

Moritz MOSZKOWSKI

ORCHESTRAL MUSIC, VOLUME ONE

JOAN OF ARC: SYMPHONIC POEM IN FOUR MOVEMENTS, OP. 19

Sinfonia Varsovia
Ian Hobson

FIRST RECORDING

MORITZ MOSZKOWSKI: ORCHESTRAL MUSIC, VOLUME ONE

by Martin Eastick

For generations of amateur pianists the name Moritz Moszkowski was that of a composer of some *Spanish Dances* for piano duet, copies of which could be found in countless piano stools, with countless further arrangements on the programmes of palm-court orchestras and other purveyors of the light music that was popular in the years between the First and Second World Wars. Concert-goers might have encountered such pianistic bon-bons as the ‘Serenata’ (the first of the Six Pieces, Op. 15), ‘Valse in E’ (the first of the Three Pieces, Op. 34), or even the *Caprice Espagnol* (Op. 37) and perhaps a few other isolated examples of Moszkowski’s extensive output for piano solo, which were once popular encores with many of the major pianists of the past.

The assumption that Moszkowski was primarily a composer of salon trifles, a representative of a bygone age, perpetuates an injustice which has its origins in the time immediately following the First World War, when much music – deserving and undeserving – was consigned to oblivion, as the cataclysmic events of 1914–18 triggered a wholesale rejection of much of what had gone before, clearing the way for the new directions in music that had emerged during the first decade of the twentieth century. Moszkowski was certainly one of the many casualties of that artistic and cultural upheaval. It was a half-century before the beginnings of the so-called ‘Romantic Revival’ in the mid- to late 1960s; in the further half-century since then, this change in taste has gathered considerable momentum in the recording studio, but live performances are still a rarity, even as scholarly research is revealing just how much music of undeniable quality deserves to be heard, not only at home but also in the concert hall and recital room.

An examination of Moszkowski's list of works reveals not only a considerable amount of piano music, as one would expect, but also a quantity of purely orchestral works. They include, as well as a variety of shorter works, an unpublished Symphony in D minor (Moszwv146) of 1873; the symphonic poem *Johanna d'Arc*, Op. 19 (1875–76), heard here in its first recording; three orchestral suites, Opp. 39, 47 and 79 (1885, 1890 and 1908); a ballet (in six tableaux), *Laurin*, Op. 53, premiered in Berlin in 1896; and the opera *Boabdil, der letzte Maurenkönig* ('Boabdil, the Last King of the Moors'), Op. 49, produced in Berlin in 1892. Here is an anomaly: although Moszkowski is remembered for music of a more modest dimension – typified by his shorter piano works (his longest piano work was the four-movement Suite, Op. 50, of 1892) – his orchestral works, by contrast, particularly those from his earlier years, are often of substantial proportions, and provide evidence of his competence in handling larger forms. No doubt Moszkowski, realising relatively early that his success as a composer rested with his short-form piano pieces, including those duets, concentrated on supplying the market with what his public wanted, thereby assuring both his continued popularity and reputation, as well as his financial security.

Moszkowski came from a wealthy Polish-Jewish family with its origins in Pilica, approximately 33 miles north-east of Katowice in what is now southern Poland; they had settled in Breslau (now Wrocław in Poland, but then the capital of Silesia in East Prussia), in 1854, the year of his birth, which occurred on 23 August. Having displayed a natural talent for music from an early age, and after some basic home tuition, he commenced his formal musical education in 1865, following his family's relocation to Dresden. A further family move to Berlin in 1869 enabled Moszkowski to further his musical education, first at Julius Stern's Conservatoire (which still exists today as part of the Faculty of Music of the Berlin University of the Arts), where he studied piano with the composer and pianist Eduard Franck (1817–93) and composition with the famous theoretician and composer Friedrich Kiel (1821–85). He then went on to complete his musical studies at Theodor Kullak's renowned Neue Akademie der Tonkunst, also in Berlin, taking composition with Richard Wüerst (1824–81), a former pupil of Mendelssohn, and piano with Kullak himself, who had studied with Carl Czerny. In

addition, he had further instruction in orchestration from Heinrich Dorn (1804–92), a long-forgotten German operatic composer. Founded in 1855, Kullak's Akademie had quickly established itself in the vanguard of German academic musical institutions, and soon became the largest and one of the most respected music-schools in Germany, accepting students from all over the world. Amongst his fellow students here were the Scharwenka brothers, Philipp (1847–1917) and Xaver (1850–1924), both of whom Moszkowski counted amongst his close friends.

