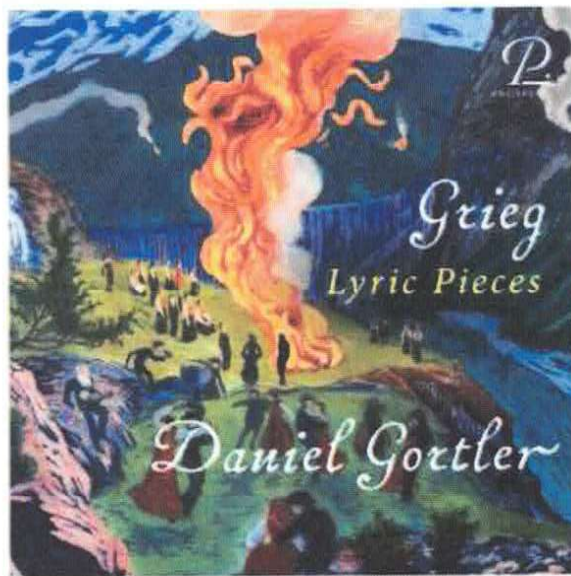


GSI

Daniel Gortler

Press Coverage



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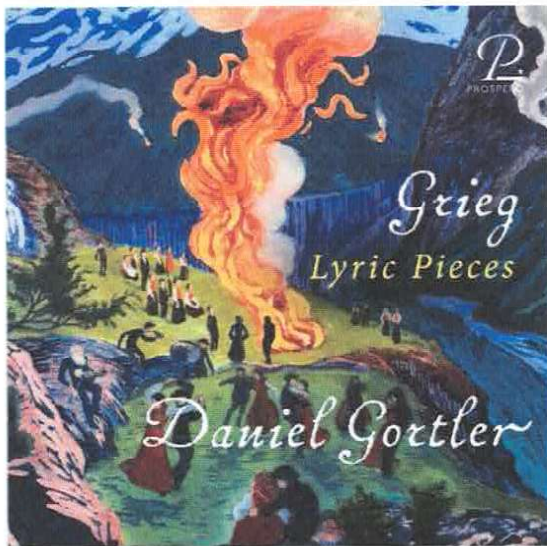
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New Recording by Acclaimed Pianist Daniel Gortler
Edvard Grieg – *Lyric Pieces for Solo Piano*
Now Available on Prospero Classical



Edvard Grieg – Lyric Pieces, a new recording by acclaimed Israeli-American pianist Daniel Gortler (Prospero Classical 0082 - distributed by Naxos) will see its North American release February 9. Grieg wrote *Lyric Pieces* as a poetic piano diary: between 1867 and 1901 he composed 66 short character pieces published in 10 books. For his debut album for Prospero Classical, Gortler selected 21 of his favorites, including the virtuosic *March of the Dwarfs*, *Butterfly*, *Brooklet and Puck*, which are among Grieg's best-known works, as well as *Arietta*, the first piece in Grieg's set. The dreamy *Berceuse*, *At the Cradle* and *Summer's Eve* and the melancholy *Solitary Traveler*, *Melody* and *Ballade* are also included. He rounds out the collection with *Vanished Days*, *Norwegian Dance*, *At your feet*, *Gade*, *Album Leaf*, *Little Bird*, *Peasant's Song*, *Notturmo*, *Peace of the Woods* and *To Spring*.

Early reviews of the album are outstanding. *Fanfare* gives *Lyric Pieces* 5 stars, saying "The performance steals the heart. Gortler consistently gets it right. The disc runs on in one gorgeous stream of melody that only Grieg could have written. Gortler's care of all aspects results in

Grieg's masterpiece emerging as a perfect sound sculpture, Gortler's account is magnificent."

Similarly, *Pizzicato* praises Gortler's performances noting, "He plays the quieter very poetically, with subtle tonal gradations and with beautiful phrasing. In the more virtuosic compositions, he surprises with a very personal rhythm and sometimes quite distinctive accentuations that give his interpretation a great freshness."

Daniel Gortler has delighted audiences and critics alike with his performances around the world, receiving praise for his technical mastery and musical ingenuity. He has performed as soloist with the London Philharmonic, Berlin Radio Symphony, Bavarian Radio Symphony, NDR Symphony, North-West German Philharmonic, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, and every orchestra in Israel, including the Israel Philharmonic. In the United States, he has been featured as soloist with the San Francisco, New World, and Atlanta Symphony Orchestras and held recitals in New York at Symphony Space, the Jewish Museum, Lincoln Center, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 92nd Street Y, and in Cleveland at the Museum of Art, to name a few. He has collaborated with conductors Zubin Mehta, Christoph Eschenbach, Franz Welzer-Most, and Michael Tilson Thomas. An avid chamber musician, Gortler has worked with artists including Bo Skovhus, Nikolaj Znaider, David Garrett, Steven Isserlis, Pinchas Zukerman and David Adam Moore. In 2023 Gortler performed with the Jupiter, Catalyst, and Shanghai Quartets. Upcoming performances include the Schubertiad, a Festival in Tel Aviv in February and a recital in Berlin at the Salon Christophori in March.

Earlier releases by Gortler include the complete Mendelssohn: Songs without words, which *ClassicsToday* hailed as "beautifully performed," noting "He commands a warm, singing sonority, tasteful musicality, plus finger work that is consistently fluent and well-defined." Of his 2-disc Schumann set which includes his *Fantasy in C Major, Op. 17* and the full *Symphonic Etudes Op. 13*, (including the 5 posthumous *Etudes*), Gortler is praised by *International Record Review* for his "high level of refinement and musical personality" and "color and imagination" in abundance. His discography also includes a collection of Schubert songs with soprano Sharon Rostorf-Zamir.

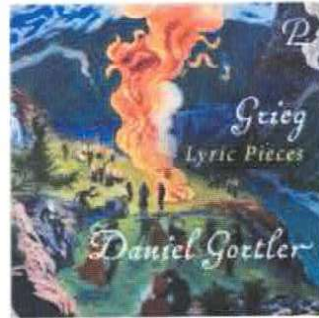
For more information on Daniel Gortler, visit <https://danielgortler.com/>

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Daniel Gortler



What the Critics Say....

“The performance steals the heart. The disc runs on in one gorgeous stream of melody that only Grieg could have written. Gortler’s care of all aspects results in Grieg’s masterpiece emerging as a perfect sound sculpture, Gortler’s account is magnificent.”

Fanfare

“Gortler plays the quieter very poetically, with subtle tonal gradations and with beautiful phrasing. In the more virtuosic compositions, he surprises with a very personal rhythm and sometimes quite distinctive accentuations that give his interpretation a great freshness.”

Pizzicato

“With intuitive and highly expressive playing he lends each one a distinct character and emotive impetus. The nostalgic melancholy of *Vanished Days*, the dream imagery of *Notturmo*, the malevolent yet comical spirit of *Puck*, or the elegant flutterings of *Butterfly*, are all well conveyed under Gortler’s attentive consideration to expressive details.”

Classical Music Sentinel

Gortler loves these pieces and puts them across most effectively.”

American Record Guide

“In his selection of 21 cleverly varied pieces, Daniel Gortler shows himself to be more expressive than Ciccolini’s highly recommended complete recording (Cascavelle 2004), and if he differs in more than one detail from the extraordinary album by Emil Gilels (Deutsche Grammophone, 1974) or that of his student Elena Filonova (Calliope, 2007), it is in no way inferior to them.”

Classica Magazine

“Daniel Gortler pulled off a masterstroke both technically and interpretively. His choice of temps is wise, the touch of the piano is full and smooth, the articulation is very clear, his dynamics and sense of rhythm capable of very subtle nuances.”

Passion Musique et Culture

“This splendid collection of Edvard Grieg material by Israeli-American pianist Daniel Gortler offers no shortage of delights.”

Textura

“A refined interpreter with sophisticated fingers.”

Classica Magazine

“Produced with meticulous precision.”

Pamela-Hickmans Concert Critique Blog

“Gortler’s put together an enjoyable program and a well-executed one.”

WTJU Radio

“Gortler paints pictures in front of our ears, his variety of touch impressive.”

Fanfare

“Gortler expertly communicates the stylistic similarities among the 21 pieces he selects, while at the same time bringing forth the small but telling ways in which Grieg differentiates each from all the others. The sensitivity with which Gortler uses the piano’s communicative potential makes this a disc, full of warmth and beauty.”

Infodad.com

“Gortler keeps the listener’s interest because he gives each of the little miniatures its own character and lets each one speak to us in a different tone. This results in an enriching narrative flow.”

Pizzicato

“Daniel Gortler pulled off a masterstroke both technically and interpretively. His choice of temps is wise, the touch of the piano is full and smooth, the articulation is very clear, his dynamics and sense of rhythm capable of very subtle nuances.”

Passion Musique et Culture

Daniel Gortler expands Grieg's lyrical pieces into sentimental reveries with sublime expression.”

Classica Magazine

“The end result of this exploration and discovery of the music of Grieg by Gortler makes for a CD that is absolutely exquisite. There are no hard edges on the recording; every piece is played with a beautiful touch and expressiveness that is enchanting and intoxicating to listen to. Even when things should be more aggressive and stormy; such as the *March of the Trolls* from Book Five, Gortler is careful that the sound does not get away from him and the voicing of each chord is heard in utmost clarity.”

Winnipeg’s Classic 107 Radio

“Faithfully rendered with the elegance the pianist knows how to give.”

Classica Magazine

As Gortler's sensitive, attentive renditions show, highly developed artistry is needed to make them sing as resonantly as they do here."

Textura

"Gortler addresses the melodic shaping, the ample real of changing harmonies and the essence of each musical vignette with insight and conviction."

