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Inner Mind Narrative of Stacy Garrop in *Inner Demons*

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Special points of interest:

Stacy Garrop's *Inner Demons*

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Music is far more than just sound; it can also evoke emotions and carry extra-musical meanings. It often serves to support, enrich and set the atmosphere for incidents in scenes, dramatic actions and narratives. Composers strive to establish their own unique style and individual voice, and their music becomes a vehicle for communicating ideas and emotions. American composer Stacy Garrop (b. 1969), like many others, has experimented with ways to create moods and deliver emotional effects through musical idioms; however, her *Inner Demons* (2007) departs from the usual past models, creating a new form of expression. She sets out to portray a mind that is limitless and capable of creating all sorts of images. Instead of evoking general emotions that are commonly experienced, Garrop has gone deeper in exploring a series of intense moods, feelings and hallucinations. It is as if she is inside the mind of an unusual character, and through music reveals the troubled spirit of someone whose mental illness affects his thinking, feelings and mood, creating both a sense of “reality” and the surreal. Garrop challenges us with a different experience in her composition, providing various musical representations of the characteristics of mental illness.

Inner Demons is formed through Garrop's interpretation of the thoughts and emotions of an imaginary character with a mental disorder. Although she does not verbally narrate the story, Garrop plays the role of a storyteller, and her music is heard as an emotional narrative portraying the inner life and mental state of an individual. She views her narrative com-

positional process as similar to the development and unfolding of a movie plot:

As a composer, I'm both a visual and auditory person. The visual part likes to see a story in my head—like a movie. . . . I feel like if I can tell myself a story, and have myself follow that story as I'm writing, then that narrative will help me guide the shape of that piece.¹

Throughout her career, Garrop has assumed the role of a storyteller for many of her compositions, including *Becoming Medusa* (2007), *Archangels* (2018), and *Goddess Triptych* (2020).

A one movement work, *Inner Demons* is an arrangement of two movements from Garrop's String Quartet No. 2: *Demons and Angels* (2004–2005), but presented in a different order; the second movement “Song of the Angels” and the third movement “Inner Demons” of the quartet appear in reverse order. The two distinctive characteristics of mental states originally portrayed in separate movements of the quartet are combined into a single movement in *Inner Demons*, expressing the inner emotions of a man who experiences life differently from others. His mental chaos, manifested in abnormal emotional reactions, mood swings and hallucinations, is captured and enhanced in Garrop's score through her skill at creating musical narrative and her command of compositional techniques. Although the causes of the character's mental illness are not explained, Garrop writes that the composition tells “the story of a man who thought his actions were guided by the forces of good, only to discover that he has

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lost his mind and wreaked havoc on earth," and demonstrates his "personality transformed."²

While it may seem like a fictional story, it is believed that this character is associated with a friend of Garrop's who was diagnosed with bipolar disorder and involved in a murder. Those afflicted with bipolarism experience short depressive episodes, diurnal mood variations and hypersomnia, and more than half of them eventually develop symptoms of psychosis.³ Garrop's Quartet No. 2 has everything to do with her friend's trial and the essence of good and evil.⁴ In it, she develops her own approach to the musical interpretation of various mood disorders, a narrative technique used again with shattering effect in *Inner Demons*.

This article examines Garrop's narrative powers and musical creativity as exemplified in *Inner Demons*, the abstract "story" of a man with a mental disorder, as told through the medium of music. To create a musical portrait of the inner workings of the man's mind, Garrop explores a series of psychological delusions and emotional states through direct, implied and mimetic means. What is intriguing is how emotional narrative and delusion are processed in the music, how musical ideas are torn apart while capturing the psychology of the man, and how Garrop tailors and develops the disparate thoughts into a unified presentation.

Garrop has her own methods of creating surprises, generating curiosity and exploring ways of expressing the depths of the character's mind. Without visual, vocal or literary aid, Garrop employs distinctive tones and themes to create sound colors and effects, and forms abstract imagery by means of stark, contrasting musical characteristics. Gestures, idioms and various unusual effects of emotional interpretations are also used to portray traits of mental disorder. The musical characteristics are introduced in such a way that they depict a blurry line between sanity and lunacy. The discontinuous, fragmented flow of the music portrays a succession of the character's thoughts and mental states—moments of calm and meditative passages juxtaposed with dramatic shifts of musical characteristics.

Garrop's driving idea is the portrayal of psychological situations that provide symbolic characteristics and abstract "images" related to the character. Nonetheless, the music sometimes also operates as background, emphasizing and enriching the character's different mental states. The work slowly unfolds with various ideas and builds in intensity, allowing one to walk in the imaginary world of Garrop's story. The structure of the entire composition is designed to create narrative progression through the ordering of emotions and musical elements that convey the character's inner mental condition. Every musical decision is

made in association with the story. By way of example, Garrop introduces certain melodies to express meaning and enhance situations and feelings connected to the character; specific intervals are used to reflect his mental state; different pitch registers are employed to shape the abstract storyline; and at times, various other instrumental parts not only support the melodic line, but also play a role in setting the mood.

Throughout the composition, Garrop experiments with diverse ways of expressing the impact of intense emotions. She employs opposing musical traits both to depict unique fragments of emotion occurring in the character's mind, as well as to unify the entire work. Such musical traits in combination with continuous-discontinuous musical flow serve to achieve varying sound effects that represent the character's conflicting feelings and moods. The inconstancy and uncertainty in musical flow also create a sense of unpredictability and ambiguity similar to that experienced when opposing emotions coexist.

At certain points in Garrop's score, noticeably changed musical styles or characteristics serve to portray different versions of events related to the character's mental condition. At other times, recurring fragments of musical materials and ideas are used to indicate uncontrollable repetitive hallucination. But, Garrop does not restrict her compositional approach to one viewpoint; the various representations of the traits of mental illness throughout the composition can lead to many layers of meaning and interpretation.