In 1871, although still only aged seventeen, he accepted Kullak's invitation to join his teaching staff, and in 1873 he made a successful debut as pianist, which in turn led to a number of concert tours, undertaken while still fulfilling his professional duties as teacher. From 1874 onwards, Moszkowski's music started to appear in print, his Op. 1 being a scherzo for solo piano, although his earliest attempts at composition – all still unpublished – pre-date this piece. They include a piano quintet (the manuscript of which survives, although it lacks a final movement), which was probably composed in his thirteenth year, the above-mentioned Symphony in D minor and an overture; and he had certainly commenced work on his colossal Piano Concerto in B minor, Op. 3, during 1873 (it was first published in 2015).

In 1884 Moszkowski married Henriette, the youngest sister of the well-known French pianist and prolific salon composer Cécile Chaminade. Soon after, however, he began to suffer from neuropathy in his arms, which severely restricted his performing activities as a pianist. This setback in turn, though, gave him the opportunity to devote more time to composition and teaching. He also began to achieve recognition and success as a conductor, and it was in this capacity that he made the first of several visits to England in 1885, at the invitation of the Philharmonic Society, which in 1887 was to grant him honorary life membership. It was on this first visit that he conducted the first performance in England of *Johanna d'Arc*, in St James's Hall in London on 20 May, where it was well received.

In 1897, at the height of his fame and by now considerably wealthy, he moved permanently to Paris. He was highly sought-after as a teacher, with such illustrious names as Vlado Perlemuter, Josef Hofmann and Wanda Landowska among his many

piano students; and it was not only for piano that he was in demand: in 1904 none other than a young Thomas Beecham came to him for lessons in orchestration at the recommendation of André Messager.

But his success was short-lived. Gradually, with the major cultural sea-change taking place with the dawning of the new century, Moszkowski found his once-considerable popularity fading. He ceased taking students in composition, bemoaning the fact that they were only interested in following the latest avant-garde trends, which certainly did not sit well with his conservative ideals, firmly entrenched in the traditions of the nineteenth century, and now under threat from the emerging New Order as Romanticism moved into its twilight. By 1908, at the age of only 54, he had become a recluse, having been separated from his wife in 1890 (a divorce was finalised in 1892), as well as losing his daughter Sylvie in 1906 at the age of seventeen, for reasons that I have not been able to discover. His other child, a son, Marcel, born in Berlin in 1887, became a diplomat and financial journalist, writing under the pseudonym Marcel Chaminade; during the Second World War, he was also involved with the French resistance, and he died as late as 1971. Moszkowski *père* also now suffered from the poor health which dogged him for the rest of his life. To make matters worse, he had unwisely invested the larger part of his considerable fortune in German, Austrian and Russian securities, which were rendered valueless as a consequence of the First World War, not to mention the ensuing revolution in Russia in 1917; and his last years were therefore spent in desperate poverty. He did receive some financial assistance, including some royalties, procured at the instigation of two of his former pupils, Josef Hofmann and Bernhard Pollack, the latter also famous as a pioneer in the study of ophthalmology and neurohistology as well as being a pianist of note. A grand testimonial concert was arranged on his behalf, at Carnegie Hall, New York, on 21 December 1924, by a number of his friends and former colleagues, with a considerable sum being raised, but before he could benefit from the proceeds, he died from stomach cancer on 4 March the following year.

Aside from the concertos, more specifically the Piano Concerto in E major, Op. 59, which has remained in print and of which there are currently no fewer than six recordings currently available, Moszkowski's orchestral music has been all but totally

forgotten – certainly in live performance – since his death in 1925. None of his larger-scale orchestral works has ever been recorded, with the exception, in 1929, of a slightly cut (presumably to fit onto one side of a 78rpm record) but spirited account of the fifth movement, a *Perpetuum mobile*, from the First Orchestral Suite, Op. 39, performed by the National Symphony Orchestra in New York, conducted by Walter Damrosch and originally released on the American Victor label; and an LP by the Louisville Orchestra, a subscription issue and so of limited circulation, includes the first complete recorded performance of the Third Orchestral Suite, Op. 79. True, in more recent times, there have been a few tentative forays into some of Moszkowski's shorter works 'for orchestra', but most often they are merely orchestrations of his piano works by others, although that at least gives some indication of his one-time popularity. The *Spanish Dances*, Op. 12, for example, are probably best-known in their orchestral guise, but they were orchestrated by his friend Philipp Scharwenka in collaboration with Valentin Frank (an alias of the American-Belgian composer Frank Valentine Van der Stucken (1858–1929)).

