

Review of Peter Epp: *Piano Collection for Entertainer* (Berlin: Epubli Verlag, 2012)

Pianist, composer and piano teacher Peter Epp brings his listeners to the world of modern and demanding salon music in a lively and practical way offering a wide range of genres and moods presented at the highest musical level: from elegy to jazz, waltz and ragtime, to Latin American styles such as tango and bossa nova. All types of music from popular literature are presented here in various forms. Epp's compositions integrate seamlessly into any pianistic repertoire and are ideal for relaxing or spectacular encores. Therefore, classical pianists are also encouraged to study these works in order to get a small but creative understanding of the world of jazz music.

The three sections that the collection contains are summarized below.

The first section of the collection by Peter Epp is based on the eponymous works of the characters of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy entitled: "Songs without Words". Lyric-vocal elements, flowing melodies and direct emotional expression are in the foreground. A prime example is the second song "Lento con anima", which, after a calm start, breaks down into an emotionally moving middle section with masterfully controlled bold harmonic sequences. In this sense, the atmospheric miniatures of the 1st section fascinate with their dreamy-sensual quality and refined simplicity.

Section 2, "Summer Mood", by contrast, captivates with figurative titles such as "Good Evening", "Taste of Ragtime" or "Cuckoo Clock". Here Peter Epp shows salon music from its predominantly lively side, with pulsating rhythm moving to the center and full use of the instrumental and tonal possibilities of the piano. For example, in "Good Evening", the swing andante style and playing with live, dance-like dots, triplets and skilfully inserted temporary changes create sophisticated accents. The lyrically expressive middle section of the contrasting piece promises amazing colors and sound effects thanks to its soulful melodic line, a real cantilena and its unexpected repetition in minor key, before the carefree and cheerful character of the opening section breaks out again. Live virtuosity in the "Cuckoo Clock", energetic, dynamic sounds in the style of ragtime, as well as moving, energetic tango scenes in the latest piece complete this creative section.

The compositions of the 3rd section "From The Young Days" now illuminate certain melodic-rhythmic samples of jazz and Latin American standards (such as jazz-rock, blues, bossa nova), which Peter Epp uses in his ballads, romances and Latin American artwork. Musically referring to the title of each piece, he again creates a creative, tonal, vibrant experience, as shown in the composition "A

Small Walk”, in which the audience can feel a leisurely rhythm and creativity. Varying eighth and sixteenth notes and syncopated movements can visualize such a relaxed, unhurried walk. Such a subtle cheerfulness and refreshing carelessness comes from almost all the works of the last section.

Taken as a whole, this piano collection consists of elaborate, original sound images that combine technical and compositional excellence and stimulate the musical imagination of the public. An extremely successful and extensive cut of the sonic realms of salon music!

Dr. Barbara Mayer

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