



**Leonardo
BALADA**

Works for Clarinet

Caprichos Nos. 6 and 7 • Double Concerto

Ivan Ivanov, Clarinet

**Leta Chin,
Greta Mutlu, Violin
Sarah Lee, Cello**

**Annie Gordon, Kristine Rominski, Flute
Rebecca Bush, Percussion
Jacob Polaczyk, Erberk Eryilmaz, Piano
Geoffrey Larson**

Leonardo
BALADA
(b. 1933)

Works for Clarinet

Caprichos No. 7 'Fantasies of La Tarara'

Chamber concerto for clarinet and instrumental ensemble
(2009)

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|---|------------------------------|------|
| 1 | I. Obsesiones ('Obsessions') | 5:27 |
| 2 | II. Sorpresas ('Surprises') | 5:40 |
| 3 | III. Íntimo ('Intimate') | 6:20 |
| 4 | IV. Frenesí ('Frenzy') | 5:26 |

Caprichos No. 6 for clarinet and piano (2009)

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|---|-----------------------------|------|
| 5 | I. Enojo ('Anger') | 2:19 |
| 6 | II. Lágrimas ('Tears') | 2:13 |
| 7 | III. Angustias ('Anguish') | 3:03 |
| 8 | IV. Escalofríos ('Shivers') | 1:35 |

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| 9 | Double Concerto for Oboe, Clarinet and Orchestra (2010)
(version for flute, clarinet and piano; 2012) | 19:29 |
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Ivan Ivanov, Clarinet

Leta Chin, Greta Mutlu, Violin 1-4 • Sarah Lee, Cello 1-4

Annie Gordon 1-4, Kristine Rominski 9, Flute

Rebecca Bush, Percussion (Vibraphone, Xylophone, Glockenspiel, Crotales con arco) 1-4

Jacob Polaczyk 1-8, Erberk Eryilmaz 9, Piano

Geoffrey Larson, Conductor 1-4

Leonardo Balada (b. 1933)

Caprichos Nos. 6 and 7 • Double Concerto

A native of Spain, composer Leonardo Balada (b. 1933) graduated from Barcelona's Conservatorio del Liceu and The Juilliard School. He has been on the faculty of the Carnegie Mellon School of Music since 1970, where he is university professor of composition. He has been commissioned by the Aspen Music Festival, the San Diego Opera, the orchestras of Pittsburgh, Cincinnati and Lausanne, the Spanish National Orchestra, Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra and other organisations, and has received several awards from the National Endowment for the Arts. Balada's works have been performed by the world's leading orchestras, including the New York, Los Angeles and Israel Philharmonics, the Dallas, Detroit, National Symphony Orchestra, Prague, Düsseldorf, Barcelona, Berne and Jerusalem Symphony Orchestras, the national orchestras of Ireland, Peru and Colombia, the Philharmonia Orchestra of London and the radio orchestras of Leipzig, Moscow, Luxembourg and the BBC. His works have been conducted and performed by artists such as Mstislav Rostropovich, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, Mariss Jansons, Neville Marriner, Jesús López Cobos, Lukas Foss, Alicia de Larrocha, Narciso Yepes, Andrés Segovia and the American Brass Quintet. Naxos Records has released numerous albums of his music including the opera *Christopher Columbus*, commissioned by the Spanish government for the 5th Centennial of the Americas and premiered with José Carreras and Montserrat Caballé to international acclaim.

I became acquainted with Leonardo Balada at the Carnegie Mellon Campus. I was immediately inspired by his music, and started playing his compositions for clarinet. My passion for his music intensified tremendously when I discovered his collaboration with Salvador Dalí (1904–1989).

'This is to certify that I consider the young composer, Mr Leonardo Balada, to possess a remarkable talent!'

– Salvador Dalí

Balada's creative style has been labeled 'Dalí's Surrealism in music', yet historically the link between surrealist aesthetics and musical composition has been poorly understood. When I realised the deep importance of Dalí to Balada, suddenly everything in his compositions become logical and meaningful to me, and I recorded his music with passion. To understand Balada as a surrealist composer, it is best to begin with his *Caprichos*, two of which are included on this recording. The term '*caprichos*' has a special place in Spanish history and culture. Far from being the lighthearted cultural fantasy implied by other composers using the Italian cognate term (notably Rimsky-Korsakov's 1887 *Capriccio español, Op. 34*), in Spain the term is closely associated with the series of etchings of that name by Francisco Goya (1746–1828). These works harshly critique life in late 18th- and early 19th-century Spain, and do not shy away from depicting poverty, corruption, superstition, violence, and, most famously, the horrors of the 1810 Napoleonic invasion and subsequent civil war in the final set of *caprichos enfáticos* entitled *Los desastres de la Guerra* (1810–20). Goya's *Caprichos*, in part because of their unflinching portrayal of the barbarity of war and their sympathy for the plight of civilians, as well as because of his own anti-monarchical politics, were an important touchstone for the Republican side of the Spanish Civil War, particularly given the parallels between the role of Napoleonic France in Goya's day with that of Nazi Germany in the 1930s. However, the etchings also fired the imagination of Spanish artists, notably the surrealists Luis Buñuel (1900–1983) and Salvador Dalí, who were attracted to the stark aesthetics and dreamlike depiction of the horrors of war. Dalí himself repeatedly echoed Goya's imagery, subject matter, and techniques, producing thousands of etchings and lithographs over his long career. This is not to say that Balada's *Caprichos* are Goyesque critiques of Spanish society or depictions of war, but they are deeply engaged with Spanish history and culture, and several of them do make direct reference to the Spanish Civil War.