Over the past six hundred years, Joan of Arc has been the subject of numerous literary and musical treatments, as well as other representations encompassing all the creative arts. In music, the early nineteenth century saw the appearance of a number of (mainly Italian) operas on the subject, including Verdi's *Giovanna d'Arco*, which was premiered in 1845; Tchaikovsky later made use of the story with his opera *The Maid of Orleans*, written in 1878–79. Among non-operatic works there is the programmatic Piano Sonata, Op. 46, *Die Jungfrau von Orleans*, by the English composer, Sir William Sterndale Bennett, his last major work. It appeared in 1873, some three years or so before Moszkowski completed his *Johanna d'Arc*.

In common with virtually all the musical representations of Joan of Arc, the inspiration behind Moszkowski's Op. 19 is not the Joan of Arc of historical fact but the title character in Friedrich Schiller's tragedy *Die Jungfrau von Orleans* ('The Maid of Orleans'), first performed in 1801. Although initially based on the life of the historical Joan, the play progressively diverges from known fact, resulting in a fairly fictitious account of Joan's life. A brief résumé of Schiller's version of events helps understand

Moszkowski's programmatic work. In Schiller's play Joan is leading the French in battle; about to kill an English knight, she removes his helmet and falls in love with him and releases him, later blaming herself for betraying the object of her mission. She is subsequently tried for sorcery at Rheims, where she is found to be guilty, having refused to defend herself. She is discharged from the French army and then captured by the English. From her prison cell, she witnesses a further battle in which the French are being easily beaten. Miraculously, she is able to escape and join the battle, where the tide is turned, and she finally dies as the French win victory, her reputation now restored.

Moszkowski started work on *Johanna d'Arc* in 1875, completing it the following year and dedicating it to his friend Philipp Scharwenka. According to a diary entry for 24 January 1875, he had composed a sketch from which he hoped to develop a short orchestral work, 'in the manner of Raff's Rhapsodie'¹ (probably Raff's *Abends-Rhapsodie*, Op. 163b, which appeared in 1874). But by 23 April he had obviously revised his intentions, referring now to his 'symphony'.² Furthermore, having attended rehearsals for a forthcoming concert arranged and conducted by Wagner to raise funds for the building of the Festspielhaus at Bayreuth, referring specifically to excerpts from the then-incomplete *Götterdämmerung*, Moszkowski acknowledged that 'the music has influenced me like no other', and, when considering his sketches for *Johanna*, stated that 'I notice it immediately'.³

The first performance of *Johanna d'Arc* took place on 23 February 1877, given by the Symphonie Kapelle in Berlin, conducted by Franz Mannstädt. The weekly *Deutsche Musiker-Zeitung*, on 3 March 1877, mentioned the concert briefly and, in a rather dismissive review, considered the work to be devoid of melody, too long and fatiguing, especially the drawn-out first movement. That first reaction notwithstanding, a number of further performances followed – in Hannover, Königsberg, Wiesbaden, Amsterdam and Warsaw, and also further afield – in Boston and New York, as well as that 1885 one

¹ Quoted in Bojan Assenov, *Moritz Moszkowski – eine Werkmonographie*, a doctoral dissertation for the Technical University, Berlin, 2009, p. 347.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

in London. It was also performed in St Petersburg during the 1879–80 season, when the conductor was none other than Rimsky-Korsakov.

Although Moszkowski himself referred to *Johanna d'Arc* as 'my symphony' (and various reference works have used that label, too), when it was first published, by Julius Hainauer in Breslau in 1879, it was subtitled 'Symphonische Dichtung in vier Abtheilungen' ('Symphonic Poem in Four Parts'), and should therefore be considered as such, implying a less formal structure than that of a symphony. Alongside the influences of Wagner and of Raff's 'Rhapsodie' that Moszkowski admitted, examination of the work suggests that he was probably also well acquainted with Raff's Fifth Symphony, *Lenore*, Op. 177, which received its first public performance in Berlin on 29 October 1873: as well as some stylistic similarities, the general blueprint for Moszkowski's work owes more than a little to Raff's.

Johanna d'Arc is scored for large orchestra, including piccolo and harp; there is also a part for solo violin. The first movement [1] is prefaced with the following text: 'Johanna's Hirtenleben. Eine Vision bringt sie zum Bewusstsein ihrer hohen Stellung' ('Joan's pastoral life. Her exalted mission is revealed to her in a vision'). The pastoral mood of the opening (*Allegro commodo*, in E major and $\frac{6}{8}$ time) immediately sets the scene, reinforcing the image of Joan's early naivety. After a while, the music is gradually pervaded by darker hues and, now in the minor, the mood becomes more hushed and sombre. A gradual loss of momentum, with only the lower strings playing *pianissimo*, leads to a watershed, signalled not only by a change in time-signature (to a more sedate $\frac{4}{4}$) but also the introduction of the harp, then a solo violin which heralds Joan's 'vision' – an extended episode of suggested supplication which gradually builds in intensity, before the music eventually returns to the comparative innocence of the beginning. Moszkowski presents this material again but, by way of a recapitulation, extends it with further development. The orchestration generally becomes thicker, invoking a mood of increased confidence and affirmation, by comparison with the earlier statement of the initial theme. After a final *fortissimo* climax, the music subsides before the brief coda – a brisk *animato* in $\frac{2}{4}$ time, with the *pizzicato* strings playing *pianissimo* – brings the movement to a close.

