



Vytautas  
**BACEVIČIUS**

**Orchestral Works • 1**

**Piano Concertos**

**Nos. 3 and 4**

**Spring Suite**

**Gabrielius Alekna, Piano**

**Lithuanian National  
Symphony Orchestra**

**Christopher Lyndon-Gee**





## Vytautas Bacevičius (1905-1970)

### Orchestral Works · 1

The life of Vytautas Bacevičius is defined by exile.

He chose a first form of exile when, in 1926 at the age of twenty-one, he left the Poland of his birth, his mother's country, abandoning the Polish style of his name, Witold, to accompany his Lithuanian-born father Vincas (Wincenty) to the then-capital of Lithuania, Kaunas. He almost immediately became a key figure in the musical life of this small nation, barely eight years after it was re-established.

He chose exile again when, in 1927, he began to spend substantial parts of each year in Paris, studying piano with Santiago Riera at the Russian Conservatoire that had been set up there by Nicolai Tcherepnin; the latter became his composition teacher. In subsequent years, he followed a dual existence between Kaunas and Paris, developing a fine reputation as a pianist, and beginning to imprint himself upon concert programmes with early works such as his *Piano Concerto No. 1* (1928), *Piano Concerto No. 2* (1933), both subtitled "*on Lithuanian themes*"; *Symphony No. 1* and *Poème électrique* for orchestra (1934). His relationship with his sister Gražyna grew closer during these years, as she too studied composition and violin in Paris during the same period; Vytautas often featured her music on his piano recital programmes.

Finally and conclusively, he had exile forced upon him while in the midst of a tour of piano recitals in South America when the Second World War broke out. Within days, Within days, the Nazis had thrust northwards from Poland to invade Lithuania, which was already occupied by Soviets. Bacevičius's passport was soon rendered worthless, and he found himself a stateless person; a situation that, if anything, worsened when Soviet control of his homeland superseded at the end of the war. By September 1940, he had succeeded in obtaining papers to allow him to settle in New York, finding work there and in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Although he visited Paris in 1961, reuniting there with his two sisters for a few weeks, he was never again to see either Poland or the country for

which he yearned as a native, Lithuania. He died on 15th January, 1970, at the Queens Jewish Hospital, New York, and is buried in the Cypress Hills cemetery in Queens.<sup>1</sup> He had never loved America; from a vast correspondence, merely the letters that survive total 1,600, written on an almost daily basis to his sisters and to various friends in Poland and Lithuania. They offer a vivid record of his inability, unwillingness even, to lay down new roots in this alien land.

Vytautas Bacevičius was born in Łódź, Poland on 9th September, 1905, the second child of a Polish mother, Maria Modlińska (1871-1958) and her slightly younger Lithuanian husband Vincas (1875-1952), his name inherited from his paternal grandfather, Witold Stanisław – Vytautas Stanislovas in Lithuanian. In February 1909, his younger sister Gražyna, also destined to become a composer, was born, with a last sibling Wanda to follow in August 1911. His elder brother Kiejstut, born a year earlier in 1904, was a successful concert pianist, too; while Wanda became a journalist and published twelve volumes of poetry.

In the second half of the nineteenth century and until the second world war, Łódź was a major cultural and University centre, a status that it has vigorously recovered today. A generation before Bacevičius, the great Polish-American pianist Arthur Rubinstein (1887-1982) was born in Łódź; it is also the birthplace of Roman Polanski (\*1933-), the conductor Paul Kletzki (1900-1973), the architect Daniel Libeskind (\*1946-), and a distinguished roster of writers, mathematicians, and physicists, including some who worked on the Manhattan Project. Bacevičius's mother Maria Modlińska was descended from an aristocratic family of architects, who settled in Łódź rather than Warsaw precisely because it was such a forward-looking centre for the arts.

Bacevičius's pedigree as pianist was impeccable. His primary teacher in his teenage years at the Conservatory in Łódź had been Józef Turczyński, a student of Anna Yesipova and Ferruccio Busoni, thus making him a



Bacevičius in the mid-1930s.

