



Exiles in Paradise

ÉMIGRÉ COMPOSERS IN HOLLYWOOD

ACHRON · CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO · GERSHWIN
GODOWSKY · GRUENBERG · KORNGOLD · RACHMANINOV
RÓZSA · SCHOENBERG · STRAVINSKY · TOCH · WAXMAN

Brinton Averil Smith, Cello
Evelyn Chen, Piano

HOLLYWOOD

Exiles in Paradise **Émigré Composers in Hollywood**

- Leopold GODOWSKY (1870–1938)**
- 1 **Triakontameron – No. 11. Alt Wien ('Old Vienna')** (1919–20) **2:28**
(arr. Jascha Heifetz, 1901–1987)
- Sergey RACHMANINOV (1873–1943)**
- 2 **Morceaux de fantaisie, Op. 3 – No. 5. Serenade** (1892, rev. 1940) * **3:05**
(arr. Brinton Averil Smith, b. 1969)
- Igor STRAVINSKY (1882–1971)**
- 3 **L'oiseau de feu ('The Firebird') – Berceuse** (1910) **3:03**
(arr. I. Stravinsky and Samuel Dushkin, 1891–1976)
- Arnold SCHOENBERG (1874–1951)**
- 4 **Das Buch der hängenden Gärten ('The Book of the Hanging Gardens'), Op. 15 –** **1:09**
No. 5. Saget mir, auf welchem Pfade ('Tell Me on Which Path') (1908)
- Joseph ACHRON (1886–1943)**
- 5 **Zwei Stimmungen ('Two Moods'), Op. 32 – No. 1 in D minor** (1910) **1:51**
- Louis GRUENBERG (1884–1964)**
- 6 **Jazzette, Op. 26, No. 3** (1924) **3:11**
- Ernst TOCH (1887–1964)**
- Three Impromptus, Op. 90c** (1963) **6:09**
- 7 **Andante cantabile** **2:06**
- 8 **Allegretto grazioso** **1:05**
- 9 **Adagio, con espressione** **2:57**

Mario CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO (1895–1968)		
10	I nottambuli (Variazioni fantastiche) ('Night Owls [Fantastic Variations]'), Op. 47 (1927)	13:55
Miklós RÓZSA (1907–1995)		
11	Toccata capricciosa, Op. 36 (1977)	5:49
Erich Wolfgang KORNGOLD (1897–1957)		
	Much Ado About Nothing – Suite, Op. 11 (1918–20)	11:26
12	Mädchen im Brautgemach ('Maiden In the Bridal Chamber')	2:56
13	Holzapfel und Schlehwein (Marsch der Wache) (‘Dogberry and Verges (March of the Watch)’)	1:57
14	Intermezzo (Gartenscene) ('Garden Scene')	4:33
15	Hornpipe	1:58
Franz WAXMAN (1906–1967)		
16	Carmen Fantasie (Based on themes from the opera of Georges Bizet) (1946) (arr. David Grigorian, b. 1946)	10:58
George GERSHWIN (1898–1937)		
17	Porgy and Bess – It Ain't Necessarily So (1935) (arr. J. Heifetz)	2:37

*** WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING**

Brinton Averil Smith, Cello
Evelyn Chen, Piano 1–6 10 12–17

Publisher: Carl Fischer – Edition G. Schirmer 1, Muzgiz – Edition 1940 revision 2,
Schott Music 3 12–15, Universal Edition 4–6 10, Mills Music 7–9, Breitkopf & Härtel 11,
Fidelio Music Publishing Company 16, Gershwin Publishing 17
1 3–6 17 (first recordings of these versions) 12–15 adapted for cello by B.A. Smith (2016)