Pamela-Hickmans Concert Critique Blog

"Gortier is a thoughtful performer. His playing is expressive and lyrical."

WTJU Radio

"This new recording is nicely played, and I am sure I could live with it as my only recording of the *Lyric Pieces*."

American Record Guide

"Interpreted with insight and acuity."

Classical Music Sentinel

"I have always loved these pieces and I think that Gottler does a lovely job with them."

WMNR Radio

"This is a beautiful recording of beautiful music. Gortler's playing is intimate, his fine piano tone is well caught in Prospero's recording."

Fanfare

"A true master of the miniature, Daniel Gortler captures the moods and characterization, the Nordic flavor, the fairytale magic, the nature scenes and, above all, the refined emotions expressed in the *Lyric Pieces* heard in this recording. Offering rich and subtle expression to Grieg's "poetic diary," his playing is delicate, polished and transparent, inviting the composer's character and personality to shine through the content of each small, finely formed musical sketch."

Pamela-Hickmans Concert Critique Blog

"Gortler has skillfully developed a program that first of all rewards the variety of atmospheres, and which represents well the fertile inventiveness of the composer."

Passion Musique et Culture

"If you don't know these beautiful, gentle pieces, do get a recording of them."

American Record Guide

"Virtuoso pieces are interspersed and effortlessly demonstrate a flawless technique."

Classica Magazine

"The album's tone is set by the beguiling *Arietta*, whose yearning melody is voiced beautifully by Gortler. Whereas the album is at its most solemn during the dark and dramatic *Ballad*, it's at its most quietly radiant in *Summer's Eve*, folk-inflected in *Peasant's Song*, and impressionistic in *Notturmo*."

Textura

“A new album is released with Edvard Grieg’s *Lyrical Pieces* performed by the highly acclaimed Israeli American pianist Daniel Gortler, one of the best international pianists.”
Aurora-Israel.com

“A nice piece of Grieg!”
Inthecooler.org

“Like this very much.”
WRUU Radio

“Nice, especially the clarity of his finger work.”
New England Public Media

“Like this”
KVLU Radio

“While contrasts in mood and style are abundant, all reflect the melodic sensibility of their creator and share an appealingly lyrical dimension. Some are dreamy, wistful, and melancholy and others lively and spirited, yet, in Gortler’s expert hands, all gather to present a cohesive portrait of the composer. He imbues the gentler lullabies with poetic sensitivity and attention to their nuances and animates the robust folk dances with vitality and enthusiasm. Regardless of the piece, his phrasing is thoughtful and honours the spirit of Grieg’s music.”
Textura

“The characters, landscapes, moods and folklore that Grieg intended are all there. You can almost smell the clear, fresh air of the Norwegian Fjords on this recording. If you can’t afford to travel to Norway, Daniel Gortler has provided the next best thing with this collection of 21 Lyric Pieces by Grieg.”
Winnipeg’s Classic 107 Radio

“A nice piece of Grieg!”
Countywide Radio UK

“A nice program and a strong debut on Prospero Classical.”
WJTU Radio

“Gortler’s “freshness” and “maturity” combine convincingly here in this excellent introduction to the vast repertoire for solo piano (total of nearly 200 pieces) from the most engaging Norwegian composer we know of.”
Passion Musique et Culture

“Five stars: Gortler consistently gets it right: a disc to delight; a disc to warm the heart. Recommended.”
Fanfare

“Beautiful..beautiful CD. He really is a lovely player.”
Winnipeg’s Classic 107 Radio

“Enlisting his signature sensitive pianistic touch and whistle-clear finger dexterity, the artist probes the many mood pieces - *Arietta* Op.12/3, *Berceuse* Op.38.1, for example, they emerge lyrical, introspective, wistful, and highly personal in character. In his reading of *Vanished Days* Op.57.1, Gortler’s playing is rich in textural and emotional content, nostalgic and so very touching. Bristling with mischief, precise finger work and the effects of strategic timing, Gortler’s performance of *Puck* Op.71/3 reminds us that the fairy world is not all goodness and generosity.”

Pamela-Hickmans Concert Critique Blog

“Amazing”

WVIK Radio

“This is a recording that needs to be heard.”

Winnipeg’s Classical 107 Radio

“Gortler's certainly up to the task. He's impressed audiences worldwide as a soloist and chamber musician with performances distinguished by technical mastery and imagination.”

Textura

Daniel Gortler



GRIEG *Arietta*, op. 12/1. *Berceuse*, op. 38/1. *March of the Dwarfs*, op. 54/3. *Vanished Days*, op. 57/1. *Brooklet*, op. 62/4. *Solitary Traveler*, op. 43/2. *To Spring*, op. 43/6. *Norwegian Dance*, op. 47/4. *At your feet*, op. 68/3. *Butterfly*, op. 43/1. *Melody*, op. 47/3. *Gade*, op. 57/2. *Albumleaf*, op. 47/2. *Ballade*, op. 65/5. *Summer's Eve*, op. 71/2. *Little Bird*, op. 43/4. *Peasant's Song*, op. 65/2. *Notturmo*, op. 54/4. *At the Cradle*, op. 68/5. *Puck*, op. 71/3. *Peace of the Woods*, op. 71/4. • Daniel Gortler (pn) • PROSPERO 082 (64:20)

Whole discs of Grieg piano music are relatively rare, so it is good to have this selection of 21 (out of a total of 66).

This is a beautiful recording of beautiful music. Gortler's playing is intimate, his fine piano tone well caught in Prospero's recording. He shapes the melody of the famous *Arietta* almost vocally, his treble sweet and songlike. The *Berceuse* that follows is a logical continuation, a prolongationalmost. Gerler's rubato is natural, and for the central section *halling*, Gortler uses a crisper, harder touch to great effect; when we hear the opening section again, its effect is deepened by the experience.

The *March of the Dwarfs* is one of the more familiar of the *Lyrical Pieces* because Grieg arranged it for orchestra in his *Lyrical Suite*. There is, again, a contrastive section that here seems to ache with nostalgia/ Gortler paints pictures in front of our ears, his variety of touch impressive. He is clearly on a fine piano, and the Prospero recording serves him extremely well.

As a reflective interlude, *Vanished Days* allows space for

introspection. Gortler knows exactly the amount of rubato to use, taking it close to the limit, but never beyond. He is careful to allow staccatos to be exactly that, allowing variety of articulation; there is no over-peddaling anywhere on the disc. This is arguably the finest performance on the disc; the care of all aspects results in Grieg's masterpiece emerging as a perfect sound sculpture. Listen to Gortler's mezzo-staccato left-hand octaves, how each one is identical and yet they move towards harmonic arrivals perfectly. For an example of articulation at a more rapid rate, try the lovely *Album Leaf*, op. 47/2. The *Ballad*, op. 65/5, equals *Vanished Days* in emotive weight.

Gortler can do light too: *Brooklet* does indeed bubble away. And if Grieg's *Solitary Traveler* is no Wotan-Wanderer, he still carries a weight. Gortler allows the music, and specifically the harmonies, the perfect space in which to resonate and make their mark.

Another of Grieg's most famous works is *To Spring*. Here, Gortler is expansive and also allows himself to be passionate. A new entrant to the field in

this particular piece is Chinese pianist Di Xiao on her album *To Spring* (released on Pacific Audio and Visual Co.). Propiano gives Gortler's piano more depth, but interpretatively Xiao seems just a touch more attuned to Grieg's expressive world. Both pianists delineate the various strata Grieg presents well. Gortler does make the familiar feel fresh, though. Just listen to his take on *Melody* (op. 47/3). Part of the key is how he makes Grieg's wonderful harmonic twists sound so unexpected.

There is an earthiness to the *Norwegian Dance*, op. 47/4, with its drone bass, that reminds us that not all of Grieg's music is innocuous to the ear. I remember hearing a recital back in 2000 at the BMIC in London, UK (the British Music Information Centre) when pianist Phillip Thomas presented a program of Cardew, Christian Wolff, Michael Finnissy and ... Grieg. The Grieg in question was from the op. 72 *Slåtter* and sounded closer to Bartók. Certainly, it was no odd-man-out in the august Modernist company. Gortler reminds us of this side of Grieg's genius before, in *At Your Feet*, offering instantly the flip side of the coin with a dreamy nocturne. A cello and violin (metaphorically) sing in the outpouring that is the central panel of the piece.

The fleet-of-finger movements, such *Butterfly*, offer no challenge at all to Gortler. Almost Schumannesque in its whimsy, Gortler's account is magnificent. The sense of Romantic free-flow in *Gade*, too, seems to pinpoint the heart of the music, while the gestures of *Little Bird* are far from superficial, and on a recording level remind us of the excellence of the recording itself here.

The *Notturmo* in G-Minor, op. 54/4 is one of Grieg's most lovely outpourings. Steven Hough recently encored this piece in a recital I attended in China as part of the Beijing Music Festival. Many did not know what it as, but everyone wanted to know. Gortler allows us to fully immerse ourselves into Grieg's miniature toe-painting. The final group carefully leads us out of Grieg's forest of melody, a deceptively simple *At the Cradle* leading to

There is a "Puck" here. It is perhaps less shadowy than Debussy's famous "Danse de Puck" from the first book of *Préludes*; Grieg's is more of a whirligig. There is the very slightest blurring in some of the bass statements of the circular theme, but the performance nevertheless steals the heart. It is left to *Peace of the Woods* to close, a crepuscular adieu

It is true not all of this music is too technically challenging, but it is all difficult on an interpretative level, and Gortler consistently gets it right. His sequencing is perfectly judged, too: the disc runs on in one gorgeous stream of melody that only Grieg could have written.