Although every event in *Inner Demons* tends to be represented by its own distinct set of musical gestures, Garrop finds ways to connect her music by using repeated occurrences of material. Drawing upon a range of musical ideas, Garrop interprets and mirrors simultaneously a sense of lucidity and insanity, thus creating distinct emotional interpretations of uncertainty. Different musical characteristics represent insanity, the intricate emotions associated with several stages of psychosis, and the unpredictable outcomes of such mental disturbances.

Significant musical gestures emerge from the combination of rhythm and tempo. In addition to irregular rhythmic accents and breaks in the steady rhythmic beat, various rhythmic patterns and modernist techniques are also used to produce sound colors suggesting insanity. The insanity effects are further enhanced by the occurrence throughout the composition of unexpected musical passages featuring contrasting musical ideas and elements. Different themes are also introduced to manipulate and enrich the portrayal of the character's mental illness. Dramatic tensions are created to express feelings

of apparent contradiction, thus conveying complex and dynamic emotional representations of his inner feelings. Every musical idea contains its own meaning, including the silences that both create effect and mark a significant moment associated with the depths of the mind.

Musical works performed at a slow tempo are often described as serene, calm, sad, tender and dreamy, whereas the same pieces performed at a fast tempo may be described as joyous, happy, exciting and restless.⁵ Similarly, consonant and dissonance musical sounds are often invested with emotional meaning. Consonances usually denote pleasant, harmonious, agreeable, joyful and similar moods, whereas dissonances often suggest discomfort, brutality, and unpleasant, jarring or sad moods. Major and minor intervals can also be associated with happy or sad moods.⁶ However, Garrop sometimes breaches boundaries in her use of consonance and dissonance to project certain moods, thereby creating a sense of ambiguity. Moreover, while she uses tempo to portray a specific mental condition or mood, a fast tempo in her music is not always associated with happiness. She stretches her listeners' imagination at every point, leaving them to wonder what is happening to the character.

Musical Reflection of Emotions in *Inner Demons*

Although *Inner Demons* is a one movement composition, it is divided into two large sections, each having its own distinct profile. The first section includes a combination of musical moments in fast and slow tempi, whereas the second section unfolds in a slow tempo throughout. The structure also exhibits a balance of opposite ideas; the first section is made up of a series of small moments, whereas the second is smooth and coherent. Moment after moment of psychotic emotion is evoked without breaking the dynamics of the music. Garrop's musical narrative is full of allusion and metaphor, and she creates a sense of mental disorder by combining various musical elements, closely mirroring the character's fluctuating emotions.

From a wider general framework, Garrop unifies the entire composition through the use of oppositional ideas that emulate states of insanity and lucidity. She also creatively builds up both tension and relaxation; the first half of the work conveys a sense of high intensity, whereas the second half evokes a calm, relaxed mood. This approach to the creation of "tension and relaxation to shape drama of the music is essential for Garrop,"⁷ as she explains:

If I can control when the music gets tense and when this tension is released, then I am able to tell virtually any story . . . I can start a composition as if we're in the middle of a nighttime thunderstorm on top of a mountain, or I can

make it sound like we're walking slowly through a field of fresh spring flowers at day-break.⁸

There are five musical themes recurring regularly at different points in the composition. These themes represent the inner voices continually running through the character's mind. The first four themes are presented in the first half of the composition, while the remaining continuously flowing theme appears in the second half. Each theme is distinctive in character and musical gesture, signifying either mental lucidity or insanity. The first two themes are lively, energetic and fast in tempo, whereas the other three themes are slow, lyrical and melancholic, indicating a sharp contrast in the emotional state of the character. The abrupt shifts of tempi and moods in different moments are also tied to appearances of the individual themes.

Garrop introduces each of the four themes/"voices" separately and in different moments, indicating that the character hears one voice after another in his mind. Switching from one theme/voice to another in different moments both enhances their significance, and heightens the emotional impact of the work. The constant occurrence of the themes mimics a symptom of mental disorder; those who experience auditory hallucinations in the form of multiple voices often report that certain voices appear more frequently than others.⁹ To create a musical analogy of this mental condition, Garrop sometimes depicts the complex and unpredictable moments of insanity by presenting the four themes in different instrumental parts simultaneously. An example can be heard in the first half of the composition at m. 302, where different themes reoccur one after the other or simultaneously, signifying that the character hears different voices at the same time in his hallucinating mind.

Garrop also uses different techniques to capture the particular narrative in portraying the character's emotion, allowing the listeners to imagine and mentally construct the emotion being presented. Conversely, there are also passages in the score that are intentionally designed to oppose one's expectation, thus creating a sense of ambiguity. For instance, the first theme/voice, which is cast in a lively dance-like style, may seem to correspond to a joyful and animated mood, but it actually serves to reveal the situation in which the character is losing his mind. The melodic line is perceived as an arch contour; it ascends in a pattern in which a rest is inserted between two pitches separated by a third, and then descends in staccato whole-tone scale. The melodic line is easily recognized, which is clearly Garrop's intention. She makes it obvious to ensure that it stands in sharp contrast to other

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emotional moments in the composition. The resulting unclear mood created is leading up to a number of changes that will appear in upcoming emotional passages. The lively, dance-like melodic line gains its significance by being presented repeatedly in various moments in different instrumental parts, emphasizing on-and-off beats. With some modification at different times, it not only signals the character's unstable mental condition, but also technically unifies the first half of the composition.

Throughout the work, the musical expression is tailored to contribute to the narrative and its understanding, thus allowing the audience to interpret the music in the form of an abstract mental image. Various expressive devices and ideas are employed in a dramatic way to produce an atmosphere of mental derangement. For instance, trills are used to foreshadow the character's approaching loss of sanity and the increasing seriousness of his mental condition, the degree of which is made clear by the length of the trills. It is worth noting that foreshadowing is a significant aspect of Garrop's musical style.

Tremolo and glissando are often used to produce different sound colors and effects, but there are moments when accompaniments playing chromatic pitches in tremolo serve not only to create a dark, agitated atmosphere of foreboding, but also provide rhythmic force, intensity and rich texture in the music. Particularly since the nineteenth century, chromatic and dissonant pitches have been much used in music to suggest ambiguity or insanity, and can be heard in the operas of Richard Strauss such as *Elektra* and *Salome*. Garrop's score is saturated with chromatic pitches which create a sense of instability. She also makes use of stepwise motion and certain intervals such as thirds in preparation for the musical depiction of changes associated with different moments of the character's mental stages.

