



ORCHID CLASSICS

WATERCOLOUR

Schubert, Chopin,
Liszt, Y. Yang

Yuanfan Yang, *piano*

Watercolour

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|------|
| 1 | Impromptu in B flat, Op.142 No.3 | 9.57 |
|---|----------------------------------|------|

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|-------|
| 2 | Étude in A minor, Op.25 No.11 | 3.46 |
| 3 | Fantaisie in F minor, Op.49 | 13.37 |

Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

- | | | |
|---|----------------------|-------|
| 4 | La campanella | 4.46 |
| 5 | La Vallée d'Obermann | 14.31 |

Yuanfan Yang (b.1997)

Three Aquarelles

- | | | |
|---|--|------|
| 6 | I Waves | 5.09 |
| 7 | II The Sun Sinks Beyond the Mountain Ridge | 8.05 |
| 8 | III The Haunted Bell | 4.08 |

Trad. arr. Jianzhong Wang (1933-2016)

- | | | |
|---|---------------------|------|
| 9 | Liuyang River (浏阳河) | 3.56 |
|---|---------------------|------|

Philip Cashian (b.1963)

- | | | |
|----|-----------|------|
| 10 | Landscape | 3.47 |
|----|-----------|------|

Peter Maxwell-Davis (1934-2016)

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|------|
| 11 | Farewell to Stromness | 4.33 |
|----|-----------------------|------|

Total time

77.31

Yuanfan Yang, piano

Impromptu in B flat, Op.142 No.3, Schubert (1797-1828)

This piece draws from Schubert's set of Four Impromptus, Op.142. The word 'impromptu' literally translates as 'improvisation', and there is a sense of lyrical flow and spontaneity of line and structure throughout all of Schubert's impromptus.

This *Impromptu in B flat major* is a theme with five variations and coda. The main theme resembles that from the incidental music which Schubert composed for the play *Rosamunde*, which also appears in the second movement of his 13th string quartet. The variations follow the classic pattern utilized and developed by Beethoven – elements include increasing subdivision and ornamentation, and a modulation prior to a return to the tonic for the final full variation, similar to the Arietta of Beethoven's Sonata in C minor Op.111, and most prominently, the Diabelli Variations.

Etude in A minor, Op.25 No.11 'Winter Wind', Chopin (1810-1849)

The term "étude" has long been used as a genre to categorise pieces of technical, sometimes virtuosic, difficulty, with its primary focus on training and refining specific aspects of the technique of a performer in private, rather than in public. But Chopin pioneered the use of the etude as an art form, with an emotional aspect that transcends the mere execution of notes.

The *Etude in A minor* is the penultimate etude of Chopin's set of Twelve Etudes, Op.25. Following a calm, sonorous and mysterious stately opening, the piece explodes into a torrent of sound, with a march-like rhythmic figure in the left hand and a cascade of chromaticised leaps in the right, all conveying a sense of fury, which lead to its nickname of 'Winter Wind'.

Fantaisie in F minor, Op.49, Chopin (1810-1849)

Fantaisie in F minor, Op.49, is a single-movement work for the piano, composed in 1841. From Chopin's letters it is known that he used the name "fantasy" to show some sort of freedom from rules and give a Romantic expression. This work belongs to the fantasy form, a free composition in terms of form and inspiration. Beginning with a solemn stately marching theme, the music eventually plunges into a passionate and virtuosic character, still with elements of marching, but more triumphant and positive in mood. Approximately halfway through the piece is a slow and sombre chorale-like section, before the previous section is restated. After a short, quiet and sweet improvisatory statement not unlike an operatic recitative, the music leads into a final flourish as the work cadences in the major key.

La campanella, Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

This newly-developed musical aspect of the etude persisted as a feature of the repertoire of the Romantic era; among others, Liszt was also particularly famous for his technically intense yet passionate concert etudes; indeed Liszt was inspired by Chopin here.

'La campanella' translates as 'the little bell', and is the third etude from Liszt's book of *Grandes études de Paganini*, which was a revision of his earlier *Études d'exécution transcendente d'après Paganini*. The melody of this etude is based on the final movement from Paganini's Violin Concerto No.2. This etude is an exploration of melodic leaps, dexterity, and stamina.

La Vallée d'Obermann ("Obermann's Valley," after Senancour) from *Années de Pèlerinage (First Year: Switzerland)*, Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

In the period when he was most active as a virtuoso, Liszt travelled widely, especially during the years 1835-39. During these years he produced a large quantity of solo piano music, including *Album d'un voyageur (A Traveller's*

Album), later to be included in his *Années de pèlerinage (Years of Pilgrimage)*, which he published in three volumes. The first volume (1855) was labelled "Switzerland," of which most pieces bear explicit literary references to Schiller, Byron or Senancour.