I enjoyed Ana Glig's selection of Grieg's *Lyric Pieces* on the Sound Dynamics label (review in *Fanfare* 42:3), but that was only eleven of them, and Grieg shared the bed with others. Here, we have an hour in which to admire Grieg's mastery of the miniature. A disc to delight; a disc to warm the heart. **Colin Clarke**

Five stars: Gortler consistently gets it right: a disc to delight; a disc to warm the heart. Recommended

Daniel Gortler

Passion Musique et Culture

D Chronicles: Lyric Pieces by Grieg

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

Lyrical Pieces (Selection)

Daniel Gortler, piano <https://danielgortler.com/>

Label : Prospero PROSP 0082 <https://prospero-classical.com/>

Registration: Oct-Nov 2021, June 2022

Duration: 64 minutes

Booklet: 32 pages (English, German)

By Guy Sauve

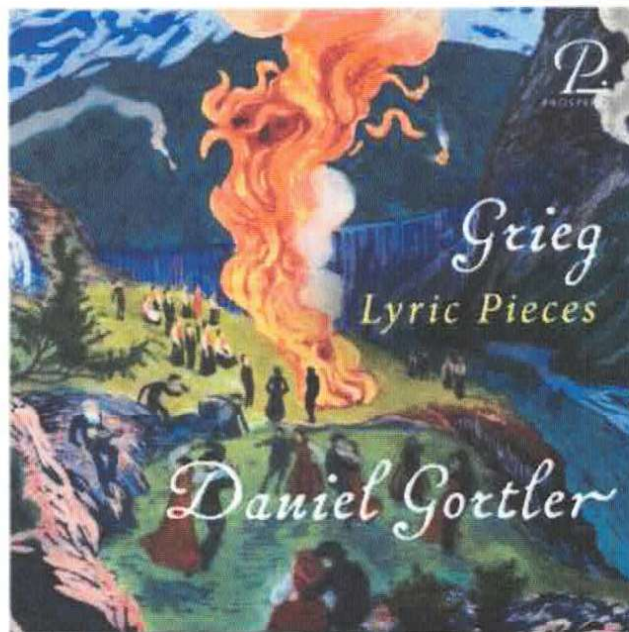
February 2024

It is Grieg's 66 lyric pieces for solo piano as it is Chopin's 60 mazurkas: dozens of miniatures, gathered in several notebooks, of sublime simplicity, written throughout a career, "technically" easy to perform and imprints of a nationalist flavor.

One of the differences between the two: in Grieg, the titles are descriptive (e.g. : Procession of Trolls; Le Ruisseau) from which a wide variety of evocations; at Chopin, the title is generic (it indicates the musical genre without any more). Another difference: in Chopin's mazurkas, intention is for beginners; in Grieg, it is more for everyone.

Then why compare the two universes? Because I think Grieg's Lyric Pieces deserve to be widely

circulated in the same title as Chopin's Mazurkas.



Just as Chopin's famous biographer Mieczyslaw Tomaszewski said the following about the Polish master's Mazurkas: "They require both an almost naive freshness of expression and an imposing maturity and mastery," so could one how about these little pearls of the Norwegian composer.

This is exactly where Daniel Gortler pulled off a masterstroke both technically and

interpretively. His choice of temps is wise, the touch of the piano is full and smooth, the articulation is very clear, his dynamics and sense of rhythm capable of very subtle nuances. By carefully sorting 21 pieces out of 66 volumes into ten notebooks each bearing a different opus number (from Opus 12 of 1867 to Opus 71 of

1901) and selecting at least one from each collection, it offers us an ever evolving panorama of poems sounds of maturity while breaking by moments with the systematic chronology of composition dates.

Gortler has skillfully developed a program that first of all rewards the variety of atmospheres, and which represents well the fertile inventiveness of the composer.

Of course, the influence of the folklore of his native country manifests itself (Peasant's singing with his stylized melody, Norwegian dance, the elegant Ballad of Opus 65, the mirror Puck). There are also references to some composers but without tarnishing Grieg's real personality, such as the dreamy Arietta (Schumann), Notturmo (impressionist piece composed the same year as Debussy's Moonlight), Little Bird (recalling the fluidity of Ravel), Peace of the woods (which I compare to a nocturnal) from Chopin).

A few animated pieces (Cortege des Trolls, Butterfly, Le Creek, Puck) contrast with others of a peaceful character - the two lullabies, Lonely Voyager in his sober existential quest, Gade (homage to his teacher Niels Gade), Summer Evening, Spring (evocating nature's slow awakening), At Your Feet (romantic and a little languishing) - or rather melancholic (Fainted Days, the Melody of Opus 47, Ballad of Opus 65).

Album sheet (op. 47 no. 2) I was particularly impressed with her dancing charm and her remarkable central part equipped with arpegs of delightful flexibility.

At Gortler's, "freshness" and "maturity" combine convincingly here in this excellent introduction to the vast repertoire for solo piano (total of nearly 200 pieces) from the most engaging Norwegian composer we know of.

Daniel Gortler

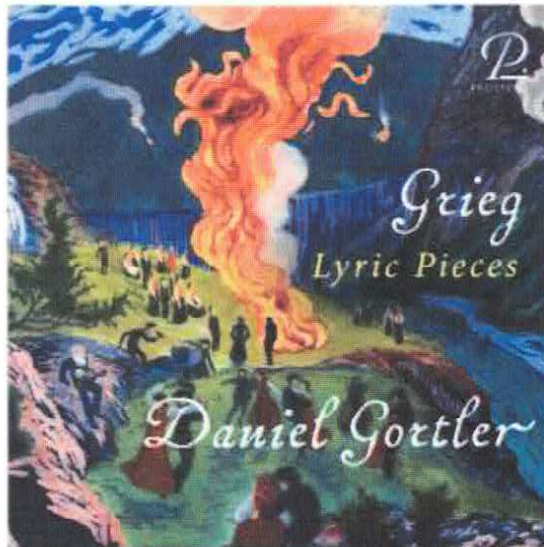


Edvard Grieg – Lyric Pieces (Selection) – Daniel Gortler (Piano) – 4262353970423 – Released February 2024 Prospero PROSP0082

Jean – Yves Duperron
February 2024

Composers from the Baltic and Nordic regions of the world have always had a strong bond or affinity with the folklore of their individual countries. They generally tend to eschew abstract or absolute forms of music like large scale symphonies and/or concertos, in favor of picturesque orchestral tone-poems and short-form or miniature character pieces for the piano. And Norwegian composer Edvard Grieg (1843-1907) is no exception. For example, Peer Gynt, incidental music to a poem based on Norwegian legend, has always been a staple of the classical music repertoire.

These somewhat simple yet highly picturesque *Lyric Pieces* totalling 66 pieces published in 10 books over a period 35 years, are prime examples of musical compositions stemming from or depicting personal reflections on tales of adventure set in natural surroundings and context. With titles like *Solitary*



Traveller, Norwegian Dance, Peasant's Song, Peace of the Woods it's easy to see where the inspiration came from. Pianist Daniel Gortler has hand-picked 21 of his personal favorites from all ten books for this collection. With intuitive and highly expressive playing he lends each one a distinct character and emotive impetus. The nostalgic melancholy of *Vanished Days*, the dreamy imagery of *Notturmo*, the malevolent yet comical spirit of *Puck*, or the elegant flutterings of *Butterfly*, are all well conveyed under Gortler's attentive

consideration to expressive details. Even the slightest shift in modod rises to the surface.

I don't know about you, but I find that pieces like these reveal much more of a composer's mindset and temperament than say any of Mozart's sonatas. They are like a portal into their personal thoughts and ideals, especially when interpreted with this much insight and acuity.

Daniel Gortler

pamela hickman's concert critique blog

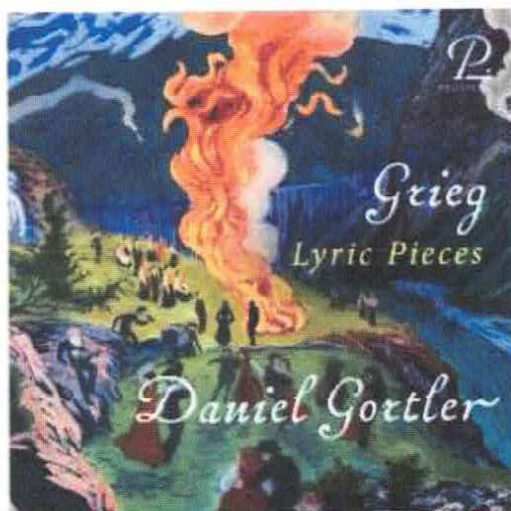
Pianist Daniel Gortler's recent recording of Edvard Grieg's "Lyric Pieces"

By Pamela Hickman

February 25, 2024

Edvard Grieg's "Lyric Pieces" for piano were written between 1867 and 1901, the sixty-six pieces published in ten books. Somewhat suggestive of Robert Schumann's piano cycles (but without their feverish intensity) they reflect Grieg's rich world of fantasy, of empathy and also the folk music of his native Norway. Indeed, Grieg has imbued these Romantic miniatures with an aura and pianistic approach that are uniquely his. American-Israeli pianist Daniel Gortler recently recorded a selection of the pieces, the line-up of which being of his own choosing and not conforming to the order in which they were written.