"descendant" of Liszt; while Santiago Riéra, his professor in Paris, had enjoyed an illustrious career as virtuoso, upon which he was launched by Georges Mathias, one of the brightest pupils of Frédéric Chopin.<sup>2</sup> Bacevičius's piano recitals in Paris in his mid-twenties attracted admiring, if small audiences, not least because of his forward-looking programming. For instance, at the Salle Gaveau on 23rd November, 1931, he performed a programme of Scriabin – a selection of *Études* and *Poèmes* and the *Tenth Sonata* – Albéniz, Szymanowski, Prokofiev's *Fifth Sonata*, five of his own works, four of them, like the Scriabin, entitled *Poème*, and ended with Ravel's *Toccata*. He frequently played Debussy, Ravel, Rachmaninov, de Falla, Granados, Čiurlionis, and the *Petite Suite* of Alexander Tcherepnin, son of his teacher, holding up Debussy in particular as a "kindred spirit" and as particularly demanding. In a review in *Le Ménestrel* a week after his recital of 14th December, 1928, the critic Joseph Baruzi wrote:

"I wasn't disappointed. It doesn't mean that we can [yet] regard Bacevičius as a pianist who had completely mastered his technique: most of his interpretations of Beethoven, Chopin and Liszt were marked by some kind of stiffness and weakness. Nevertheless, he played six preludes by Debussy and two poems by Scriabin (*Masque* and *Étrangeté*) with much exaltation and, in some places, energy; besides, he introduced a very expressive piece *Katarinka* by J. Gruodis."<sup>3</sup>

Clearly, his youthful "weakness" in the classics had been mastered by the time Bacevičius was playing regularly at Carnegie Hall in the 1950s, for the American reviewers repeatedly praised him for his lightness of playing and called him "a genuine specialist of spiritualised interpretation."<sup>4</sup> One anonymous critic wrote of him in the *New York Herald Tribune* in 1956 that he played with "steel fingers" but "enveloped Chopin's lullaby with the soft breathing of spring."<sup>5</sup>

His pianistic gifts and standing achieved during his Paris years were such that he was invited to sit as a jury

member with his compatriot Arthur Rubinstein, with Emil Sauer, François Casadesus, Walter Gieseking, Carlo Zecchi and others for the 1938 Ysaÿe competition. The laureates launched on their careers that year were no less than Emil Gilels and Jakob Flier.

But the key remark of Joseph Baruzi's prescient review of December 1928 must surely have been:

"However, what I seem to recognise in him as a pianist is a really talented composer."<sup>6</sup>

For, from his very earliest years in Łódź, Bacevičius was intent upon acquiring skills and a presence as a composer. His earliest "romantic" efforts as a teenager rapidly evolved once he reached Kaunas, and he was almost immediately assessed as a talent to reckon with by colleagues such as Jeronimas Kačinkas, initially on the basis of works that extolled the value of a Lithuanian folk music heritage. His Parisian experiences rapidly made themselves felt, however, and – stimulated by Honegger's *Pacific 231* and *Rugby*, by Mosolov's *Zavod* (*The Iron Foundry*), and by Prokofiev, whose recitals and whose highly personal brand of polytonality he had much admired – his brief orchestral work *Poème électrique*, premièred in Kaunas in January 1934, became a landmark in Lithuanian music of the time.<sup>7</sup>

Clearly, his pianistic immersion in Scriabin's music had risen to the surface of his own creative impulse as early as 1926 and 1927, in three *Poèmes* for solo piano entitled successively "*Contemplation*", "*mystique*" and "*astral*"; followed in 1928 by an unperformed orchestral work for an unprecedented 188 instruments – one of several incarnations of his recurrent idea for a *Poème cosmique*. These early works already convey resonances of Scriabin's *Universe Symphony*, the first part of the latter's *Preparation for the Final Mystery*.

Crystallizing gradually over the next twenty years, Bacevičius arrived at his concept of a "cosmic music", perceiving his artistic heritage in common with the æsthetic of Scriabin, Bartók, Jolivet, Varèse and latterly Stockhausen. There is no evidence one way or the other whether Bacevičius ever met Varèse while he lived in New



Bacevičius with his sister Gražyna and their father Vincas.

