

Ottorino RESPIGHI

COMPLETE PIANO MUSIC, VOLUME ONE: ORIGINAL PIANO WORKS I

THREE PRELUDES ON GREGORIAN MELODIES

PRELUDE IN B FLAT MINOR

PRELUDE IN D MINOR

ANDANTE IN D MAJOR

ANDANTE IN E MAJOR

ANDANTE IN F MAJOR

TOCCATA IN D DORIAN

SONATA IN F MINOR

Giovanna Gatto

INCLUDES FIRST RECORDINGS

OTTORINO RESPIGHI: COMPLETE PIANO MUSIC, VOLUME ONE

by Potito Pedarra

Respighi seems never to have studied the piano formally, choosing instead the organ classes of Cesare Dall'Olio, his counterpoint and composition teacher at the Liceo Musicale in Bologna. He graduated both in violin, his preferred instrument, and in composition. Even so, both as a young man and in his maturity, Respighi often played the piano in public, as accompanist¹ and as soloist in his own compositions for piano and orchestra.² Among the occasional essays dedicated to Respighi as a pianist, there is one which goes beyond anecdotes³ to assess his importance. It is from the pianist and teacher Giuseppe Piccioli (1905–61), who was among the first to study Respighi's piano music, and who pointed out that although his 'fervent activity in other branches of music prevented the illustrious symphonist from dedicating much time to the piano', he left an indelible mark through 'the truly important works which we have awaited since the death of Busoni'.⁴ Piccioli judged the *Preludi sopra melodie gregoriane* the most beautiful of Respighi's output for piano: 'his pianistic art is shown splendidly'.⁵

¹ Respighi frequently played the piano in chamber-music concerts in 1910–20. For a decade he was the accompanist of the mezzo-soprano Chiarina Fino Savio, as well as of his wife, Elsa Olivieri Sangiacomo, with whom he gave over three hundred concerts around the world; he also played with a number of violinists.

² He gave the first performance, with the New York Philharmonic under Willem Mengelberg in Carnegie Hall, of the *Concerto in Modo Misolidico* (on 31 December 1925) and the *Toccata per pianoforte e orchestra* (on 24 November 1928).

³ One such is worth quotation by way of example. Respighi's sister, Amelia, wrote:

Ottorino's first teacher was his father, but then he continued by himself and reached a reasonable level. [...] One day my father returned home earlier than usual, and was amazed, climbing the stairs, to hear someone playing Schumann's *Symphonic Variations*: none of his students was studying the piece, and he was surprised to find Ottorino at the piano. He hadn't imagined that his son could have acquired such a technique from the sporadic lessons he'd been given.

Quoted in Elsa Respighi, *Ottorino Respighi*, Ricordi, Milan, 1954, p. 11.

⁴ Giuseppe Piccioli, 'Ottorino Respighi', in *L'Arte pianistica in Italia da Clementi ai nostri giorni*, Umberto Pizzi, Bologna, no date (presumably the 1920s), p. 37.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

The recording project of which this album forms the first instalment will present the first entirely complete account of Respighi's piano music: the original works for solo piano, published and unpublished, and all the transcriptions – of earlier composers and of his own orchestral works, for solo piano and piano four hands. Volumes One and Two will be dedicated to the published and unpublished original music, and the third to transcriptions, including Respighi's solo-piano transcriptions of Frescobaldi and his own *Antiche arie e danze per liuto* – works which have in common their first performer, Luisa Baccara (1892–1985). This project also includes some scores that have been overlooked by earlier pianists, perhaps because some of these works require realisation or completion. One of them is a recently rediscovered *Andante* in E major, P006a [8], which, along with its contemporary *Andante* in F major, P006 [7], and the *Andante* in D major, P007 [9] – compositions from November–December 1896 – form a trilogy from Respighi's days as a student.