Gortler addresses the melodic shaping, the ample realm of changing harmonies and the essence of each musical vignette with insight and conviction. Enlisting his signature sensitive pianistic touch and whistle-clean finger dexterity, the artist probes the many mood pieces - "Arietta" Op.12/3, "Berceuse" Op.38/1, for example; they emerge lyrical, introspective, wistful and highly personal in character. In his reading of "Vanished Days" Op.57/1, Gortler's playing is rich in textural and emotional content, nostalgic and so very touching. Then there are pieces evoking the world of nature - the vivid, effervescent, many-directional movement of water in "Brooklet" Op. 62/4, the



descriptive fluttering of tiny wings in "Butterfly" Op.43/1 ending in the blink of any eye, little hops of the endearing "Little Bird" Op.43/4, the piece's quirky ornaments produced with meticulous precision. In "To the Spring", Gortler conveys Grieg's sense of wonder and joy inspired by the arrival of spring. As to items describing the day's end, Notturmo Op.54/4, with its chromatic moments, reflects some waves of unrest, compared to the composer's sense of peace, tranquillity and intimacy in "Summer's Eve" Op.71/2. We are reminded of Grieg's folk heritage, here and there in glimpses, but more specifically in "Norwegian Dance" Op.47/4, its drone and modal melody evoking the character of the early fiddle, and in the appealing simplicity of the "Peasant's Song". The whimsical "March of the Dwarfs" (Trolls), conjures up the boisterous imaginary inhabitants of the Jotunheimen mountains. Bristling with mischief, precise fingerwork and the effects of strategic timing, Gortler's performance of "Puck" Op.71/3 reminds us that the fairy world is not all goodness and generosity. (In Scandinavia, Puck is portrayed as a Norse demon, indeed, sometimes associated with the devil.) Not only did Schumann write a piano piece entitled "Gade", his third piano trio was also dedicated to Niels Wilhelm Gade, a close family friend. Grieg, in the "Lyric Pieces" pays tribute to the same

Danish composer/conductor, who had been a major influence on him in his early years. "Gade" Op.57/2 is a light-hearted, spirited piece.

A true master of the miniature, Daniel Gortler captures the moods and characterization, the Nordic flavour, the fairytale magic, the nature scenes and, above all, the refined emotions expressed in the "Lyric Pieces" heard in this recording. Offering rich and subtle expression to Grieg's "poetic diary", his playing is delicate, polished and transparent, inviting the composer's character and personality to shine through the content of each small, finely-formed musical sketch.

Grieg "Lyric Pieces" (Prospero Classical) was recorded (2021, 2022) at the Jerusalem Music Centre on a Steinway grand piano. Daniel Gortler is a Steinway artist.

Daniel Gortler

CLASSICA

Diary for piano

Daniel Gortler deploys Grieg's Lyric Pieces into sentimental reveries with subtle expression

By Isabelle Werck

Prospero Classical

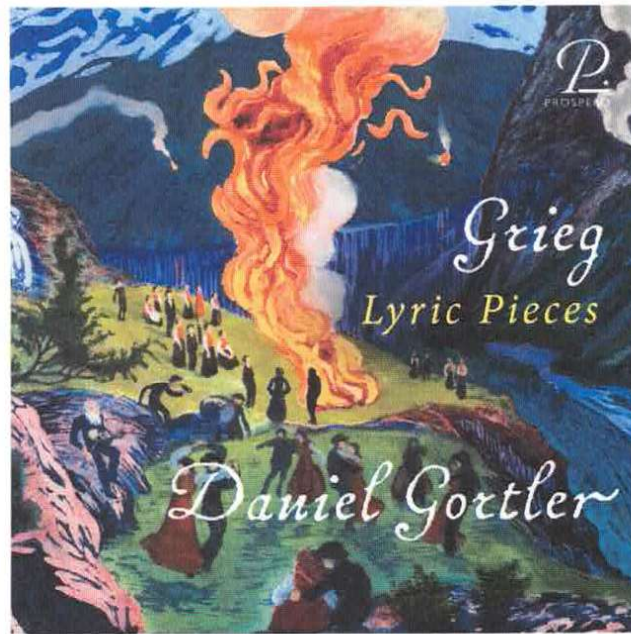
March 3, 2024

Congratulations to the pianist Daniel Gortler, his album with a selection of the well-known and popular "lyric pieces" by Edvard Grieg has received the highest critics award, a CHOC, in the French classical magazine Classical.

Daniel Gortler expands Grieg's lyrical pieces into sentimental reveries with sublime expression. Many of Grieg's sixty-six lyric pieces, much loved by amateurs, are quite easy on the fingers. But to really interpret them is another matter!

In his selection of 21 cleverly varied pieces, Daniel Gortler shows himself to be more expressive than Ciccolini's highly recommended complete recording (Cascavalle 2004), and if he differs in more than one detail from the extraordinary album by Emil Gilels (Deutsche Grammophone, 1974) or that of his student Elena Filonova (Calliope, 2007), it is in no way inferior to them.

Norwegian folklore is represented by two tracks: *Norwegian Dance* and *Peasant's Song*.



It is however, faithfully represented in the other pieces, with all the dancing elements that the pianist knows how to convey. In the moderate tempo pieces, he lets their dreamy aura shine.

Mini rubatos venture to the edge of sentimentality, but their affectionate boldness knows where and how to hold back. The album opens with the exquisite

Arietta, the work of "a naive and profound poet," as Guy Sacre writes. *At the Cradle*, longings for days gone by, a love song, an archaic ballad, evening reflections, the wanderings of a traveler in the fjords: The whole journey of subtle emotions seems to hold no secrets for this refined interpreter with sophisticated fingers.

Daniel Gortler has decided to interpret the *To the Spring* at a slower pace than Grieg suggested (Grieg's pianola recordings show a surprisingly frantic tempo): The shiny dew is replaced by the fervor and tenderness of a blossom.

Virtuoso pieces are interspersed, and effortlessly demonstrate a flawless technique: Clear, transparent articulation in *Brooklet*, very lively and spontaneous in *Little Bird*, mischievous like a little devil in *Puck*. The famous *March of the Dwarfs* is less aggressive than in other versions, despite all the hammered tritones, it rather gives the impression of a fairytale-like speed. The album ends with *Peace of the Woods* that leaves us in a halo of tranquility. The detailed, well-illustrated booklet is in English and German.

EDVARD GRIEG (1843-1907)
Lyrical pieces (selection) – Daniel
Gortler (piano) Prospero
PROSP0082.2023, 1 H 04 MIN

A retrouver à prix vert dans les FNAC

déjà entendu pareille plénitude, pareille progression dramatique, telle une vague qui de très loin se forme et se déploie? Le *Vivace* final s'ébroue dans une joie contagieuse avant d'être interrompu par un hurlement strident du violon: symbole des acouphènes dont souffrait le compositeur? Dans ces pages les Modigliani sont à couper le souffle.

SARAH-OLIVIER BOUJAT

QUATUOR MODIGLIANI (QUATUOR À CORDES)

Grieg: *Quatuor n°1 en sol mineur*. Smetana: *Quatuor n°1 « De ma vie »* — PHILIPPE MATHIAS

— 100% SACRÉ

CD CLASSICA PLACE 3



Mémoire de concertos

Le violoniste Théotime Langlois de Swarte et ses amis du Consort relatent avec grâce et fougue la vie du prêtre roux, dévouée à l'instrument et au genre.



Le catalogue de Vivaldi se présente comme un tas de perles; reste à faire le collier. Ce portrait du compositeur à travers ses concertos est un chef-d'œuvre de joaillerie grâce au talent conjugué de Théotime Langlois de Swarte et du musicologue Olivier Fourès - l'art et la méthode. La dimension narrative du programme, où un soupçon de Legrenzi campe d'embée l'ambiance dans laquelle baigne le jeune Antonio, se jumelle avec la métamorphose de l'instrumentarium selon qu'on évolue dans la sphère intime des premiers concertos (un instrument par partie), ou parmi les musi-

ciens de l'orchestre de Dresde et ses effectifs opulents. On trouvera occasionnellement un psautier (« il y en avait deux à l'*Ospedale della Pietà* ») et, dans le *Concerto* RV 569, des timbales absentes des enregistrements d'Alexis Kossenko (Alpha Classics, 2012) et Mathieu Lussier (Atma Classique, 2015). Notre chercheur a mis la main sur une poignée d'inédits de toute beauté, dont l'édition originale dite « de Gènes » de *L'Été*. Vivaldi ne supportant pas la tiédeur, Théotime Langlois de Swarte n'a rationné ni la grâce qu'il prodigue aux mouvements lents, ni la fougue qu'il insufflé aux mouvements rapides. Rien de précipité pour autant dans ce jeu où la technique n'est jamais exhibée comme une fin en soi. Le *Concerto « Il ritiro »* résume bien les qualités de notre soliste: une pudeur déchirante dans l'*Andante*, un jeu intériorisé dans la cadence du mouvement initial où un bariolage dans la grave succède de but en blanc aux pépiements aigus, un finale plus fantasque, dont les larges intervalles lui permettent d'investir les registres extrêmes avec une grande sûreté d'intonation.

Ses amis du Consort ont plus que droit au chapitre: comment refuser à Justin Taylor le paiement d'attention que mérite son clavecin - inventif, spirituel -, notamment dans les hypnotiques mouvements médians? Réuni au grand complet dans le *Concerto* RV 569, l'ensemble, magnifié par la prise de son (spatialisation des cors), éclate d'un communicatif bonheur de jouer. Épilogue mélancolique, avec l'émouvante chaconne du *Concerto* RV 583 que Vivaldi troussa pour la jeune Chiaretta avant de quitter Venise.

HÉLÈNE BIGORI

ANTONIO VIVALDI (1678-1741)

« Concerti per una vita », *Concertos*, RV 37, 171, 212, 237 « per PIsendei », 250, 252, 256 « Il ritiro », 267a « per Anna Maria », 278, 315 « L'Été », 356, 370, 569, 583, 768 et 813 — Théotime Langlois de Swarte (violon), Le Consort — HANNOVERA MUNICIPIUM SOCIETY (C.D.)

