PentaTone
classics
Gordon Getty Piano Pieces
Conrad Tao
HYBRID MULTICHANNEL
SUPER AUDIO CD

Gordon Getty (1933)
Piano Pieces

Homework Suite

1	Seascape	1. 05
2	Giga	0. 39
3	Ghost Waltz	0. 36
4	Berceuse	2. 01
5	Night Horses	0. 53

Ancestor Suite

6	Zwei Walzer	2. 28
7	Waltz of the Ancestors	1. 29
8	Schottische	1. 09
9	Waltz-Ländler	2. 47
10	Polka-Polonaise	2. 39
11	Gavotte	1. 33
12	Gothic Waltz	2. 20
13	March-Sarabande-Presto	4. 43
14	Madeline	2. 54
15	Ewig Du	3. 59
16	Finale	1. 39

Three Traditional Pieces

17	The Fiddler of Ballykeel	2. 50
18	Tiefer und Tiefer	2. 30
19	Ehemals	4. 38

20	**First Adventure**	1. 26
21	**Raise the Colors**	2. 14
22	**Andantino**	3. 38
23	**Scherzo Pensieroso**	2. 50

Conrad Tao-piano

Total playing time: 53.12

Recording Venue: Skywalker Sound, Skywalker Ranch, California, USA July 2012.
Executive Producers: Lisa Delan & Job Maarse
Recording Producer: Job Maarse
Balance Engineer: Jean-Marie Geijsen
Recording Engineer: Dann Thompson
Editing: Jean-Marie Geijsen
Piano Tuner: Mark Schecter
Special Thanks to Leslie-Ann Jones

Steingraeber & Söhne piano by R.KASSMAN Purveyor of Fine Pianos, Berkeley, CA, USA

Design: Netherlads • Photography: Vanessa Briceno-Scherzer • Nadja Kilchofer • Ruiming Wang

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Notes by the Composer

These piano pieces cover what is getting to be a considerable lifetime. The five called *Homework Suite* date from my year at San Francisco Conservatory of Music (1962); *Andantino* and *Scherzo Pensiersoso* were written this year (2012). It might as easily have been the other way around. Fifty years ago, I could steal unconsciously from others, and now more from myself, but the language and perspective are the same.

Orchestral versions of most have been performed and recorded. But these piano originals may never have been heard by the paying public. I'm not a good enough pianist to have been sure of them, and crossed my fingers when Pentatone proposed to record them. Not to worry when Conrad Tao is the pianist. Everything came out as I had imagined it.

My teacher at the Conservatory, Sol Joseph, once asked me if I expected to move on to atonalism. I told him I kind of doubted it. My music seems to belong more in the nineteenth century, with inklings of others, and even a splash of atonalism if that's what comes knocking, We write what is in our heads.

Anmerkungen des Komponisten

Die Klavierstücke auf der vorliegenden CD umfassen eine recht stattliche Lebenszeit. Die fünf Stücke mit dem Titel *Homework Suite* datieren aus meinem Studienjahr 1962 am San Francisco Conservatory of Music, wohingegen *Andantino* und *Scherzo Pensiersoso* in diesem Jahr 2012 entstanden. Es hätte auch genau andersherum sein können. Vor fünfzig Jahren konnte ich unbewusst in den Werken anderer Komponisten wildern, heute kann ich es bei mir selbst tun – die musikalische Sprache und die Perspektive aber sind gleich.

Von den meisten Stücken wurden Orchesterfassungen aufgeführt und aufgenommen. Aber diese Klavierstücke in ihrer Originalfassung hat die Öffentlichkeit kaum gehört. Meine pianistischen Fähigkeiten reichen für diese Werke nicht wirklich aus und so habe ich bei der Besetzung die Daumen gedrückt, als Pentatone diese Einspielung plante. Aber mit einem Pianisten vom Schlage Conrad Taos war das unnötig. Das Ergebnis war exakt so, wie ich es mir vorgestellt hatte.

Sol Joseph, mein Lehrer am Konservatorium, fragte mich einst, ob ich mich in Richtung Atonalität entwickeln würde. Ich hielt das damals eher für unwahrscheinlich. Meine Musik wurzelt eher im 19. Jahrhundert, mit Hinweisen auf andere Epochen, und verwendet falls nötig auch einen Spritzer Atonalität. Wir schreiben, was in unseren Köpfen ist.

Notes du compositeur

Ces morceaux de piano couvrent ce qui est en train de devenir une durée de vie considérable. Les cinq *Homework Suite* datent de mon année au Conservatoire de musique de San Francisco (1962). *Andantino* et *Scherzo Pensiersoso* ont été écrits cette année. Et cela pourrait facilement être le contraire. Il y a cinquante ans, je pouvais voler inconsciemment aux autres et maintenant davantage à moi-même, mais le langage et la perspective sont les mêmes.