The instability in rhythmic flow of *Inner Demons* enhances the dramatic effect and suggests the mysterious inner workings of the character's mind. For instance, notes that are tied across the bar line, weakening the strong beat, are emphasized in different moments indicating certain emotions and moods. Syncopation and hemiola are employed, expressing a variety of mental activities occurring in his complex mind. Beats are often irregularly stressed, blurring the traditional expectation of constant rhythmic pulse and sense of strong and weak beats. Garrop also uses the interruption of regular metric patterns to interpret the mental situation of the character.

From moment to moment, the musical flow is continuously disrupted, particularly in the first half of the composition. Changing from one moment to another allows Garrop to highlight the succeeding episodes of ambiguity and mystery occurring in a disordered mind. One of the opposing

emotional moments that creates conflict with the restless previous musical moments is heard in the slow, melancholic *Wayfaring Stranger* theme, at m. 160. This musical event helps to shape our sense of the character's unstable mental state. The passage is not wholly consonant; as the character gradually moves from a serene and nostalgic moment of calmness into an unexpected stage of emotional disquiet, the music becomes distorted. Garrop employs long, ascending melodic pitches in trills on a minor second played by the first violin above the *Wayfaring Stranger* melody, indicating the beginning of the character's mental collapse. She makes the listener aware of the emotion in the music by using the long trills to produce a feeling of vagueness and uncertainty. The composition demonstrates the character's mood swings between periods of sanity and insanity, reflected at times in both unexpected musical and emotional events.

Specific melodies can evoke a sense of time. The *Wayfaring Stranger* is a well-known American folk song dating from the eighteenth century. In contrast to the music of the previous moments, the slow, beautiful melodic line is associated with sadness, expressing the character's melancholy. Such fluctuations in the character's mood, ranging from elation to sadness or vice-versa, mirror symptoms of bipolarism—mood swings from euphoria to irritability, energy and depression.¹⁰

Garrop plays with the idea of past and present by employing the *Wayfaring Stranger* melody. It indicates a fleeting memory of some unidentified event from the character's past—a brief glimpse of another moment in time. The same theme reappears with or without trills several times in melodic fragments throughout the first half of the composition, and serves to highlight the different emotional time-moments between past and present in the life of the character.

While Garrop portrays a psychotic person with inconsistent and contradictory moods, she also situates her listeners to a different way of thinking, feeling and perceiving, in order to enhance their understanding of the character she projects. Although mental illnesses include a variety of conditions and symptoms, a "loss of unity or coherence among mental activities"¹¹ and "fragmentation of thought, emotion and volition are the unifying features of the disorders."¹² Basic psychotic symptoms include "disorder of emotion, thought, energy, concentration and memory."¹³

Garrop enables the listener to interpret her use of the *Wayfaring Stranger* theme by exploring the character's mental situation in relation to a specific symptom of psychiatric disorder—hearing voices. While auditory hallucination is often associated with schizophrenia, Garrop

does not explicitly state that her character is schizophrenic or bipolar. Rather, she provides an abstract illustration of mental disorder that typically manifests that symptom. Through her use of the *Wayfaring Stranger* melody, one gains a deeper “internal” perspective of the character.

Similarly, Garrop expresses the character’s drastic emotional changes and instability by references to various traditional dances of the past. Unpredictable fragmented musical events with waltz-like characteristics, such as three-four meter in basic “oom-pa-pa” rhythmic pulse, are presented *fortissimo* in the viola, cello and double-bass throughout the first half of the composition. Unpredictability is one of the most common features of mental disorders,¹⁴ as is the loss of coherence of perceptions and memories.¹⁵ The changes and mixture of diverse musical contexts in *Inner Demons* demonstrate the disorderly mental state of the character, without providing a clear insight into his existential “reality.”

Garrop also creates a sense that one is unaware of the future path the story will take. Her use of musical characteristics portrays a recollecting of past events and memories of the character. In his mind, time does not progress in a straight, unfragmented and predictable line—hence Garrop’s use of characteristics of the waltz, which “evolved from the Ländler in the eighteenth century.”¹⁶

Another genre that Garrop borrows from the musical past is the scherzo which, like the waltz, she also uses to establish a feeling of incoherence and discontinuity. The scherzo originated in the seventeenth century as a vocal or somewhat fanciful instrumental piece, and became one of the movements of the string quartet, sonata and symphony in the eighteenth and

nineteenth centuries. Garrop incorporates historical material of this sort into her score to create atmosphere and to convey a sense of the emotional conflict experienced by the man as a result of his uncontrollable mental state. It is also used as if to recall some past event in the character’s life that is left untold by Garrop, imparting an aura of mystery to the composition.

In addition to employing historically inspired thematic material and significant musical characteristics, Garrop draws on such traditional techniques as echoing and imitation between two or three instrumental parts. The repetition of a melody in different instrumental parts gives a continuous flow to the music. Such repetitions occur spontaneously at various points throughout the first half of the composition to present unpredicted, short, fragmented ideas. Not only do the fragmentations capture the unsettled mind of the character, but they also create forward moving momentum.

Although *Inner Demons* does not convey any details of what actually happened to the man, in an abstract way it does provide audible information on his disordered state of mind. Garrop allows one to experience a sense of his delusional psychosis through the sound colors she creates. Intense psychotic moments are portrayed through non-standard use of string instruments playing random high pitches quickly and chaotically with random accents, harsh dissonances, loud dynamics and occasionally with second violin, cello and double-bass playing *col legno battuto* (Ex. 1). A feeling of regular beats is lost in this moment. The raucous, jarring quality of the sound coupled with a fast tempo effectively captures the intense expression of emotions from the character’s inner world. Garrop also creates a sense that it is not possible to predict what the next event will be.

