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Eugène Ysaÿe Violin Discoveries Sherban Lupu violin Henri Bonamy piano Liepāja Symphony Orchestra | Paul Mann

Eugène YSAŸE: Violin Discoveries

Scènes Sentimentales (1885)				11:41
1	No. 3	Allegro appassionato	6:15	
2	No. 5	Moderato	5:23	
3	Élégie (c. 1	912)		5:11
Trois Études-Poèmes (1924)				20:11
4	No. 1	Sérénade (Allegretto poco scherzando)	4:25	
5	No. 2	Au ruisseau (Poco lento)	3:57	
6	No. 3	Cara memoria (Molto moderato alla marcia funèbre)	11:49	
7	Petite fantaisie romantique (c. 1901)		5:06	
8	Violin Concerto in G minor (1910) Orchestration by Sabin Pautza (2017)			25:08
Total playing time:				67:17

All world première recordings (except track 7)

Sherban Lupu violin

Henri Bonamy piano (tracks 1-7) Liepāja Symphony Orchestra (track 8) Paul Mann conductor (track 8)



YSAŸE AND HIS MUSIC

Belgian violinist, conductor and composer Eugène Ysaÿe (July 16th, 1858–May 12th, 1931) has been recognized as one of the greatest violin virtuosos of the 19th and early 20th centuries; regarded as the "King of the Violin" by Nathan Milstein, his legacy has inspired generations of musicians. Ysaÿe started his violin training with his father, then entered the Liege Conservatory to study with Désiré Heynberg and Rodolphe Massart. After winning several competitions in the conservatory, he studied with Henryk Wieniawsky in Brussels and Henri Vieuxtemps in Paris, soon establishing an international reputation as a great virtuoso throughout many European countries as well as Russia and the United States.¹

As a violinist of the franco-belgian school, Ysaÿe's mastery of the instrument, his artistic interpretation and his kindness and enthusiasm enabled him to maintain close friendships with many of the greatest French composers of his time, including César Franck, Camille Saint-Saëns, Gabriel Fauré, Ernest Chausson and Vincent d'Indy. His style of musical interpretation was ideal, and he promoted 20th century French music by premiering a great amount of works which had been dedicated to him, including Franck's Violin Sonata in A major, Chausson's *Poème* and Debussy's String Quartet.

Ysaÿe was also a true avant-garde composer whose works feature revolutionary modern violin technique, unique expressive devices, profound musicality and harmonic originality, which eventually served as the bridge between the era of the Romantic virtuoso and contemporary music. His *Six Solo Violin Sonatas* have become some of the most popular unaccompanied violin works of the 21st century concert stage, along with J.S Bach's solo violin sonatas and partitas and Paganini's *24 Caprices*. Out of admiration for specific performers, Ysaÿe dedicated each sonata to six different violinists with the intention of highlighting various styles of performance. The whole set exemplifies Ysaÿe's finest writing of violin music through the use of new compositional devices.

One is forced to wonder why so many of his works remain unknown and unpublished. Perhaps his talent in composition was overshadowed by his mastery of performing and was also underestimated by people, including himself, at the time. The following words by Ysaÿe from an interview with Frederick Martens shows how modestly he viewed his own compositions:

"In the days of Viotti and Rode the harmonic possibilities were more limited— they had only a few chords, and hardly any chords of the ninth. But now harmonic material for the development of a new violin technique



¹ Antoine Ysaÿe and Bertram Ratcliffe, *Ysaÿe, His Life, Work, and Influence* (London: William Heinemann LTD, 1947), 21-26.

is there: I have some violin studies, in manuscripts, which I may publish someday, devoted to that end. I am always somewhat hesitant about publishing— there are many things I might publish, but I have seen so much brought out that was banal, poor, unworthy, that I have always been inclined to mistrust the value of my own creations rather than fall into the same error. We have the scale of Debussy and his successors to draw upon, their new chords and successions of fourth and fifths— for new technical formulas are always evolved out of and follow after new harmonic discoveries— though there is as yet no violin method which gives a fingering for the whole tone scale. Perhaps we will have to wait until Kreisler or I will have written one which makes plain the new flowering of technical beauty and aesthetic development which it brings to the violin."²