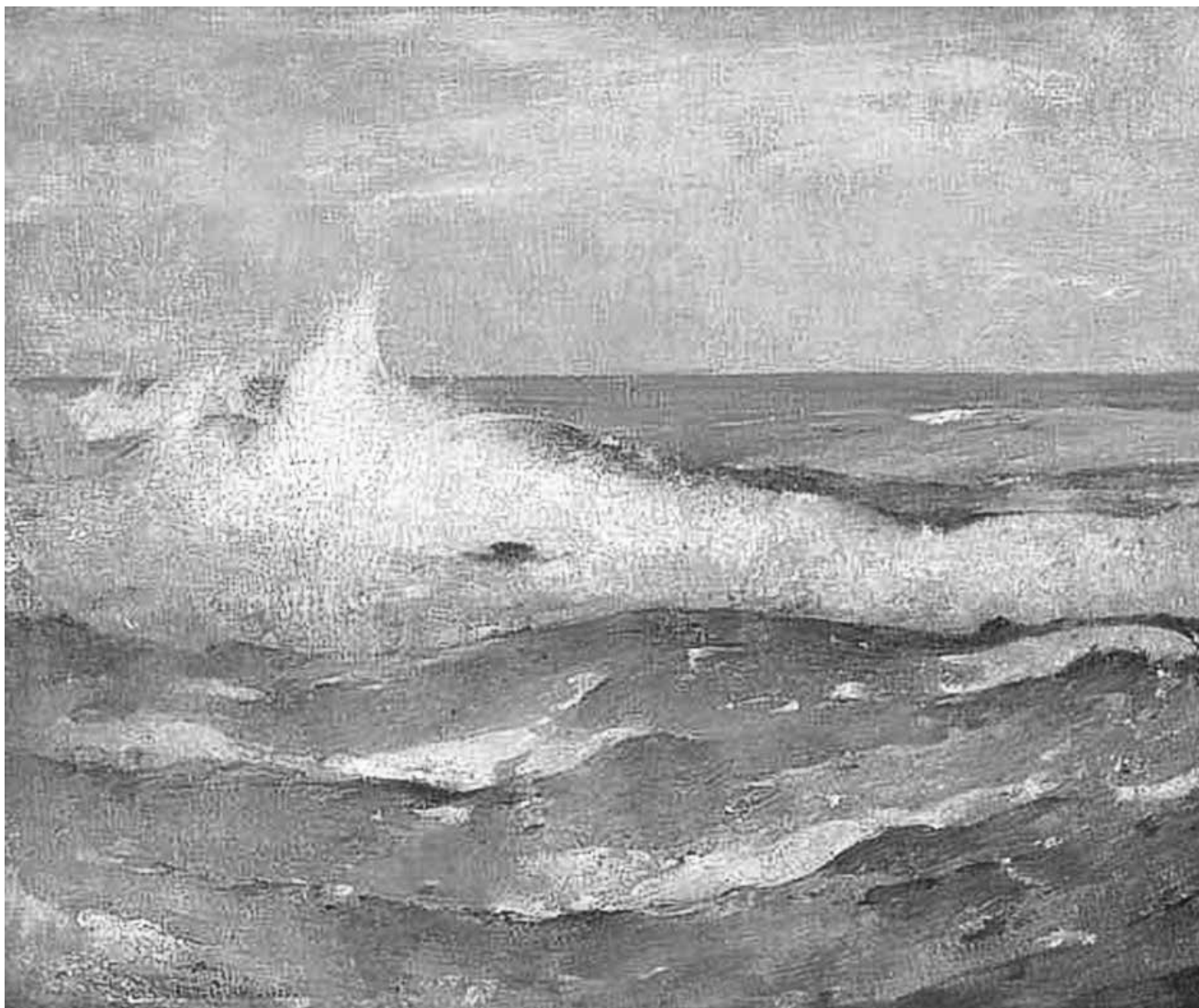
The author cited in the collection for *Vallée d'Obermann*, is Étienne Pivert de Senancour (1770-1846), who, though born in Paris, spent the years of the French Revolution in Switzerland. His *Obermann* (1804) takes the form of letters written by a melancholy individual living alone in the valley of the Jura – presumably the "Valley of Obermann", to which Liszt's piece refers.

