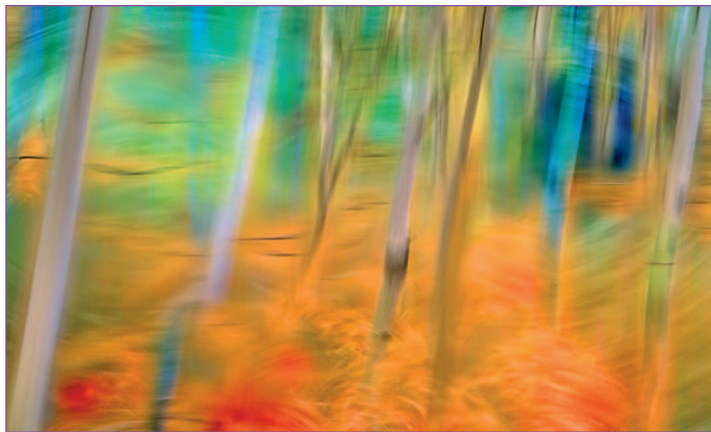


NAXOS

**Camillo
TOGNI**

Three Studies on Morts sans sépulture
Flute Sonata • Violin Sonata • String Trio

Lorna Windsor, Soprano
Ex Novo Ensemble



Camillo Togni (1922-1993) Chamber Works

Camillo Togni stands as one of the most representative figures of twentieth-century Italian music. His patient and distilled creative development – essential and uncompromisingly independent from both aleatoric music and the integralism of the Darmstadt school, where he attended the *Ferienkurse* from 1950 to 1955 – could be defined as a quest to strike a balance between exacting formal coherence and the broadest imaginative freedom, while composing with rare and extraordinary craftsmanship.

While reading philosophy at Pavia University, Togni studied piano under Giovanni Anfossi and Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli and composition with Franco Margola and Alfredo Casella. He soon became aware of his distance from neoclassicism, feeling more affinity with late-romantic tradition, chromaticism and the difficult and inner expressivity of Schoenberg's dodecaphonic technique. His firm belief in the ethical value of artistic endeavours led him to in-depth studies of literary and poetic texts by Jean-Paul Sartre, Charles d'Orléans, T. S. Eliot and ultimately his beloved Georg Trakl, who inspired some of his chamber works (*Helian* and *Gesang zur Nacht*) and his two operas *Blaubart* (1977) and *Barrabas* (1985). In 1965 he won the SIMC prize for chamber music with *Rondeaux per dieci* for soprano and nine instruments. Between 1978 and 1988 he taught at the Conservatory of Parma and from 1989 he held advanced courses at the Fiesole music school.

The compositions recorded here provide an overview of his work that spans some thirty years, from 1950 to 1980: starting out from a relatively 'immature' serial technique, influenced by Busonian style and a propensity to 'draw some tonal aspects from serial practice' and finally reaching absolute variation within an integral chromatic environment, excluding any motivic processes. In achieving this absolute approach, Togni supported his rationalisation by extending serial functions from the intervals to several other parameters, including the formal structure.

In the *Three studies for 'Morts sans sépulture'*, Op. 31, for soprano and piano, dated 1950, Togni

used a text by Jean-Paul Sartre for the first time, from the homonymous play dealing with specifically existentialist themes. The work is in three movements corresponding to three textual extracts: *Andante* (from Tableau I, Scène II), *Quasi passacaglia* (from Tableau III, Scène II), and *Comodo* (from Tableau IV, Scène III). The compact and densely polyphonic texture is classically through-composed, starting from a four-note figure based on the first four notes of the tone row: spanning a minor third and extended symmetrically:



The serial technique employed is not yet orthodox while the declaimed vocal *melos* reveals influences of French music and the teachings of Casella. A new series, derived from the first, adopts a thematic value of its own in the second movement, employing the metric pulse of the Passacaglia without evading a Dallapiccola-like diatonic essence. In the third movement there is yet another series behind the motif presented on the piano, which is the origin of the *ostinato* marked *pp uguale e poco staccato* depicting *le bruit de la pluie*, Togni's tribute to symbolism.