Some twenty years separate the E major *Andante*, P006a, from the *Toccata in D Dorian*, P105b [6], composed in the Hermitage of Tizzano (near Bologna) in the spring of 1916, an apparently unproductive period which Respighi passed 'in a delightful location on a hill in the municipality of Casalecchio, facing San Luca'; from there he wrote: 'I stay with the parish priest and have a sober life of great peace.'⁶ Respighi went back to Rome following the death of his mother in Bologna (on 29 March 1916), and returned to teaching but then 'collapsed' with chronic fatigue. He found refuge once again in the Tizzano Hermitage, where he composed a few pages of music, little more than sketches, among them the *Toccata in D Dorian*. The gap of twenty years which separates the E major *Andante* from this little *Toccata* marked Respighi's passage from youth to maturity. Although only a sketch, the delicate *Toccata in D Dorian* shows Respighi already mindful of colour and searching for a personal idiom – and not yet influenced by his later experimentation with exoticism (as, for example, in the operas *Belkis*, *Regina di Saba* and *La Fiamma*) or by Gregorian chant.

⁶ Letter to Chiarina Fino Savio, dated 12 June 1916, quoted in Elsa Respighi, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

The **Sonata in F minor, p016** (1897–98) was not discovered until the 1980s. It was composed in Bologna when Respighi was in his third year of harmony at the Liceo Musicale G. B. Martini, but it was first performed only on 11 October 1986 at the Teatro La Fenice in Venice, during a conference on Respighi organised by the Fondazione Cini; the performer was Gino Gorini and most of the Italian musicological world was present. The occasion was also used to present the first edition of the Sonata, published by Ricordi. It falls into three parts: I *Allegro*; II *Lento*; III *Allegretto*. Even in its precocity, the Sonata in F minor is one of the works in which the personality of the composer is recognisable, in the fragmented melodic structure characteristic of an already sophisticated compositional style, where, as Sergio Martinotti writes, one can hear

the emblematic coexistence of European modules and Martuccian echoes immediately present in the first *Allegro*, with an initial phrase full of touching determination that constitutes a convincing introduction, almost a peremptory gesture to begin the framework of this first movement with an intensely heated and incisive theme [1]. [...] After the brief introduction, the exposition of the first theme, followed by a short development in D flat major, returns in its original form to give way to the second theme that opens to a more confidential lyricism.⁷

A modulation connects the second theme to the central section, developed in C major, of which it becomes a basic element, and the movement ends in the ‘respectful coexistence of the two themes’⁸ and a return to the original tonality.

The following *Lento* [2] has ‘the measured and serious pace of an almost Busonian chorale’⁹ The first theme, above transparent harmonies, is connected to the more majestic second subject in C sharp minor via a brief modulation into E major. The impressionistic nature of this section gives the music a nocturnal atmosphere. The Busonian trend shows itself more clearly in the last reprise of the main theme, in which

⁷ Sergio Martinotti, ‘La musica per pianoforte di Respighi’, in Elio Battaglia *et al.*, *Ottorino Respighi*, ed. Giancarlo Rostirolla, ERI-Edizione RAI, Turin, 1985, pp. 174–75.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 176–77.

the left hand plays a bass line which prefigures Respighi's Frescobaldi transcriptions. The movement finishes with the opening theme in a relaxed and peaceful atmosphere.

The third movement, *Allegretto* [3], opens with a jocular theme in B flat minor, leading via a lyrical section to a *Più lento* central section in D flat major based on delays and suggestive accelerations, before a rapid return to the opening theme, supported by the harmony. The work concludes with a fragmentary and visionary cadence, reminding the listener that, apart from the different tonality, this juvenile sonata lacks a real finale.¹⁰

The **Prelude in B flat minor, P043** [4], is the first and only surviving movement from a collection which, along with a *Canone*,¹¹ *Intermezzo*, *Studio* and *Fuga*, formed a *Suite per pianoforte*, presumably a homage to the forms of the past, as the surviving piece suggests. The Prelude is in ternary form: *Lento* – *Più mosso* – *Tempo I*. The first and last sections use the theme which opens the piece: a faint melody murmured religiously above bass bichords. The same theme is carved in *fortissimo* octaves in the *Tempo I*, first in the bass and then in the treble. Having reached the climax, the theme dies away, sliding into the lower register of the piano. In the *Più mosso* the archaic effects show as plagal cadences and *legato* which give the music a stop-start effect.

