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CLASSICS

ARAM & KAREN KHACHATURIAN

Music for Violin and Piano

Ruben Kosemyan *violin* · Natalya Mnatsakanyan *piano*

Karen Khachaturian 1920-2011 · Aram Khachaturian 1903-1987

Karen Khachaturian

Violin Sonata in G minor Op.1 (1949)

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| 1. Allegro | 5'42 |
| 2. Andante | 4'04 |
| 3. Presto | 5'00 |

Aram Khachaturian

- | | |
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| 4. “Sabre Dance” from “Gayane” ballet (transcription by J. Heifetz) | 2'17 |
| 5. “Dance” | 4'24 |
| 6. “Lullaby” from “Gayane” ballet | 3'20 |
| 7. “Ayesha’s Dance” from “Gayane” ballet (transcription by J. Heifetz) | 2'19 |
| 8. “Song-Poem” (in Honor of Ashugs) arranged by R. Kosemyan | 6'17 |
| 9. “Adagio” from “Spartacus” ballet (transcription by H. Smbatyan) | 6'46 |
| 10. “Andante Sostenuto” from violin concerto | 10'10 |

Ruben Kosemyan *violin* · Natalya Mnatsakanyan *piano*

Recording: October 2017, “Composers Union of Armenia”

Sound engineer: Sergey Gasparyan

Photos by H. Karapetyan and B. Khachaturyan

Cover: Laguna Landscape, by Joseph Kleitsch (Oil On Canvas, 1925)

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Karen Khachaturian (1920-2011) is considered one of the most notable composers of Armenia. He was the nephew of the composer Aram Khachaturian.

Each of his works clearly demonstrates an unerring feeling for musical form and structure and a keen ear for timbre and harmony. In addition to the Violin Sonata (1947), his works include a Cello Sonata (1966), a String Quartet (1969), four symphonies (1955, 1968, 1982, 1991) and a ballet “Cipollino” (1973), as well as various other orchestral works and music for the theatre and films.

Karen Khachaturian’s **Sonata for violin and piano** (1947) brought him international attention. Rhythmic drive and an idiomatic use of the instrumental forces characterize this attractive and colourful work.



Ruben Kosemyan (left) & Karen Khachaturian (right)

Aram Khachaturian (1903-1978) was the most famous Armenian composer of the 20th century and the author of ballet music, symphonies, concertos, and film scores. He extensively used Armenian and also Caucasian folk music in his works. His style is characterized by colourful and exotic harmonies, virtuosity, unusual rhythms and a strong feeling of improvisation.

“**Sabre Dance**” is a movement in the final act of Aram Khachaturian’s ballet “*Gayane*” (1942), where the dancers display their skill with sabres. It is one of his best known and most recognizable works, which was transcribed for many instrumental combinations. On this recording we hear the arrangement by the great violinist Jascha Heifetz for violin and piano.

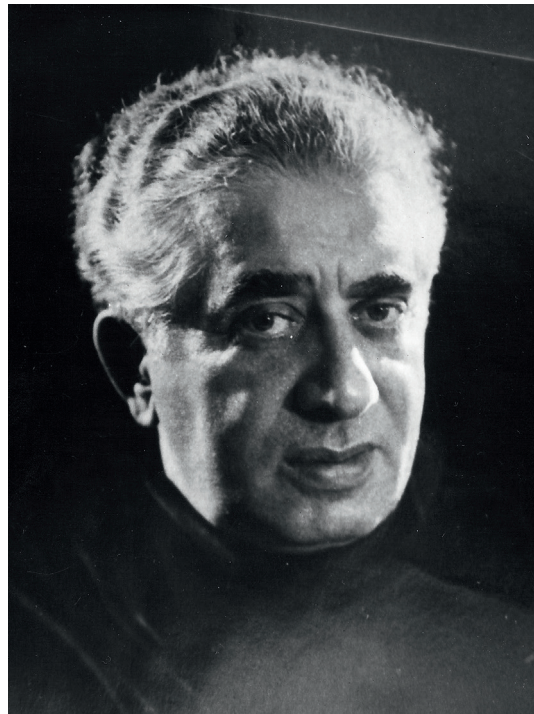
“**Ayesha’s Dance**” is a dance of a Kurdish girl, an excerpt from the ballet “*Gayane*” (1942), transcribed for violin and piano by Jascha Heifetz.