York; his somewhat self-effacing nature, under-confident bordering on paranoid, would tend to suggest that he almost certainly did not. During his Paris visit of late 1961 he heard Messiaen at the Trinité, but rather than waiting to introduce himself, he sent a note and did not follow up. At the same time, his *inner* self-confidence knew no bounds, crystallizing at the time he wrote his *Symphony No. 6 'Cosmic'* in this declaration in a letter to his sister Grażyna:

"What I am trying to create is a new theory of musical creation, based on the philosophy of [American occultist] Claude Bragdon, who maintains that music is the most important element of the existence of the *Universum*. ... The Thought or the Light of Wisdom is the product of the perpetual vibration of the universe, which, in turn, is responsible for the magnetism that maintains the balance (both material and spiritual;) of the *Universum*. ... Music, the symbol of supreme Thought strives towards the core and the source of existence, of the *Universum*."<sup>8</sup>

Three years later, he was even clearer about his creative methodologies and objectives:

"From now on I'm going to write *pure and atonal* music. I'm going to draw all my ideas from my own Universe and filter them through my own mentality guided by my own knowledge. Since I hate mathematical puzzles, systems and techniques, I reject and have no intention of borrowing from others; my logic will be naturally based on the strictest discipline, which will take into account all conditions necessary to create purely atonal music – not serial, however, since my music will be *virtually unrepeatable*, yet with much stress on *structures rythmiques*. ... I hope you believe me, [Grażyna], that I need no intuition to enter my extra-material Universe, its purely abstract spheres, higher and higher into the light, the apex of perfection."<sup>9</sup>

His existence in the now hated north-eastern corner of the United States became ever more withdrawn and iconoclastic even as he continued, of desperate necessity, giving piano lessons.

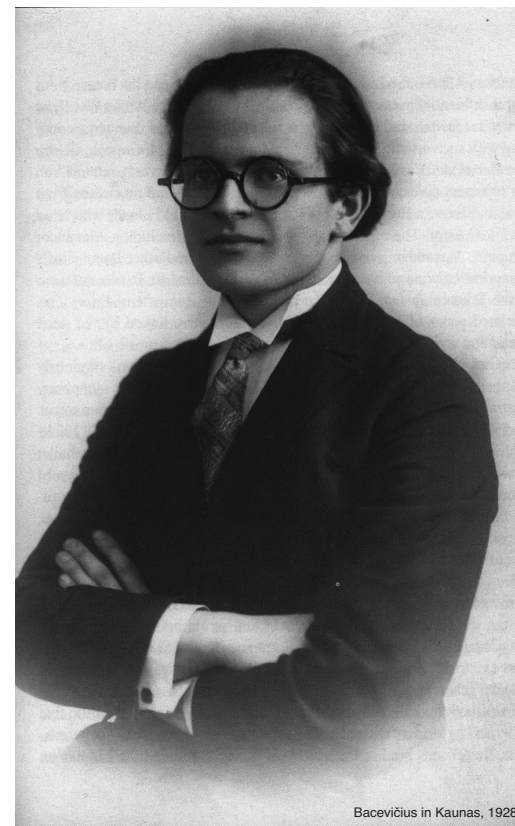
"... for all Americans, *culture* equals the luxury appliances in their kitchens, the air-conditioner, refrigerators, cars, excellent roads, colour TVs etc.<sup>10</sup> In their stupid reasoning, this is followed by science and art and spiritual culture, and you could never convince them that science and the fine arts could be superior in countries 'behind us' in terms of civilization."<sup>11</sup>

Despite his negativity about the world around him, his productivity as a composer continued to blossom; much of his solo piano music was published by Mercury Music Corporation in 1967, and in 1969 he even received an ASCAP award.

But he had paid the costs himself of Mercury's publication of his works to the imprint's owner, Rabbi Milton Feist, which is probably the circumstance behind his outburst in yet another letter:

"In America, you buy friendship with money, and disinterested friendship in the European style is unthinkable."<sup>12</sup>

He was doubtless thinking back to the sense of promise and opportunity he had experienced in 1938, when the prestigious publisher Universal Edition of Vienna – publishers of Schoenberg, Berg, Webern and Bartók – had brought out his *Deux grotesques* and *Premier mot*.<sup>13</sup> His existence in America was that of a lonely and increasingly socially isolated man; never married, culturally alienated, ever more nostalgic for the Europe he had lost, close only in his epistolary relationships with his brother and sisters; his orchestral music unperformed and ignored. Yet he kept on writing, and the conviction of his artistic vision is all the more remarkable given his hostility to the American musical environment and his isolation from all that he felt had formed him as a young man.