The production of this album originated from Sherban Lupu's tribute to the great 20th century violin teacher Joseph Gingold, who made significant contributions to violin teaching in the United States. The first violinist to give the performance of Ysaÿe's Sonata No.3, "Ballade" for solo violin, Gingold was a pupil of Ysaÿe during his stay in Belgium from 1927 to 1930. Lupu studied with Gingold in his studio at Indiana University in the 1970s and recalls:

"Mr. Gingold had this extraordinary ability, like all great Russian story tellers, to imitate what Ysaÿe was saying. He told me that Ysaÿe often improvised and that his improvisations were far more interesting than the six sonatas he wrote. However, at the same time he was writing music continuously. Therefore, I felt like it was my duty, my task, and my calling to try to find out what else Ysaÿe wrote. It is a tribute to my teacher."³

In 2012, Lupu started his journey to discover Ysaÿe's remaining manuscripts by visiting the libraries of Brussels and Liège, the main libraries containing most of his personal archives. He found some very interesting things in the Royal Library of Belgium in Brussels, though the main sources of this album were discovered in the library of The Royal Conservatoire of Liège with the help of librarian Mr. Philippe Gilson. Lupu was directed to a stack of Ysaÿe's paper manuscripts, which was about "Twelve feet long and three feet [in] height," sitting on the floor and covered in one inch of dust. He spent the next three days cleaning the dust off every single piece of paper by hand. Lupu edited the pieces on this album out of the manuscripts, adding fingerings and bowings, and readied them for performance use.

This album is a result of several years of effort by Lupu, similar to previous contributions he has made to the Romanian violinist and composer George Enescu.



² Frederick H. Martens, *Violin Mastery: Talks with Master Violinists and Teachers*

⁽New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1919), 2.

³ Sherban Lupu, interview by Qianyi Fan, March 23, 2021.

The Scènes Sentimentales were written in 1885, at the moment when Eugène Ysaÿe made the most important decision in his life— he decided to leave the Konzerthaus in Berlin and return to Paris as a concert violinist, where he soon impressed French musical society and critics. Ysaÿe likely performed his own *Scènes Sentimentales*, which would have showcased his unparalleled prowess in musical interpretation. No. 3, marked *Allegro appassionato*, begins with a burst of punctuated octaves; above the undulating piano line, octave leaps in the violin bring a poignant nostalgia into the mood. The piece as a whole is both dramatic and sensitive. The metric ambiguity created by the emphasis on the second beat is heard throughout the work, inspiring great joy and imagination in the listeners. Dotted rhythms sparkle in the middle section of the piece, while an abundance of double stops demonstrates the virtuosity of the young composer. Structured similarly to No. 3, No. 5: *Moderato* opens in D-flat major with charming lyricism. There is a poetic beauty within the synthesis of the winding melody in the violin and the syncopated driving rhythm in the piano. Both No. 3 and No. 5 feature a kind of romantic cantabile style with flexible movement and expressive legato.

The next piece, *Elégie*, was discovered with no title and no ending. A precious piece that shows Ysaÿe at his most compositionally inspirational, this extremely beautiful piece could possibly have beeen used as a slow movement of one of Ysaÿe's violin concertos. Lupu completed the ending and entitled it *Elégie*. The piece is believed to be written at the beginning of the 20th century around the same time with Ysaye's *Rêve d'enfant* song; Lupu has dated it possibly around 1912. The descending chromatic line in the piano introduction explores a variety of colors, while the lament in the violin solo conveys a hint of sorrow within the serenity of F-sharp minor.

The *Trois Etudes*-Poèmes, another unpublished collection, was compiled in 1924 and contains three individual works. Although they were written at different times and dedicated to different people, Ysaÿe organized those three works together and intended to publish them as a whole set in 1924, one year after the publication of his *Solo Violin Sonatas*. No. 1: *Serenade (Allegretto poco scherzando)* was found in the Royal Library of Belgium in Brussels and was possibly dedicated to Ysaÿe's student, Siegel⁴. An amusing, tango-like piece in G minor, the Serenade is in a dancelike 6/8 meter with the emphasis on the downbeats. The handwritten copies came without a piano score; it was obvious, however, that a piano part was needed because of the two bars of rest at the beginning. The piano accompaniment was later composed by Sabin Pautza, who orchestrated the *Violin Concerto* on this album.