The **Prelude in D minor, P043a** (formerly catalogued as P184; c. 1903) [5], is conceived in three sections:

- a *Lento* in D minor, followed by a *Presto* in the same tonality. A second *Lento* concludes the section and seems to be the continuation of the first theme, because it begins on the dominant;
- a new *Presto* section in A major that keeps the character of the previous one;
- a *Meno mosso*.

The piece is a fantasy with old-fashioned elements and a changeable atmosphere, from the Bach-Busoni of the opening *Lento*, bars that give a cadential style, the Scarlatti-like hand-crossings, and touches of humour such as the *Meno mosso*, which reminds one of Rossini's *Péchés de vieillesse*. The severity of the D minor *Lento*, a kind of chorale,

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

¹¹ Of this piece, later merged into the *Sei pezzi per pianoforte*, P044, only the first part of an early draft survives.

contrasts with the two *Presto* sections in D minor and A major, which are imbued with a rhythmic vivacity and expressiveness reminiscent of Scarlatti. In the *Meno mosso* in F major a delicate theme floats above murmuring triplets decorated with *acciaccature* – an accompaniment that, introduced as a discordant element, acts boldly with a witty and light-hearted effect. The structure might thus appear relatively straightforward, but the manuscript suggests that Respighi had something more in mind, as Giovanna Gatto explains:

The decision to give the Prelude, p043a, in rondo form was dictated by the desire to remain as close as possible to the score as desired by the composer: Respighi wrote at the end of the second *Lento* in D minor the word *Fine* ('End'), preceded by a double bar-line. The second *Presto* in A major follows, at the end of which we find the words *Da capo sino al Fine* ('From the beginning to the end'), also preceded by a double bar-line.

It was therefore logical not to proceed directly to the *Meno mosso* in F major (section c) but to pay attention to Respighi's original intent, considering the tie above the last note, A, of the *Presto* in A major (section b) as a precursor of the theme of the *Lento* and playing the Prelude again from the A section.

We can therefore consider the beginning *Lento e presto* in D minor as a single section A, repeated in rondo form after the *Presto* in A major (section b) and again after the *Meno mosso* in F major as section c. It follows that, according to the indications of the composer (*Fine* and *Da capo al fine*), we can maintain a Classical harmonic structure, to wit:

section A, D minor, which ends with *Fine*

section B, based on the dominant A but in major scale, which ends with *Da capo al Fine*

reprise of section A, D minor

section c, in the relative tonality of F major

reprise of section A, which brings the piece to the conclusion.¹²

¹² E-mail to the author, dated 17 September 2017.

Until recently, the existence of the *Toccata in D Dorian*, P105b (1916) [6], was entirely unsuspected. Although it has survived as little more than a sketch, its composition coincides with Respighi's mature period, usually dated to the year in which he composed *Fontane di Roma* – the period when he suspended his teaching following his mother's death and, according to his wife's testimony, wrote not even a note. Fortunately, that seems not to have been the case, and these little pieces, found casually between other pages of autograph music, may well have been unknown to Elsa Respighi.