The *Sonata for flute and piano*, Op. 35, dated 1953, in three movements *Comodo*, *Recitativo* and *Rondò*, was performed in August 1954 at Darmstadt by Severino Gazzelloni and the composer himself on the piano. The work's motivic character is still Brahmsian and the serial material is enriched with formal implications: the note durations of the thematic pattern, which first appears on the flute, are correlated to the amplitude of the intervals.

The dodecaphonic technique employed here is more refined: the series is subdivided into two and four independent sections while the inversion transposed down a fourth is employed as complementary material:



Though only one year separates *Op. 35* and the *Sonata for violin and piano, Op. 37*, (in three movements: *Moderatamente sostenuto, Sarabanda, Rondò*), this new work represents an unconditional negation of thematic principles in favour of absolute variation. Only the repeated reference to the traditional dance-like forms of the *Sarabande* and *Rondò* betray Togni's inclinations towards a 'classicism' in the Schoenbergian mould. In the first movement (four episodes), the prime and retrograde forms of the series – an *Allintervallreihe* containing each one of the six possible intervals twice – are superimposed on the complementary inversion form and its retrograde:



In the *Sarabande* the series is divided into two independent groups of six sounds and entrusted to the piano, while in the *Rondò* the truncation technique is developed further with the hexachords divided between the two instruments.

The rarefied writing, with frequent and extreme shifts in register, the extraordinary variety of articulation and sharp contrasts in intensity in the [*Piece for guitar and cello*] (1959) reveal clear influences of Pointillism, and perhaps also a certain structuralism of the post-weberian avant-garde. Through a radicalisation of the dodecaphonic medium the composer definitively overcomes classical forms. The process of rationalisation is also applied to the formal organization of the composition: the work is significantly divided into twelve sections – reorganised into three groups of four, three and five – length is determined by the number of repetitions of serial forms, corresponding in order to the width of the intervals in the series and linked to an equal number of durations and intensities (*pp, p, f* and *ff*):



The *Trio for strings*, written between 1978 and 1980, is in three parts; the titles *Angry, Tortured* and *Burning* were suggested to the composer by Stravinsky,

who used the same adjectives to describe Arnold Schoenberg's facial expression. Finally free from formal schemes, Togni gives full rein to his creative fantasy, which expands superbly engaging his material in total variation and employing the maximum contrasts of articulation, agogic accent and intensity. The trio shares its intrinsically dramatic language with Togni's opera *Blaubart*, which also dates from this period, and employs the retrograde form of the tone row of the opera:



The *Five pieces for flute and guitar*, written between 1975 and 1976 are based on a dual programmatic input: a tribute to Luigi Dallapiccola (1904-1975) and a rereading of the lyric poet Anacreon of Teos. The serial material is directly taken from the opening bars of a sketch for Dallapiccola's last incomplete composition,

while each of the pieces has a title from a fragment from the Greek poet (*Rondine garrula, Fermente, Intreccio, Fiore di cinnamomo, Compianto*). Architectural proportions, rhythmic figures, durations, horizontal densities and levels of dynamic intensity are all direct consequences of the dodecaphonic structure; nevertheless the extraordinary freedom and decidedly improvisatory style of the work is directly proportional to this extreme coherence.

The *Two Preludes* for piccolo were written in 1980 and performed in Perugia the same year by Roberto Fabbriciani. Togni's composition here seems to be more concise, employing extremely sparse expressive means. The gradual acquisition of the full chromatic range is immediately perceived in the first piece: the series – characterized by five repetitions of the tritone – is progressively exposed, broadening the distance between the sounds, which are separated by ever more frequent recurrences of the previous sounds:



The second *Prelude*, on the other hand, is based on an *Alleintervallreihe* derived from the three initial notes of the previous piece, developed by always alternating the semitone with one of the other five intervals. The unity behind the compositional gesture is immediately clear: a

gradual dynamic *crescendo* starting from the initial *sottovoce*, coupled with a progressive rhythmic acceleration achieved by systematically reducing note values up until the ‘cadenza’ with rapid notes played *ad libitum* and the brief closing section.