The work is essentially a tone-poem for piano, developing with the imaginative use of thematic transformation, which was to be the principal structural feature of his orchestral tone poems. It traces a path from darkness to light, the opening mood depicted by the long quotation from Senancour's book, which Liszt places at the head of the piece, beginning: "What do I want? What am I? What to ask of nature?...Every cause is invisible, every end deceptive; every form changes..." This mood of emptiness is captured by the slowly descending scale lines of the opening, and the constant questions are echoed by several clear musical questions that interrupt the ongoing development of the downward-moving figure. Before long a more songful extension of the questioning motif appears, and the material unfolds in an increasingly emphatic, brilliant, dramatic and colourful way.

Three Aquarelles, Yuanfan Yang (b.1997)

- I. Waves
- II. The Sun Sinks Beyond the Mountain Ridge
- III. The Haunted Bell

The term 'aquarelle' translates as 'watercolour', and my set of pieces is a neo-impressionist collection of watercolour paintings in the form of music. These three pieces were written between 2011-2013, and are all highly programmatic, and



Breaking Wave (1922) by Emil Carlsen

form a clear representation of my personal musical language during my early-mid teenage years. The three pieces may be performed as a set, or individually.

'Waves', which was finished in May 2011 was initially inspired by the impressionistic painting *Breaking Wave* (1922) by Emil Carlsen. Personally I'm fond of the seaside, be it a warm and sunny day or a cloudy and windy day. The open sea, blue waters, changeable tides, surging waves and endless sky are all likely to inspire my musical imagination. This piece won both the 1st Prize and the sole Overall Prize in the EPTA UK Composition Competition 2011 and Highly-Commended in the BBC Proms Composition Competition 2011.

'The Sun Sinks Beyond the Mountain Ridge' was finished in early 2013 and depicts dynamic, beautiful and poetic scenery where the sun slowly sets beyond the magnificent mountains. The overall mood of the piece is calm and poignant. The opening of the piece represents the bright, burning orange sun at dusk, and is followed by a large eagle swooping in front of the sun and flying away. The middle section is livelier and slightly faster-moving as it portrays animals going home in the mountains. In the final section, towards the end of the piece, the majestic mountains dominating the tired sun are illustrated in the music, which leads to the end where the sun almost completely disappears.

'The Haunted Bell' represents a "haunted bell" of a clock tower that chimes only at midnight. Strange, eerie and ghostly things are appearing around the bell, which is characterised by the sounding E flat note directly above middle C. This E flat, or the midnight "haunted bell", sounds 13 times throughout the piece. Since 13 is conventionally a special number indicating unluckiness, and in view of the fact that clocks or bells don't sound more than 12 times, the music is intended to represent a supernaturally atmospheric conception. This piece won the 1st Prize in the Golden Key International Piano Composition Competition in 2012, and was broadcast throughout the UK on BBC 2, BBC 4 and BBC Radio 3. A friend of mine Anthony Peel was a keen photographer and very kindly presented me with

the following photo depicting a 'haunted bell'. Sadly, he passed away a few years ago. 'The Haunted Bell' is dedicated to his memory.



The Haunted Bell (2013) by Anthony Peel

Liuyang River, arr. Jianzhong Wang (1933-2016)

Liuyang River is a popular Chinese folk song, arranged here for solo piano. The piece is calm and joyful, with the use of arpeggios and scalar figurations on the piano to give the impression of a gentle river flowing.

Landscape, Philip Cashian (b.1963)

The composer writes: *Landscape* was written in 1995 for volume one of the ABRSM's *Spectrum* contemporary piano music series. The title is fairly self-explanatory in that the opening chord of the piece is constantly transformed throughout the work, creating an atmospheric harmonic and textural musical landscape.

Farewell to Stromness (from 'The Yellow Cake Revue'),

Peter Maxwell Davies (1934-2016)

Farewell to Stromness is one of the two piano interludes of Maxwell Davies's 'Yellow Cake Revue', a work which is otherwise a sequence of cabaret songs and recitations. Composed in 1980 as a protest against a uranium mine proposition on the distant Orkney Islands where the composer lived, the title of the piece refers to the town of Stromness, which was a few miles from where the mine was to be dug. Whilst *Farewell to Stromness* isn't a particular representation of Maxwell Davies's 'general' compositional style, which leaned more towards the avant-garde in terms of structure and sound-world, it has become one of the most accessible and popular pieces of today.

This album was recorded in August 2016, which was five months after Maxwell Davies's death. My performance of 'Farewell to Stromness' is a tribute to the great influential composer, and is dedicated to his memory.