In support of Elsa's opinion, though, there is the testimony of Respighi's pupil Daniele Amfitheatroff, according to whom the music of *Fontane di Roma* (the score of which was completed in October 1916) was already written a year earlier, when Amfitheatroff heard Respighi play some parts of it on the piano, in the summer of 1915 at Amfitheatroff's house in Levanto. Giovanna Gatto writes:

The *Toccata in D Dorian* was found in a series of detached pages containing three short manuscript pieces which were never published or performed by Respighi: an organ prelude, the *Toccata in D Dorian* and an unfinished fugue which required completion. Unlike the Prelude, which carried the heading 'for organ', the Toccata was clearly written for piano. To support this thesis, there is the range used by the composer, which descends to a low D in the left hand, a note that would not be possible on an organ keyboard.

As far as the writing of the piece is concerned, the Toccata has a strong improvisational character which echoes the aesthetic of Baroque music and that of the *Stylus Phantasticus* of harpsichord toccatas by Bach and his predecessors. A search for new and individual colours is also clear from the first bar, and suggests other composers such as Claude Debussy. The extended arpeggios at the beginning pass into suspended phrases and show a clear modal effect.

On the one hand, Respighi frequently searches for a solemn organ-like timbre, inspired by his knowledge of that instrument. This style is frequently displayed in the piece, and is developed in the extended finale, where a long sequence of chords in the right hand is sustained by the very low bass line. The imposing result is obtained by using

the complete length of the keyboard, and leads to a conclusion in the majestic key of D major.¹³

The recent discovery of an *Andante in E major*, P006a, lacking a finale and unpublished, completes the group of three *Andantes* from Respighi's period of study and training: P006 [7], P006a [8] and P007 [9]. Its scholastic origin, moreover, is clearly indicated by the rubber-stamp of the Liceo Musicale G. B. Martini di Bologna, on the upper edge of the page of the first, between Respighi's timidly written name and the date. Giovanna Gatto presents these three works as a trilogy

because they were written in the same period and share the same Romantic colour. The choice of performing these three *Andantes* in succession was dictated by the fact that they were composed in a short interval of time between November and December 1896. In the context of this album, they constitute a major-key oasis of peace, a breath of Romanticism which prepare the listener for the *Tre preludi sopra melodie gregoriane*.

The three *Andantes* were written soon after his first piano piece, a Sonata in A minor (P004a/b). Performing them in chronological order, the tonalities used are F major (P006), E major (P006a) and D major (P007), as if Respighi had conceived them as late-Romantic exercises in related keys. Nonetheless, they are of unusual naturalness and clarity, despite their creation by a Respighi who was still adolescent. The inclusion of the *Andante* P006a in the programme, though lacking its final bars, was dictated by the desire to maintain the unity of the three compositions.

One option would be to leave the composition unfinished, recording the manuscript pages without a finale. However, considering the three *Andantes* as written during the same creative impulse, as is clear from the similarity of form, which is that of a classical dual-theme tripartite piece, I considered it appropriate to complete the *Andante* P006a following as closely as possible the original composition. I therefore added two final bars which reprise the final part of the first section and, as suggested by the composer, recall the second subject. Thus the stylistic and compositional unity of the pieces is maintained,

¹³ E-mail to the author, dated 16 September 2017.

along with the idea of conceiving them as a product of the same moment of happy inspiration.¹⁴

The *Tre preludi sopra melodie gregoriane*, P131 (1921), constitute not only the point of arrival and the culmination of Respighi's limited output for piano, but also his last work for the instrument in a solo capacity; afterwards, he wrote only some *concertante* works – the *Concerto in Mixolydian Mode* (1925), the *Toccata* for piano and orchestra (1928) and the *Concerto a cinque* (1933). Beyond that, he used the piano to enrich his orchestral palette (in the 'Roman' symphonic poems, for example) as accompaniment for the last Lieder, and in a handful of compositions for piano duet.