No. 2: *Au ruisseau (Poco lento)* was dedicated to the Belgian violinist, Laurent Angenot (1873–1949), who was once a pupil of Ysaÿe in Brussels.⁵ The most etude-like piece among all three works for its extensive use of double stops, it is nonetheless different from Paganini – Ysaÿe's use of double stops centered around the first



 ⁴ Antoine Ysaÿe, *Ysaÿe*, trans. Frank Clarkson (Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire: W.E. Hill & Sons, 1980), 212.
⁵ Ibid., 211.

finger of the left hand as the base while achieving a relatively equal balance among all fingers. As we have seen in his *Six Violin Sonatas*, he organized fingerings economically, even in extremely difficult passages; at the same time, his technique is complementary to the music.

An indisputable but overlooked masterwork, No. 3: *Cara memoria* (*Molto moderato alla marcia funebre*) is perhaps the most special of the set. A slow, E-flat minor funeral march in 6/4 meter, the repetitiveness of the dotted-rhythmic pattern and the static harmonics in the opening theme might remind listeners of another Parisian composer, Erik Satie. As the work fully develops, the imitative conversation between the piano and violin draws upon the chamber music quality of the work, while the monologue of the violin is full of sympathetic fantasy. The whole collection demonstrates Ysaÿe's absorption of the French music tradition, as well as possibly a direct influence by Gabriel Fauré in terms of its melodic lyricism and subtle rhythmic patterns, reminiscent of dance music.

The *Petite fantaisie romantique* is a sweet and delightful piece. It was put in this album due to Lupu's findings in the library of Liège Conservatoire. There is a beautiful dedication from Antoine Ysaÿe written to Joseph Gingold in 1967, "you are such a wonderful pupil of Ysaÿe and a witness of his legacy, so you should enjoy this piece. It is a tribute to Joseph Gingold's love for his father."⁶

The Violin Concerto in G minor (1910)

While several of Ysaÿe's works were arranged and published by his descendants after his death, many works were missing or unpublished, including at least six violin concertos! Written records of those concertos survive in Ysaÿe's biography, written by his son Antoine Ysaÿe:

"Ysaÿe used a great deal of manuscript paper and only a very small part of what he wrote remains...There is still a large amount of works that is yet unpublished. Most are at the Musée de Liège. However, encyclopedias and dictionaries still persist in only listing the six concertos which have never seen the light of the day!".⁷

In the past decade, several of the master's unknown concertos have come to light, including his concertos in E minor and D minor and the work titled *Concerto No. 8*, which were possibly composed in Ysaÿe's youthful years. Within this context, the *Violin Concerto in G minor* (1910), reconstructed by Sherban Lupu and orchestrated by Sabin Pautza, is an extremely important discovery. In Lupu's own words, "It is a historical milestone towards understanding Ysaÿe's creative genius. It will serve to better understand his influence on the violin repertoire in his creative output."⁸



⁶ Sherban Lupu, interview by Qianyi Fan, March 23, 2021.

⁷ Antoine Ysaÿe, *Ysaÿe*, trans. Frank Clarkson (Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire: W.E. Hill & Sons, 1980), 218.

⁸ Sherban Lupu, interview by Qianyi Fan, March 23, 2021.

Found in the library of The Royal Conservatoire of Liège, the concerto exists in several different manuscript versions. Lupu dedicatedly organized every single sheet of paper out of several hundred handwritten pages; in the course of his research, he noticed that several of Ysaÿe's pupils had tried to put this concerto together out of the manuscripts around 1954. But they probably did not have access to all the papers, so it was a poor attempt.

What makes this piece so special is the fact that it evolved over 17 years of Ysaÿe's life (1893–1910). Digital manuscript copies from Lupu suggest that there are four major versions of the manuscripts. Handwritten markings on the manuscripts indicate that Ysaÿe came back to this concerto every few years, making changes on the older scores and finishing new ones. A brief description of each is provided here:

The earliest manuscript version of the G Minor Concerto was composed in July and August of 1893 in Uccle, Brussels. It was a complete version that had both violin part and piano score. Of note: although Ysaÿe only composed parts for violin and piano in this version, he marked specific instruments on the piano score in many places, indicating that he had the scope of the orchestration in mind.