Bacevičius in Kaunas, 1928.

All three of the works on this recording were written in the United States. The *Piano Concerto No. 3* dates from his earlier years in the country (1946-49), when he was still optimistic about his prospects, and when his ears were still very firmly in Europe. Thus, it has powerful echoes of the “French” idiom of works such as the *Troisième* and *Quatrième Mot*, of *Vision*, written in Kaunas, and of the *Second Symphony ‘della Guerra’*, composed while he was trapped in Buenos Aires. Following a rather conventional “martial” opening, we hear a lyrical, chromatic oboe theme; it will be with this contrasting second subject that the piano opens its argument, continuing with a transposed version of the same music at the second solo entry. Then later, the piano soloist explores a third theme, also lyrical and *cantabile* (marked *Moderato*), that is never shared in exact form with the orchestra. There is a sense until the very concluding pages that piano and orchestra are less interlocutors and collaborators than somewhat estranged observers of each other. In a similar way, the *staccato* themes of the rondo *Finale* are related in type of movement, rather than in dialogue with each other. The piano soloist does not concede his independence even at the closing pages of the work. Several thematic elements of these two outer movements are adapted from the *Three Moments, Op. 41* for solo piano (New York 1946); the exemplary work of what Małgorzata Janicka-Słysz terms the composer’s “neoclassical period”.<sup>14</sup> The two faster movements are separated by a musing *Adagio misterioso* that beautifully illustrates the gentle, lyrically based atonality of Bacevičius’s early style. Its highly decorated chromaticisms never quite draw it out from a firm foundation around the F tonality with which it opens and closes.

The 1958 *Spring Suite (Pavasario Siuita)* marks a period of aspiration to a substantially more complex, contrapuntally dense style. It is based upon a solo piano composition of the same name of seven years earlier, but considerably enriched by contrapuntal additions far beyond the reach of two hands. It immediately precedes the composition in 1959 of *Poème cosmique* for solo piano (published by Mercury), and the *Symphony No. 6 ‘Cosmic’*, and is in many respects a study for these

pioneering works. Two well-hidden quotations from Stravinsky’s *Le Sacre du Printemps* are integrated with rustic Lithuanian folk melodies. The overall impression of the work is one of bubbling, seething energy.

In Bacevičius’s work chronology, the composition of *Piano Concerto No. 4* (1962), subtitled (in an echo of Karol Szymanowski) *Symphonie Concertante*, is sandwiched between two of the composer’s most important achievements: the *Symphony No. 6 ‘Cosmic’* of 1960, and *Graphique*, a symphonic poem of 1964.<sup>15</sup> Thus, it is a vital work for the understanding of his “cosmic” period, and is in stark contrast with the “French” lyricism of the third concerto. By “cosmic”, Bacevičius intends the inner world of the non-verbal soul, the limitless imagination of the human mind liberated from corporeal concerns:

“... I searched for new creative and aesthetic ideas in *my own* [Universe]; in this I was much helped by my subconscious, which is an inexhaustible treasure and source of previously undiscovered ideas and creative elements of abstract and tonal music.”<sup>16</sup>

In this, he is no more “eccentric” than Varèse, who declared,

“I want to dwell in the material itself, to be ... part of the acoustic vibration.”<sup>17</sup>

The first movement of the *Symphonie Concertante* adheres to Bacevičius’s favourite Rondo-form, as follows:

Introduction – a b a<sup>1</sup> b<sup>1</sup> c d a<sup>2</sup> e a<sup>3</sup> – cadenza – f a<sup>4</sup> g (cadenza for percussion) d – coda

Intervallically, he focuses upon a wedge shape: c – f – c# – f# – d; upon two interlocking fifths: f – c – g / c# – f# – b; and upon the whole-tone scale.<sup>18</sup>

Both this extensive first movement and the *Finale, Allegro agitato*, are restless music, characterised by dialogue fragments of a couple of measures thrown

backwards and forwards; the third movement includes literal quotes of passages from the first. As in the *Third Concerto*, it is in the slow movement that we are most tangibly confronted with the composer’s dream-world, here tapering out in an inconclusive cello solo.