Exiles in Paradise

Émigré Composers in Hollywood

Los Angeles in the early 20th century, although thriving, lacked the musical and cultural traditions of the major American and European cities. However, an influx of refugees, fleeing war and persecution in Europe, rapidly formed one of the most prolific communities of artistic talent in history, centered within a few square miles near Hollywood. In addition to the composers heard here, this included musicians Jascha Heifetz, William Primrose, Gregor Piatigorsky, Arthur Rubinstein, Otto Klemperer, Lotte Lehmann, Ernst Krenek, Alexandre Tansman, Hanns Eisler, Bernard Herrmann and Kurt Weill, and literary and cultural figures such as Thomas and Heinrich Mann, Bertolt Brecht, Dylan Thomas, Bertrand Russell, W.H. Auden, Aldous Huxley, Franz Werfel and Alma Mahler. The aspiration of this recording, beyond expanding the cello repertoire, is to survey the depth of compositional talent present within that tightly-knit community. It is remarkable how much of the American scientific, economic and cultural dominance in the 20th century was brought to their shores by those seeking refuge, opportunities and fair treatment that their own governments would not afford them. These composers transformed the musical culture of America in ways that are only now beginning to be fully appreciated.

Leopold Godowsky (1870–1938, L.A. 1916–19)

A Russian child prodigy whose family originally emigrated to the US in 1884, Godowsky had established a successful European career when the First World War forced his return to America. Almost entirely self-taught, Godowsky is considered among the greatest technical pianists. *Alt Wien* ('Old Vienna'), in a transcription by his friend Heifetz, begins this survey with an imagined reminiscence of these European exiles, living in a foreign land.

Sergey Rachmaninov (1873–1943, L.A. 1942–43)

Fleeing the Russian Revolution, Rachmaninov found refuge in America but was forced to prioritise concertising over composition. Following medical advice, he relocated to Beverly Hills in 1942, where he died the following year. His 1892 set of *Morceux de fantasia* established Rachmaninov's international reputation, but in 1940, he substantially revised the *Serenade* transcribed here. This revision displays the hand of both the youthful Russian and the old exile.

Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971, L.A. 1940–69)

A Russian with Ukrainian heritage, Stravinsky was driven from Europe by the outbreak of the Second World War and settled in Hollywood. His home became a meeting ground for

eminent intellectuals, including W.H. Auden, Dylan Thomas, Aldous Huxley, Thomas Mann, Bertrand Russell, Charlie Chaplin and George Gershwin (though never arch-rival Schoenberg). Already an international star, Stravinsky's fame was reinforced when Disney used *The Rite of Spring* in *Fantasia*. This arrangement of the *Berceuse* from his ballet *The Firebird* was made by the violinist Samuel Dushkin, in collaboration with Stravinsky.

Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951, L.A. 1934–51)

The rise of Hitler drove Schoenberg from Berlin and he ultimately settled in Los Angeles, teaching at the University of Southern California (USC) and the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). Schoenberg's home similarly became a gathering spot for leading artists including Klemperer, Gershwin, Toch, Achron, Gruenberg, Varèse, Harpo Marx and Peter Lorre. *Saget mir, auf welchem Pfade* ('Tell Me on Which Path') is taken from the song cycle *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*. Composing in a freely atonal style, Schoenberg says he felt that here he had finally found his true compositional voice. The poem, which ponders which path to take, seems to anticipate the choices Schoenberg faced, both in composing and in deciding to abandon his homeland.

Joseph Achron (1886–1943, L.A. 1934–43)
Described by his friend Schoenberg as 'one of the most underrated modern composers',

Achron was a Lithuanian Jew known for both his violin playing and his compositions. Achron embraced Jewish music at a time when most Jews were more concerned with integration, and Heifetz made his *Hebrew Melody* world famous. Achron moved to America in 1924, ultimately settling in Los Angeles, where he continued his violin career, composed for films and premiered his third *Violin Concerto* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. The work heard here is from a set of pieces for violin titled *Stimmungen* ('Moods') composed in St Petersburg. Each *Stimmung* focuses on creating a mood with a single melody, varying only the harmony and accompaniment.

