

T2-CD Review: César Franck (1822-1890): Prelude, Chorale and Fugue

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Tomaz Svete (1956)

Second Sonata for Piano dedicated to
Adriana Magdovski (2004)

Adriana Magdovski, piano

1 CD (40 min, 23 sec)

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Adriana Magdovski is a leading Slovenian, internationally renowned pianist. After studying in Graz, London and Stuttgart, she is building an international career, collaborating with numerous orchestras, soloists and contemporary composers. Her concert career has led her to European culture Capitals as well as the United States. The present CD is her debut.

The Belgian composer César Franck, who was ridiculously described by Camille Saint-Saëns as the eternal modulator, was committed to Wagner's obsessive chromatism, which combined this intensely sensual and dramatic harmonious language with a true sense of Catholic piety. The effect can be astounding: the silent thinking of a devoted nature is always followed by an emotional outburst, often within seconds. For a pianist, this is not an easy task, as he/she has to experience these mood swings without resorting to cheap melodrama or performative religiosity.

Of all Franck's piano solo works, Prelude, Chorale and Fugue is most often performed. It was written by Cesar Franck when he was in his early 60s.

In writing the Prelude and Fugue (Chorale was added as an afterthought) Franck apparently paid homage to Bach. The actual composition, however, points to a number of other influences, namely Beethoven, Schumann, and Liszt. It was Liszt who held a special place in Franck's heart, as they have been great friends since the beginning of Franck's career. Regardless of the influences, the music is purely Franck, meaning that it repeatedly becomes embroiled in conflicts between deep contemplation

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and ardent enthusiasm, argues in a harmonious language of intense chromatism, and freely uses a cyclical form fully supported by both Liszt and Wagner.

The performance of Slovenian pianist Adriana Magdovski on the present CD is full of light, natural flow, natural breath, free, thoughtful, authentic, deep. The introductory Prelude expresses above all peace that transcends common reason. Peace from another dimension, which Franck knew very well. Eruptive, dynamically condensed parts also fall into the same category. Choral interpretatively expresses a clear dynamic plan. Everything has its place, purpose. Fugue, on the other hand, stands resolutely, grounded in thoughtful internal virtuosity, to which any kitsch or cheapness is foreign. Interpretation as an invitation to a deeper confrontation with oneself.

Tomaz Svete (1956) is one of leading Slovenian composers. In his extensive oeuvre, he dedicates his attention mainly to contemporary opera. On the present CD we have a work that has the capacity to become one of the cornerstones of Slovenian piano literature of the 21st century. Great cyclical work that harmonizes unusually well with the first part of the CD. On a subconscious level, the pianist connected the spirituality and depth of Franck's music to Svete's 2nd Sonata for piano solo. As if guided by the same spirit. Through three Movements of the Sonata dedicated to the pianist (Deciso, quasi meccanico ma appassionato, Passacaglia, Corale, toccata e fuge) we hear a song about love, death, loneliness, the search for the invisible, some brief views of the musical past (as indicated by the names of 2nd and 3rd Movements), only to jump right into the wild and crazy 21st century and all that still awaits us behind the veil of today.



ADRIANA MAGDOVSKI was born in Maribor into a Polish-Macedonian family. She studied with prof. Milena Sever at Conservatory Maribor. During this time, she drew the attention of the Slovenian music public for the first time to her exceptional musical talent. She received an absolute prize at the 21st TEMSIG competition and won a score of perfect 100 points. This was followed by solo recitals throughout Slovenia, recordings for RTV Maribor and RTV Slovenia and first performances with the orchestras of the Slovenian Philharmonic, RTV Slovenia and the Maribor Philharmonic.

She has performed in all major Slovenian music Halls: Gallus Hall of Cankarjev dom, Great Hall of the Slovenian Philharmonic, Union Hall, Casino Hall of SNG Maribor, Great Hall of SNG Maribor...

At the age of fifteen she was admitted to the Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst in Graz (Austria), in the class of prof. Doris Wolf-Blumauer. This was followed by training with prof. Norma Fisher in London and postgraduate studies at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik und darstellende Kunst in Stuttgart (Germany), with professors Oleg Maisenberg and Wolfgang Blosler.

An important influence for her artistic development was the relationship with the great flutist Irena Grafenauer which started at the International Music Festival September in Maribor and continued at the Mozarteum in Salzburg. As a chamber musician she collaborates with names such as soprano Soula

Parassidis, tenor Norman Reinhardt, flutist Irena Grafenauer, sporanos Bernarda Bobro, Sabina Cvilak and many others. The winner of the Preteren Fund, composer Tomaz Svete, dedicated his 2nd piano Sonata for her.

Adriana Magdovski is the winner of the Martha Debelli Award given by the University of Graz to the best students, the winner of the Gina Bachauer International Junior Piano Competition in Salt Lake City (USA) and the recipient of the Soroptimist International Amsterdam Scholarship and the Gallus Award (in connection with the Slovenian Philharmonic).

As a soloist she regularly performs and records in Europe (Germany, Austria, Poland, France, Belgium, Cyprus...) and the USA.

Adriana Magdovski holds the position of an associate professor at the Department of Music of the University of Maribor. Her students are winners of the highest recognition for artistic achievements of the University of Maribor-Perlach Award and prestigious scholarships at the Berklee College of Music in Boston (USA) and Trinity Laban College of Music in London (UK).

Adriana Magdovski is regular guest in television shows, round tables and international workshops.

Ms Magdovski enjoys a special relationship with the legendary pianist and pedagogue prof. Norma Fisher. In 2016 and 2017, she was her assistant at the Royal College of Music in London, at the London Masterclasses; Royal Northern College of Music Manchester and at the Vladimir Horowitz International Piano Competition in Kiev (Ukraine).