Khachaturian’s third ballet “*Spartacus*” (1954) was his last internationally acclaimed work. Its renowned “**Adagio**” reveals the deep love of the Roman slave Spartacus and his wife Phrygia. This beautiful movement was transcribed for violin and piano by H. Smbatyan.

One of the best parts of the ballet “*Gayane*” is the “**Lullaby**”, a touching and sincere song using Armenian melodies.

“**Dance No.1**” for violin and piano was composed by Khachaturian in 1926 and was left unpublished during his lifetime. A manuscript of this early composition was found in his archives.

The “**Song-Poem**” was written in 1929 and was titled “In Honor of Ashugs”. Ashug is a traditional singer-poet who accompanies himself while singing an epic or romantic tale, or a shorter original composition.



Aram Khachaturian.

Photo Courtesy of Aram Khachaturian Museum, Armenia

Aram Khachaturian's **Violin Concerto in D minor** was completed in 1940 and dedicated to the Russian violinist David Oistrakh, who premièred the concerto in Moscow on September 16, 1940. Oistrakh advised Khachaturian on the composition of the solo part and also wrote his own cadenza that markedly differs from the one originally composed by Khachaturian. The concerto was initially well received and awarded the Stalin Prize for arts in 1941. The work became a staple of the 20th century violin repertoire, and maintains its popularity into the 21st century.

Canadian concert violinist **Ruben Kosemyan** born in Armenia and at the age of four began studying violin under the guidance of his father Alexander Kosemyan (Violist with the State Komitas quartet) and Tatyana Hayrapetyan in Special Music School after Tchaikovsky. At age of 9 he played Mendelssohn and Mozart violin concertos with orchestra. A year later Ruben played in “Palace of Congresses” of Moscow city. In 1987 he moved to Moscow to continue his musical education at the Moscow State Conservatory with professor Maya Glezarova

Ruben has attended master-classes under the guidance of Leonid Kogan, Igor Oistrach, Tibor Varga, Ruben Aharonyan (First violin of State Borodin quartet), Jean Ter-Merguerian, Ivan Monigetti and Dominique de Williencourt. In 1997 Ruben was granted the prestigious Vladimir Spivakov scholarship. In 1998 he began teaching violin and chamber ensemble classes at the Yerevan State Conservatory, and in 2000 Ruben was selected as head of the department of classical music at the “House of Music and Culture”, Kish Island.

He has appeared with concerts in Armenia, Germany, France, Iran, the USA, Canada, Mexico, Taiwan, Malaysia, Russia and Georgia, performing Brahms double concerto, violin concertos of Khachaturian, Saryan, Tchaikovsky, Mendelssohn, Glazunov, Mozart, Bruch, Bach and many others. In 2005 Ruben Kosemyan founded the Piano Trio. In October 31/2007, he was awarded a gold medal “UNESCO Aram Khachaturian Centenary” by the “Composers Union” of Armenia. In 2009 Ruben was invited to join the “Khachaturian” State quartet as first violin, where he worked until 2010. Ruben is the author of “Violin Technique as a Mean of Music Expression”. Since 2010, Ruben has been living in Canada where he's organized a group of professional musicians for live performances and recordings of classical, romantic and some contemporary music. He made his Canadian debut with Canadian conductor Nurhan Arman and “Sinfonia Toronto” in world known “Glenn Gould Studio”, later in Toronto's Koerner Hall. In 2015 Ruben received Canadian Citizenship.



Pianist **Natalya Mnatsakanyan** born in Armenia and at the early age began studying piano at the Spendiaryan Special Music School with Professor Serguey Kechek. She received her Bachelor Degree in Piano Performance in Yerevan Komitas State Conservatory, where she also attended Post-Graduated courses. In 1992, Natalya became the laureate of Arno Babadjanian Piano Competition. During almost 12 years Natalya worked in Yerevan Komitas State Conservatory as accompanist at Wind Instruments and Solo Singing Departments. Natalya has participated successfully in national and international competitions as piano accompanist (“Yamaha” Competition, “Presidential Youth Award” Competition, “Renaissance” International Competition). Since 2012, Natalya has been living in Canada. She regularly plays recitals as piano accompanist on the stages of Montreal, Brockville, Toronto (including the famous Koerner Hall), collaborating with violinist Ruben Kosemyan.