



“ Because invention is, in fact, a cautious dipping into the negation that lies outside system from a position firmly ensconced in system.

Glenn Gould

GABIZ REICHERT

RUPERT'S TEAR





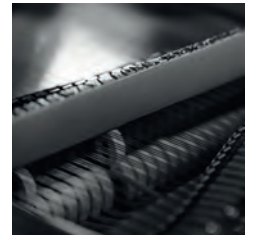
**GABIZ REICHERT** PIANO

# RUPERT'S TEARS

They have many names: *Prince Rupert's Drops*, *Dutch Tears*, *Bolognese Glass Tears*, or *Batavian Droplets*. They are droplets made of hot glass that are rapidly cooled in water or oil. While the droplet is nearly indestructible to hammer blows or hydraulic presses, the entire tear will explode into fine particles once the thin, fragile tail is snapped off. This phenomenon can only be appreciated as a whole: being both robust and fragile, combining resilience with vulnerability.

This simplifying image has helped me better understand the ontology of musical works, which seem stable as a term yet fragile in their definitions. In the following text, I will often refer to a *work* (in italics), using it as a more inclusive term: A *work* is more than its last edition's notes, more than the composition, the first performance, or a presumed intention behind the process of its genesis.

Attempts to list and catalogue the various elements that constitute a work can never be fully completed, since, aside from influences of historical performance and composition practices, our individual perception – our psyche – heavily shapes these elements. There is no way of making music that remains completely unscathed by historical influence and tradition. The more we as performers allow further elements to become an active part of a musical work, the more diverse and extensive the performer's possibilities become. A style of playing in which all the documents that can be linked to a *work* are consciously included in an interpretation is what I call *enhanced performance practice*, or *enhanced interpretation*. Therefore, as a performer (the German word *Interpret* seems more fitting here) I see myself as both an external spectator of the *work*, and a part of it. This might give the impression of being paradoxical, but quite like the fragile-robust *rupert's tear*, it can only be both. First and foremost, however, the goal always has to be: creating touching and novel music, that has never been heard like this before.



FIRST PANEL: BACH/BRAHMS

## **J.S. BACH (1685-1750) | J. BRAHMS (1833-1897)**

- 1** CHACONNE, ARRANGED FOR THE LEFT HAND ALONE  
From the Partita n°2 BWV 1004 for Violin solo  
Arr. Johannes Brahms (5 Studies for Piano, Appendix 1a n°5)

SECOND PANEL: THE SCHUMANN/BECKER-PROJECT

## **R. SCHUMANN (1810-1856)**

- 2** FROM SYMPHONIC STUDIES OP. 13
  - Thema
  - Appendix Var. 3
  - Appendix Var. 1
  - Appendix Var. 5
  - Appendix Var. 2
  - Appendix Var. 4

## **R. BECKER (\*1993)**

- 3** ISLE OF MEMORY (2023)  
Fantasy on a theme by Schumann (Op. 13)/ von Fricken (Commission)

THIRD PANEL: THE RACHMANINOV-COLLAGE

## **S. RACHMANINOV (1873-1943)**

COLLAGE

- 4** ÉTUDE-TABLEAU OP. 33 N°8 (ORIG.) IN G MINOR
- 5** PRÉLUDE OP. 23 N°5 IN G MINOR
- 6** PRÉLUDE OP. 32 N°10 IN B MINOR
- 7** PRÉLUDE OP. 32 N°13 IN D FLAT MAJOR
- 8** PRÉLUDE OP. 3 N°2 IN C SHARP MINOR