The second movement – ‘Innere Zerwürfnisse – Rückerinnerungen’ (‘Inner conflicts – Recollections’) [2] – starts in A minor, and is marked *Andante malinconico*, reinforced with a further *con dolore* almost immediately, representing Joan wrestling with her innermost feelings and emotions as she contemplates her situation. The principal theme is now introduced, first in C major, then modulating to E major, and soon establishes itself as the focal point of the movement. There then follows a contrasting interlude, marked *pianissimo*, which is characterised by a continuing shifting chromaticism, again with clear echoes of Raff, before an upward *crescendo* leads directly to the grandiose restatement of the main theme, now with the full orchestra playing *fortissimo*. As the volume and intensity gradually lessen, the flutes make a momentary reference to the opening *leitmotif* from the first movement before the music slowly fades away, with the darker mood of the opening recalled.

The third movement – ‘Einzug der Sieger zur Krönung in Rheims’ (‘Procession of the conquerors to the coronation at Rheims’) [3] – is a processional march, slow and deliberate, marked *Molto moderato*. It is underpinned with a swagger of superiority through double-dotted syncopation, with the exaggerated accent anticipating the beat. Here Moszkowski seems to anticipate Erich Korngold (1897–1957) as the Hollywood film composer of action and adventure spectacles in the late 1930s and 1940s. The *cantabile* trio section, although not actually marked as such, provides a suitable contrast of calm from the pomp and splendour of the opening, which returns after a short *staccato* bridging passage. A short coda, *un poco più mosso*, brings the movement to a rousing conclusion.

The fourth movement presents ‘Johanna in der Gefangenschaft; ihre Ketten-sprengung, Sieg, Tod und Verklärung’ (‘Joan in prison. Her release from chains. Triumph, death and apotheosis’) [4]. The initial mood is one of foreboding, as the cellos and basses enter with a dark and gloomy *pianissimo*, which then introduces a brisk military march, played by the flutes and piccolo accompanied by the steady beat of a drum, as the soldiers march off to war. Then comes the ebb and flow of battle which precedes a further theme, of more relaxed character, that is then repeated *fortissimo*. The music builds up to another climax, where a sudden *sforzato* causes a brief hiatus, before

it sets off again with more relentless drive and determination. Eventually the excitement subsides and, as the music diminishes in volume, the opening *leitmotif* briefly appears again, this time incomplete, as an answering phrase by the cellos, and also now with a change of rhythm. This passage is followed by a reappearance of Joan's 'vision', also from the first movement, which gradually gathers in intensity as it leads directly into the triumphant and grandiose final coda – the representation of Joan's death and apotheosis.

Martin Eastick was born in Croydon in 1957 and studied piano from age six. Although continuing with his studies, he decided against a musical career, instead devoting his spare time to researching neglected nineteenth-century music and collecting scores, mainly of piano music by forgotten composers of the Romantic era. He has presented many lecture-recitals introducing forgotten repertoire as well as, more recently, assisting in a number of recordings, often providing performing material from his now substantial private collection.

Ian Hobson, pianist and conductor, enjoys an international reputation, both for his performances of the Romantic repertoire and of neglected piano music old and new, and for his assured conducting from both the piano and the podium, renewing interest in the music of such lesser-known masters as Ignaz Moscheles and Johann Hummel. He is also an effective advocate of works written expressly for him by contemporary composers, among them John Gardner, Benjamin Lees, David Liptak, Alan Ridout and Roberto Sierra.

As guest soloist, Ian Hobson has appeared with the world's major orchestras; those in the United States include the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Philadelphia Orchestra, the symphony orchestras of Baltimore, Florida, Houston, Indianapolis, Pittsburgh and St Louis, the American Symphony Orchestra and the Orquesta Sinfónica de Puerto Rico. Elsewhere, he has been heard with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and Hallé Orchestra in the UK, and the ORF-Vienna, Orchester der Beethovenhalle, Moscow Chopin Orchestra, Israeli Sinfonietta and New Zealand Symphony Orchestra.