Louis Gruenberg (1884–1964, L.A. 1937–64)
Gruenberg emigrated from Russia with his family when he was just a few months old. He studied with Busoni in Vienna and gained fleeting fame in America with the success of his 1933 opera *The Emperor Jones* at the Met. Gruenberg moved to Los Angeles in 1937 and worked as a film composer. He received several Academy Award nominations and at least 39 movie score credits, though his credits stop in the late 1950s, possibly as a result of blacklisting. Heifetz commissioned a *Violin Concerto*, which he debuted and recorded in 1944, marking a second high point in Gruenberg's career as a composer. This miniature from his three 1924 *Jazzettes* for violin and piano shows his longtime fascination with jazz and ragtime influences.

Ernst Toch (1887–1964, *L.A. 1936–50, 58–64*)
Though Viennese, Toch was educated in Germany and forced from his professorship in Mannheim by Hitler's rise. Toch eventually found refuge in America, where he scored music for films in relative obscurity (his music for the chase scene in *Heidi* is perhaps his best-known score) and taught both music and philosophy at USC. Though he was a leading avant-garde composer in the pre-war years, Toch returned to a Romantic approach in later life. These three *Impromptus* for solo cello, written near the end of Toch's life, were a 60th birthday gift for Gregor Piatigorsky.

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895–1968, *L.A. 1940–68*)
Born in Florence, Castelnuovo-Tedesco had established his reputation with commissions from Segovia, Heifetz and Piatigorsky and performances by Toscanini when Mussolini's racial laws drove him to immigrate to America. Castelnuovo-Tedesco scored over 200 movies at MGM and taught students including André Previn, Henry Mancini and John Williams, while continuing to compose concert works. *I notambulli*, written in the late 1920s, describes the figures he passed during his nightly strolls in Florence. He describes it as 'a set of extremely free and colourful variations, with a Spanish flavoured theme, alternatively lyrical, dreamy, bizarre, dramatic and carefree (like the figures which passed by me in the night) accompanied by strange and unusual instrumental effects.'

Miklós Rózsa (1907–1995, *L.A. 1940–95*)
Born in Hungary and trained in Leipzig, Rózsa began scoring films as a sideline to concert compositions. He sought refuge in Hollywood during the Second World War and settled there. Best known for scores such as *Spellbound* and *Ben Hur*, Rózsa continued his 'double life' as a classical composer with notable commissions from Heifetz, Piatigorsky and János Starker. He wrote the *Toccata capricciosa* for solo cello in 1977, dedicating it to the memory of Piatigorsky. Rózsa believed that many of his best compositions were for solo instruments, inspired by his memories of unaccompanied Hungarian folk musicians.

Erich Wolfgang Korngold (1897–1957, *L.A. 1938–57*)
Mahler declared the nine-year-old Korngold a 'genius', and Richard Strauss confessed a sense of awe reading through twelve-year-old Erich's compositions. By his early twenties, Korngold was one of the most successful composers in the world, with operas and concert works performed in concert halls throughout Europe. However, as critical tastes moved towards modernism, Korngold's career slowed and he agreed to score a few select films. When the Anschluss made return to Vienna impossible, Korngold embarked on a career as a film composer in Los Angeles, where his scores set new standards of musical innovation and beauty. Following the war, Korngold attempted to restart his concert music career.

However, his compositions – including his now beloved *Violin Concerto* – failed to impress modernist tastes, and he died nearly forgotten. Korngold's incidental music for a 1920 Viennese production of *Much Ado About Nothing* was so successful that Korngold was obliged to arrange the score for violin and piano to continue the performance run.