Bacevičius’s music deserves a place in the wider repertoire, not only as a shining representative of his small nation’s determined place in the world, but also for moments of melting lyrical beauty and fascinating harmonic originality that draw one to repeated hearings of his work.

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<sup>1</sup> Małgorzata Janicka-Słysz, *Vytautas Bacevičius i jego idee muzyki kosmicznej*, Kraków 2001, 159

<sup>2</sup> Edmundas Gedgaudas, *Vytautas Bacevičius the Pianist*, in Rūta Stanevičiūtė & Veronika Janatjeva, Eds., *Vytautas Bacevičius in Context*, Vilnius 2009, 31

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Baruzi, in *Le Ménestrel*, no. 51, 21st December, 1928, p. 545; cit. in Vita Gruodytė, *Vytautas Bacevičius in the Context of Interwar Paris*; in Stanevičiūtė & Janatjeva Eds. *op. cit.* Vilnius 2009, 63

<sup>4</sup> Edmundas Gedgaudas, *Vytautas Bacevičius the Pianist*; in Stanevičiūtė & Janatjeva Eds. *op. cit.* Vilnius 2009, 34

<sup>5</sup> Gedgaudas, *ibid.*, 34

<sup>6</sup> Baruzi, *op. cit.*, in *ibid.*, 63

<sup>7</sup> Ona Narbutienė, *Vytautas Bacevičius*, in *Vytautas Bacevičius: A Return of the Restless Artist – A centennial celebration of Vytautas Bacevičius*; programme book of the *Vytautas Bacevičius Music Festival*, Vilnius, September 16 – October 29, 2005, English translation Veronika Janatjeva, 29

<sup>8</sup> From a letter of 13th March, 1960 to his sister Gražyna; cit. in Małgorzata Janicka-Słysz, *Vytautas Bacevičius’s Creative Evolution: Towards Cosmic Music*; in Rūta Stanevičiūtė-Goštautienė & Audronė Žiūraitytė, Eds., *Constructing Modernity and Reconstructing Nationality: Lithuanian Music in the Twentieth Century*, Vilnius 2004, 33

<sup>9</sup> From a letter of 18th March, 1963 to his sister Gražyna; cit. in Krzysztof Droba, *Vytautas Bacevičius in America, or, An Artist in the Cage*; in Stanevičiūtė & Janatjeva Eds. *op. cit.* Vilnius 2009, 132

<sup>10</sup> How well do these observations resonate with Henry Miller’s *The Air-conditioned Nightmare* (New York 1945), written soon after the latter’s own return from the ten years he lived in Paris and a year in Greece; coincidentally, a chapter of Miller’s book gives a profile of Varèse.

<sup>11</sup> From a letter of 9th June, 1966 to his sister Wanda; cit. in Krzysztof Droba, *op. cit.*; in Stanevičiūtė & Janatjeva Eds. *ibid.* Vilnius 2009, 123

<sup>12</sup> From a letter of 3rd June, 1966 to his sister Wanda; cit. in Krzysztof Droba, *op. cit.*; in Stanevičiūtė & Janatjeva Eds. *ibid.* Vilnius 2009, 123

<sup>13</sup> Małgorzata Janicka-Słysz, *Vytautas Bacevičius i jego idee muzyki kosmicznej*, Kraków 2001, 161

<sup>14</sup> Małgorzata Janicka-Słysz, *Vytautas Bacevičius i jego idee muzyki kosmicznej*, Kraków 2001, 52-57

<sup>15</sup> Małgorzata Janicka-Słysz, *Vytautas Bacevičius i jego idee muzyki kosmicznej*, Kraków 2001, 163

<sup>16</sup> Vytautas Bacevičius, *Sześć tygodni życia realnego we śnie* (*Six weeks of real life in a dream*) [written in Polish, 1963], The Vytautas Bacevičius Archive. LLMA (Lietuvos literatūros ir meno archyvas – Lithuanian Archives of Literature and Art, Vilnius); cit. in Małgorzata Janicka-Słysz, *Vytautas Bacevičius’s Cosmology of Tones and the Expression of Structure*; in Stanevičiūtė & Janatjeva Eds. *op. cit.* Vilnius 2009, 39

<sup>17</sup> Gunther Schuller, *Conversation with Varèse*, in *Res facta* No. 1, 1967, 13

<sup>18</sup> I am indebted to Małgorzata Janicka-Słysz, *op. cit.* Kraków 2001, 66, for the outlines of these analyses.



