

Program Notes **by Elisenda Fábregas**

Hommage à Mozart was written for concert pianist Eric Himy and performed in a worldwide concert tour in 2006 - the year of the 250th anniversary of Mozart's birth.

In "Hommage à Mozart" I wanted to honor Mozart's gift for melody and his love for the vocal line, and the incredible feeling of spontaneity and improvisation of his music, in spite of being highly structured, and Mozart's wide emotional range. This work is not a theme and variations: Mozart's themes are integrated within the music so they seem to grow out of the musical fabric. Two characteristics of the selected Mozart themes (a rhythmic motif and repeated notes) are an integral part of the work.

"Hommage à Mozart" has three distinct sections organized in a modified rondo form that flows without interruption. The main theme of this work is always varied every time it returns, sometimes with Mozart motifs embedded in it and undistinguishable. The contrasting sections are based on Mozart's themes.

The first section laments the death of Mozart, his sudden and untimely death and the sad circumstances of his burial. The main theme is a slow poignantly lyrical melody based on the descending interval of minor second, perfect fourth and repeated notes (referencing the dark side of the Queen of the Night Aria), surrounded by colorful and mysterious cascading passages. This section introduces three Mozart quotations: a brief partial quotation of the dramatic orchestral theme of the beginning of the first movement of Piano Concerto No. 24 in C minor, the theme from the first movement of Piano Concerto #19, and Aria #20 (Ein Madchen oder Weibchen). The end of this first section is the climax and the center of gravity of the whole work, and the dramatic silence that leads into the second section is a resigned and painful breath.

The atmosphere of the second section is full of resigned acceptance but it eventually brings warmth and hope by introducing and developing the theme of the second movement (Larghetto) of Piano Concerto No. 24 in C minor.

The third section celebrates Mozart's humor and lightheartedness by introducing Aria #14 (Königin der Nacht) from the Magic Flute and the rhythmic theme in F major from the first movement of Piano Concerto #19. The work stops suddenly at the end of a mad Queen of the Night laughing passage, then a brief slow passage (*Sostenuto e con dolore*) brings us back to the reality of death, and then the mad neurotic laugh starts again and ends with a whimsical Mozart laugh!