

PHCD

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Leos Janacek

Capriccio for Piano, Left Hand & Chamber Ensemble

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2. Adagio 5:26
3. Allegretto 5:40
4. Andante 5:48

Nursery Rhymes

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6. Spring Sunshine 1:29
7. Mule & Hamster 1:09
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Youth - Suite for Winds

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Concertino for Piano & Chamber Ensemble

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29. Con Moto 3:19
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Produced for CD by Jeffrey Kaufman

CD Preparation: New York Digital Recording

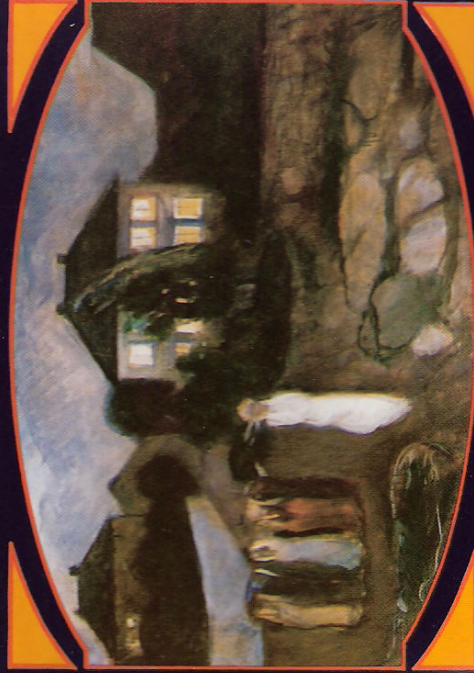
Original Recording Engineers:

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Leos Janacek

NURSERY RHYMES • YOUTH
CAPRICCIO for PIANO, LEFT HAND
CONCERTINO for PIANO and CHAMBER ENSEMBLE



The Caramoor Festival Orchestra - Hilde Somer, pianist
Conducted by Julius Rudel

Leos Janacek

Leos Janacek was born on July 3, 1854 in the village of Hukvaldy where he lived till he was 11 years old. At this time his pleasant singing voice led him to become a chorister at the Queen's Monastery in Old Brno.

It is said that from the day of his birth Janacek lived in close contact with music, nature and poverty. His father's sole amusement was music and he kept the family from starvation by bee-keeping and a few domestic animals. Fruit, vegetables and beer were earned by playing dance-music when requested.

After four years of the monastery he completed his schooling and entered the Imperial and Royal Teachers' Training Institute. Upon completing his work at the Institute, Janacek's musical life went rapidly through choral and organ performances, teaching and composing. His first instrumental work — Suite for String Orchestra — was composed in 1877.

He married in 1881, returned to Brno (he had spent time in Vienna) and was appointed conductor of the Philharmonic Society. He then founded the Organ School which ultimately became the conservatory. He became its director and continued to teach for forty years.

Till his death in 1928 his output was tremendous including several operas, symphonic works for large orchestra, numerous choral compositions and an incredible number of compositions from the age of 62 until his death at 74.

Capriccio For Piano Left Hand And Chamber Orchestra Flute (Piccolo), 2 Trumpets, 3 Trombones, Tuba • Allegro • Adagio • Allegretto • Andante

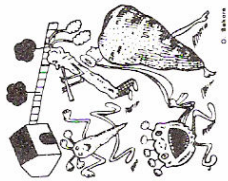
Between June and October 1926, one year after the Concertino and at the same time as the Glagolitic Mass, Janacek wrote a work which presented him with a further opportunity for solving the pattern of a concerto in his own way. This was his Capriccio for piano for the left hand and wind ensemble — flute (alternating piccolo), two trumpets, tenor tuba (usually replaced by a bass) and three trombones. Janacek wrote this work at the request of the pianist Otakar Hollmann who, having been wounded in the First World War, could use only his left hand. Hollmann made similar requests to other Czech composers, e.g., Bohuslav Martinu, who wrote for him his Divertimento for the left hand. Janacek had, at first, refused Hollmann's request, but the idea gave him no peace and, on November 11th, 1926, he wrote to Hollmann telling him that the Capriccio was finished. He added: "You know, to write merely for the left hand would have been childishly gratuitous. More reasons were necessary, subjective and objective. When all these were present and clashed, the work came into existence." Thus Janacek composed a Czech counterpart to the four compositions written for the Pianist Prince Paul Wittgenstein (who had suffered in the same way) at almost exactly the same time by Ravel and Prokofiev who wrote concertos for the left hand, and Richard Strauss who composed his *Parergon to the Sinfonia Domestica* (1925) and *Panathenean Procession* (1926-27).