2022, 74 MIN

CD CLASSICA PLACE 7



Journal intime pour piano

Daniel Gortler déploie les *Pièces lyriques* de Grieg en de sentimentales rêveries à l'expression subtile.

Sur les soixante-six *Pièces lyriques* de Grieg, beaucoup, très appréciées des amateurs, sont assez faciles pour les doigts. Mais les interpréter vraiment, c'est une autre affaire! Dans son choix de vingt-et-un numéros judicieusement variés, Daniel Gortler se montre plus soigneusement expressif que Ciccolini dans son intégrale pourtant très recommandable (Cascavelle, 2004), et s'il diffère par plus d'un détail de l'excellent album d'Emil Gilels (Deutsche Grammophon, 1974) ou de son élève Elena Filonova (Calliope, 2007) il ne se montre en rien inférieur.

Le folklore norvégien n'est représenté ici que par deux titres, *Halling* et *Chanson paysanne*, quoiqu'il soit fidèlement rendu dans les autres morceaux, avec tout l'élément dansant que le pianiste sait leur restituer. Dans les pièces au tempo modéré, il s'attache surtout à laisser rayonner leur aura de rêverie. Des mini-rubatos se risquent au bord de la sentimentalité, mais leur affectueuse audace sait où et comment se retenir. L'exquise *Arietta* ouvre l'album, page « d'un poète naïf et profond », comme l'écrit Guy Sacre. Berceuses, nostalgies des jours envolés, chant d'amour, ballade archaïque, contemplation du soir, errance du voyageur dans les fjords: tout le parcours des émotions subtiles semble ne pas avoir de secret pour cet interprète aux doigts raffinés.

Daniel Gortler a décidé d'interpréter *L'Hommage au printemps* plus lentement que Grieg ne l'a indiqué (d'ailleurs les enregistrements de Grieg sur piano)

rèvent un tempo étonnamment nerveux) : à la rosée brillante se substituent plutôt la lerve et la délicatesse d'une éclosion. Les pièces virtuoses s'intercalent, et prouvent sans difficulté une technique impeccable : articulation claire, transparente dans le *Petit ruisseau*, très vive et spontanée dans *Petit oiseau*, espègle comme un diabolin dans *Puck*. La fameuse *Marche des Trolls*, moins agressive, malgré tous ses tritons martelés, que dans d'autres versions, joue plutôt la vélocité feerique. L'album s'achève par une *Paix des bois* qui nous laisse dans un halo de tranquillité. Le livret très détaillé et bien illustré est en anglais et en allemand. GABRIELE WELCKA

EDVARD GRIEG (1843-1907)

Pièces lyriques (5, 6, 8, 9, 10) — Daniel Goffier (piano)
— Prospero PROSPERO 2023, 111 04 MIN
CD CLASSICA page 8



Cœur d'antan

S'emparant du Steinway de Rachmaninov, Lukas Geniušas replonge la maison suisse du compositeur dans l'atmosphère onirique et séduisante de son maître.

Commençons par le piano – un Steinway offert à celui qui fut le « dernier des romantiques ». Si sa carrure imposante le distingue d'emblée, ce sont surtout ses tons profonds et nobles qui saisissent l'auditeur. La palette évoque à la fois l'intimité et l'intensité, à l'image de son propriétaire qui passait les années 1930 aux côtés de cet instrument magnifique dans sa villa, près de Lucerne. Aux commandes du piano de Sergueï Rachmaninov, Lukas Geniušas s'empare d'un instrument qui n'a rien à voir avec l'éclat des pianos modernes,

nous plongeant dans un univers d'antan et livrant un puissant récit non pas par la force mais par la poésie du discours. Mais l'interprète va encore plus loin dans son hommage au compositeur, proposant les versions originales de la titanique première sonate et de cinq préludes tirés de l'opus 32, entreprise fascinante qui prête un nouveau visage à ces œuvres.

Si nos oreilles retiennent la pâte sonore d'un Lugansky, dont les gravures des mêmes œuvres ont exploité l'ampleur symphonique de ces pages (Ambrosio, 2012, et Harmonia Mundi, 2017), les timbres perlés de Geniušas mettent en lumière des voix intérieures de la sonate, rendue plus intime par un jeu lyrique qui fait la part belle aux sonorités liquides du piano. Face à cette sonate « sauvage », comme l'avait décrite Rachmaninov, l'expressivité naturelle du pianiste trouve le juste milieu entre l'emportement romantique de Lugansky et l'admirable sobriété de Steven Osborne (Hyperion, 2020). Chez Lukas Geniušas, le drame demeure au cœur de l'œuvre, livré par une tenue rythmique et une recherche de couleurs qui ne va jamais contre la nature de l'instrument. Sans doute, le Steinway – extraordinairement capté et réglé – y est pour beaucoup, ses aigus dorés et ses basses nourries restituant une atmosphère onirique sans lourdeur. Or, il faut également souligner la maîtrise du pianiste devant un instrument qui subit mal une virtuosité trop extravertie, comme en témoigne un récital de Pletnev sur ce même piano (Deutsche Grammophon, 1998). Ainsi, le jeune Russo-lituanien revêt les préludes de nuances subtiles, livrant un maximum de contrastes sans franchir les limites de l'instrument. Par cette gravure de haute voée, Lukas Geniušas restitue brillamment la pensée du compositeur dont la musique insaisissable ne cesse de subjuguier.

MELISSA KHORRAM

SERGUEÏ RACHMANINOV (1873-1943)

Sonate pour piano n° 1 (version originale). Préludes op. 32 n° 2, 7, 8 et 13 – Lukas Geniušas (piano) — ALPINA CLASSICS 997 2023, 55/59'



Sans tourner autour du pot

L'ultime pirouette irrévérencieuse de Boesmans est magistralement portée par Bassem Akiki à la tête d'un Symphonique de La Monnaie vif-argent.

Un adieu, espègle, comme l'était son auteur, le malicieux Philippe Boesmans, qui voulait que son neuvième et dernier opéra soit une comédie, après tant de drames. Et qui, comme chaque fois, avait su choisir son livret : réduit de deux tiers, *On purge bébé*, vaudeville hilarant, sur fond de constipation et pots de chambre brisés, d'épouse foldingue et de cocu innocent, marche même paré de méismes musicaux. Car pour le compositeur belge, le texte devait rester compréhensible à 100 % : resserrée, commentée, soulignée, la claque irresistible et vacharde de Feydeau sur les petits-bourgeois de son temps garde sa verve tellurique. On n'y rit pas comme au théâtre, à gorge déployée – pour cela il faudrait la vidéo du spectacle de Richard Brunel, incontournable réussite – mais on y sourit, complice, face à ces parvenus sans culture, jouets d'un Toto enfant roi destructeur des conventions sociales, soutenu par une mère aussi inconsciente qu'impossible.

Si la dissolution des couples dans l'absurde fonctionne si bien, c'est que Boesmans avait taillé des rôles sur mesure et que chacun est à sa juste place : Jodie Devos colorature idéale en registre d'incontrôlable machine infernale, Jean-Sébastien Bou mettant son élégance au service de sa chute imparable, Deniz Delaere ténor aussi délicat que hors-sol face à un couple adultère imbu de lui-même (Sophie Pondjiclis, Jérôme Varnier), tous sont parfaits.

Daniel Gortler

WINNIPEG'S
CLASSIC 107

Norwegian Lyricism: Pianist Daniel Gortler releases CD of Grieg's Lyric Pieces

By Chris Wolf
March 11, 2024

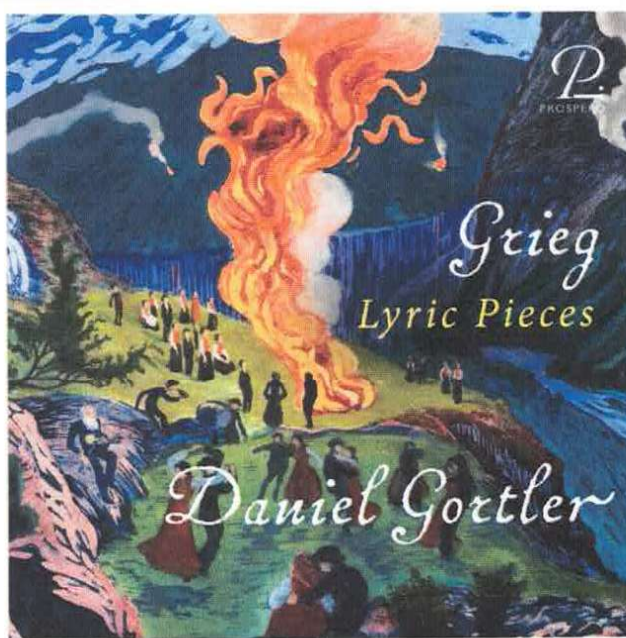
In December the Swiss record label *Prospero* released a CD featuring the marvelous Israeli pianist Daniel Gortler performing selections from Edvard Grieg's ten books of *Lyric Pieces*.

Educated at The Rubin Academy of Music in Tel Aviv, Israel and The MusikHochschule in Hanover, Germany, Daniel Gortler has gone on to perform with some of the world's best orchestras including The San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, The Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, and the Houston Symphony to name just a few. He has made appearances at very prestigious Festivals such as the Lucerne Festival, Schleswig-Holstein Festival, and the Verbirer Festival and has performed chamber music alongside the likes Daniel Johannesson, Steven Isserlis and Sylvia Schwartz. When it comes to the piano miniature, Gortler feels very much at home. He has made a magnificent recording of

Mendelssohn's *Songs without words* that is available on the Romeo Records Label. With this

latest Grieg project he has explored the moods, feelings and elements of Norwegian folk music than run throughout the books.