Balada's *Caprichos* are very special to me, because they clearly demonstrate in music Dali's notion of 'transformation' – the transformation of one recognisable object into another through the perceptual-cognitive phenomenon of optical illusion. This approach inspired Balada to explore the 'sound transformation', establishing a well-defined, creative musical profile with one musical unit that mutates to another perfectly clear musical unit. This technique can be heard in the first and second movements of *Caprichos No. 7 'Fantasies of La Tarara'* (2009) for clarinet and orchestra, a four-part surrealistic work in which the materials evolve from abstract composition into the Andalusian folk melody *La Tarara*, then return to abstract composition. In *Caprichos No. 6* (also from 2009), the piano and clarinet are charged with elaborating material that is clearly abstract in inspiration and beyond any recognisable musical referent. The keys to Balada's creation of these 'four brief movements of human psychological reactions', as the composer's secondary title puts it, are to be found in reactions prompted by specific inner readings of his own during and after the premiere of *Faustbal*. The level of the characters' psychological development in that opera produced particular problems of sound that Balada decided to tackle in a piece where he could feel freely inspired. In this regard the titles of the movements are highly significant: *I. Anger, II. Tears, III. Anguish, IV. Shivers*. The work is much shorter than his other *Caprichos* – barely ten minutes long – and each human reaction possesses a corresponding melody or timbre. In the case of *Anger*, staccato accents introduce an irregular rhythm that is interrupted by the

clarinet's *glissandi* and an interlude in a slower tempo. For its part, *Tears* tries musically to reflect tears streaming down a face, while *Anguish* evokes an obsessive universe thanks to an insistent ostinato. The last movement, *Shivers*, is the shortest of the movements and shares with the first a tense atmosphere that seeks resolution in a brilliant finale thanks to a cluster-type sound resolution. I was honoured to perform the world premiere of *Caprichos No. 6*, which took place on 16 September 2012, with Jacob Polaczyk (piano) at the Carnegie Mellon University Kresge Theater, Pittsburgh.

The *Double Concerto*, arranged for clarinet, flute and piano is a transcribed version of the *Double Concerto for Oboe, Clarinet and Orchestra* composed in 2010, commissioned by the Orquesta Filarmónica de Querétaro and Rudy Weingartner, and is dedicated to him, Eleanor Weingartner (clarinetist) and Miguel Salazar (oboist), who premiered the *Concerto* with the Orquesta Filarmónica de Querétaro in the orchestra's official concert hall on 8 July 2011. The composition is yet to be premiered in the piano transcription – this is the only recording. The piece's secondary title is *Modern Fantasy on Two Folkloric Mexican Tunes*. One of them is the *Jarabe tapatio*, often referred to as the 'Mexican Hat Dance', the national dance of Mexico. The other is *La Raspa*, and originated in Veracruz as a celebratory dance. The climax of this many-sided *Concerto* features a distinctive orchestration with an array of guitars and a great tonal challenge led by the woodwind soloists.

Ivan Ivanov

Leta Chin



Violinist Leta Chin is known for her brilliant technique and mature musical expression. Her artistry comes from a distinguished lineage of renowned violin teachers such as Ilkka Talvi, Grigory Kalinovsky and Cyrus Forough. She has participated in numerous international competitions and performed around Asia, Europe and North America. Chin is a recitalist, a soloist and a chamber musician. www.letachin.com

Greta Mutlu



Bulgarian violinist Greta Mutlu's recent engagements include recitals with pianist Veneta Neynska and international tours as part of the Aurora Orchestra and the London Symphony Orchestra. Mutlu has appeared in recital and as a soloist in Bulgaria, Canada, the UK and the US. A devoted chamber musician, she has been a member of the Honors String Quartet at Carnegie Mellon University. Festival appearances include the Aspen Music Festival and School and Domaine Forget, and she has participated in the Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme. Mutlu studied at the Cleveland Institute of Music, The Glenn Gould School in Toronto, and Carnegie Mellon University.

Annie Gordon



Originally from South Florida, Annie Darlin Gordon is a freelance flautist and music educator. As a flautist, she has performed with orchestras, ensembles and festivals around the world. Gordon freelances with many ensembles, and can be found most often performing with Queen City Opera and with her woodwind quintet, Wayside Winds. As an educator, Gordon is passionate about the cross section between music and socially conscious education, and is a winds teaching artist at MYCincinnati. Gordon studied at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and Carnegie Mellon University with Kathleen Chastain, Michel Debost, Alexa Still, Alberto Almarza and Jeanne Baxtresser.