Born in Wolverhampton in 1952 and one of the youngest-ever graduates of the Royal Academy of Music, Ian Hobson subsequently pursued advanced studies at both Cambridge University and Yale University. He began his international career in 1981 when he won First Prize at the Leeds International Piano Competition, having previously earned silver medals at both the Arthur Rubinstein and Vienna Beethoven competitions. A professor in the Center for Advanced Study at the University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign), Ian Hobson received the endowed chair of Swanlund Professor of Music in 2000 and is now the Swanlund Emeritus Professor.

He is in increasing demand as a conductor, particularly for performances in which he doubles as a pianist. He made his debut in this capacity in 1996 with the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, and has since appeared with the English Chamber Orchestra, the Fort Worth Chamber Orchestra, the Sinfonia Varsovia (at Carnegie Hall), the Pomeranian Philharmonic and the Kibbutz Chamber Orchestra of Israel, among others. He also performs extensively as pianist-conductor with Sinfonia da Camera, a group he formed in 1984 and which quickly gained international recognition through its recordings.

To date he has amassed a discography of some sixty releases, mostly on the Zephyr label, including the complete piano sonatas of Beethoven and Schumann, a complete edition of Brahms' piano variations and the complete piano works by Chopin. With the violinist Sherban Lupu he is recording, as pianist and conductor, the complete works of Ernst for Toccata Classics, for which label he has also recorded piano music by Edward and Kate Loder (TOCC 0322 and 0321) and Harold Truscott (TOCC 0252). He has also released three albums in a pioneering series of recordings of the early orchestral works by Martinů, also for Toccata Classics (TOCC 0156, 0249 and 0414), and this first of the orchestral music of Moritz Moszkowski, in which he conducts the Sinfonia Varsovia.

www.ianhobson.net

In 1984, at the invitation of Waldemar Dąbrowski, director of the Stanisław I. Witkiewicz Studio Centre for the Arts in Warsaw, and Franciszek Wybrańczyk, director of the Polish Chamber Orchestra, the violinist Yehudi Menuhin arrived in Poland to perform as a soloist and conductor. So as to meet the exigencies of the repertoire, the orchestra invited renowned Polish musicians from all over Poland to take part in the performances. The first concerts of the ensemble, conducted by Menuhin, were received enthusiastically by audiences and critics, and he accepted the invitation to become the first guest conductor of the newly established orchestra, now named **Sinfonia Varsovia**.

Sinfonia Varsovia performs at the world's most prestigious concert halls and festivals, working with world renowned conductors and soloists. The orchestra has recorded a wide range of albums, radio and television performances, and boasts a discography of almost 300 albums, many of which have received prestigious prizes. In 1997 Krzysztof Penderecki became the musical director, and in 2003 also its artistic director. Sinfonia Varsovia is a municipal cultural institution co-ordinated by the City of Warsaw. In 2015, in the presence of the President of Warsaw, Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz, the architect Thomas Pucher and Janusz Marynowski, director of Sinfonia Varsovia, signed a contract for the delivery of design documentation for a new concert hall for the orchestra and for the development of the property at 272 Ulica Grochowska.

www.sinfoniavarsovia.org



Recorded on 12 and 13 December 2018 in the Witold Lutosławski Concert Studio (S1),
Polish Radio, Warsaw

Recording engineers: Gabriela Blicharz, Beata Jankowska-Burzyńska and Joanna Popowicz

Producer: Ian Hobson

Editor: Samir Golescu

Mastering: Graham Duncan and Richard Scholwin

Performance materials were provided by the Edwin A. Fleisher
Collection of Orchestral Music at the Free Library of Philadelphia.

Booklet essay: Martin Eastick

Cover photograph: courtesy of The Tully Potter Collection

Cover design: David M. Baker (david@notneverknow.com)

Typesetting and lay-out: Kerrypress, St Albans

Executive Producer: Martin Anderson

© Toccata Classics, London, 2019

© Toccata Classics, London, 2019



Krzysztof Penderecki, artistic director
Janusz Marynowski, director

MORITZ MOSZKOWSKI Orchestral Music, Volume One

Johanna d’Arc: Symphonic Poem in Four Movements, Op. 19 (1875–76) 59:26

1 I <i>Allegro commodo</i>	23:00
2 II <i>Andante malinconico</i>	12:49
3 III <i>Molto moderato</i>	10:07
4 IV <i>Allegro molto</i>	13:30

Sinfonia Varsovia

Jakub Haufa, solo violin 1 2

FIRST RECORDING

Ian Hobson, conductor