What were these "objective and subjective" reasons which induced Janacek to change his mind and compose this work? From the objective point of view, the most important reason was certainly that having written the Concertino he found he had not fully explored the many possibilities offered by this genre. As for the subjective reasons, Jarmil Burghauser, in his preface to the published score, assumes that Janacek "was certainly inspired by the unyielding energy of a man who, although maimed in war, did not give up his intended career as a pianist, and this not in the sense of acrobatics but as a serious artist". This defiance (the work was originally to have been called *Defiance*) and the clash with the drastic realities of war and its aftermath, form the spiritual contents of the work. This is emphasized by the instrumentation mainly for the hard sounding brass instruments, and the general mood of gloom and nostalgia. It is the reverse of the joyful *Sinfonietta* with which it is linked, however, by its military descent. Thus Janacek's Capriccio may be regarded as a protest against the senselessness and horrors of war while the piano may be said to personify a victim of war who continues to wage an untiring struggle.

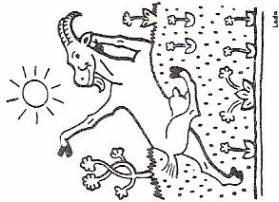
The Capriccio, although for a long time one of Janacek's least performed works, is in no way inferior to his masterpiece — except perhaps for some of the sound values, and this may be due to the unusual technique.

1. INTRODUCTION

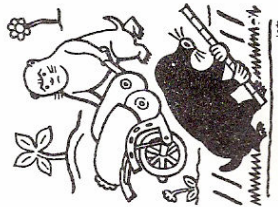
2. TURNIP'S WEDDING
TURNIP IS GETTING MARRIED,
THE OLD BAGGAGE DANCES
WITH THE CABBAGE
WHILE PARSNIPS IN THE MIDDLE
PLAY FLUTE AND FIDDLE.
TIDLY, TIDLY, TIDLY, ETC.
TIDLY, FIDLY, TIDLY, FIDLY, ETC.
TIDLY DOODLY, TIDLY DOODLY.



3. SPRING SUNSHINE
SPRING-TIME SUN IS BRIGHTLY
BEAMING,
IN THE FIELDS FRESH GRASS IS
GLEAMING
ON THE BANK THE OLD GOAT
LAZES
UNDISTURBED AMONG THE
DAISES.



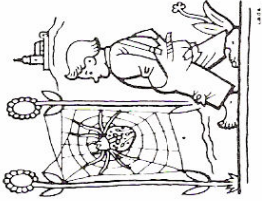
4. MOLE AND HAMSTER
MISTER MOLE CREEPS WITH A RULER,
MEASURING OUT HIS ACRES,
IN A BARKOW HAMSTER'S WHEELING
FLOUR TO THE BAKER'S.



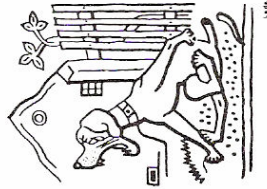
5. CHARLIE' RIDE TO HELL.
DOWN TO HELL RIDES OUR CHARLIE,
WHITE HORSE HE'S RIDING, DEVIL
BEHIND HIM,
CHASED BY THE DEVIL, I'LL BUY A
WHISTLE.
IF THAT WON'T STOP HIM, HACKSAW
MIGHT CHOP HIM,
THEN I WILL FLEE WITH LOCK AND
KEY.



6. TORN TROUSERS
TROUSERS ARE ALL TORN TO SHREDS,
THROUGH THE HOLES ITS DRAUGHTY,
SPIDER SPINS THE MENDING THREADS,
SHE AND I ARE CRAFTY.



