

94378

BRILLIANT  
CLASSICS



# HUMMEL

## COMPLETE PIANO SONATAS

Costantino Mastroprimiano *fortepiano*



**Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837)**  
**Complete Piano Sonatas**

**CD1 54'50**

*Trois Sonates pour le Fortepiano ou Clavecin avec accompagnement de Flûte ou Violon ou Violoncelle composées et dédiées à Sa Majesté la Reine d'Angleterre par Jean Hummel jun. de Vienne Âgé de 14 Ans œuvre 2me*

**Sonata No.1 in C Op.2 No.3**

(for fortepiano solo)

- |                         |      |
|-------------------------|------|
| 1. I. Allegro spiritoso | 7'30 |
| 2. II. Adagio           | 4'20 |
| 3. III. Rondo           | 5'54 |

*Grande Sonata pour le Fortepiano, composée et dédiée à Madame la Comtesse Lonczynska née Comtesse Zabielska œuvre 30 par Jean Nep. Hummel*

**Sonata No.4 in C Op.38**

- |                             |       |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| 4. I. Adagio Maestoso –     |       |
| Allegro mod( era)to         | 14'16 |
| 5. II. Adagio con molto     |       |
| Espressione                 | 9'22  |
| 6. III. Finale. Prestissimo | 6'42  |

7. **Fantasia in C Op.124**  
für das Fortepiano, über ein thema aus Mozart's:  
*die Hochzeit des Figaro* 6'36

**CD2 52'51**

*Sonate pour le Fortepiano composée et dédiée à Monsieur Joseph Haydn par Jean Nep. Hummel de Vienne Op.13*

**Sonata No.2 in E flat Op.13**

- |                         |      |
|-------------------------|------|
| 1. I. Allegro con brio  | 9'00 |
| 2. II. Adagio con grand |      |
| Espressione             | 6'44 |
| 3. III. Finale.         |      |
| All(egr)o con Spirito   | 8'47 |

*Grosse Sonate für das Fortepiano Ihrer Kaiserlichen Hoheit Der Frau Erb Grossherzogin Maria von Sachsen Weimar etc.etc. von Joh. Nep. Hummel, 81 tes Werk*

**Sonata No.5 in F sharp minor Op.81**

- |                        |      |
|------------------------|------|
| 4. I. Allegro          | 9'19 |
| 5. II. Largo con molt' |      |
| Espressione            | 9'00 |
| 6. III. Vivace         | 9'20 |

**CD3 51'08**

*Grande Sonate pour le Fortepiano composée et dédiée à Mademoiselle Madeleine de Kurzbeck par J.N.Hummel de Vienne Op.20*

**Sonata No.3 in F minor Op.20**

- |                                   |      |
|-----------------------------------|------|
| 1. I. All(egr)o Moderato          | 9'10 |
| 2. II. Adagio Maestoso - attacca  | 6'56 |
| 3. III. Presto - Ancor più presto | 4'49 |

*Grande Sonate Brillante pour le Fortepiano seul composée et dédiée à Madame Eugénie Béer née Silhn à Vienne par J.N.Hummel œuvre 106*

**Sonata No.6 in D Op.106**

- |                               |       |
|-------------------------------|-------|
| 4. I. Allegro moderato        |       |
| ma risoluto                   | 12'57 |
| 5. II. Un scherzo all'antica. |       |
| Allegro non troppo            | 4'17  |
| 6. III. Larghetto a Capriccio | 5'34  |
| 7. IV. Finale. Allegro Vivace | 7'15  |

Costantino Mastropimiano *fortepiano*

**Johann Nepomuk Hummel** (1778-1837) is a name that's usually found in conjunction with other composers of the period, such as Mozart or Beethoven, in relation to whom he always comes across as a rival or an underling: the former with respect to Beethoven and the piano, since both were considered masters in Vienna at the time; and the latter because he studied under Mozart from the age of 8, actually living in his home for two years.

Hummel's unflinching devotion to Mozart comes across clearly in his compositions. His piano works are full of quotations of themes, transcriptions and arrangements that echo the master's compositions. Evidence of the influence of his teacher goes beyond these homages, however, since Hummel also inherited remarkable skills of improvisation, the fruit of a style of performance and composing that prevailed among keyboard players of the age, although it has yet to be studied in depth by contemporary scholars.