The *Tre preludi* appear at the end of Respighi's search for a personal idiom, a phase which began with his presumed withdrawal from composition at the time of the sketches for the *Toccata in D Dorian* (1916). This exploration, which in the end resulted in his 'Gregorian' period, 'was felt as a spiritual need, as an antidote to the impressionism underlined in the *Fountains of Rome*'.¹⁵ The consequence was that the paring-back of Respighi's expressive palette was so thorough and original that Luciano Lanfranchi, writing of the third of the Preludes, talks of 'Weberian pointillism', although this experiment 'once again confirms Respighi's desire to find new ways while remaining within an Italian sensitivity and method'. Respighi did not abandon traditional tonalities, Lanfranchi concludes, 'but was able to re-invent them, recalling (for example) modes which preceded classical tonality, and all of the other tonal forms more or less close to those of composers of the thirteenth to the nineteenth centuries'.¹⁶

According to Elsa Respighi, who married Respighi in 1919,

The *Tre preludi sopra melodie gregoriane* for piano were [...] composed on Capri in the summer of 1919, and one can say that this piece mirrors the state of mind of Respighi in

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Martinotti, *loc. cit.*, p. 184.

¹⁶ Luciano Lanfranchi, 'A proposito dei *Preludi sopra melodie gregoriane* e della scrittura pianistica di Respighi', in Alberto Cantù, *Respighi compositore*, EDA, Turin, 1985, pp. 110–11.

that period: joyful wonder at a revelation and at the same time mystic exaltation from a strong religious sense which well suited the harmony of our life together.¹⁷

Respighi had told her in confidence 'how it would be great to revive in a new language of sounds those wonderful melodies, crystallised according to the strict rules of the Roman Catholic liturgy'.¹⁸ Elsa had recently graduated in this subject and offered to be his teacher but it didn't require much effort, as she admitted: 'It was complete intoxication [for Respighi], and there was no day when he failed to ask me to sing for him some pages of the Roman Gradual; he listened as if enchanted'.¹⁹ This enchantment had a noticeable effect on Respighi's music, beginning with the *Preludes*, so much so that there is no subsequent composition in which Gregorian chant cannot be heard.

Attilio Piovano recognises a very strong similarity between the Gregorian theme of the second Prelude and the beginning of the Magnificat antiphon from the first vespers, *Virgo prudentissima*, in the Graduale Romano, for the festivity of 15 August. In my opinion, however, one can speak only about similarities – and Piovano himself concludes that it is impossible to indicate any themes from the Graduale that Respighi took as the bases of the *Preludi*.²⁰ In my view, the 'original themes' of Respighi's Preludes do not exist, or scholarship, which has combed through the Graduale, would have been able to identify them.

As Elsa Respighi states, the *Tre preludi sopra melodie gregoriane* were composed on the island of Capri in 1919 (more precisely, in Anacapri, above Capri): the newlyweds, on what would today be termed their honeymoon, rarely went down to Capri, turning their rented villa into a forge of art and music. Edwin Cerio, who had purchased the Villa 'Il Rosaio' in 1911, decided to rent it to some of the many artists and writers of the time who crowded Capri, but the Respighis preferred to take refuge in the silence to devote themselves to their work. At 'Il Rosaio' Ottorino completed the score for the cantata

¹⁷ Cf. Elsa Respighi, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Attilio Piovano, 'Citazioni Gregoriane e uso del modalismo nella musica strumentale di Ottorino Respighi', in *Ottorino Respighi, op. cit.*, pp. 208 and 213.

La primavera and the opera for Podrecca's Teatro dei Piccoli, *La Bella addormentata* ('Sleeping Beauty'), and composed most of the symphonic poem *Ballata delle gnomidi*; he also wrote a number of songs to poems by Gabriele D'Annunzio – and the *Tre preludi sopra melodie gregoriane*. So much work in so short a space of time – July, August and part of September – suggests that some of these pieces must already have been sketched and only completed at 'Il Rosaio'. In the case of the Three Preludes, that process seems to have begun there, since the definitive manuscript bears the date 1921.