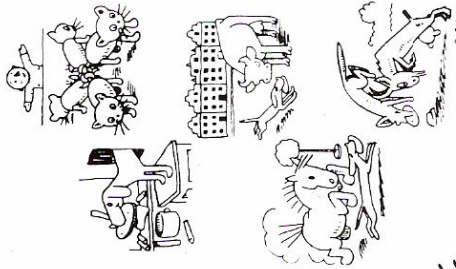
**7. FRANK THE KNACKER PLAYS
THE CELLO**
IN THE COWSHED PAINTED YELLOW
LIST'NING TO THOSE NOTES SO MELLOW,
FRANK THE KNACKER PLAYS THE CELLO,
COW THINKS FRANK'S A FINE OLD FELLOW.



8. OUR DOGGIE
OUR POOR DOGGIE BROKE HIS TAIL OFF,
HE STUCK IT IN THE FENCE,
HOW COULD HE BE SO DENSE?
POOR DOGGIE! POOR DOGGIE!
POOR DOGGIE!
POOR DOGGIE!



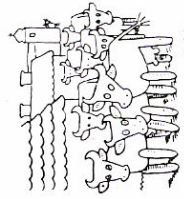
9. A FINE SERMON
 FRIENDS, MY SERMON, FOR YOUR SINS
 WITH ENTANGLED CATS BEGINS.
 ROVER, OUR HOUND JUMPED WITH
 ONE BOUND,
 STOLE A BIG TART SO SWEET, RAN WITH
 IT DOWN THE STREET.
 RAN UNDER MOO-COW'S TUMMY,
 LOOKED UP AND CALLED HER MUMMY.
 SNAPPED AT OX, MADE HIM MAD,
 TURNED BACK AND CALLED HIM DAD.
 SAW BULL BEFORE HIM, "UNCLE,
 GOOD MORNING."
 RAN PAST AN OLD WHITE HORSE
 CALLED HIM "GRANDAD" OF COURSE.
 THEN A GOAT RAN BY SO PROUD,
 "GRANDMOTHER GOAT," HE CALLED
 OUT LOUD.



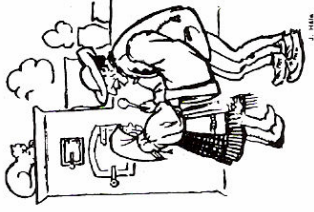
10. MAGIC
 OLD WITCH WOMAN MADE BY MAGIC,
 STIRRING WITH HER STICK,
 MILLET OUT OF BARLEY CORN.
 O! WHAT DELIGHTFUL MAGIC!



11. HOW! NOW! THERE'S THE COWS!
 HOW! NOW! THERE'S THE COWS!
 EACH ONE FULL OF MILK SO CREAMY,
 AND THEIR EYES ARE VAIN AND DREAMY.
 ONE COW HAS NO CALF AT ALL, HIDES
 BEHIND THE CHURCHYARD WALL.
 CRASH! FALLS THE CHURCH SPIRE!
 THE NEW BARN IS ON FIRE!
 GIRL, JUMP IN THE WATER COLD,
 YOU'LL FIND CORALS MADE OF GOLD,
 NO, I WON'T JUMP, I'LL GET HURT,
 AND I'LL WET MY FINE NEW SKIRT.
 THEN HOW CAN I GET IT DRY?
 SHEPHERD ON THE MEADOW, HE WILL
 HANG IT UP FOR YOU.
 SHEPHERD ON THE MEADOW, HE WILL
 HANG IT UP FOR YOU.



12. SOUP
 WIFE WITH MISCHIEF OVERFLOWING,
 OVERFLOWING, STRAIGHT INTO THE POT
 YOU'RE GOING, IN YOU'RE GOING!
 LID GOES ON YOU, LITTLE SINNER,
 LITTLE SINNER
 THEN YOU'LL COOK WITH SOUP FOR
 DINNER, SOUP FOR DINNER.



13. GRANNY IN THE BUSHES
 IN THE BUSHES GRANNY'S GONE,
 CLOSE BE-HIND I CREEP ALONG.
 WHERE SHE GOES, THERE I MUST BE,
 IN THE BUSHES, GRAN AND ME!