Kristine Rominski



Flautist and teacher Kristine Rominski performs with the Seattle Metropolitan Chamber Orchestra and Seattle Collaborative Orchestra, and collaborates with Brazilian ensembles Choroloco and Um Mundo Choro. She is teaching artist for Seattle Music Partners, the Michael J. Owens Music Education Fund, and the Seattle Chamber Music Society. Rominski takes a special interest in Brazilian Choro and has attended workshops with master players Douglas Lora, Alexandre Ribeiro and Daniela Spielmann. Her major flute teachers include Alberto Almarza and Jeanne Baxtresser (Carnegie Mellon University), and Stephanie Jutt (University of Wisconsin-Madison). www.kristineerominski.weebly.com

Jacob Polaczyk



Jacob Polaczyk (b. 1983) is a New York City-based Polish composer, pedagogue and pianist. He teaches at The New York Conservatory of Music and is new music director of the Chopin and Friends Festival. He is an associate composer of IMONY, and has received numerous accolades and scholarships for his compositions nationally and internationally. Polaczyk studied at Carnegie Mellon University, the Academy of Music in Cracow and Jagiellonian University. His compositions have been performed internationally, including at Carnegie Hall. As a pianist he collaborates with many New York-based artists, new music ensembles, opera and dance companies.

Erberk Eryilmaz



Turkish composer, pianist, and conductor Erberk Eryilmaz has collaborated with ensembles such as the Presidential Symphony Orchestra (Turkey) and the Houston Symphony, and his music has been performed at venues such as Carnegie Hall and the Sydney Opera House. His numerous awards include the BNY Mellon Award for Outstanding Artistic Achievement, and his work has been selected for the 2021 Moon Arts Project. He has garnered praise from *The Washington Post*, *Fanfare*, and *CNN Türk*, and has been featured on international media stations. Eryilmaz is co-director of the Hoppa Project which promotes music from Eastern Europe and the Middle East. www.erberkeryilmaz.com

Geoffrey Larson



American conductor Geoffrey Larson is the founding music director of the Seattle Metropolitan Chamber Orchestra, also serving as assistant conductor and chorus master of Berkshire Opera Festival. He has given the world premieres of numerous works, collaborating with composers such as Erberk Eryilmaz and Gabriel Prokofiev. Larson worked closely with baritone Sherrill Milnes on *Don Giovanni* at the Estates Theatre, Prague, the site of the work's premiere. He has assisted conductors such as Gerard Schwarz and Ronald Zollman, and was a finalist of the 2017 Respighi Prize in Conducting. He counts George Hurst, Robert Page and Arthur Fagen among his mentors. www.geoffreylarson.com

Ivan Ivanov



Bulgarian-born clarinetist Ivan Ivanov studied for his Bachelor's degree at the National Academy of Music – 'Prof. Pancho Vladigerov', graduating with distinction. In 2004 Ivanov became a permanent member of the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra and worked with conductors such as Sir Neville Marriner, Jean-Bernard Pommier and Rossen Milanov. In addition to his full time employment at the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra he has collaborated with the Radio Sofia and New Symphony Orchestras, among others. Ivanov earned his Master's degree at Carnegie Mellon University and his Doctor of Musical Arts at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. At Carnegie Mellon University he collaborated with surrealist composer Leonardo Balada, subsequently recording this album, and writing the book *Surrealism in Music and Leonardo Balada*. Ivanov has also recorded for the Bulgarian National Radio archive and Bulgarian National Television. Ivanov currently serves as clarinet lecturer and post-doctoral scholar at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and as a substitute player with the Las Vegas Philharmonic and San Diego Symphony.

Barcelona native Leonardo Balada's creative style has been labelled 'Dali's surrealism in music' – an aspect of his work explored in this programme through the technique of 'sound transformation' in which abstract musical materials become familiar melody. Fusing traditional and contemporary elements, *Caprichos Nos. 6 and 7* engage intimately with Spanish culture and history, while the virtuoso *Double Concerto*, heard here in an arrangement for flute, clarinet and piano, blends well-known Mexican folk tunes with the composer's distinctive avant-garde style.

Leonardo
BALADA
(b. 1933)

- 1-4 Caprichos No. 7 'Fantasies of La Tarara' (2009)**
Chamber concerto for clarinet and instrumental ensemble **23:03**
- 5-8 Caprichos No. 6 for clarinet and piano (2009)** **9:20**
- 9 Double Concerto for Oboe, Clarinet and Orchestra (2010)***
(version for flute, clarinet and piano; 2012) **19:29**

***WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING**

Ivan Ivanov, Clarinet

Leta Chin, Greta Mutlu, Violin 1-4 • Sarah Lee, Cello 1-4
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Recorded: 25 April 2013 **1-4**, 11 April 2013 **5-8**, 18 April 2013 **9** at The Vlahakis Recording Studio,
Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Producer: Ivan Ivanov • Engineer: Riccardo Schulz • Editors: Ivan Ivanov, Riccardo Schulz

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet.

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