Ex. 1: Stacy Garrop: *Inner Demons*, Theodore Presser Company 2009, 2010, mm. 203–208.

The flow of the music often lacks connection, and is interrupted by unexpected musical events to portray fragmentation of emotions and a sense of the character’s inability to think logically. For instance, chord-like musical gestures with instrumental parts played as double stops, stressed with combined accented markings in loud dynamic levels, at times in triple stops in pizzicato, are

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abruptly inserted, breaking the continuity from one music activity to another. Nevertheless, there are also times when two different moments are linked together by a bridge of two to four measures of repeating pitches that enable the transition from one emotion to another, giving continuity to the music. The abstract musical narrative progresses in such a way that Garrop allows information to continually unfold and be perceived, demonstrating the character's mental struggle. Her skillful use of musical elements and ideas enables listeners to construct their own mental images of the work through these moments, as well as encountering every moment as of the now, with respect to what is happening to the character.

Garrop experiments with pauses and rests to create silence in the music. Silence is traditionally considered as an "absence of sound,"¹⁷ and "as an unrelated circumstance that frames musical occurrences,"¹⁸ but in her composition, pauses and rests represent more than just symbols of silence. For Garrop, silence is neither simply silence, nor is it merely constituted as a part of the composition's formal structure. It is a part of the "inside" mind of the character. Garrop transforms silences to reflect the psychological state of wandering or mind-blanking—"the mind is not just elsewhere, but nowhere."¹⁹

In addition to interpreting the "inside" mind, pauses and rests that create silence are able to express and communicate. They are employed for the purpose of adding dramatic effects to the music, creating uncertainty, unpredictability about the progression of a phase and event, and a feeling of incoherency, thus breaking the habitual orientation of listening.

As well as using silence to signal the end of events and a section, Garrop uses pauses to portray the interruptions or disturbances in thought processes that occur in different mental states, both in the man and generally. In *Inner Demons*, she depicts a silent moment in the character's mind in order to make the situation of an event appear more compelling than the other moments. Also, the idea of opposition is encountered through the presence of sound and silence.

Despite Garrop's use of pauses, the music has a sense of forward motion. Passages with unexpected, sudden cut-offs capture the instability of emotion and abrupt changes of mood—symptoms of mental disorder.²⁰ An example is found at m. 371, where there is a long pause after the sudden cut-off. The passage not only portrays the mental situation of the character, but it also reveals a lack of direction in the musical flow, making it impossible for the listeners to comprehend where the music is leading them. Using descending intervals of a third, Garrop designs a

falling musical gesture, approaching a sudden long pause, to end the first section. The silence is followed by a passage that is marked "sweet singing and flowing," which signals the beginning of a new section. This second section may be heard as another, and different, mental moment of the character in the second half of the composition, which Garrop carefully establishes.

Garrop uses soft dynamics to create an impression of calmness and lucidity, as well as artificial harmonics to achieve high pitch register sounds, imparting a different timbre to this slow section. These changes appear at the beginning of the section, producing a distinct sound quality as background music to accompany the lyrical melody and to differentiate the current event from the previous musical incidents. Moreover, the melody flows gently from cello to violin and back again to cello without interruption, suggesting the character's state of mental calm. Overall, the music of this section is less fragmented than before, while the dramatic tension that accumulated in the previous section is also released. Garrop notes that this moment is heard as a recollection of "the goodness that existed in the man before his personality transformed."²¹ The second section is characterized by a sense of reality and sanity, whereas the previous section projected an atmosphere of insanity and the surreal.

One of the themes/voices is never gone; Garrop ends the composition by recalling the second theme/voice that is played by the first violin, beginning at m. 16 in the first half of the work. However, it is now presented in modified form—a different way to conclude the composition, which also leaves the story with a mystery ending. It is as if to imply that the character's haunting mental disorder will never be resolved.

Conclusion

Garrop has given *Inner Demons* a significant narrative role, expressing the character's inner life as different from that of a normal person. Various situations, conditions, moods and emotions are determined by her design, allowing listeners to respond to her intention. What the story depicts is not physical reality but an imaginary construction of a series of emotional feelings in the mind of a mentally ill man, and his inability to control his moods and emotions. It does not reveal what had happened to the character, but describes what is happening now.

The music is dramatic in its sound effects, and moods are exhibited in various ways, each standing in contrast to the others. This leads to a feeling of both lucidity and insanity in the musical events. The character's mental situations are also enhanced by switching themes/voices. Different dynamic levels are used to shape the situations of

the mental states, conveying the experience of the character's emotions and thoughts in real time.

Garrop uses both conventional and unconventional musical materials in challenging ways, often drawing on non-traditional musical presentation to achieve greater emotional intensity. The incorporation of past musical characteristics and material creates a sense of time (present and past) occurring in the mind of the character. Fragmented moments of themes, of waltz and other music characteristics, represent memories and thoughts of the character in an abstract way.

Music techniques and gestures are used to create a variety of styles and moods. Chromatic pitches are emphasized, producing an unstable sound effect. Pauses and rests that create silence disrupt expectations; they also capture the character's state of mind and unfinished thoughts; uncertainty of upcoming events creates ambiguity. Nevertheless, Garrop ties the work together by various musical means, giving the music a feeling of goal-directed momentum. The entire piece is made comprehensible from a perspective of a larger picture rather than thorough individual moments. Although musical characteristics may seem incoherent and disparate, they share the same unifying purpose: to depict the mental condition of the character. In addition, unity is established through Garrop's oppositional approach in ideas such as tension-relaxation between the two distinct sections, lucid-insanity moods, and interruption and continuity of melodic ideas and moments.

Garrop transforms successions of inner mental states into sound, allowing the audience to feel the various emotional effects. Although musical ideas may seem unrelated to the content, they nevertheless effectively present the mental operation of the character. Repeated occurrences of musical materials, such as the dance-like melody, work to build up associations among musical events and the storyline as well as to trigger recognition in hearing.