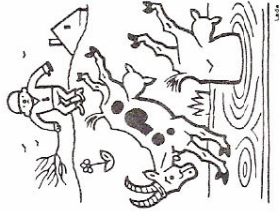
14. FRUIT PICKING
 SPOTTED BILLY SHAKES THE PEAR TREE,
 SPOTTED BILLY SHAKES THE PEAR TREE,
 WHITE GOAT PICKS THEM UP, SEE!
 SHE'LL GO TO-MOR-RON TO SELL
 THE PEARS AT MARKET, SELL
 THE PEARS AT MARKET.



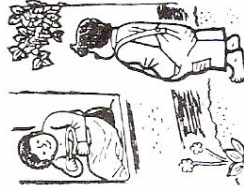
15. FARMER BUMPKIN
 FARMER BUMPKIN, SILLY CLOWN,
 KICKS A TIN POT UP AND DOWN,
 SAYS HIS STEW IN IT CAUGHT FIRE,
 FLINGS IT IN THE STREAM, THE LIAR!



16. GOAT LAZES IN THE SUN
 GOAT IS LAZING IN THE SUN, AND I
 DON'T LIKE HER GRINNING.
 SO I'LL GRAB HER BY THE BEARD, WALK
 ALONG WITH HER TO MEARD.
 THERE NO GOATS GRAZE ON THE HILL,
 MILK IS EATEN WITH A DRILL,
 BREAD'S CUT WITH HAMMERS, THOSE
 FELLOWS, CHOP THE WOOD WITH
 THE BELLOWS.



17. SILLY BILLY
 SILLY, SILLY BILLY, LOOK, THE FOOL
 DRIVES THE GOATS DOWN THE POOL,
 GOATS GO, GOATS GO MAD, AWAY THEY
 DASH IN THE WATER WITH A SPLASH.



18. FRANKIE BOY
 FRANKIE BOY, FRANKIE BOY, GRUEL
 WITH MILK IS ALL YOUR JOY,
 YOU'D PREFER IT CREAMY, I'LL BET,
 BUT CREAM'S SOMETHING YOU WILL
 NOT GET.

19. BEAR SITS DOWN UPON A TREE TRUNK
 BEAR SITS DOWN UPON A TREE TRUNK,
 MAKES HIMSELF NEW BRECHES
 (REPEAT 2 TIMES)
 WHEN THE TRUNK TIPS UP AND BUMPS HIM,
 HE GETS CROSS AND SCREECHES.
 (REPEAT)
 HOP, HOP, HOP LA-LA, HOP LA-LA
 AND HOP SA-SA, HOPE, HOP!
 HOP! HOP! HOP, HOP!



Youth — Suite For Winds

• Allegro • Andante Sostenuto • Vivace • Allegro Animato: Presto

Janacek himself celebrated his seventieth birthday in the most fitting manner by composing in July 1924, in the very month of his birthday, the wind sextet Youth. This hymn in praise of true youth was written while he was busy working on the opera dealing with the artificial youth of Elina Makropoulos. He had been inspired to write for a wind chamber ensemble after hearing the Parisian *Societe moderne des instruments a vent* in Salzburg and the subject may very well have been suggested to him when he was collecting material concerning his childhood and youth for his biographer Max Brod, and for a commemorative almanac published for his seventieth birthday by the Brno editor Adolf Verely. He must have recalled many incidents, particularly his boyhood years at the old Brno monastery. With this period in mind he wrote, on March 19th, 1924, the joyous March of the Blue Boys, scored for little "piccolo, bells or tambourine or piano", dedicated to the flautist Vaclav Sedlacek, his own copyist.

Shortly afterwards (May 19th, 1924) he wrote the real March of the Blue Boys in which the melody of the Trio is similar to the Trio of the third movement of Youth.

Thus it is evident that both the principal melodies of this playful movement originally referred to "Blue Boys" of a much less innocent character than the scholarship holders of the old Brno monastery or the little bluebirds to which they were compared. Are we to see in this some sort of musical pun? Or is it just another proof of the multitude of meanings applicable to the most "realistic" music?

The light-hearted character of Youth is further expressed by the fact that although Janacek divided it into the four movements of a sonata, he did not give even the first movement the usual sonata form in the true sense of the word but made it a free rondo.