Potential developments in keyboard compositions were often put to the test in improvisations, which were a sort of showcase for musicians. This was common practice for many composers, including Beethoven. The forms of improvisation that worked best were then perfected in written compositions that were ultimately printed. As the spread of music publishing evolved, composers often lived far away from the musicians who played their works. To make sure that what they had in mind was clear to all performers, they increasingly tended to enrich their scores with notes, symbols and indications.

Another musician to play a concrete role in Hummel's musical education was **Haydn**, from whom he learnt to use the *Ars Rhetorica*, as his Sonatas clearly reveal. The main body of these works consists of the **6 Sonatas – Op.2 No.3, Op.13, Op.20, Op.38, Op.81 and Op.106**, written between 1792 and 1824. In addition there are also the solo version of the Sonata Op.92 for four hands, 3 others of uncertain attribution and the original, unpublished version of Sonata Op.20.

In his Sonatas Hummel was able to experiment with new approaches to the piano

and other instruments. The most “modern” of these solutions were then faithfully recorded in his **Method** for piano, published in 1828. This is a theoretical work with practical implications in which the author attempts to describe not only the correct mechanical approach to playing the notes, but also the overall musical intent.

A feature typical of the Viennese school was *discourse*, meaning not so much melody as the sense of a spoken inflection in the musical line by means of which certain syntactic and rhetorical devices could be borrowed from speech and applied to sound. This included the practice of *Decoration* typical of the Biedermeier style.

It is significant the Hummel did not only use Viennese instruments (**Walter**, C. Graf), but also owned an **Erard** (now kept at the Hummel Museum in Bratislava), which speaks for his vision as a composer for the piano. Indeed, he was a true piano authority. **Liszt** (or his father Adam) was keen to study with him, though in the end he fell back on Carl Czerny. As for **Schubert**, who appreciated the degree of compositional complexity achieved by the school of Hummel, he resolved to dedicate his last three piano sonatas to him. **Chopin** and **Schumann** also owed a great deal to him, especially in their early works.

Despite such widespread acclaim, however, in time the popularity of Hummel's works began to wane, as piano playing tended to become less conceptual and more spectacular. Certain lesser compositions remained in the repertoire, though in general they were considered merely decorative and somewhat dated. For example, the Italian pianist Dino Ciani included the Sonata Op.13 in his programme for a recital held in Milan in July 1966.

© Costantino Mastroprimiano

Translation by Kate Singleton



Costantino Mastroprimiano today represents a singular personality in the scene of the fortepiano. After his studies of piano and chamber music with M. Marvulli, Guido Agosti and Riccardo Brengola, he decided to devote himself to the study of the fortepiano.

He has recorded a varied discography (Tactus and Brilliant Classics). Absolute reference is complete recording of the sonatas of Muzio Clementi (18 CDs for Brilliant Classics).

Prompt for its results at festivals and seasons in Italy (Accademia Filarmonica Romana, I Concerti della Normale di Pisa, Società del Quartetto di Milano, Accademia Cristofori di Firenze etc) and Europe (Les Nuits de Septembre – Liège, Noites de Queluz, Uni Mozarteum – Salzburg, etc.)

He is Professor of fortepiano at the Conservatoire of Perugia and visiting professor at the Koninklijk Conservatorium Den Haag, Universitat – Mozarteum Salzburg and other important institutions.



Recording: January 2017, Oratorio di Santa Cecilia, Perugia; April 2017 (Opp.81, 106 & 124), Verbania, Italy

Recording Producer: Costantino Mastroprimiano

Recording and Editing: Daniele Marinelli and Luca Maria Burocchi (Teclas Studio)

Mastering: Umberto Ugoberti (Pitch Audio)

Photo backside booklet: © Fabrizio Trionfera

Instruments: Forteplano Urbano Petroselli, after Anton Walter ca.1790; Erard “en forme de clavecin” 1838 (Opp. 81, 106 & 124)

Tuning: Urbano Petroselli - Marco Barletta

Cover: *Riva del Garda*, Carl Hummel (1821-1907)

© & © 2018 Brilliant Classics