Without spoken dialogue and singing, Garrop uses musical language and idioms to convey ambiguous emotional elements, giving her listeners a present experience of the character. The emotional changes are so abrupt that her music sounds fragmented and discontinuous, producing a sense of a distorted mental experience of reality, thus expressing thoughts of an abnormal mind by manipulating musical gestures. The continually changing development in musical characteristics and emotional stages successfully blends with the unsettling moods of the character. Indeed, emotion becomes an important quality of unity in the composition.

The subject of mental illness has led Garrop to develop ways in which the characteristics of moods, thoughts and

feelings of the inner life can be portrayed in music. Listening to her musical language, one is able to reflect on those emotional states that could constitute a narrative of one's own.

Notes

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- ² Stacy Garrop, program notes to *Inner Demons* (New York: Theodore Presser Company, 2009, 2010).
- ³ Sigrun Hope, *Inflammatory Profile in Schizophrenia and Bipolar Disorder. Relation to Affective State* (Ph.D. diss., University of Oslo, 2012), 17.
- ⁴ Barbara Yaross, "Love, Death, Murder and A String Quartet," *Chicago Reader*, 18 Nov. 2004, chicagoreader.com/chicago/love-death-murder-and-a-string-quartet/Content?oid=9172.
- ⁵ William Thompson and Lena Quinto, "Music and Emotion: Psychological Considerations," in *The Aesthetic Mind: Philosophy and Psychology*, ed. Elisabeth Schellekens and Peter Goldie (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 360.
- ⁶ Paula Virtala and Mari Tervaniemi, "Neurocognition of Major-Minor and Consonance-Dissonance," *Music Perception: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 34, no. 4 (April 2017), 387-404; Mark Jude Trano, Peter A. Cariani, Bertrand Delgutte, and Louis D. Braida, "Neurobiological Foundations for the Theory of Harmony in Western Tonal Music," *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 930 (June 2001), 92-116.
- ⁷ Kacie Wright, "Composer Spotlight: Stacy Garrop," *Houghtonhorns*, 8 March 2021, houghtonhorns.com/composer-spotlight-stacy-garrop/.
- ⁸ Stacy Garrop, "What Do Baseball and Beethoven have in Common? Tension!" *composerinklings*, 29 October 2016, composerinklings.com/2016/10/what-do-baseball-and-beethoven-have-in_29.html.
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- ¹⁰ Wendy Francik, *The Nature of Self-Directed Learning and Transformational Learning in Self-Managing Bipolar Disorder to Stay Well* (Ph.D. diss., Texas State University, 2012), 12.
- ¹¹ Emma Lindley, *Making Sense of Mental Illness: The Importance of Inclusive Dialogue* (Ph.D. diss., University of Manchester, 2010), 28.
- ¹² Andrew Moskowitz and Gerhard Heim, "Eugen Bleuler's *Dementia Praecox or the Group of Schizophrenias* (1911): A Centenary Appreciation and Reconsideration," *Schizophrenia Bulletin* 37, no 3 (2011), 473.
- ¹³ Molly K. Larson, Elaine L. Walker, and Michael T. Compton, "Early Signs, Diagnosis and Therapeutics of the Prodromal Phase of Schizophrenia and Related Psychotic Disorders," *Expert Review of Neurotherapeutics* 10, no. 8 (July 2010), 1347-59, ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2930984/.
- ¹⁴ Patrick Corrigan and Amy Watson, "Understanding the Impact of Stigma on People with Mental Illness," *World Psychiatry: Official Journal of the World Psychiatric Association*

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¹⁵ Moskowitz and Heim, 476.

¹⁶ Amy Tikkanen, "Waltz," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, [britannica.com/art/waltz](https://www.britannica.com/art/waltz).

¹⁷ R. M. Schafer, *Ear Cleaning: Notes for an Experimental Music Course* (New York: Berandol Music, 1969), 1-3.

¹⁸ Kari Darby, *Silence for Orchestra: Incorporating Silence in Musical Language through Theories of Expectation*, (M.A. thesis, Eastern Illinois University, 2016), 1.

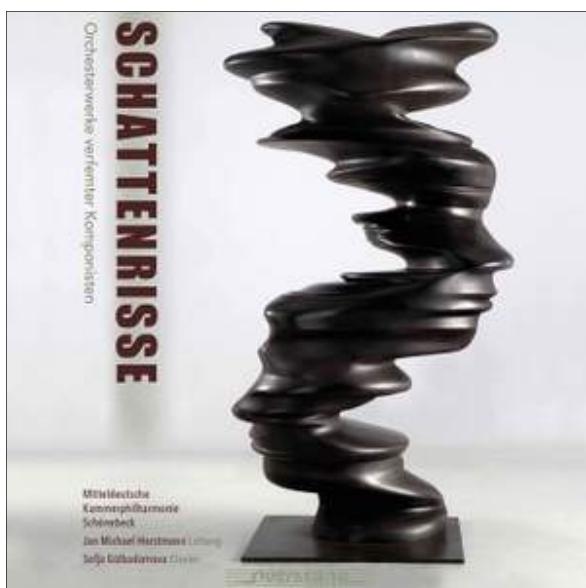
¹⁹ Adrian F. Ward and Daniel M. Wegner, "Mind-blanking: When the Mind Goes Away," *Frontiers Psychology* 27 (September 2013), [frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2013.00650/full](https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2013.00650/full).

²⁰ Erika Nichole Jackson, *Diagnoses by Gender: The Consequences of Treatment of the Mentally Ill in Virginia Woolf's The Waves and Mrs. Dalloway* (M.A. thesis, State University of New York College at Cortland, 2016), 8.

²¹ Garrop, program notes to *Inner Demons*.

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Schattenrisse. Works for Orchestra by Ostracized Composers. Querstand (2022). Includes Kaprálová's *Suite en miniature*.

New Recordings



Piccolo Legends. Daniel Schnyder (Marsyas and Apollo, Teiresias, Baroque loqueness), Bohuslav Martinů (Scherzo, Divertimento), Jan Novák (Marsyas), **Vítězslava Kaprálová** (Tales of a Small Flute—world premiere recording), Gabriel Malancioiu (Hommage à Mar-syas), Leonardo de Lorenzo (suite Mythologique). Performed by Haika Lübecke and Pamela Stahel, piccolo, Hendrik Heilmann, piano, Sarah Verrue, harp. Prospero (2023).