Les versions orchestrales de la plupart de ces œuvres ont été jouées et enregistrées. Mais il est fort possible que ces pièces originales au piano n'aient pas été entendues par le public des salles. Je ne suis pas un assez bon pianiste pour être sûr de ces morceaux et j'ai croisé les doigts quand Pentatone m'a proposé de les enregistrer. Il n'y a rien à craindre lorsque Conrad Tao est au piano. Tout est exactement comme je l'avais imaginé.

Mon professeur au Conservatoire, Sol Joseph, me demanda un jour si je m'attendais à passer à l'atonalisme. Je lui répondis que j'en doutais. Ma musique appartient davantage au dix-neuvième siècle, avec des clins d'œil à d'autres périodes, et même un brin d'atonalisme, selon ce qui se présente. Nous écrivons ce qui nous vient à l'esprit.

GORDON GETTY

Gordon Getty was born in Los Angeles in 1933, and has lived in San Francisco since 1945. He graduated in English literature from the University of San Francisco in 1956. His first published piece was an a cappella chorus on Tennyson's "All Along the Valley," written while he was working for his father in the Middle East. He then studied theory at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music under Sol Joseph in 1961 and 1962. Five piano pieces he wrote there, now collectively the *Homework Suite*, were published in 1964.

Meanwhile he married, went back to work for his father, and completed nothing new for 18 years. Then compositions came steadily. His song cycle *The White Election* set 31 poems by Emily Dickinson for soprano and piano. It was recorded by Kaaren Erickson and Armen Guzelimian on Delos in 1986, and by Lisa Delan and Fritz Steinegger on PentaTone in 2009.

Plump Jack, meanwhile, grew piece by piece. Part of what is now the *Boar's Head Inn* scene was premiered by the San Francisco Symphony in 1984. A fuller version was repeated there in 1986, along with the newly written *Shallow's Orchard, Banishment* and *Off to War.* The same four scenes were soon heard in the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion and at the Spoleto Festival. The complete opera, again in concert version, premiered in London in 2002.

Most of Getty's compositions are for voice. His work for chorus and orchestra includes settings of Tennyson and Housman in *Victorian Scenes* (1989), ending with a reworked "All Along the Valley," and of Poe in *Annabel Lee* (1990). Orchestral choruses setting mostly or wholly his own texts include *Three Welsh Songs* (1998) and *Young America* (2001). His cantata *Joan and the Bells* (1998), also to his own text, is for the same forces with soprano and baritone soloists. All have been recorded by PentaTone. His second opera, *Usher House*, to his own libretto after Poe's short story, is due release by PentaTone in 2013.

Of his compositions Getty has said: "My style is undoubtedly tonal, though with hints of atonality, such as any composer would likely use to suggest a degree of disorientation. But I'm strictly tonal in my approach. I represent a viewpoint that stands somewhat apart from the 20th century, which was in large measure a repudiation of the 19th, and a sock in the nose to sentimentality. Whatever it was that the great Victorian composers and poets were trying to achieve, that's what I'm trying to achieve."

CONRAD TAO

The only classical musician on Forbes' 2011 "30 Under 30" list of people changing the world, Chinese-American pianist Conrad Tao was found playing children's songs on the piano at 18 months of age. Born in Urbana, Illinois in 1994, he gave his first piano recital at age 4; four years later, he made his concerto debut performing Mozart's Piano Concerto in A Major, K. 414. In 2011, the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars and the Department of Education named Conrad a Presidential Scholar in the Arts, while the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts awarded him a YoungArts gold medal in music. Conrad was also named a Gilmore Young Artist, an honor awarded every two years highlighting the most promising American pianists of the new generation. In 2012 he was awarded the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant.

Sporting a truly international career, Conrad has appeared as soloist in the United States with the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Baltimore, Dallas, Detroit, and San Francisco Symphonies, among many others. He has made multiple tours of Europe, giving solo recitals in Paris, London, Munich, Berlin, and Verbier, and performed with orchestras in Brazil, China, Hong Kong, Mexico, Moscow, and Singapore. He has performed at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, at the Louvre in Paris, has made appearances at the Mostly Mozart and Aspen Music Festivals, as well as several festivals in Europe and South America.

As an accomplished composer, Conrad has won eight consecutive ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards since 2004; he also received BMI's Carlos Surinach prize in 2005. Conrad was commissioned by the Hong Kong Philharmonic to write a concert overture ringing in their new season in 2012, and by the Dallas Symphony to compose a work observing the 50th anniversary of President John F. Kennedy's assassination in 2013.

