

Devil's Dance for Violin and Piano [2000]

Written by bluesever

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1. *Devil's Dance, for violin & piano (from Witches of Eastwick)*
Composed by John Williams
2. *A Transylvanian Rhapsody from Young Frankenstein, for violin & piano (arr. by Feldman) A Transylvanian Lullaby*
Composed by John Morris
3. *Småtroid (Puck), lyric piece for piano, Op. 71/3*
Composed by Edvard Grieg
4. *Danse macabre, symphonic poem in G minor, Op. 40*
Composed by Camille Saint-Saens
5. *Märchenbilder, for piano, No. 4, The Gnomes, Op. 3/4*
Composed by Erich Wolfgang Korngold
6. *Walpurgisnacht ("Lieb Mutter, heut Nacht..."), duet for 2 sopranos & piano, Op. 75/4*
Composed by Johannes Brahms
7. *Andres Maienlied ("Die Schwalbe fliegt"), song for voice & piano ("Hexenlied"), Op. 8/8*
Composed by Felix Mendelssohn
8. *La Ronde des Lutins, scherzo fantastique for violin & piano, Op 25*
Composed by Antonio Bazzini
9. *The Graceful Ghost, a concert variation for violin & piano*
Composed by William Bolcom
10. *Concert Fantasy on themes from Gounod's "Faust," for violin & orchestra (or piano)*
Composed by Pablo de Sarasate
11. *Caprice for solo violin in B flat major ("The Devil's Chuckle"), Op. 1/13*
Composed by Niccolò Paganini

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*12. Sonata for violin & continuo in G minor, B. g5 ("The Devil's Trill")
Composed by Giuseppe Tartini*

*13. Sonata for violin solo No. 2 in A minor ("Obsession"), Op. 27/2 Obsession
Composed by Eugene-Auguste Ysaye*

Jonathan Feldman – piano

Gil Shaham – violin

Some would suspect this disc to be an abomination in the eyes of God and man; it is actually a pleasant little disc of what used to be called encores. You remember encores: the technically virtuosic but musically lightweight works that a performer would play after the real recital was over. Now those days are gone. Nowadays what used to be encores -- the chocolate mousse and Napoleon brandy after a full musical meal -- are the meat and potatoes of the music industry.

This disc is an entire dessert tray full of sweet confections. Some of them are extremely light, past the point of frivolity to inanity: John Williams' Devil's Dance (from *The Witches of Eastwick*) and John Morris' A Transylvanian Lullaby (from *Young Frankenstein*). Some are musically more substantial but still pretty silly: Sarasate's Concert Fantasy on Gounod's Faust, Korngold's Caprice Fantastique, and especially the piano-and-violin transcription of Saint-Saëns *Danse Macabre*. Some are charming: Brahms' *Walpurgisnacht*, Mendelssohn's *Hexenlied*, and especially William Bolcom's gorgeous *Graceful Ghost Rag*. Some are flat-out stunning: Tartini's "Devil's Trill" Sonata.

All are played with technical mastery, a great sense of fun, and no sense of slumming by virtuoso violinist Gil Shaham. Some aspects of the disc are goofy: the photograph on the back cover with Shaham and his accompanist holding flashlights under their faces reminds one of Cub Scout camp, and the liner notes are the purest pandering. But, despite all this, the disc is a lot of fun. Recommended for those who like their daredevil violin virtuosity on the light side.

---James Leonard, Rovi

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[back](#)