Kaprálová's *Tales of a Small Flute*, though completely unassuming, unpretentious, straightforward, and naïve, exude an aura of spell-binding poetry. It should be noted that Kaprálová composed the two programmatic miniatures for her husband who was a beginner flute player; they have since become a part of instructive literature for young flutists. This is cheerful music in which the Bohemian-Moravian elements shine through time and again in dreamlike cantilenas.



Things Lived and Dreamt. Leoš Janáček (Sonata 1. X. 1905), Josef Suk (Printemps, Things Lived and Dreamt), Antonín Dvořák (Humoresques), **Vítězslava Kaprálová** (April Preludes), Bedřich Smetana (Czech Dances). Performed by Francine Kay, piano. Analekta (2023).

April Preludes remains Kaprálová's most popular piano work to date. The composer dedicated her preludes to Czech virtuoso pianist Rudolf Firkušný in the hope that he would be the first to perform them; in the end, however, it was Dana Šetková, a student of Prague Conservatory, who premiered the composition on October 5, 1937, at a concert of the Přítomnost Society. Firkušný did eventually program the preludes a few years later, on January 28, 1940, in Paris. The reviewer of the Parisian premiere wrote about his performance: "One of the recitals of the concert series presented by the French Society for Contemporary Music also included works of Czech composers, namely a piano sonata of Pavel Bořkovec and *April Preludes* of Vítězslava Kaprálová. Sharing the program with the works by the two most prominent representatives of contemporary music, the *Duo Concertante* of Igor Stravinsky and a violin sonata of Albert Roussel, they testified, in front of the most knowledgeable audience, to the high quality of contemporary Czech music. But it was the *April Preludes* by Vítězslava Kaprálová that achieved a truly astounding success, owing to the happy union of modern musical form and richness of feelings and invention that turned the four small compositions into musical formations of great charm."¹

¹ "Koncert Rudolfa Firkušného." *Československý boj* 2, no. 4 (1940): 8.

Women of the 19th-century salon: Mademoiselle E. Mailly

Tom Moore

Among the many forgotten women composing in the 19th-century was **M^{lle} E. Mailly**, a member of a large musical family active in both Belgium and France for at least three generations. She has at least two surviving publications to her credit. But, she was not the only composer in the family—Joseph Mailly (Henri-Jean-Joseph Mailly, 1804–1863), probably her brother, was both a violoncellist and composer. His son, organist Alphonse Mailly (1833–1918), was even the subject of a monograph and two articles.

Because M^{lle} Mailly had a close personal connection with Joseph Mailly, it is useful to look briefly at his career. He merits the following short biographical note by Édouard Georges Jacques Gregoir in *Les artistes-musiciens belges*:

[B]orn in Brussels, on May 15, 1830, he married Marie-Françoise Spinau, of Brussels . . . [A]n excellent musician, he became a member, at a very young age, of the orchestra of the Odéon in Paris, when *Robin des Bois* [Der Freischütz] was in vogue there [1824]. Having returned to Brussels in 1828, he was a student at the École royale de musique, and in 1835 replaced Platel as the solo cellist at the Monnaie. He was the father of Alphonse Mailly, the well-known organist. He died in Brussels on August 9, 1863, at the age of 59.¹

Sadly, none of Joseph Mailly's works seem to have survived.

A much briefer biographical note on Joseph Mailly reads:

Joseph Mailly, . . . choirmaster of the Église du Béguinage and solo cellist at the Théâtre de la Monnaie, in Brussels, has composed various works for the cello, including two fantasies on *Le Pré aux Clercs* and *Zampa* which will soon be published.²

We can trace Joseph Mailly and his sister (?) E. Mailly in various directories and annuals of the early decades of the nineteenth century. Gregoir usefully provides an approximate date of birth for Joseph (1804), and so we can surmise that M^{lle} Mailly was born relatively close to the same time. The earliest entry I have found for Joseph Mailly (his first name is not given, unfortunately) is from 1816, when he would have been twelve (still an early age for a professional position), at the Théâtre royal Italien that was performing at the Salle Favart at that time.³ Two separate listings place him at distinctly different addresses in 1820, though he continues in his position at the theater.⁴ By 1822, he has moved to 22, rue de Bellefond (about half a mile from rue Cadet), where he shared the property with M^{lle} E. Mailly.⁵ He was now identified as cellist of the Théâtre Italien.

One might surmise that M^{lle} E. Mailly was also born in Brussels, and perhaps was born after Joseph, who was now eighteen years old. They, I believe, were likely the children of another professional musician (as yet unidentified), who settled in Brussels.

Joseph left Paris to return to Brussels in 1829, and was registered at the École royale in February 1829. Meanwhile, M^{lle} Mailly remained in Paris at the same address. According to the *Annuaire* for 1832, she married a certain Péron, was now active

in a family business as a music engraver, and (perhaps) had been widowed, since the business was under her married name. She continued in the same business and at the same address until at least 1835.⁶

There seem to be two surviving works by M^{lle} E. Mailly: the waltz *Mes souvenirs* and the romance *Partagez mon Délire!* To my knowledge, these survive uniquely at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris. The first was included in the *Bibliographie de la France* in 1824 (oddly, it lists a different street number for her residence), and the latter appears in 1821.⁷ Both compositions were evidently published before Mailly's marriage to Péron (in 1832 at the latest). The publisher of the romance seems to have specialized almost entirely in vocal works, with at least three other women composers, Colette Bassenge, M^{me} Mainvielle-Fodor, and Caroline Martainville, included in their catalogue.

A few words about the remaining Maillys:

Despite a long and eminent career as organist and his importance as a teacher, Alphonse Mailly has only a fairly short list of works to his credit: pieces for organ, harmonium or piano through op. 14.⁸ A source from 1880 explicitly states that Alphonse is the older son of the cellist Joseph Mailly.⁹ A later source (by an author who met him personally) both confirms this (stating that his father had been solo violoncellist at the Théâtre de la Monnaie), and notes that Joseph had been choirmaster at the Église Saint-Jean-Baptiste au Béguinage in Brussels.¹⁰ None of these sources mention M^{lle} E. Mailly, or her connection to these important musical figures.

