

## *After Gould - Goldberg Variations with Schönberg in background*

The preference of choosing the *Goldberg Variations* as the ground for the *Art of Instrumentation* project was imposed to me as somehow a natural one: these variations are positioned high on my predilection list of Gould's Bach interpretations, and being a confirmed insomniac I listened intensively to this composition during my many sleepless nights. History teaches us that the composition was commissioned by the Russian ambassador Count Kaiserling, who often stopped in Leipzig and brought with him the young and prodigious keyboard player Johann Gottlieb Goldberg. The variations were written for Goldberg – hence the name of the composition – and with their smooth and somewhat lively characters were supposed to cheer up the ambassador's sleepless nights (another insomniac). This history according to Bach's biographer Johann Nikolaus Forkel has been questioned nowadays, but whether it is true or not, the fact that in this present project there is a third (this time also a confirmed one) insomniac involved – and that is Gidon Kremer, who initiated the idea of the project – I thought there are too many insomniac stories circling around for not to take them seriously and would be a pity to omit the occasion to involve the *Goldberg Variations*, especially if we take into consideration that the two recordings of that composition considerably contributed to Gould's pianist fame.

As Gould was a fervent interpreter of Schönberg's music as well, I thought wouldn't be a bad idea to “stir up” Bach's music and bring Schönberg into picture: not so long ago, many contemporary composers “asked” Bach for some help and gladly quoted him and lightened up the somewhat heavy sounding character of their music. Today, we are so much used to anything, and in this hopelessly indifferent world, one can clearly imagine Schönberg as a relaxation factor.

Speaking a bit more closely about the technical facet of this instrumentation concept, I should point out that every aspect of Gould's interpretation was followed into details accordingly to my abilities. Consequently, the tempos (given in the brackets) dynamics and articulations (of course not present in Bach's manuscript) as well as repetitions of certain parts are penned down “after Gould”. Gould's second recording session of the *Goldberg Variations* – the one realized in 1982 on CBS records – served as the base of my instrumentation. In rare cases I was faced with some inconsistencies according to my scores of the composition (I used the Edition Peters Urtext edition). For example in Variation XVIII, bar 28, there is a trill in the bass part added by Gould; in the Variation XXVI, measure 3, Gould left out the trill in *discantus* (this is most likely the effect of the very fast tempo chosen by the pianist). In any such cases I followed Gould's interpretation and “corrected” the score accordingly.

In the case of two short “intermezzi” of Schönberg, I only suggested (again in brackets) the tempos of Gould's interpretation as otherwise I found a perfect concordance between the recording and a precise and detailed Schönberg's score.

Finally *After Gould - Goldberg Variations with Schönberg in background* consists of the follow variations (Bach) and small piano pieces (Schönberg) arranged for string quintet (or string orchestra):

- 1 - Variation 30
- 2 - Variation 19
- 3 - Sechs Kleine Klavierstücke, No.V
- 4 – Variation 4
- 5 – Variation 18
- 6 - Sechs Kleine Klavierstücke, No.IV
- 7 – Variation 22
- 8 – Variation 26

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