Seven pages of orchestration were found. On the title page of the piano score, Ysaÿe wrote the name of Théodore Lindenlaub, who was the music journalist at Le Temps and Ysaÿe's lifelong friend⁹. In this edition, Ysaÿe titled this piece *Poème Concertant* instead of Concerto, which informs us of his plan for a large-scale, one movement work.

The second version, dated around 1901, came with an incomplete piano score and a complete violin solo part. On the title page of the piano score, Ysaÿe intended to dedicate this concerto to Irma Sethe, one of his most talented pupils in the Royal Conservatoire in Brussels and the godmother of his son Antoine Ysaÿe.¹⁰

The third version came with a complete violin solo part and a double piano score, completed on August 27th, 1908. This version did not include a dedication.

The fourth version was completed in July of 1910 in Brussels. Unlike the 1908 version, this one includes an additional cadenza. On the manuscript cover page of the final version, Ysaÿe wrote "Enesco." At this point, he had probably decided to dedicate this piece to the Romanian violinist George Enescu, who later became the dedicate of his solo sonata, *Ballade*. Interestingly, there are some similarities found between the *Violin Concerto in G minor* and the *Ballade*, most prominently the expansive nature and rising shape of the



⁹ Antoine Ysaÿe and Bertram Ratcliffe, *Ysaÿe, His Life, Work, and Influence*

⁽London: William Heinemann LTD, 1947), 22-23.

¹⁰ Antoine Ysaÿe, Ysaÿe, trans. Frank Clarkson (Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire: W.E. Hill & Sons, 1980), 154.

introductions, the brilliant, dotted rhythms in the thematic material and the extensive use of whole tone scales and chromaticism. One might assume that Ysaÿe composed the Ballade with this concerto in mind.

The violin part that was used in this recording was arranged and edited by Lupu, with the early inspiration he received from Gingold on Ysaÿe's improvisational style. The orchestration was done by the Romanian composer Sabin Pautza based on the few orchestral pages by Ysaÿe and the piano score of the 1910 manuscript version. This orchestral edition (consistent with the edited violin part) is slightly different from the manuscripts in terms of tempo markings, harmonization, and the total number of measures. Thanks to Pautza's compositional versatility, we have been granted the opportunity to experience this great work with equally well-crafted orchestration.

Standing at the turn of two centuries, this concerto is a miniature summation of Ysaÿe's middle period, of his talent, his cycle, and his legacy. This is an ambitious work that contains a collision of late 19th-century Romanticism and 20th-century French modernism, along with Ysaÿe's distinctive improvisational style and revolutionary violin techniques. Traditional aspects remain in the piece's modified Sonata-Allegro form, while new tonal languages are explored in the transitions and developments, accomplished through innovative violin techniques.

The thematic material that starts with a descending chromatic line is introduced by solo violin, marked *sostenuto* (2:03). In fact, it is probably the only concerto of the 18th to the 20th century that starts with the solo monologue of the soloist. It is a prayer like litany enhanced by the G-string drone that almost sounds like a monks choir praying in a monastery. The violin is desperately attempting through a prayer to reach God for answers; and only after that, the orchestra intervenes with the thematic comments almost like in an ancient Greek play. To the listener's great satisfaction, the brilliant theme arrives in the tonic G minor (4:38). The off-beat gesture in the orchestra balances the quick, accented, dotted rhythm in the violin. In the transitional passages, clusters of double stops and tenths in high registers make it a true virtuosic violin concerto. Though this concerto is considered to be one of his most difficult, there is always a natural ease in Ysaÿe's technical approach due to his intimate understanding of the instrument. The contrasting lyrical and expressive second theme is in B-flat major, the relative major of G minor (6:03). Ysaÿe's melodic approach here features written out rubato and the overlapping of phrase units by the use of enharmonic pitches. These elements make the phrases so continuous that it seems they have no end in sight.