Sergio Martinotti's survey of Respighi's piano music offers commentaries on all three Preludes:

Aside from the uncertainty of the tonality, what is surprising about the first Prelude [10] is the bare but skilful counterpoint of the accompaniment: the syncopated rhythm integrates and accentuates the rarefied and inward-looking climate of the musical discourse. The internal counterpoint sometimes shows an ancestry in Busoni and, in the central episode, the layers of timbre and the distant octaves that take up the first theme in unison clearly shows the influence of Debussy and of Albéniz's *Iberia*.²¹

Written in a typical toccata style, the stormy second Prelude [11] is based on octaves and open arpeggios which hint at a Romantic tradition pointing to Reger, but it also reflects the classical pianism of the very early Debussy. After an episode in E major, with an acclamatory crescendo suggestive of the orchestra, the main theme at last comes again, hovering in a visionary and spacious climate, not exempt from echoes of Franck, as if to recall its true mystical nature.²²

Martinotti found that the repeated notes of the third Prelude [12] recalled Ravel, and observed that its melody

is expressed entirely in the central register. Although there are some tonal echoes intended to permit recapitulation, the piece is bare and inward-looking, and the references to the past now appear provisory, with the growing weight of the Gregorian phrase returned to

²¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 185.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 186–87.

its petrified original cadence, where the repeated octaves serve as a pedal in a dreamy and archaic atmosphere, in which every sound evaporates.²³

Writing of the *Tre preludi*, Giuseppe Piccioli considered that

Respighi's piano-writing reveals perfect understanding of the instrument. [...] His style comes directly from Liszt and Busoni, tending towards a fullness of sound via combinations of chords, and is rarely brilliant, [being] substantially distant from the harpsichord-like sound characteristic of some modern composers. The way of dividing the parts shows clearly that Respighi was searching for expressiveness and not brilliance, though that did not stop him from obtaining new tone-colours.²⁴

In his analysis of the first Prelude Luciano Lanfranchi found

a harmonic sequence reminiscent of certain pages of Stravinsky and melodic fragments which we find in *The Rite of Spring* and in the *Symphony of Psalms*. In the second prelude, instead, there is a pianistic disposition which is similar to that of Shostakovich: bichords in the upper register and melody in the lower.²⁵

In the first case, Stravinsky had arrived at the idiom of *The Rite of Spring* a few years earlier; in the second, at the time of composition of the Respighi *Preludes*, Shostakovich was little more than a boy of fourteen. Perhaps it is not surprising that the *Tre preludi sopra melodie gregoriane* – with the addition of an extra movement, six years later – became the wonderful 'Impressioni per orchestra' with the title of *Vetrate di Chiesa* ('Church Windows').

Potito Pedarra is the reference figure for Ottorino Respighi and his music, the scholar to whose work younger musicologists are all indebted. In the 1980s he became president of Accademia Musicale O. Respighi in Assisi. In 1984 Casa Ricordi and Elsa Respighi entrusted him with the task of researching and cataloguing Respighi's manuscripts, and in 1985 he became the editor of the Catalogue of the Works of Ottorino Respighi for the publisher ERI. In 1986 he began working on Respighi's Opera Omnia for the Fondazione Cini in Venice. From 1993 to 2000 he was editor of the magazine Civiltà

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

²⁴ Piccioli, *loc. cit.*, p. 37.

²⁵ Lanfranchi, *loc. cit.*, p. 109.

