

# GHEDINI

Musica da Concerto  
Musica Concertante

# HINDEMITH

Fünf Stücke Op.44 No.4

Simonide Braconi *viola & viola d'amore* · Enrico Bronzi *cello*  
Nuova Orchestra da Camera "Ferruccio Busoni"  
Massimo Belli *conductor*



## Giorgio Federico Ghedini & Paul Hindemith

### Giorgio Federico Ghedini 1892-1965

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|--|-------------------------------|------|
| 1. <b>Musica da Concerto</b>             | 4. Lebhaft (Vivace)           | 1'47 |
| <i>for Viola &amp; Viola d'Amore and</i> | 5. Sehr Langsam (Molto lento) | 4'08 |
| <i>String orchestra</i> (1953) 24'21     | 6. Lebhaft (Vivace)           | 3'27 |

### Paul Hindemith 1895-1963

#### Fünf Stücke Op.44 No.4 *for String Orchestra* (1927)

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|--|------|
| 2. Langsam (Lento)                     | 2'42 |
| 3. Langsam. Schnell<br>(Lento. Veloce) | 1'53 |

### Giorgio Federico Ghedini

- |                              |       |
|------------------------------|-------|
| 7. <b>Musica Concertante</b> |       |
| <i>for Cello and String</i>  |       |
| <i>Orchestra</i> (1962)      | 15'47 |

Simonide Braconi *viola & viola d'amore* · Enrico Bronzi *cello*  
Lucio Degani *1st violin* (tr. 2-6)

Nuova Orchestra da Camera "Ferruccio Busoni"  
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The history of music at its most established and reliable is not always immune to misunderstanding, fashion, mistaken judgment and bias. Take the case of **Giorgio Federico Ghedini** (1892-1965) and **Paul Hindemith** (1895-1963), for instance. Both of them have suffered a form of oblivion when in fact they should have been recognized for their exceptionally creative musical personalities. Ghedini, the author of the *Musica da concerto per viola e archi* (1953) and the *Musica concertante per violoncello e archi* (1962), was a man of great learning and culture. In these two works he celebrates the deeply evocative sound universe of the viola and the cello in a dream-like dialogue with the strings, giving rise to unresolved themes that transmute like vibrations of the inner soul. Hindemith, for his part, began his career composing crudely expressionist works and only later devoted his attention to exploration of form and sound. In their creative energy, his *Cinque pezzi per orchestra* (1927) pay homage to Bach in the strict handling of harsh counterpoint that can dissolve into mysterious lyricism, with an intense and captivating asymmetrical finale in the *violino concertante*. Is this New Objectivity? Perhaps – for sure it is music as a form of the subconscious.

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Translation by Kate Singleton

**Giorgio Federico Ghedini** (1892-1965) was born in Cuneo in Piedmont, Northern Italy. He studied organ and piano as a child, then cello and harmony/counterpoint during a three-year period at the Liceo Musicale in Turin, having settled there in 1905. He studied composition privately with Giovanni Cravero then briefly with Marco Enrico Bossi in Bologna, graduating in 1911. In the early 1920's he returned to Turin's Liceo Musicale as a teacher of piano, then harmony, then composition. Having committed himself to teaching, he later taught composition at the conservatories of Palma and finally Milan, where he was director for more than ten years. Among those of his pupils who would become most distinguished

were Claudio Abbado, Luciano Berio, Guido Cantelli and Niccolò Castiglioni. As a composer, Ghedini became widely known only in the late 1920's and another decade would pass before he was taken seriously as one of the foremost modern Italian composers. *Architettura* (1940) proved to be a landmark piece on the road to a wider appreciation of Ghedini's music. His list of compositions includes nine operas (one of which is based on Melville's *Billy Budd*), more than a dozen orchestral pieces – mostly concertante works, several for unusual combinations - many piano pieces, chamber music including two string quartets, two violin sonatas and a wind quintet, and vocal and choral works. His *Concerto dell'Albatro*, scored for violin, cello, piano, narrator and orchestra includes in its finale fragments from *Moby Dick*.