The development section (8:13) opens with chromatic sequences and whole tone scales as the tonality becomes more unstable. After a long build up to the tonal climax, there is a magic moment where the woodwinds and harp provide a background of splendid colors behind the inventive flourishes of the violin; this impressionistic style reflects the direct influence of Debussy. Here, Ysaÿe expands the Sonata-Allegro



form by inserting a third theme in A major, which later reappears in the recapitulation section, now played by the orchestra with an embellishing line in the violin. After the violin cadenza, the entire introduction reoccurs at the Coda, this time with orchestral accompaniment. This cyclic treatment of motivic material gives the concerto a holistic unity.

The reconstruction of the G minor Concerto, along with the other pieces in this album, makes it possible to broaden our understanding of Eugène Ysaÿe. Since 2021 is the 90th anniversary of Eugène Ysaÿe's death, the release of this album is the perfect way to offer tribute to his masterful career.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to Sherban Lupu, with whom I studied violin in the summers of 2013 and 2016. Mr. Lupu became a mentor of mine, encouraging me to pursue graduate study at Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, where I am currently working on my doctoral dissertation. He has very generously shared access to many Ysaÿe sources, particularly those regarding the *Violin Concerto in G minor*, a privilege for which I am very thankful, as has also gifted his time and knowledge through an interview and extensive e-mail correspondence. It is a great honor to write the booklet for this CD, which I have done at his invitation.

Qianyi Fan, May 2021



THE MUSICIANS

One of the world's leading performers of George Enescu's music, Romanian-born **Sherban Lupu** studied at the Bucharest Conservatory with George Manoliu Mr. Lupu left Romania to study in London at the Guildhall School of Music with Yfrah Neaman and he took lessons and master classes with legendary violinists Yehudi Menuhin, Henryk Szering and Nathan Milstein as well as with Norbert Brainin of the Amadeus String Quartet and Sandor Vegh.

Lupu has won prizes in numerous competitions such as the Vienna International, Romanian National String Quartet, Jacques Thibaud in Paris, Carl Flesch in London, Royal Society of Arts and the Park Lane Group Contest. Subsequently Lupu came to the United States to study with Dorothy De Lay and, at Indiana University, with Josef Gingold and to receive chamber music coaching from Menahem Pressler.

Mr. Lupu, professor emeritus of violin at the University of Illinois, has been artistic director of the Gubbio Festival in Italy and associate concertmaster of the San Francisco Opera. Solo appearances include The Kennedy Center, Gstaad Festival, Aldeburgh Festival, Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elisabeth Hall, Wigmore Hall, St. John's Smith Square, Berlin Philharmonic Hall and Carnegie Hall. He has also performed the Brahms and Tchaikovsky violin concertos in live broadcasts with the BBC Orchestra and has appeared as soloist with the Northern Israeli Symphony Orchestra.

In collaboration with the composer Cornel Taranu, Mr. Lupu has finished and reconstructed the "Caprice Roumain" for violin and orchestra by George Enescu.

In the year 2000, Mr. Lupu received a lifetime achievement award from the Romanian Cultural Foundation for his efforts to promote Romanian culture and music internationally.

Much in demand as a pedagogue, Mr. Lupu is a frequent member of international juries, has given numerous master classes and taught violin courses in England, Holland, Germany, Italy, Romania, Czech Republic and Poland where in July 2004 he received from the Ministry of Culture the Award for Outstanding Teaching.

In November 2002 Mr. Lupu was awarded the title of Doctor Honoris Causa by the Academy of Music "G. Dima" from Cluj (Romania) and in January 2004 the President of Romania has conferred upon Sherban Lupu the title of Commander of the National Order of Merit and Service for his worldwide musical and cultural activities.





Since 2002 Mr. Lupu has been the Artistic Director of the International Festival "The Musical Citadel of Brasov", Romania. Also, in September 2005, together with the Romanian Cultural Institute Mr. Lupu has published six volumes of previously unknown works for violin by George Enescu. The works were discovered, edited and arranged by Sherban Lupu. Since December 2011 Mr. Lupu has been President of the George Enescu Society of the United States.

In 2007 Sherban Lupu received again the prestigious "Arnold Beckman" Award from the Research Board of the University of Illinois and was awarded the title of Doctor Honoris Causa from the Al. I. Cuza University of Iasi, Romania. Mr. Lupu was awarded the prestigious Fulbright Grant for the academic year 2009 - 2010.