Musicale. *His publications include the* Catalogo delle opere di Ottorino Respighi (ERI, Turin, 1985); Il pianoforte nella produzione giovanile di Respighi (Rugginenti, Milan, 1995); *Musiche inedite per piccola orchestra*, in Atti del Convegno di studio 'Respighi giovanile' (Rosetum, Milan, 1996); Elsa Olivieri Sangiacomo: la vita, le opere; Catalogo delle opere, *Biblioteca Economica di Musicologia, Rosetum, Milan, 1998*; 'Elsa Olivieri Sangiacomo: Due canzoni per chitarra' and 'Catalogo delle opere di E. O. Sangiacomo' in Elsa Respighi e il suo tempo. Verona e l'Italia nel Primo Novecento (Cierre Gruppo, Verona, 2015). *He is currently working on a revision of the* Catalogo tematico analitico della produzione musicale di Respighi (Rugginenti, Milan, 1995); *the* Opera Omnia collection of autograph manuscripts (Fondazione Cini, Venezia/Istituto Storico Germanico, Roma); *and the vast* Carteggi respighiani, *an iconographic catalogue and other genealogical studies of the Respighi family from the sixteenth century onwards.*

Giovanna Gatto is an eclectic and inquisitive Italian pianist. She graduated in Piano Performance at the Conservatoire di Piacenza, where she studied with Maria Grazia Petrali, and obtained a first-class Master's degree at the Conservatorio Giuseppe Verdi in Como, studying with Roberto Stefanoni. After attending post-graduate courses at the Accademia S. Cecilia in Bergamo with Konstantin Bogino, she obtained further Masters in Performance and Music Pedagogy with Patricia Pagny at the Berne University of the Arts. Always attracted by different repertoires, she also studied harpsichord with Dirk Börner, organ with Benjamin Righetti and fortepiano with Edoardo Torbianelli. Her interest in exploring the possibilities of the piano was fed by courses taught by Alexander Lonquich, Pier Narciso Masi, Konstantin Scherbakov, Rodion Shchedrin, Jeffrey Swann, Andrea Turini and Aquiles Delle Vigne. Among the other musicians whose lessons and courses were important in her development are Teodoro Anzellotti, Corinna Belcea, Conradin Brotbek, Peter Bruns, David Eggert, Francesco Gesualdi, Patrick Jüdt, Robert Levin, Ernesto Molinari and Benjamin Schmidt. She was also awarded a Bachelor's degree in the Economy of the Arts, Culture and Communication at the Bocconi University in Milan.



She has performed for numerous organisations and festivals in Italy and further afield in Europe – chiefly Croatia, France, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland – both as soloist and in chamber ensembles. The conductors with whom she has worked include Riccardo Bovino, Massimo Merone, Simone Ori and Christopher Warren-Green, with her concerto appearances featuring the Beethoven Third Piano Concerto, Mozart's Concertos K449 and K466 and the Bach D minor.

Her numerous prizes in national and international competitions, both as soloist and in chamber music, include sponsorship by the Inner Wheel Rotary Club; her research into Respighi's piano music won her sponsorship from the Irène Dénéreáz Foundation in Lausanne. This Respighi project has allowed her to work closely with the Respighi authority Potito Pedarra.

She has given several first performances, both as soloist and as chamber musician, and recorded music by Akaishi, Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Debussy, Prokofiev and Ravel, for the labels Acustica Records in Germany and Tasti'Era Projects in France. She works with the Gamo Ensemble and the Festival of Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, playing contemporary music, often in world premieres. Her interest in new ways of performing has brought about her performance, in ensemble, of electronic reworkings by her brother Vito Gatto of classical masterpieces, such as a version of Debussy's *Claire de Lune* released by Decca in 2017. Another unusual interest is her work in developing new compositions and transcriptions for accordion and piano, resulting in a number of first performances, the composers including Carlo Galante and Fergus Johnstone. The project, called '88keysfortwo', gave her the chance of sponsorship from Pro Helvetia, Fondation Suisa and Swiss performers SIG during the Classical:NEXT meeting in Rotterdam in 2018.

Giovanna Gatto teaches piano and chamber music in music academies in Canton Solothurn in Switzerland and the Franco Vittadini and Giacomo Puccini Conservatoires in Pavia and Gallarate in Italy.



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OTTORINO RESPIGHI Complete Piano Music, Volume One

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TT 54:03

Giovanna Gatto, piano

*FIRST RECORDINGS