Franz Waxman (1906–1967, L.A. 1934–67)

Born in Germany, Waxman had an early start in the German film industry orchestrating the score for *The Blue Angel*, but a severe beating by Nazi thugs in 1934 convinced him to leave Germany for Los Angeles. Waxman's scores for films such as *The Bride of Frankenstein*, *Rebecca* and *Rear Window* earned him twelve Academy Award nominations, and Oscars in consecutive years for *Sunset Boulevard* and *A Place in the Sun*. Waxman also composed

concert works and founded the Los Angeles Music Festival, which paired adventurous new music with classics and championed the works of fellow composers. His fiendishly difficult *Carmen Fantasie*, written for the 1946 film *Humoresque* and popularised by Heifetz, is perhaps his best-known concert work.

George Gershwin (1898–1937, L.A. 1936–37)

Though Gershwin (née Jacob Gershowitz) was actually born in America to recently arrived Lithuanian immigrants, he grew up to personify the idiom of American music, and seemed the appropriate ending to this survey. *It Ain't Necessarily So* from *Porgy and Bess*, in a brilliant transcription by Heifetz, combines classical and jazz influences in a way that defines the American sound.

Brinton Averil Smith

Brinton Averil Smith

Cellist Brinton Averil Smith has been lauded by critics for thrillingly virtuosic performances and musical ideals rooted in the golden age of string playing. Smith's debut recording of Miklós Rózsa's *Cello Concerto* and his recent live recording of the first performance of the Castelnuovo-Tedesco's *Cello Concerto* in more than 80 years both received widespread international critical acclaim. Smith's broadcast performances include CBS *Sunday Morning*, NPR *Performance Today* and *SymphonyCast*, while his live YouTube performances of unusual cello works and virtuosic transcriptions have been viewed more than a million times. Smith has been the principal cellist of the Houston Symphony since 2005 and is also a faculty member of The Shepherd School of Music and the Aspen Music Festival. At the age of ten, Smith began taking university courses and completed a Bachelor of Arts in mathematics at the age of 17. He studied with Zara Nelsova at The Juilliard School, where he received his Master's and Doctoral degrees, writing on the playing of Emanuel Feuermann.

www.brintonaverilsmith.com



Photo: Sandy Lankford

Evelyn Chen

Pianist Evelyn Chen's recent engagements include performances at the David Geffen and Alice Tully Halls at Lincoln Center, Carnegie Recital Hall, the Mozarteum and Tchaikovsky Concert Hall. A Steinway Artist, she has performed as a soloist with orchestras including the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra, Boston Pops, Philharmonia Orchestra, and the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, and has collaborated with renowned conductors including Riccardo Muti, Leonard Slatkin and Stanisław Skrowaczewski. Chen's recordings have received international critical acclaim, and her recording of Rachmaninov's *Piano Concerto* with Leonard Slatkin and the Philharmonia Orchestra became a top-selling classical recording in the UK. After emigrating from Taiwan to Los Angeles at the age of 12, Chen won several international competitions including First Prize in the Bach International Competition, and received her Bachelor of Arts in composition from Harvard University. Chen was awarded the William Petschek Recital Debut Award at The Juilliard School, where she received a Doctor of Musical Arts degree.

www.evelynchen.com



Photo: Peter Schaaf

Political crises and rising antisemitism in Europe during the first half of the 20th century prompted many leading musicians to immigrate to America. An influx of refugees formed a flourishing artistic community centered within a few square miles near Hollywood and this exceptional gathering of composers transformed America's musical landscape. This survey explores their diverse output through music for cello and piano, including arrangements by the composers and their fellow expatriate performers never before heard on the cello.

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Brinton Averil Smith, Cello

Evelyn Chen, Piano **1–6** **10** **12–17**

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet

Recorded: 25–26 May 2018 at Stude Concert Hall, The Shepherd School of Music, Rice University, Houston, Texas, USA

Producer, engineer, editor and mixing: Brad Sayles • Mastering engineer: Ryan Edwards

Booklet notes: Brinton Averil Smith • See booklet for publisher's details

Cover image: *Sunset over the Hollywood sign from Griffith Observatory* by dansolomonphoto (www.iStockPhoto.com)

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