## GABIZ REICHERT

Gabiz Reichert (1994) is a Swiss classical pianist who distinguishes himself in his concerts – mostly moderated by himself – due to his original concert programs and his creative interpretative style. As a laureate of both, national and international competitions (including prizes and honorable mentions of e.g. Bärenreiter, SUISA and the Vienna International Music Competition) he played on stages in Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Finland, Spain and Japan, where he was invited to play in the Sendai International Music Competition as the first from his country to do so. Following the competition, he completed a concert-tour through Japan. During his studies in Munich in the class of the Finnish pianist Antti Siirala – where his final recital was awarded with the highest mark - he had multiple chances to perform major repertoire with different orchestras (e. g. Rachmaninov's 2nd, Brahms' 1st, Beethoven's 4th, Grieg's piano-concerto, and others). Furthermore, he had the chance to work with great soloists and paedagogues, including Matti Raekallio, Jaques Rouvier, Andrea Bonatta, Homero Francesh, and more. His own students have successfully passed entrance exams (both bachelor and master) in some of Europe's most prestigious schools. His focus in teaching lies in giving everyone the necessary tools to be able to work indepenantly and efficiantly, while keeping an eye on body and health. A careful approach is important to him, which is why he takes a lot of time for his students.

He had the chance to work as a juror, most recently as part of the jury-corps in the Concours Géza Anda, where he was asked to co-create a new prize to be given to someone that doesn't reach the semi-finals of the competition. Furthermore, he was part of the jury for the Neeme Järvi Prize from the Gstaad Menuhin Festival and Academy. Since 2024, Gabiz lives in Winterthur (Zurich), where he works in communication for the orchestra Musikkollegium Winterthur.

## THE PROGRAMME

This CD's programme presents itself as a single unit in three parts, three pictures conveying different facets of the principle of *returning*. Furthermore, they are all inspired by documents outside the realm of conventional interpretation, as described before. Following, selected aspects will be addressed.

# THE FIRST PANEL: BACH/BRAHMS, CHACONNE FOR THE LEFT HAND ALONE

Like a turning wheel, the Chaconne simultaneously contains elements of reiteration and progression. While the turning of the wheel conveys a sort of meditative repetition, the landscape around said wheel is changing: The initial pain and suffering of the chaconne's powerful opening theme seem to be forgotten during the transfigured middle section in D major. The longer the wheel keeps rotating in major, the more unlikely a return to minor seems to become. However, the last section confirms what none dared to fear with devastating self-evidence: All hope is soon to be lost and the theme in D minor returns – in a resolute fortissimo. It is the *return* to D minor and its opening theme that – in hindsight – renders the hopeful middle section to be so bittersweetly tragic, and that gives the first section its extensive importance.

To be as close as possible to the original's virtuosity for the violin, Brahms decided to arrange the piece for the left hand alone. With his virtuosic transcription for two-handed piano, Ferruccio Busoni chose a different approach. As soon as one gets to know the score of Busoni's arrangement, it is hard to hear the piece without his poetic performance instructions, e.g. his iconic *quasi tromboni* at the beginning of the major-section. This touching, yet completely imaginary chorale of trombones has been shaping the way of perceiving the Chaconne for the whole 20th century. Even in playing Brahms' transcription, Busoni's ghost-trombones are enchanting inner ears of many to come. The transcriptions of Bach's D-minor-Chaconne are, for many ears, part of this *work*, and will find their path into our way of playing – one way or the other. My interpretation grants these influences a very conscious access into my playing, in order to capture the complexity of the *work*.



## THE MIDDLE PANEL: THE SCHUMANN/BECKER- PROJECT

Our way of playing has been changing a lot in the 20th century. Documents like manuscripts, letters, or contemporary reviews have gained a lot of importance in the world of interpreting music, at the cost of oral tradition. While this opened doors for musicology to take its place in performing and interpretation, some traditions perished, like improvising in Schumann's (and others') piano pieces. The *Symphonic Studies* nowadays have been subject to a certain professional consensus regarding the proper way of playing them. For a complete performance of the studies, it dictates, *all* the studies have to be played, including the ones from the *appendix* (never published by Robert Schumann himself) being skilfully placed within the others. As a result, the appendix has become an awkward side-product of our tradition: Schumann never intended to publish the five variations, yet for me – and likeminded ears – they are not to be separated from the *work*.

Composition has been changing, too, in the last century. With an increasing focus on electronic and electroacoustic music, conventional instruments have gone out of fashion in some parts of New Music and its *musique concrète*. Helmut Lachenmann, however, has been going his own path. His *musique concrète instrumentale* is written for orchestra-instruments and takes its compositional material from the *side-products* of tone-production, e.g. the scratching of a bow at the beginning of a string sound. This noise has always been part of the sound we know, but Lachenmann gives it its own *raison d'être*. In this CD's programme, the side-product that is Schumann's *appendix* will get its own, Lachenmannian self-value: On this CD, these pieces appear as their own and self-sufficient set of interwoven variations, continuing in the scheme of the Chaconne (theme and minor section; major section and *return* to minor section and opening theme).

