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leuan Jones



Schubert

by leuan Jones

Harp

CLAUDIO



The harp pictured is from the same period these pieces were written... early 19th century, almost 200 years ago. Since then the mechanics of the harp have been improved, developed and strengthened considerably. To achieve fast silent pedal changes in that period was not really possible. Despite the early mechanism for the harp being invented in the early 18th century, it was not until 1808 that Erard first patented the double action harp with fourchettes . The 1808 Erard patent describes an early version of the double-action mechanism on which modern harps are based. This harp was achieved by doubling Erard's single action mechanism of 1794. This clearly explains why few composers of the period wrote for the harp. Parish-Alvars was one of the first harpist composers to take advantage of the new double action harp mechanism, but even his use of pedals was basic in comparison with the pedal changes needed to perform the works of Schubert.



Over the years, improved springs and linkage in the mechanism have meant that it is possible to achieve much more precise chromaticism on the harp. Some of these pieces require very fast and accurate pedaling. With the use of enharmonics many of the changes in tonalities are eliminated or used to make key changes easier.

I have always tried to enhance and expand the harp repertoire beyond the boundaries set by the traditional classical and impressionist works so often played. This period is lacking in original compositions for the harp so I hope to show the positive side of transcribing some of this pure and beautiful music.

© Ieuan Jones

Ieuan Jones was born and brought up in Mid-Wales and started playing the harp at the age of six with Frances Mon Jones. At the age of 13, he was the youngest member of the National Youth Orchestra of Wales. Shortly afterwards Jones went on to join the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain. In 1981 he gained a scholarship to study with Marisa Robles at the Royal College of Music. After four years at the RCM, winning all the major prizes including the Tagore Gold Medal and the Queen Mothers Rose Bowl for the most distinguished student of his year, he won the Royal Over-Seas League Music Competition in 1985 (only the second harpist to do so in the history of this competition). He was the runner up at the Israel International Harp Competition in the same year. While still a student he was appointed harpist to the House of Commons; an appointment which went on for 13 years, and has not since been repeated.

Jones has played for audiences all over the world, concerto appearances include the Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires, Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Teatro de la Maestranza during the Seville EXPO and recitals including Melbourne Festival, Hong Kong City Hall, Madrid, Rome, Paris and many more. He is a member of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music's diploma examiners and is regularly invited as a member of international competition panels worldwide.

In 1997 Jones was appointed Professor of Harp at the Royal College of Music and in 2016 was awarded the Fellowship of the Royal College of Music.

"...harpist of exceptional musical imagination and stylistic panache" Hillary Finch, The Times

"...one of the most talented harpists...of any generation" Nicanor Zabaleta

"Pure wizardry..."The Philippine Star

"Jones is an instrumentalist who seems welded to his instrument by more than career choice. He convinces you that while he is playing, nothing else matters: an amazingly focused musician." The Age, Australia.

"...he is outstandingly gifted...." Sir Georg Solti

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