As an award-winning violinist, Conrad has performed with orchestras across the United States, sometimes performing violin and piano concertos on the same concert. Conrad's violin prowess was featured on Jackie Evancho's "Dream With Me" PBS special, on which Conrad also traded spots with David Foster behind the piano.

As a recording artist, Conrad has released two solo albums on the EMI label, and an orchestral album featuring late Mozart piano concertos, in addition to this recording.

Conrad attended the Columbia University/Juilliard School joint degree program and studied piano with Professors Yoheved Kaplinsky and Choong Mo Kang at Juilliard. He studied composition with Professor Christopher Theofanidis of Yale University, and studied violin with Ms. Catherine Cho for five years at Juilliard's Pre-College Division.

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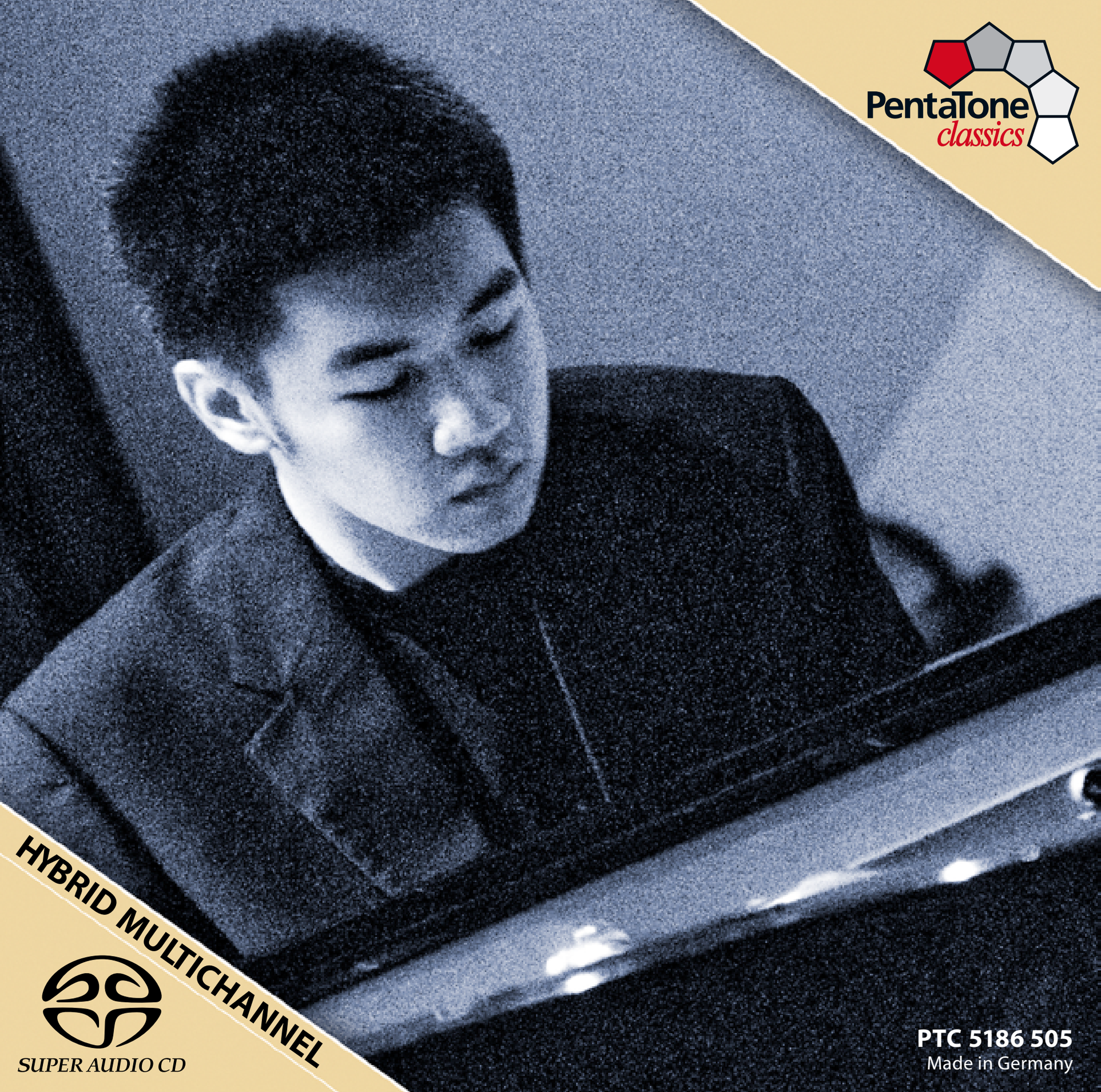

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