In his twenties Ghedini wrestled with “the all-consuming desire to compose; fantasising about writing important works, about becoming ‘somebody’; beautiful plans, wonderful ideals ... but no money; composing doesn't buy you bread, especially to start with”. He loved the music of much older periods – Frescobaldi, Monteverdi, the Gabriellis, etc. His independence from any school of composers and his alienation from avant garde trends make him a genuinely individual figure. Although recognition of his value was slow to emerge, this was not because of any lateness in his artistic maturity; he had found his own voice some years before the breakthrough success of *Architecture*. In a piece such as the *Musica da Concerto* for viola and string orchestra Ghedini's ability to write passages in a completely tonal idiom while achieving a freshness, a “newness”, is evident. Schoenberg's assertion that there was “still plenty of music to be written in C major” comes to mind. This valuable addition to the viola repertoire is not remotely virtuosic or demonstrative – no more exhibitionist than Vaughan Williams' *Lark Ascending*, for example. Yet it is a more soloistic work than Ghedini's *Musica concertante* for cello and strings (1962), also included on this CD. Another preoccupation of Ghedini's is instrumental tone-colour and texture, for which he possessed a specially sensitive ear. While the richly lyrical or freely rhapsodic sections of this work are contrasted with more animated, purposeful passages, it is the slower, expansive music that is most characteristic – still

and beautiful in its simplicity. At certain moments the pure water of Sibelius's Sixth Symphony or the chaste language of Gerald Finzi may well come to mind. Although Ghedini's musical personality is seemingly introspective, there is equally a quiet directness of expression. Dating from 1953, *Musica da concerto* was a piece perhaps surprisingly included among Karajan's earliest recordings (accompanying viola-player Bruno Giuranna), while Thomas Beecham also recorded the work in 1959 with Frederick Riddle as soloist. Ghedini's music was also championed by his pupils Guido Cantelli and Claudio Abbado, as well as Giulini and Celibidache.

Ghedini described composing as “an unimaginable mystery: the creation of a work of art starting from the simple melodic line that is the essence ... melody is everything. Harmony is like the bottle for the wine, the frame for the painting. In architecture too, the first thing you need is the drawing. In my composing room, all luxury disturbs me. A piano that is too good distracts me with the sensuality of its sound. A mediocre instrument fires my imagination.” Then, more generally: “Never turn art into a comfortable career. Music is invention, always; it is separate from everyday reality, a dream, a poetic vision. You must love your own art, no matter what sacrifice you make for it.”

**Paul Hindemith** (1895-1963) was among the most prolific and versatile of twentieth-century composers. He was also a tremendously all-round musician – proficient on nearly every instrument, outstanding viola soloist and quartet member (he founded the Amar Quartet), conductor and composer of music in all genres including pieces for children. He wrote a sonata for every orchestral instrument. He was also a music theorist and an outstanding teacher. In 1935 he accepted an offer from the Turkish government to oversee the foundation of a music school in Istanbul. Through his typically thorough and dedicated work in transforming the music scene in Turkey he became a widely respected figure.

Hindemith strongly believed that music should be useful in a practical sense. *Gebrauchsmusik* is the appropriate German word for the philosophy of music

composed not merely for its own sake but for a specific purpose, such as a particular ceremony, for dancing or for children/students to perform. Hindemith was attracted to Expressionism before espousing the anti-Romantic, neo-Classical movement which flourished in the 1920's. He composed his *Fünf Stücke*, Op.44 No 4 for string orchestra in 1927. This group of pieces typifies Hindemith's practicality. Though they were composed for a school orchestra to play, in no way do they suggest any compromise in Hindemith's artistry or inventiveness. This is music of substance and depth, satisfying for both amateur and professional ensembles. Though everything may be played in first position, these pieces are not easy. Hindemith wrote: "one cannot require that music written today and for today's needs be such that it can be sight-read straight off by everybody. Here the amateur is given some hard nuts to crack." The tempos for the five pieces are slow, slow leading to fast (not too distant from a hornpipe), fast, very slow and fast. In the final piece a solo violin has a tricky part including passages of running semiquavers.

Ghedini's *Musica concertante* for cello (1962) is one of several of his works in which he writes for his own instrument as soloist. He wrote about twenty concerto-like works but gave too few of them the simple title of concerto. From the outset the soloist presents disarmingly simple melodic material. One cannot avoid the generalisation that Italian composers and performers have always been natural purveyors of the cantabile line. About a quarter of the way into the piece a preoccupation with semitonal oscillations becomes a striking feature. While there are passages of increasing animation or intensity, the prevailing qualities are nobility, serenity, understatement, purity, sincerity and unexaggerated eloquence. To the unpretentious Ghedini any showiness is anathema. His honesty and integrity no doubt contribute to his natural facility in making the clichéd sound unclichéd. Although Ghedini's name will be unknown to many, his music does not deserve to be so neglected. Like many other composers, he suffers because he did not follow most modern trends. A reappraisal is overdue.

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**Simonide Braconi** completed his musical studies under the guidance of Giuranna, Bashmet and Kashkashian, graduating with honours at the Conservatory of Rome, Freiburg (Germany) and Accademia Chigiana in Siena.