In addition to concert tours and masterclasses Mr. Lupu is presently pursuing several more recording projects, such as the complete works for violin by Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst.

SHERBAN LUPU





HENRI BONAMY

"an extraordinary musicality and poetic sensitivity" (*Ouest France*)

Henri Bonamy performs in the main european cities and has made guest appearances at the Gasteig in Munich, at the National Auditorium in Madrid, at the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Festival and the International George Enescu Festival in Bucharest, among others.

He received the "Bavarian EON Cultural Award" and numerous prizes at international piano competitions: Concours international de Genève, Erwin Nyiregyhazi (Japan) and Alessandro Casagrande (Italy).

In 2014 and 2015, he was a university piano professor in Busan and Seoul, South Korea. He now teaches at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Munich.

After the Conservatoire Supérieur de Paris, Henri Bonamy studied with Dmitri Bashkirov at the Escuela Superior de Musica Reina Sofia in Madrid, continued his studies and graduated with master degrees at the University of Music and Performing Arts Munich, with Elisso Virssaladze (piano) and Bruno Weil (conducting).

"I am a pianist thinking as a conductor, and a conductor who condenses musical contents like a pianist" Henri Bonamy is the artistic director of the Isartal Philharmonic Orchestra since 2019. He conducted the Munich Symphony Orchestra, the Nuremberg Symphony Orchestra and the Georgian Chamber Orchestra Ingolstadt.



Paul Mann is a regular guest-conductor with many major orchestras throughout Europe, the USA, Australia and the Far East. His work as chief conductor of the Odense Symphony Orchestra in Denmark achieved considerable critical success, particularly in the symphonies of Beethoven, Elgar, Mahler, Schumann and Shostakovich; in Odense he also made numerous recordings of a wide range of repertoire for such labels as Bridge, DaCapo and EMI. More recently, he has made more than twenty recordings for the Toccata Classics label, mostly world premiere recordings of rare repertoire and of contemporary composers with such orchestras as the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and the Liepāja Symphony orchestra.

He first came to international attention as first-prize winner in the 1998 Donatella Flick Conducting Competition, as a result of which he was also appointed assistant conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra. He made his LSO debut shortly afterwards and subsequently collaborated regularly with the orchestra, both in the concert hall and recording studio. A wide-ranging musician, he has also collaborated with a number of musicians in other disciplines, including the jazz trumpeter Wynton Marsalis, the rock singer Bruce Dickinson and the legendary rock band Deep Purple, with whose keyboard player the late Jon Lord he enjoyed an especially fruitful association.

Sabin Pautza received his Master of Fine Arts in Music from the Bucharest Academy in 1965 and studied composition an conducting at the Accademia Musicale Chiggiana of Siena, Italy, with Franco Donatoni, Bruno Maderna and Franco Ferrara. Among the awards he has received, are the "George Enescu" Prize from the Romanian Academy, First Prize from the Composers Union of Romania and the Honorable Mention at the International Composition Contest in Salt Lake City, Utah. Most recently Mr. Pautza received the Honorable Mention at the Nissim National Contest for his *Sinfonia Sacra* commissioned by the Choral Art Society of New Jersey. He also won the First Prize in the "Dr. Martin Luther King Jr." Contest for his composition "*Chimes*".

Maestro Pautza holds an Honorary Doctorate in Music granted by the London Institute for Applied Research and he received his PhD *"Summa cum Laude"* in Music from the "George Dima" Academy of Arts.

While Professor in Conducting and Composition at the "George Enescu" Academy of Music Dr. Pautza served as Music Director and Conductor of the Academy Symphony Orchestra. Maestro Pautza's music has been released on ten compact discs by Swift Group Records in the *Opera Omnia Series*. He made his American debut at Carnegie Hall in 1985 with the N.Y. University Orchestra conducting his own composition *Haiku*.

Maestro Pautza has been Music Director and Conductor of the Plainfield Symphony Orchestra since 1987 and he is invited frequently as guest conductor throughout Europe and Australia. His name appears among the most famous musicians of the world in the *International Who's Who in Music* published at Cambridge, England and in the volume 2000 Notable American Men released by the American Biographical Institute.

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Sherban Lupu