## Gabrielius Alekna



Photo: Gedmantas Kropis

The winner of second prize at the 2005 International Beethoven Piano Competition in Vienna, Austria, Gabrielius Alekna has appeared as a soloist with the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Juilliard Orchestra, and the New Amsterdam (New York), as well as with all major orchestras in his native Lithuania. Daniel Barenboim recently recognized him as 'a highly gifted pianist and musician'. His recording of complete *Mots* by Vytautas Bacevičius was released in early 2012 on the British label Toccata Classics, and involved collaborations with the two-time GRAMMY®-winning producer Judith Sherman and the three-time GRAMMY®-nominated pianist Ursula Oppens. He has presented solo performances at venues such as the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, New York, the Steinway Hall, New York, the National Gallery in Washington D.C., the Musikverein, Vienna, and the Lithuanian National Philharmonic Hall. Gabrielius Alekna has garnered more than a dozen top prizes in competitions on both sides of the Atlantic, such as the Hilton Head (United States), Maria Canals (Spain), and the Čiurlionis (Lithuania) International Piano Competitions. He is a Visiting Professor at the Music Academy of Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas, Lithuania, and has co-founded the Birštonas Summer Arts Academy in Birštonas, Lithuania. Born in Vilnius, Lithuania, the pianist began his music studies at the age of five. After graduation from the Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis Arts Gymnasium in Vilnius, he continued his studies at the Lithuanian Music Academy. In 1996, Gabrielius Alekna was invited to attend The Juilliard School, where he studied with Jerome Lowenthal, receiving Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral degrees in music.

## Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra



Photo: Inga Juodytė

Founded in 1940 by Lithuanian composer, conductor and pianist Balys Dvarionas, the Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra remains one of the most experienced symphony orchestras in Lithuania. A 96-piece orchestra currently brings together Lithuania's finest musicians and annually gives some fifty concerts throughout the country. On its international tours, the LNSO has repeatedly performed in most European countries, Japan and Turkey, appearing in some of the world's greatest concert halls and major festivals, including the Vienna Musikverein, the Alte Oper, Frankfurt, the Barbican Centre, London, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Space, the Schleswig-Holstein Festival, and the Ludwigsburg Festival. The roster of conductors who have led the LNSO includes international figures such as Mstislav Rostropovich, Krzysztof Penderecki, Kurt Masur, Justus Frantz, and Neeme Järvi. The bulk of the orchestra's repertoire consists of classical and romantic masterpieces spiced by the most innovative twentieth-century scores and nearly all the symphonic works written by Lithuanian composers. Since 1964 Juozas Domarkas has been Artistic Director and Chief Conductor.