This work lasts only eighteen minutes but is extremely characteristic of Janacek and brimming over with humour. The first performance was given in Brno on October 21st, 1924, where it was played by professors of the Brno *conservatoire*. In spite of the excellence of the players and many rehearsals, the first performance was a failure, though for reasons beyond the control of both the performers and the composer.

On November 23rd of the same year, the sextet was played in the Vinohrady theatre by seven members of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra (one more was added for the piccolo part), and this must be regarded as the real *premiere*.

Concertino For Piano And Chamber Orchestra

2 Violins, Viola, 2 Clarinets, French Horn, Bassoon
• Moderato • Piu Mosso • Con Moto • Allegro

Janacek, in his next work, gave ample proof that his honorary doctorate was not going to have the slightest effect on his composing, especially since it was of a type which might very easily have been academic — a piano concerto.

“The eternally young old man from Brno surprised us on Saturday with a work which was, once again, a revelation. The title: Concertino — for piano, two violins, viola, clarinet, horn and bassoon. As can be seen the scoring itself is pure Janacek, a fact which is even more pointedly stressed in the music (the piano cadenza in the third movement seems reminiscent of the old concertos). Not a symphony with piano, but a suite which might have been entitled, Nature.”

“Thus it is clear that the Concertino belongs to the world of The Cunning Little Vixen while the Quartet could be coupled with Katya Kabanova. Janacek’s melodies are excitingly new and highly original, sometimes being based on a minor scale with a raised fourth (the main themes of the first, second and to a certain extent the third movement) or on the whole tone scale which has, however, when used by Janacek, quite a different colour than when used by Debussy. The same may be said of Janacek’s melodic progressions based on chords of four or five fourths — equally dear to Debussy. Janacek’s rhythms, sometimes slow, sometimes dancing, either primly or with abandon, deserve a complete study of their own. The same may be said for his original and yet perfectly worked-out instrumentation which he knows so well how to graduate by, in the first movement, adding only horns to the piano, in the second, only the clarinet, and only from the end of that movement using the whole ensemble. No wonder that the success of the new work was quite exceptional. Everyone in the audience felt that this was the first spring day of the year.”

With these words I tried to express the unforgettable impression made by this work, in an article in *Ceskoslovenska republika* published after the first Prague performance of this Concertino for piano and chamber ensemble. Janacek wrote in the spring of 1925 in the heart of his native Hukvaldy country, finishing it on April 29th.

The inspiration to write it and the first musical ideas had come to him half a year earlier in Prague after hearing the brilliant rendering of his Diary by the pianist Jan Herman at a rehearsal which took place in Herman’s flat on the evening before the morning concert given in the Vinohrady theatre, as part of Janacek’s jubilee celebrations on Sunday, November 23rd, 1924. Here is *Overgrown Path*, *Songs of Hradcany*, the sextet *Youth*, *Presentiment* and *Death* from the *Piano Sonata* 5. 10. 1905, and *The Diary of One Who Vanished* were performed, with Herman playing the first and the last two items. A letter which Janacek wrote to Herman on February 7th, 1925, contains some interesting hints relating to the content of the work, even if they are contained in Janacek’s usual obscure style. “You played my Diary as I have never yet heard it played... Under this wonderful impression... the main themes for my future concerto came to me while walking. From here to the full working out of them is a long way. Much thinking!

“Why the horn in the final movement? Why the shrill derisive clarinet in the second one?” [This is exactly what it would be interesting to know from Janacek himself!] The whole thing comes from the youthful mood of the sextet *Youth*.

“I have a feeling it is like an echo of the time when I was struggling with the piano.”

Despite certain affinities to classical forms especially to the basic ternary form ABA, always a favourite with Janacek, it may be said that he created in the Concertino a true piano concerto of his own which differs from the absolute music of e.g. Hindemith’s concertos, by being admittedly programmatic and also by the strictly applied theory of linking individual themes with individual instruments.

The first performance of this little masterpiece took place on February 16th, 1926 in Brno, and Prague followed on the 20th of the same month, yet for neither of these performances was the piano part entrusted to Herman as he had expected, but to Ilona Kurz-Stepanova. In his letter of explanation which Janacek wrote to Herman, the simple though unconvincing reason was given that she had been the first to ask for it. “But to you,” adds Janacek, “I dedicated the work, because it is you I must thank for the Concertino.”