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Yuanfan Yang

Born in 1997, Edinburgh, Yuanfan Yang is now studying piano and composition at the Royal Academy of Music in London, after studying for seven years at Chetham's School of Music.

Yuanfan has won 1st Prize at the Cleveland International Young Artists Piano Competition in the USA in 2015, 1st Prize at the 4th International Franz Liszt Piano Competition in Weimar, Germany in 2014, where he was awarded the Special Prize for Best Composition and Improvisation, and the European Union of Music Competitions for Youth (EMCY) Prize for Most Outstanding Contestant. He has performed for many eminent music societies, festivals and key events throughout numerous countries.

Yuanfan is also a versatile composer and an accomplished improviser. He has won prizes in many composition competitions including the BBC Proms Young Composers Competition 2011, the Golden Key International Piano Composition Competition in 2012, the National Centre for Early Music Composers' Award 2013, and the Royal Academy's Alan Bush Composition Competition 2016. A number of his works have been broadcast on BBC TV and Radio. His piano concerto 'The Wilderness', composed in 2014, has been performed in Qianjiang, Wuhan, Manchester, London and Paris, being enthusiastically received with critical acclaim from the press and audience.

For more information on Yuanfan please visit www.yuanfanyang.com





杨远帆

杨远帆 (Yuanfan Yang), 1997 年出生于苏格兰爱丁堡市, 祖籍湖北。2008至2014年在英国奇特慕音乐学校学习, 目前就读于伦敦皇家音乐学院 (the Royal Academy of Music), 主修钢琴和作曲。

对远帆的钢琴演奏, 著名音乐评论家斯蒂芬·威格勒 (Stephen Wigler) 在《国际钢琴杂志》(2016) 里写道: 杨远帆的演奏“针对任何年龄的钢琴家来说, 可称异乎寻常地好..... 精采地呈现, 精美地组织, 激昂处令人屏息凝神, 伤感处深深动人心弦。”

远帆曾在一系列钢琴大赛中获奖, 包括2009年英国曼彻斯特钢琴协奏曲国际大赛年青组冠军、英国欧洲钢琴教师协会2010年钢琴大赛总冠军、2012年BBC年轻音乐家大赛钢琴冠军、英国北方皇家音乐学院第二届James Mottram国际钢琴大赛 (2010) 年青组冠军、2013年美国明尼苏达E – 钢琴国际大赛第三名、德国魏玛第四届李斯特国际青少年钢琴大赛 (2014) 青年冠军、2015年英国伦敦“大音乐工程”古典音乐冠军、2015年美国克利夫兰青少年国际钢琴大赛青年冠军、英国李斯特协会2015年国际钢琴大赛冠军、瑞士伯尔尼第九届古典音乐国际钢琴大赛 (2016) 冠军、2016年克利夫兰国际钢琴大赛阿格里奇信息基金特别奖。远帆长于视奏, 在英国奇特慕音乐学校就学期间, 蝉联六届迈克尔·亚伯拉罕钢琴视奏公开赛冠军。远帆的演出之旅包括英国、德国、美国、中国、意大利、西班牙、奥地利、罗马尼亚、法国、瑞士等国家。

远帆被英国媒体和业内人士誉称为“想象联翩”的年轻作曲家。他的一系列作品曾在BBC电视和BBC广播中播出。他获得的作曲奖项包括2010年英国欧洲钢琴教师协会作曲大赛年龄组冠军、2011年英国欧洲钢琴教师协会作曲大赛总冠军、2011年BBC青年作曲家大赛高度赞扬奖、2012年美国金钥匙国际钢琴作曲赛少年组冠军、2014年德国魏玛第四届李斯特国际青少年钢琴大赛即兴演奏和作曲特别奖、2016年英国皇家音乐学院阿兰·布什作曲赛高度赞扬奖, 等等。2014年9月, 他根据中国戏剧家曹禺先生的同名话剧所创作的大型钢琴协奏曲《原野》, 在中国第三届曹禺文化周首演, 此后在曼彻斯特、伦敦、巴黎等地演出, 受到中外观众的欢迎和好评。(网络搜狗搜索: Yuanfan Yang)

My thanks go to the Drake Calleja Trust for their contribution to the production of this album.

Recorded 10-12 August 2016 at Duke's Hall, The Royal Academy of Music, London

Producer: Rosanna Goodall

Recording Engineer: Andrew Lang

Editing and Mastering: Andrew Lang

Piano Tuner: Farid Showghi

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