Awarded in several international solo competitions ("L. Tertis", Cologne, etc.), in 1994 he was chosen by Maestro R. Muti as First viola in the orchestra of the Teatro alla Scala. He has also been invited to play with the Berliner Philharmoniker.

He has recorded for important record labels and has collaborated as a soloist with conductors of the calibre of W. Sawallisch and R. Muti.

Together with the other first parts of the orchestra he formed the Scala String Quartet.

He is a member of juries in various international competitions and is invited to hold courses at important institutions.

He teaches at the Milano Music Master.

He is also a viola d'amore soloist and as a composer he has published several works for Sonzogno and MAP. Several of his compositions have been premiered at the Teatro alla Scala and the Philharmonie in Berlin.

Cellist and conductor, **Enrico Bronzi** is born in Parma in 1973. He is the cellist of the Trio di Parma, with whom he has carried out intense concert activity since 1990, appearing in the most important concert halls of Europe, USA, South America and Australia (Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center in New York, Berlin Philharmonie, Wiener Konzerthaus, Kölner Philharmonie, Herkulessaal in Munich, St. Peterburg Philharmonic Hall, Wigmore Hall and Queen Elizabeth Hall in London, Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires). The group has also successfully competed in a number of international competitions in Florence, Melbourne, Lyon and Munich, and has received the “Premio Abbiati” from Italian musical critics. Since 2001, Bronzi has coupled his chamber group activity with an active career as a soloist, which after having won a prize in the Rostropovich Competition in Paris, culminated with the first prize in the Paulo Cello Competition of Helsinki in 2002. On that occasion, he also received the Special Prize dedicated to R. Sommer for the best performance of Dvorak's Concerto with the Helsinki Philharmonic. He regularly participates in a number of festivals including Lucerne, Melbourne, Turku, Naantali, Stresa, Ravenna, and Lockenhaus. He has performed as soloist under the direction of C. Abbado, V. Delman, C. Eschenbach, P. Berglund, F. Bruggen, K. Penderecki. He appeared together with international musicians like Martha Argerich, Alexander Lonquich, Gidon Kremer, Angela Hewitt, Wolfram Christ, Stefan Milenkovich, Joshua Bell, Hagen Quartett, Giardino Armonico. He was



taught conducting by Jorma Panula and has appeared as guest conductor and soloist with Orchestra Mozart, Camerata Salzburg, Kremerata Baltica, Tapiola Sinfonietta, Orchestra della Toscana, Orchestra Filarmonica del Teatro La Fenice, Orchestra da Camera di Mantova, Orchestra Haydn. For three years he collaborated as cello solo at the La Scala Theatre in Milan and he regularly takes place in the juries of major international competitions (Premio Borciani, Premio ‘Trio di Trieste’, Concorso ‘V. Gui’ of Florence, Turku Cello Competition...). He carries out an intense activity teaching and he has been a professor at the Universität Mozarteum in Salzburg since 2007. He's Artistic Director of the activity of the Fondazione Perugia Musica Classica. Enrico Bronzi plays a Vincenzo Panormo cello dated 1770.

### Nuova Orchestra da Camera “Ferruccio Busoni”

1st violins: Lucio Degani, Antonella Defrenza, Giada Visentin, Leonardo Giovine, Ales Lavrencic  
2nd violins: Enzo Ligresti, Furio belli, Leopoldo Pesce, Anna Apollonio, Vanja Radlovacki  
Viole: Gabriele Gastaldello, Sara Zoto  
Cello: Giuseppe Barutti, Antonio Merici  
Double bass: Harada Mitsugu

The “Ferruccio Busoni” Chamber Orchestra was founded in 1965 by Aldo Belli, which makes it one of the oldest chamber orchestras in Italy. The ensemble has held hundreds of concerts in Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Germany, Switzerland, Russia, Tunisia, Mexico and Italy, with exceptional soloists such as Salvatore Accardo, Ivry Gitlis, Roberto Plano, Domenico Nordio, Massimo Quarta.

In 2013 the orchestra inaugurated, as a representative of Italy, the International Silver Lyre Festival organized by the Philharmonic Society of St. Petersburg and in 2021 it represented the Italian government on a tour in Mexico.

The orchestra has recorded 26 CDs for Velut Luna, Concerto, Warner and Amadeus, and currently records for Brilliant Classics.

Massimo Belli graduated with full marks and honours with Renato Zanettovich. He studied with the Trio of Trieste, Piero Farulli, Henryk Szeryng and Salvatore Accardo. Winner of numerous competitions, he has played solo and conducted in Europe, the former Soviet Union, Turkey and South America.

He has recorded for Sipario, Nuova Era, Concerto Classics, Amadeus and Warner, and is currently recording for Brilliant Classics.





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