The *appendix-project* served as the fundament for the following commissioned piece by Robin Becker, who wrote the fantasy «*Isle of Memory*» for this very CD as a continuation to Schumann's appendix. The piece commences with a «*Prologue*», cutting off the return to the theme at the end of the appendix that was played before. Not only the theme, but also playing-techniques from the Schumann-variations continue to glisten through the texture of the composition, like a *memory* from afar. The second part «*Shimmer*» still encapsulates the basic structure of the theme, but it is encased in the confines of an ever-present fog, which seems to rise progressively. During the whole piece, the *return* to Schumann's theme is only hinted at, but never truly fulfilled. As opposed to the Chaconne, a return to the beginning in Becker's «*Isle of Memory*» is virtually impossible, for a memory can never become fact again. The last part «*Sparkles*» shows itself to be quite distant from Schumann's theme, it appears only to be a mere afterthought. At the very end, however, the listeners find themselves in a complex, intricate and alienated version of the the first two bars of the original theme, as if one remembers a bygone dream. Becker's music lingers in the distant memories of Schumann and his time. A time which we will never be able to fully return to.

After the tragedy of the Chaconne and the ever-changing variations of the *Symphonic Studies*, Becker's «*Isle of Memory*» sets the scene for the last panel of this triptych.





## THE THIRD PANEL: THE RACHMANINOV-COLLAGES

Opposed to the first two panels, the last one is inspired greatly by *paintings* as an art form. Firstly, the last panel is a collage that unifies five miniatures by Rachmaninov. Secondly, Rachmaninov's flair for the visual arts is reflected in the name of his etudes: *Études-Tableaux* (study pictures). Thirdly, the famous prelude in B minor Op. 32 No. 10, named after the picture by the Swiss painter Arnold Böcklin, «*The Homecoming*» is placed right at the centre of this collage. The prelude and the painting unify the tragedy of a return, as introduced in the Chaconne, with the impossibility of an actual returning, as depicted in «*Isle of Memory*». The parallels to visual arts in Rachmaninov's œuvre are striking, and associations with Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* are obvious: Therefore, Mussorgsky's *promenade* – modulating from G to B minor – is setting the stage as a transition from the G minor prelude into the aforementioned *Homecoming-prelude*, although in this context *Returning-prelude* would probably be more telling.

The concept of *returning* in this collage is rather complex, and can be found on different, intertwined levels. In the complete cycle of Rachmaninov's preludes, an arc between the first (C sharp minor) and the last (D flat major) prelude, can be found: The motif of the first prelude returns in the last as a distant memory of its cycle's beginning and seems unable to decide between D flat major and C sharp minor. After some struggle, a triumphant major prevails: For more than two minutes, Rachmaninov holds the D flat pedal tone as soon as the major is finally reached. A conclusion *per aspera ad astra* would therefore present itself as a suitable ending to the CD. However, in the course of his programme, it has become rather obvious that one cannot completely free oneself of one's beginnings. The Chaconne was already denied the possibility of an *ad astra*, and the Collage in this programme will now suffer a similar

fate. As a result, the unmistakably confirmed D flat major cannot last forever, and it merges with the prelude Op. 3/2 in C sharp minor (Rachmaninov's first). Once again – like the return to minor in the Chaconne – a moment of resignation emerges after indulging in hope and joy. Although the two preludes (in D-flat major and C-sharp minor) do not appear in their chronological order, Rachmaninov's aforementioned arc, with the distant memory of its beginning (not unlike the Schumann/Becker-Project), shall still be preserved. Thus, this CD also closes with a reminiscence of *its own* beginning, the Chaconne. In this way, not only is Rachmaninov's cyclically conceived arc extended into this programme, but the theme of the Chaconne is endowed with an almost prophetic, transcendent function; as if we could have known from the very beginning.



# THANKS & IMPRESSUM

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