David Vergauwen suggests¹¹ that the Édouard Mailly who wrote an important history of the Conservatoire Royal de Musique de Bruxelles may also have been a son of Joseph Mailly (and would thus likely have been a nephew of Mademoiselle E. Mailly). Another composing Mailly was A. Mailly, who wrote many works for band published ca. 1880–1900. Paul Mailly, active at La Monnaie in Brussels at about this time as pianist/accompanist (1873–1887), might also have been a member of this extended family.

Notes

¹ Édouard Georges Jacques Gregoir, *Les artistes-musiciens belges au XVIII^e et au XIX^e siècle*, 1885, 134–35.

² *Les Sociétés Chorales en Belgique*, 2nd edn., Gand, 1861, 236.

³ Rue Cadet. In *Almanach de 25,000 adresses de Paris, pour l'année 1816*, 564.

⁴ *Annales de la musique ou Almanach musical*, vol. 2, 1820, 98;

Almanach des 25,000 Adresses, vol. 1, 1820, 420.

⁵ *Bibliographie musicale de la France et de l'étranger*, 556.

⁶ *Annuaire des artistes français*, 1^{re} année – 1832, 290–91; *Almanach des commerçans de Paris*, vol. 1, 1835, 477.

⁷ 55. *Mes Souvenirs*, walse pour piano, par Mlle Mailly. A Paris, chez M^{lle} Mailly, rue de Bellefond, n. 37; 183. *Partagez mon délire*, romance avec accompagnement de piano par M^{lle} E Mailly, Prix 1 fr 50 C A Paris chez M^{lle} E Mailly, rue de Bellefond n 22. In *Bibliographie de la France*, 1824, 103; Ibid, 1821, 354.

⁸ *Biographie Universelle*, 1880, 149–150.

⁹ *Mémoires couronnés et autres mémoires*, 1880, 93.

¹⁰ W. Van Brunt Todd, "Alphonse Mailly," *The Musician* 14, no. 3 (March 1909): 130–31.

¹¹ Private email communication to the author, 20 February 2021.

In Review



Vítězslava Kaprálová: Works for Piano Solo.
EuroArts (2022). Time: 70'.

"An entire universe of feelings, colour changes, thematic changes, polyphony, intertwined sub-parts and deeply moving main parts comes into being on a topographical map whose exploration is never boring."—Leonie Karatas on Kaprálová's piano music.

The piano works of Vítězslava Kaprálová (1915-1940) offer an ideal introduction into the Czech composer's musical world. Bold, confident, unpredictable—yet also polished and remarkably mature—Kaprálová's piano pieces are alive with beautiful melodies, timbres and textures, and conceived with great skill and confidence. They include some of Kaprálová's most significant and representative compositions: the *Sonata Appassionata*, written in 1933 during her student years at the Brno Conservatory, the well-known *April Preludes* (1937), which by now have been recorded dozens of times, and a set of *Variations sur le Carillon* (1938), a work that crystallizes Kaprálová's piano-writing style.

Taken as a whole, Kaprálová's piano works fit comfortably onto one CD, and in her debut recording, pianist Leonie Karatas has chosen to record them under the apropos title of "La Vita." Kaprálová's nickname was 'Vita' (her first name appears as such in some of her published works) and of course the word itself translates as 'life.' Thus in that title we are also reminded of the brevity of Kaprálová's own existence.

The programming order is not chrono-

logically arranged, and instead opens unusually with the three pieces of Opus 9. This lesser-known trio of works was composed under the guidance of Vítězslav Novák at the Prague Conservatory, where Kaprálová had moved from Brno in 1935 at age 20 in order to continue her studies. Each of the three pieces is a free-standing musical work, resulting from different compositional assignments.

The opening "Prelude" is a chiefly post-impressionist work, frequently drifting in the direction of a more modern, dissonant style reminiscent of Prokofiev. The somber opening melody provides a basis for recurring variations, complemented not only by a lyrical secondary theme, but also little cadenza-like digressions of differing character. Karatas handles these disparate elements beautifully in a rich performance that immediately engages the listener with her luminous, elegant tone and impeccably-judged voicing. Her flawless interpretation of this small but wonderful score establishes a high musical standard at the outset of Karatas' program.

In contrast with the prelude, the "Crab Canon" that follows has an atypical austerity, with the melodic lines performed simultaneously backwards and forwards (as one can observe in the score, but hardly detect during listening). Karatas makes the most of this brief, stark and dissonant work, her playing remaining steady and unperturbed even as the music becomes increasingly chaotic. It's the only convincing performance of this work that I've encountered.

The final piece in Op. 9, "Scherzo Passacaglia," was actually the first to be composed. Like the crab canon, the work is a modernist take on a Baroque compositional technique, and actually exists in several different versions. Karatas is perfect here in bringing to life the grotesque musical elements, which surprised even Novák, of this virtuosic work (another version of the piece has the title *Grotesque Passacaglia*). It's a piece that codifies this recurring and significant aspect of Kaprálová's musical personality. Karatas delivers a knockout performance of this inspired work, with all of the details perfectly judged.

Next on the program are the four *April Preludes*, Kaprálová's best known work for solo piano and an excellent representative of her mature style. They were written for Czech pianist Rudolf Firkušný, and partially inspired by his interpretation of Martinů's Second Piano Concerto. Of the many recordings of this work, Karatas' is among the best. Although there are some issues with the published score, which contains several notational errors, Karatas navigates these well. Yet her performance contains odd departures from the score, for example in the rhythms at the end of both the first and second preludes, which are altered, possibly for dramatic effect. In the second prelude, the specified *Andante* tempo comes across more as an *Adagio* in Karatas' unusually slow rendition, stretching the music at times uncomfortably and requiring patience to engage with the musical line. Fortunately, the *tempi* in the remaining preludes seem perfectly judged. The polka-like finale inspires a particularly strong reading from Karatas—a definitive performance that brings out the full character of the music, and concludes Kaprálová's most popular piano work on a note of perfection.