As Gortler explains, "The melodic line and the harmony and lyricism is very important to me, and I always feel the music first of all, in those channels...I think in those miniatures, that the most important thing...the singing line. Like there was a singer... but there



is just the piano."

The idea of recording Grieg's *Lyric pieces* came to Gortler during the pandemic. He had more time on his hands, and was looking for other music to perform. Scriabin, Poulenc and others were explored, but it was a piano technician friend of his that suggested he listen to a recording of the great Emil Gilels performing the *Lyric Pieces*, and for Gortler that recording had a profound effect. "I listened, and I really

fell in love with those pieces. I started to play one... two... and then five and then ten...and COVID was still there...and so I found twenty or twenty-five...that's how the project was born."

The passion Gortler has for these pieces is very intense. "Grieg puts everything in this dish! There is the folklore, nature, the drama, the dance...there is the sad and happy and all the feelings that one can feel... memories... and Norwegian views and landscapes...I feel all of that in the music," says Gortler.

The end result of this exploration and discovery of the music of Grieg by Gortler makes for a CD that is absolutely exquisite. There are no hard edges on the recording; every piece is played with a beautiful touch and expressiveness that is enchanting and intoxicating to listen to. Even when things

should be more aggressive and stormy; such as the *March of the Trolls* from Book Five, Gortler is careful that the sound does not get away from him and the voicing of each chord is heard in utmost clarity.

The characters, landscapes, moods and folklore that Grieg intended are all there. You can almost smell the clear, fresh air of the Norwegian Fjords on this recording. If you can't afford to travel to Norway, Daniel Gortler has provided the next best thing with this collection of 21 Lyric Pieces by Grieg.

This is a recording that needs to be heard!

<https://classic107.com/articles/norwegian-lyricism-pianist-daniel-gortler-releases-cd-of-griegs-lyric-pieces>

Daniel Gortler



Pianist Daniel Gortler plays Grieg

March 11, 2024

These days a new album is released with Edvard Grieg's "Lyrical Pieces" performed by the highly acclaimed Israeli-American pianist Daniel Gortler, one of the best international pianists. His presentations are considered important musical events mainly in Israel and the United States, the two countries where his activities are



concentrated. We are informed that at a recent exhibition concert in New York, critics praised his performance. In addition to his performances as a soloist with orchestras and recitals in both countries, he is associated with the European romantic repertoire. His recordings of works by Mendelssohn, Schumann and Schubert won the praise of professional critics and the appreciation of music lovers around the world. The release of the album takes place within the framework of a special recital to mark the 180th anniversary of Grieg's birth. On 16.3 at the Israeli Conservatory of Music (Stricker). More data: <https://www.icm.org.il/event/gortler-2/>

Daniel Gortler has performed with the best orchestras around the world and in recitals and chamber concerts in the most prestigious venues, alongside great artists and under the batons of internationally famous conductors. He has taught at Tel Aviv and New York Universities and many of his students have won numerous awards and

wide international recognition. He won first international prizes in numerous competitions, and was one of the founders of the "Israeli Schubertiade." Grieg wrote "Lyric Pieces" as a poetic diary for piano, between 1867 and 1901 he composed 66 short character pieces published in 10 books. Gortler selected 21 of his favorites.

More data: <http://www.danielgortler.com>

Daniel Gortler

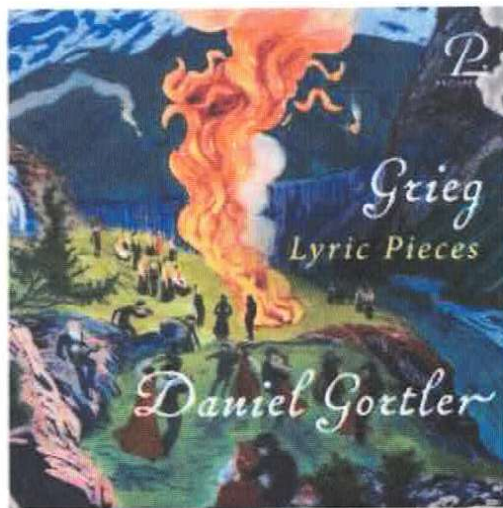
INFODAD.COM: Family-Focused Reviews

(++++) THE POWERS OF ONE

Grieg: Lyric Pieces (excerpts). Daniel Gortler, piano Prospero Records.

By Mark J. Estren
March 28, 2024

Although the use of multiple instruments opens up a wide range of sounds and colors with which composers can communicate their thoughts and feelings, there are times when a single instrument, sensitively used, can be every bit as effective as an ensemble. Small-scale works with a sense of intimacy are particularly congenial territory for single-instrument presentation, and Grieg's 66 *Lyric Pieces* certainly fit that description. Composed during a 35-year period (1866-1901), these poetic miniatures were collected in 10 books: Opp. 12, 38, 43, 47, 54, 57, 62, 65, 68 and 71. The total set does have a circularity of sorts: Grieg reuses the theme of the opening *Arietta*, Op. 12, No. 1, in the concluding *Remembrances*, Op. 71, No. 7. But within the overall compilation of works, there is no particular structure: the pieces are musical thoughts of various kinds that sound as good independently as they do when heard as a group (or 10 groups). This circumstance has long opened the door to pianists who want to present a selection of these technically undemanding but emotionally captivating pieces – and Daniel Gortler does a particularly nice job in this regard in his recital on the Prospero label. Gortler offers 21 of the *Lyric Pieces* arranged simply for their individual and collective effect, not with any attempt to impose orderliness on them. Starting with *Arietta*, he proceeds to *Berceuse*, Op. 38, No. 1, to continue a similar mood, then changes impressions



with *March of the Trolls*, Op. 54, No. 3 (here called "March of the Dwarfs" for some reason). As the recital continues, the individual works' moods are quickly established, nicely summed up through Gortler's sensitive playing, and then rapidly erased – so the feelings of the next piece in line can complement or contrast with the one just heard. *Vanished Days*, Op. 57, No. 1 is followed by *Brooklet*, Op. 62, No. 4; *Solitary Traveller*, Op. 43, No. 2; *To the Spring*, Op. 43, No. 6; *Norwegian Dance*, Op. 47, No. 4; *At Your Feet*, Op. 68, No. 3; *Butterfly*, Op. 43, No. 1; *Melody*, Op. 47, No. 3; *Gade*, Op. 57, No. 2; *Album Leaf*, Op. 47, No. 2; *Ballad*, Op. 65, No. 5; *Summer's Eve*, Op. 71, No. 2; *Little Bird*, Op. 43, No. 4; *Peasant's Song*, Op. 65, No. 2; *Notturmo*, Op. 54, No. 4; *At the Cradle*, Op. 68, No. 5; *Puck*, Op. 71, No. 3; and finally *Peace of the Woods*, Op. 71, No. 4. In fact, it is the most peaceful and pleasantly lyrical of the *Lyric Pieces* in which Gortler excels – *Album Leaf*, *Summer's Eve*, *Notturmo* and *Peace of the Woods* are standouts. Taken as a whole, the 66 *Lyric Pieces* show an element of Grieg's musical personality that remained largely unchanged for more than three decades. Gortler expertly communicates the stylistic similarities among the 21 pieces he selects, while at the same time bringing forth the small but telling ways in which Grieg differentiates each from all the others. The sensitivity with which Gortler uses the piano's communicative potential makes this a disc full of warmth and beauty.

Daniel Gortler

pizzicato
Remy Franck's Journal about Classical Music

Narratives Grieg-Program

April 11, 2023

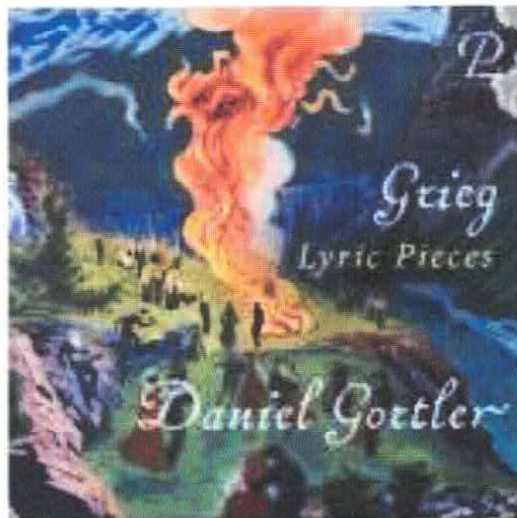
By Remy Franck



Edvard Grieg: Lyrische Stücke op. 12 Nr. 1; op. 38 Nr. 1; op. 43 Nr. 1, 2, 4, 6; op. 47 Nr. 2, 3, 4; op. 54 Nr. 3 & 4; op. 57 Nr. 1 & 2; op. 62 Nr. 4; op. 65 Nr. 2 & 5; op. 68 Nr. 3 & 5; op. 71 Nr. 2, 3, 4; Daniel Gortler, Klavier; # Prospero PROSP0082; Aufnahme 2022, Veröffentlichung 03.11.2023 (64')

Israeli-American pianist Daniel Gortler has selected 21 of Edward Grieg's Lyric Pieces for his debut album on Prospero.

He plays the quieter pieces very poetically, with subtle tonal gradations and with beautiful phrasing. In the more virtuosic compositions he surprises with a very personal rhythm and sometimes quite distinctive accentuations that give his interpretation a great freshness.



On the whole, he keeps the listener's interest with a very differentiated playing, because he gives each of the little miniatures its own character and lets each one speak to us in a different tone. This results in an enriching narrative flow.