## Christopher Lyndon-Gee

Christopher Lyndon-Gee was recently honoured as one of only three hundred conductors included in Naxos's 600-page book and CD compilation *A to Z of Conductors*, covering the entire history of the art-form from Hans von Bülow and Arthur Nikisch to the present day. Christopher Lyndon-Gee was nominated for GRAMMYs® in 1998 for 'Best Orchestral Performance' for the first volume of his groundbreaking series of the complete works of Igor Markevitch (originally released on Marco Polo); in 2003 for the world première recording of George Rochberg's *Symphony No. 5* on Naxos American Classics; and again in 2007 for Hans Werner Henze's *Violin Concertos Nos. 1 and 3*, with Peter Sheppard Skærved and the Saarbrücken Radio Symphony Orchestra (now the Deutsche Radio Philharmonie). Other recordings have been listed among the *Gramophone* 'Editor's Choice' in London, *Fanfare* magazine 'Outstanding CDs of the Year', *Penguin Guide to Compact Discs* multiple Rosettes and Key Recordings listings, and he won the *Pizzicato* prize in Luxembourg. He was named 'Artist of the Year' by the Australian National Critics Circle in 1994, and won the Sydney Opera Critics 'Best Conductor' award the same year. Acclaimed releases include George Rochberg's *Symphony No. 1* in its première recording (Naxos 8.559214); volume 2 of the complete works of Edgard Varèse (8.557882), including the massive original version of *Amériques*, for an orchestra of 155 players; and the completion of the Markevitch complete works project, the oratorio *Le Paradis perdu*, released in 2008 [Naxos 8.570773]. Frequently invited to conduct at the Warsaw Autumn Festival, he conducted four world premières in a single concert at the Jubilee, Fiftieth anniversary Festival in 2007 – new symphonies by the Slovakian composer Roman Berger; Lithuania's leading female composer Onutė Narbutaitė; and the Polish composers Jerzy Kornowicz and Alexander Lasoń. In 2006 he led the closing concert at the November 2006 'Paweł Szymański Festival', also in Warsaw, featuring six of the major works of Poland's leading composer of today. In 2008, a four-DVD set including this complete concert was released worldwide by Polskie Wydawnictwo Audiowizualne. As a composer, Lyndon-Gee was honoured by the Onassis Foundation Prize in 2001, has won the 'Sounds Australian' award three times, the Adolf Spivakovsky Prize, and the MacDowell Fellowship twice. In 2006, his setting from Dante's *Paradiso*, '*Frammento del Dante*', was premièred in Florence by the *Echo Klassik* prize-winning German ensemble SingerPur; *Musik für Saiteninstrumente* has had recent performances in several countries (including Vladivostok, in far eastern Russia); and '*Over Litton*', after a poem of Edward Storey, was premièred in Wales as a 25th anniversary Presteigne Festival Commission before being taken up widely in New York, Australia and elsewhere. In progress are forthcoming commissions of a set of songs for Lute and Tenor voice, *Lieder des Morgensterns*; a new work for SingerPur on a text from Milton; a *String Quartet*; a second string orchestra work for the German conductor Eckart Schloifer, '*... und unter den Blättern saß Er, weinend*'; a work for 'Harpichord Unlimited' in New York, *Etudes canoniques*; and a Symphony respectfully dedicated to the aboriginal heritage of Australia, *Symphony of Dreamtime*. Lyndon-Gee studied conducting under Rudolf Schwarz in London, and Franco Ferrara in Rome, where Leonard Bernstein heard him conduct a student concert, subsequently inviting him to study at Tanglewood. Here he later worked also under Maurice Abravanel, Erich Leinsdorf and others. He worked as Bruno Maderna's assistant at La Scala, Milan, later becoming second conductor at the Teatro Regio in Turin, working also with the RAI orchestra in that city. He was co-founder with composer Lorenzo Ferrero of the Ensemble Fase Seconda, who premièred dozens of commissioned new works throughout Italy, Germany, France and at many international festivals. As a composer, he studied with Goffredo Petrassi in Rome, Luciano Berio, Sylvano Bussotti and Jean Martinon. Britain's great musicologist Arthur Hutchings remains a powerful guiding influence, several decades on.

Vytautas Bacevičius remained virtually unknown as a composer during his lifetime, in contrast to the fortunes of his sister Gražyna Bacewicz, who retained her Polish nationality. Rendered stateless by the outbreak of World War II while he was on tour as a concert pianist in Argentina, he eventually settled in New York until his death in 1970, giving acclaimed piano recitals, teaching, and writing astoundingly original orchestral scores. He never lost his deep allegiance to and nostalgia for Lithuania. This recording gives an eloquent introduction to his pianistic virtuosity and to his mystical, Scriabinesque vision of the orchestra.

Vytautas  
**BACEVIČIUS**  
(1905-1970)

**Piano Concerto No. 3,  
Op. 44 (1946/1949)\*† 26:41**

- ❶ **I. Allegro moderato – più mosso –  
Allegro molto – Moderato – Vivace 12:15**  
❷ **II. Adagio misterioso 8:50**  
❸ **III. Allegro molto 5:36**

**Spring Suite, Op. 64 (1958)† 17:49**

- ❹ **I. Andantino 6:12**  
❺ **II. Lento 6:45**  
❻ **III. Allegro giocoso 4:52**

**Piano Concerto No. 4  
‘Symphonie Concertante’,  
Op. 67 (1962)\* 24:07**

- ❼ **I. Allegro misterioso –  
Allegro moderato 12:33**  
❽ **II. Andante – Andantino – Lento 5:00**  
❾ **III. Allegro agitato – Presto –  
Allegro molto 6:34**

† **WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDINGS**

**Gabrielius Alekna, Piano\***  
**Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra**  
**Christopher Lyndon-Gee**

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