After a charming rendition of the brief *Little Song*, Karatas proves equally persuasive in Kaprálová's early but remarkably effective Five Piano Compositions. All are played exquisitely, but the fourth movement *Tempo di menuetto* stands out as especially superb. It's a memorable little gem and Karatas gives a flawless and moving performance. Here, as elsewhere on the program, one senses a true bond between the composer and the artist, as Karatas comes fully prepared and engaged with the music she is playing, bringing to life Kaprálová's musical personality, even in her earliest compositional efforts. The musical depth of the final funeral march movement, for example, is astonishing, and Karatas' slow tempo here contributes to the dark mood of this emotionally mature, sorrowful work.

After the five piano compositions, the program fast-forwards to two of Kaprálová's final piano works, the Dance from 1940, completed and first recorded by pianist Giorgio Koukl, and the 1938 set of *Variations sur le carillon*

de l'église St.-Etienne-du-Mont. Koukl performed a wonderful service by completing and recording the unfinished Dance, but it is also valuable to have Karatas' excellent rendition of this polka-like piece, which will only encourage other artists to take up this unknown score. The Dance's folk stylization shows an unmistakable kinship with Martinů who composed works of similar character (see his 3 Czech Dances for solo piano from 1927, for example). It turns out that Karatas' performance of this delightful work is more smiling and nuanced compared with Koukl's, offering a greater variety of articulations and tone colors, along with a much better sound quality.

The 1938 set of variations that follows isn't as well-known as the *April Preludes*, but certainly deserves to be. This is a comparatively more difficult piece to interpret, and the short length and small number of variations results in a work that is highly concentrated, yet constantly changing and musically diverse. The theme itself must be among the shortest in the history of musical variations—only eight notes long, it is based on a church carillon tune that Kaprálová could apparently hear chiming from her flat in Paris. Martinů considered the work a masterpiece and wrote an affectionate “review” of the piece in a letter to Kaprálová that is a must-read.¹

This score is more elusive than other piano works by Kaprálová, as one discovers when studying the score or listening to the available recordings. From the most basic level of tempo choice to minute details of voicing and pedaling, interpreters have sought remarkably different solutions. Karatas delivers a strong performance that stands out among the alternatives for the same reasons as do the rest of her recordings on this disc: beauty of tone, imaginative voicing, and fully realized musical characterizations. I did find myself not fully convinced by the tempo choices early on, with the second and third variations seeming a bit rushed, and wished for more generous pedaling in the first variation with its resonant, bell-like sounds and strikingly coloristic dissonance. Nonetheless, this is undoubtedly a praiseworthy interpretation. Variation 4 (*Quasi etude, vivo*) is played with a breathtaking precision, and the fifth variation ‘Choral’ is perfectly realized. The final variation has echoes of the last *April Prelude*, in that both are grotesquely stylized polkas with similar rhythmic motifs. Here Karatas projects the music with an appropriate exuberance and flair. In the climactic coda that follows, the carillon theme is heard in thunderous *fff* octaves, with Martinů musing in his letter to Kaprálová that is sounds as if the piano is being sacrificed. As it turns out, the recording engineers couldn't quite handle the decibel levels during this passage, which unfortunately sounds congested.

Karatas saves her performance of the *Sonata Appassionata* for the end of the program, which proves to be another wise choice. This two-movement work is Kaprálová's only large canvas for piano solo, and it is an extraordinarily effective one, despite being an early work written during her student years at the Brno Conservatory. The Sonata is a summary of the romantic and impressionistic styles that Kaprálová was exposed to and assimilated, coupled with a more forward-looking modernism that would become increasingly prominent in future compositions.

Karatas plays this ambitious work of youthful genius with a great sense of authority and commitment, bringing out all the winning aspects of this score and delivering a thrilling musical

experience. The dramatic first movement is delivered with perfection and makes me long to hear Karatas interpreting Rachmaninoff and Chopin. A great performance such as this reveals the music in the best possible light and reveals the extent of Kaprálová's compositional mastery even at this early stage of her career.

The second movement is a set of variations, based on one of Kaprálová's most beguiling themes, and it is instructive to compare Kaprálová's stylistic approach to writing variations in this piece with that of the Carillon variations written five years later. Both works contain six variations, but those in the Sonata are longer in length and more romantically conceived. The final variation, beginning as a *fugato* and unfolding developmentally, is the longest of all, taking up as much time as the earlier variations combined. In this final variation the music suddenly turns more modernistic, adopting a grotesque character that foreshadows what we hear in subsequent works.

Karatas takes the opening theme at a leisurely tempo, allowing the music to unfold gradually and for details to emerge that illuminate the beauty and intricacy of Kaprálová's piano writing. As the difficulties increase, Karatas handles the diverse musical demands of this sprawling movement with ease. This is a triumphant performance of an ambitious, impactful work that should be heard in recitals more often.

The program ends with a beautiful little coda—the two ‘bouquets’ from 1935. These intimate miniatures are played superbly and conclude Karatas' recital in a mode of reflection.

The success of this recording hinges on the fact that Karatas is obviously fully immersed in Kaprálová's music, and possesses the artistry, imagination and vision to truly bring it to life. We hear an accomplished performer bringing new insights into the interpretation of Kaprálová's piano music, and in this way Karatas performs a great service to Kaprálová's legacy. The beauty of these scores is that every thoughtful performance brings new revelations, and new ways of advocating for Kaprálová's music. As Karatas concludes in her liner notes, “What her music brings about in the listener is nothing less than astonishment and speechlessness at the thunderbolt her music strikes in you.” One could say the same about the performances on this exceptional disc.

Erik Entwistle

¹ Erik Entwistle, “Kaprállová's Piano Works,” in *The Kaprálová Companion*, edited by Karla Hartl and Erik Entwistle (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2011), 27–68.

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The KS Journal Reader



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