Daniel Gortler

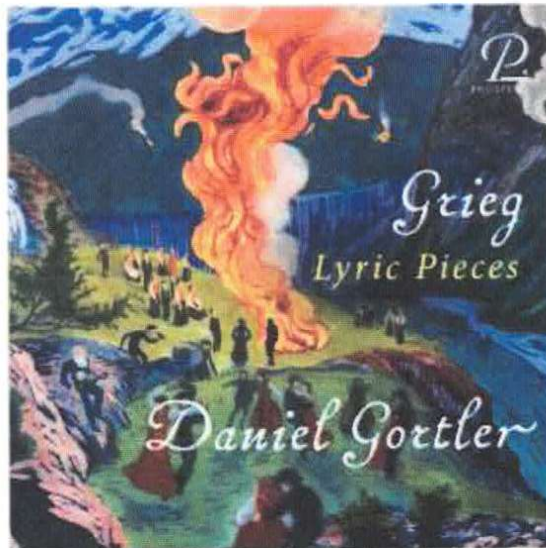


DANIEL GORTLER DEBUTS WITH FAVORITES

This is Daniel Gortler's debut on Prospero Classical. He presents his favorite Lyric Pieces by Edvard Grieg. And it makes quite a nice program — and a strong debut.

Grieg wrote 66 of these short characteristic pieces. They were composed over 34 years and published in ten volumes. Some are among the best-known works by Grieg. And many are notoriously difficult.

Often pianists show off their technical expertise with the virtuoso-level selections. Gortler takes a different route. All twenty-one of the selections are favorites of the pianist. And many of those are easy to play.



But Gortler's purpose isn't to show off his chops. Rather, it's to express himself through these works. And that purpose elevates even the simplest pieces in this program. Gortler is a thoughtful performer. His playing is expressive and lyrical.

As recorded, the piano has a warm, rounded sound. It's well-suited to the music and Gortler's playing.

Gortler's put together an enjoyable program and a well-executed one.

Daniel Gortler

AMERICAN RECORD GUIDE
INDEPENDENT CRITICS REVIEWING CLASSICAL RECORDINGS AND MUSIC IN CONCERT

GRIEG: *Lyric Pieces*, sel Daniel Gortler, piano Prospero 82 - 64 minutes

By Donald Vroon
April/May 2024

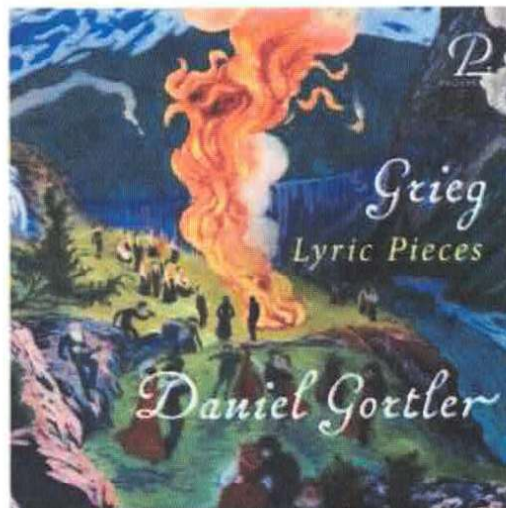
Edvard Grieg wrote these from 1867 to 1901 (he died in 1907). His style didn't change much, so they can be performed in any order. The complete *Lyric Pieces* have been beautifully recorded by Nicholas Roth on Blue Griffin (J/A 2007). I have 4 other recordings, not counting this one. (Obviously, I really like these pieces.) Most of them present a one-disc selection in order of composition: Gilels (DG), Richter (J/A 2021), Fialkowska (N/D 2015). Only Cyprien Katsaris does what this one does: a one-disc 56 *American Record Guide* March/April 2024 selection in an order chosen by the pianist. Katsaris does 19 of them with other Grieg pieces; Gortler does 21 of them.

The recordings bear little resemblance to each other. I can't listen carefully to all of the recordings to compare every piece and every program. I know I like the music, and the most attractive pieces turn up in most of these collections - just not always in the same order.

This new recording is nicely played, and I am sure I could live with it as my only recording of the *Lyric Pieces*. But why should I do that, when great pianists have recorded these? Nicholas Roth and Daniel Gortler may not have the reputation of Gilels and Richter, but they obviously love these pieces and put them across most effectively. Gortler is Israeli, and he has also recorded Mendelssohn's *Songs without Words*, which are very similar character pieces (praised in Sept/Oct 2009).

Since I am very happy with the 4 recordings I already have, I will not replace any of them with this one. We have reviewed around 30 recordings of *Lyric Pieces*. I would put this in the top 5 of the ones I know, not counting the orchestral suite (Opus 54, the only ones Grieg orchestrated - in 1904).

If you don't know these beautiful, gentle pieces, do get a recording of them.



Daniel Gortler

textura

Daniel Gortler: *Edvard Grieg—Lyric Pieces*

Prospero Classical

By Ron Schepper

August 2024

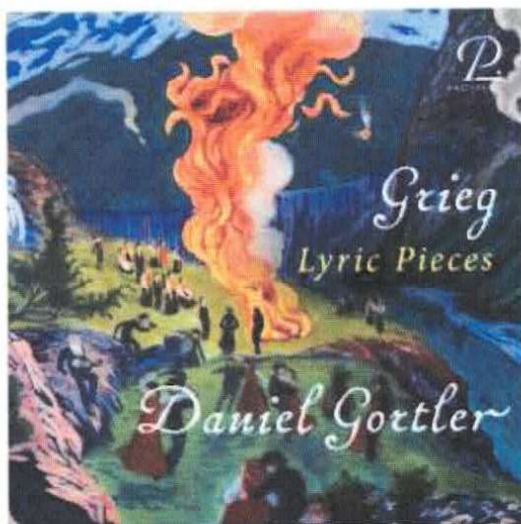
This splendid collection of Edvard Grieg (1843-1907) material by Israeli-American pianist Daniel Gortler could have been a triple-disc affair. After all, between 1867 and 1901 the composer wrote sixty-six short character pieces, from which Gortler selected twenty-one for his Prospero Classical debut. Perhaps a second volume will eventually materialize; for now, the first offers no shortage of delights. Publishing them in ten books, the composer created these pieces as something of an ongoing piano diary. Consistent with that, they were created throughout his life, with the first volume (Op. 12) appearing during his early twenties and the tenth (Op. 71) when he was fifty-eight. Most are miniatures lasting from one to two minutes, with only two pushing past four.

While contrasts in mood and style are abundant, all reflect the melodic sensibility of their creator and share, as advertised, an appealingly lyrical dimension. Some are dreamy, wistful, and melancholy and others lively and spirited, yet, in Gortler's expert hands, all gather to present a cohesive portrait of the composer (it's worth noting that the pianist strays from strict chronology and instead orders the pieces to create a satisfying flow). He imbues the gentler lullabies with poetic

sensitivity and attention to their nuances and animates the robust folk dances with vitality and enthusiasm. Regardless of the piece, his phrasing is thoughtful and honours the spirit of Grieg's music.

Gortler's certainly up to the task. He's impressed audiences worldwide as a soloist and chamber musician with performances distinguished by technical mastery and imagination. Earlier releases featuring the music of Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Schubert nicely complement the new one, recorded in 2021 and 2022 at the Jerusalem Music Centre with Gortler playing a Steinway grand piano. If the lyric pieces seem particularly strong on melody, it's intentional, as borne out by Grieg's comment, "I wrote my piano music so that it will be played, sung, and enjoyed in every fisherman's and peasant's hut in Norway where there is a piano."

The character of his homeland is evoked in the pieces but often allusively. Whereas some titles, such as "March of the Dwarfs," "Butterfly," and "At the Cradle," point to a specific subject matter and rapidly fluttering figures in "Brooklet" and "Little Bird" do evoke a stream and chirping bird, respectively, others like



"Ballad" and "Summer's Eve" conjure a mood or scene indirectly.

The album's tone is set by the beguiling "Arietta," whose yearning melody is voiced beautifully by Gortler. This sweet caress of a piece wends its gentle way for a fleeting minute-and-a-half before ceding the stage to the equally charming "Berceuse," which frames a brief Norwegian dance episode in the middle with tranquil expressions. "March of the Dwarfs" thereafter engages with fluttering phrases that could be taken for macabre chants by the titular creatures. The oscillation between serenity and liveliness reflected in the initial pieces continues as the album advances, with ones such as "Vanished Days," "At Your Feet," and "Solitary Traveller" accentuating the set's introspective, elegiac dimension and "Norwegian Dance" and the devilish "Puck" its rhythmically exuberant side. Whereas the album is at its most solemn during the dark and dramatic "Ballad," it's at its

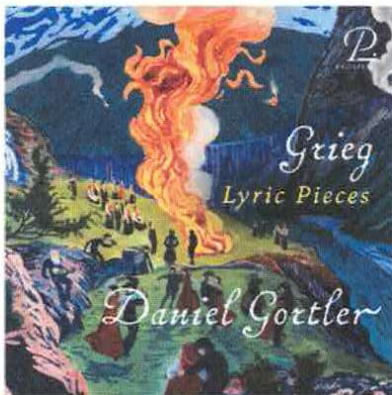
most quietly radiant in "Summer's Eve," folk-inflected in "Peasant's Song," and impressionistic in "Notturmo."

Of course often a piece will exemplify both tendencies when serene expressions bookend a dance episode. Again, regardless of the differences in tone Grieg's emphasis on melody is omnipresent. One is even titled "Melody," the tone opted for in this gracefully flowing setting melancholy; "Album Leaf," by comparison, exudes rhapsodic playfulness and the enticing character of salon music. While Grieg himself characterized the settings in one volume as "easy pieces for piano students" (in a letter to a Danish composer colleague), don't be fooled by how seemingly easy it might be to play them (not all, as illustrated by "Brooklet" and "Puck"). As Gortler's sensitive, attentive renditions show, highly developed artistry is needed to make them sing as resonantly as they do here.

Daniel Gortler

Edvard Grieg - Lyric Pieces

Release Date: February 16, 2024



- 1 Lyric Pieces, Book I, Op.12 Nr. 1, Arietta
- 2 Lyric Pieces, Book II, Op.38 Nr. 1, Berceuse
- 3 Lyric Pieces, Book V, Op.54 Nr. 3, March of the Dwarfs

Show all tracks ↓

Edvard Grieg – Lyric Pieces, a new recording by acclaimed Israeli-American pianist Daniel Gortler (Prospero Classical 0082 - distributed by Naxos) will see its North American release February 9. Grieg wrote Lyric Pieces as a poetic piano diary: between 1867 and 1901 he composed 66 short character pieces published in 10 books. For his debut album for Prospero Classical, Gortler selected 21 of his favorites, including the virtuosic March of the Dwarfs, Butterfly, Brooklet and Puck, which are among Grieg's best-known works, as well as Arietta, the first piece in Grieg's set. The dreamy Berceuse, At the Cradle and Summer's Eve and the melancholy Solitary Traveler, Melody and Ballade are also included. He rounds out the collection with Vanished Days, Norwegian Dance, At your feet, Gade, Album Leaf, Little Bird, Peasant's Song, Notturmo, Peace of the Woods and To Spring. For the complete listing, [click here].

Early reviews of the album are outstanding. Fanfare gives Lyric Pieces 5 stars, saying " The performance steals the heart, Gortler consistently gets it right. The disc runs on in one gorgeous stream of melody that only Grieg could have written. Gortler's care of all aspects results in Grieg's masterpiece emerging as a perfect sound sculpture, Gortler's account is magnificent."

Similarly, Pizzicato praises Gortler's performances noting, "He plays the quieter very poetically, with subtle tonal gradations and with beautiful phrasing. In the more virtuosic compositions, he surprises with a very personal rhythm and sometimes quite distinctive accentuations that give his interpretation a great freshness."

Press Release

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Artist Details

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Tour Dates

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[▶ Interview with Winnipeg - Classic 107's Chris Wolf](#)

[▶ Atlanta Music Critic Interview](#)

Daniel Gortler does a particularly nice job in his recital: 'Grieg Lyric Pieces' / INFODAD.com







Posted At: March 28, 2024 12:00 AM
 INFODAD .com writes.....Although the use of multiple instruments opens up a wide range of sounds and colors with which composers can communicate their thoughts and feelings, there are times when a single instrument, sensitively used, can be every bit as effective as an ensemble. Small-scale works with a sense of intimacy are particularly congenial territory for single-instrument presentation, and Grieg's 66 L...



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Tracking for July 26, 2024

Station	Freq	City	Format	Spins	Comment
Syndicated:					
PRX/Classical 24	multi	National	classical	ON	ADDED To ROT
Online:					
pamela hickman's concert ...	www	blog	review	ON	https://tinyurl.com/26ony8se
INFODAD.com	www	online	review	ON	https://tinyurl.com/24d82oun
YouTube/Classical Music D...	www	online	video	ON	Daniel Gortler – Edvard Grieg, Lyric Pieces on Classical Music Discoveries podcast
Classical Music Sentinel	www	online	feature	ON	http://tinyurl.com/26bjrxkt
inthecooler.org	www	Online +	classical	ON	A nice piece of Grieg!! Wants Interview - Details TBD
Alabama:					
WLRH - Huntsville Public ...	89.3	Huntsville	classical	ON	ADDED To ROT
Alaska:					
KUAC/Nightlight	89.9	Fairbanks	ambient	ON	ADDED To ROT
California:					
KUCI/Classical Impacts	88.9	Irvine	classical	ON	ADDED To ROT

K-MOZART/Classical	105.1	Los Angeles	classical	ON	ADDED To ROT
Colorado:					
Colorado Public Radio/New...	multi	Denver/Statewide	new releases	ON	ADDED To NR
Connecticut:					
WMNR/Classical	88.1	Monroe	classical	ON	I have always loved these pieces and I think that Gortler does a lovely job with them
WMNR/Diana Blase	88.1	Monroe	classical	ON	Very interested in this
WWUH/Classical	91.3	West Hartford	classical	ON	ADDED To ROT
Florida:					
WFSU Public Media	88.9	Tallahassee	interview	ON	 CrossoverMedia – Dan... 
WFSU Public Media/Impress...	88.9	Tallahassee	classical	ON	ADDED + Interview
WFSU Public Media/New Rel...	88.9	Tallahassee	classical	ON	ADDED To ROT
Georgia:					
Atlanta Music Critic	www	Atlanta	interview	ON	 Atlanta Music Critic Interview
WRUU/Four Centuries of Gr...	107.5	Savannah+	classical	ON	Playing music from the album on my show. Like this very much, playing a couple selections
Hawaii:					
HPR/Evening Concert	88.1	Honolulu	classical	ON	How lovely!
Illinois:					
WFMT/Sunday Afternoons wi...	98.7	Chicago	classical	ON	Playing 5 selections
WVIK/Perspective	90.3	Rock Island	classical	ON	This looks amazing!
Illinois Public Media - W...	90.9	Urbana	classical	ON	Grieg and his Lyric Pieces always go over well
Massachusetts:					
New England Public Media/...	88.5	Amherst	classical	ON	Nice. I especially like the clarity of his finger work
Michigan:					
IPR - Interlochen Public ...	88.7	Interlochen	classical	ON	ADDED To ROT
Missouri:					
KKFI/Classical Challenge	90.1	Kansas City	classical	ON	ADDED To ROT
KWUR/Classical Music	90.3	St. Louis	classical	ON	I would be very happy to give this album promo airplay and to put this in rotation
Montana:					
KGLT/Sunday Classical	91.9 / 98.1 / 89.5	Bozeman	classical	ON	ADDED To ROT
New Jersey:					
WMSC	90.3	Upper Montclair	classical	ON	ADDED To ROT
New York:					
WQXR/New Releases	105.9	New York	new releases	ON	ADDED To ROT
North Carolina:					
WCPE - 89.7 The Classical...	89.7	Wake Forest	classical	ON	ADDED To ROT + Interview
WCPE - 89.7 The Classical...	89.7	Wake Forest	interview	ON	 CrossoverMedia – Dan... 
Oregon:					
KMUN/Nachtmusik	91.9	Astoria	classical	ON	ADDED To ROT
Pennsylvania:					
WQLN/Classics with Brian ...	91.3	Erie	classical	ON	Downloaded and in Audition
WRTI/Classical New Releases	90.1	Philadelphia	new releases	ON	ADDED To NR
WQED/Classical	89.3	Pittsburgh	classical	ON	ADDED To ROT
Texas:					
KMFA/Rideshare	89.5	Austin	classical	ON	Downloaded and in Audition
KMFA/Classical Austin	89.5	Austin	classical	ON	ADDED To ROT
KVLJ	91.3	Beaumont	classical	ON	Like this
Classical 101 - WRRR/New R...	101.1	Dallas	new releases	ON	ADDED To NR
Utah:					
KBYU/Classical	89.1	Provo	classical	ON	Downloaded and in Audition
Virginia:					
WTJU/Propero Classical	91.1	Charlottesville	review	ON	http://tinyurl.com/yc4ymzbd
WTJU/Classical	91.1	Charlottesville	classical	ON	ADDED + Review
Washington:					
Spokane Public Radio/Pian...	91.1	Spokane	classical	ON	ADDED To ROT
Wisconsin:					
WORT/Back Porch Serenade	89.9	Madison	classical	ON	Downloaded and in Audition
Canada	Freq	City	Format	Spins	Comment
National:					
CBC Music/New Releases	multi	National	new releases	ON	ADDED To Classical ROT
Manitoba:					
WINNIPEG'S CLASSIC107	107.1	Winnipeg	classical	ON	The Grieg is in full rotation here. Beautiful...beautiful CD. Wants his other Mendelssohn and Schumann discs for airplay too. He really is a lovely player
WINNIPEG'S CLASSIC107/Art...	107.1	Winnipeg	interview	ON	https://tinyurl.com/2658xzjg
WINNIPEG'S CLASSIC107/Cla...	107.1	Winnipeg	classical	ON	 CrossoverMedia – DANIEL GORTLER – Winnipe...
WINNIPEG'S CLASSIC107	107.1	Winnipeg	interview	ON	 Interview with Winnipeg – Classic 107's Chris Wolf
International	Freq	City	Format	Spins/wk	Comment
Australia:					
ABC Australia/Classic	multi	National	classical	ON	ADDED To ROT
Canada:					
Passion Musique et Culture	www	online	classical	ON	https://tinyurl.com/25jzxa8

Israel:						
GLZ/Behind The Notes of S...	www	National +	variety	ON	https://tinyurl.com/29slveyx	
KAN KOL HAMUSICA/Voice of...	www	national +	feature	ON	https://omny.fm/shows/magazine/14-3-2024	
AURORA	www	Spanish Newspaper	review	ON	https://tinyurl.com/299aszeg	
Italy:						
Radio Classica	94.0 FM	Milan +	classical	ON	ADDED To ROT	
Luxembourg:						
pizzicato	www	press	review	ON	https://www.pizzicato.lu/narratives-grieg-programm/	
South Africa:						
FINE Music Radio	101.3	Cape Town	classical	ON	ADDED To ROT	
United Kingdom:						
Bradley Stoke Radio/Class...	103.4	Bristol+	classical	ON	Most grateful for this release	
countywide radio/In The C...	www	Wigan+	classical	ON	A nice piece of Grieg!!	

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