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English translation: Liam Mac Grabhann

Lorna Windsor



Photo: Graziano Fantuzzi

Once a piano and viola student, then trained at the Guildhall School, London, as a *Lieder* and opera singer, Lorna Windsor has performed in many major theatres and festivals. She has sung Salieri with Frans Bruggen, and Bach directed by Gustav Leonhardt, and has recorded *Les Motets de Versailles* by Blanchard. She has performed Monteverdi in Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Mantova, and the title rôle in Peri’s *Euridice* at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris; her Mozart rôles include those of Venus in *Ascanio in Alba*, Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* at Glyndebourne, Despina in *Così fan tutte* directed by Claudio Abbado, and in the Strehler production (Piccolo Teatro di Milano) performed in Rome, Beijing, St Petersburg and Moscow. Her *Lieder* repertoire, following the tradition of her teacher, Hans Hotter, is vast and varied, and she is a well-known interpreter in the field of experimental contemporary music and theatre, the recipient of frequent dedications from today’s composers, combining theatrical experience and poetical insight with vocal and technical versatility.

Ex Novo Ensemble



Photo: Mark Smith

The Ex Novo Ensemble was founded in Venice in 1979 by Claudio Ambrosini and seven young musicians, who have remained with the Ensemble ever since. The Ex Novo Ensemble now represents a point of reference on the international panorama of new music. The continuity obtained by working together has brought a certain character, a “sound”, which both public and critics of the major European festivals have recognised to be unique to this Ensemble. The Ex Novo commitment to exploring the language of contemporary music later became the basis for re-interpreting classical repertory, particularly those scores composed for rare instrumental groups that, although very beautiful, remain little known. Many world premières and works dedicated to the Ensemble have been recorded and transmitted by major European broadcasting corporations. Of

particular significance in the Ensemble’s work is its contribution to the promotion of Italian chamber music, as demonstrated by its long association with recording companies including Arts, ASV, Black Box, Dynamic, Stradivarius, and others.

La tecnica dodecafonica si fa più raffinata, con la suddivisione della serie in 2 e 4 tronconi indipendenti e l'impiego della forma invertita, trasposta alla quarta inferiore, che risulta complementare:



Sebbene un solo anno separi l'op. 35 dalla *Sonata op. 37 per violino e pianoforte* del 1954 (nei tre movimenti: *Moderatamente sostenuto*, *Sarabanda*, *Rondò*), in questa è già affermata senza riserve la negazione del principio tematico, a favore del procedimento di variazione assoluta. Solo il reiterato riferimento alle forme coreutiche tradizionali della *Sarabanda* e del *Rondò* tradisce ancora l'inclinazione togliattiana verso il 'classicismo' di stampo schönbergiano. Nel I movimento (in 4 episodi), le forme originali retta e retrograda della serie – una *Allintervallreihe* contenente due volte ciascuno i 6 intervalli possibili – sono sovrapposte alla forma invertita complementare e al suo retrogrado:



Nella *Sarabanda* la serie è invece divisa in due gruppi indipendenti di 6 suoni affidati al pianoforte, mentre nel *Rondò* la tecnica del tronconamento viene ancor più sviluppata con la distribuzione degli esacordi tra i due strumenti.

La scrittura rarefatta, i frequenti e laceranti spostamenti di registro, la straordinaria varietà dei modi d'attacco, i forti contrasti d'intensità del [*Pezzo*] per chitarra e violoncello (1959) risentono evidentemente del puntillismo e forse di certo strutturalismo dell'avanguardia post-weberniana. Nel brano si attua, attraverso la radicalizzazione del mezzo dodecafonico, il definitivo superamento della forma classica e il processo di razionalizzazione è qui applicato finanche all'organizzazione formale della composizione, significativamente suddivisa in 12 sezioni - riunite in tre gruppi di 4, 3 e 5 - la cui lunghezza dipende dal numero

delle ricorrenze delle forme seriali, corrispondente nell'ordine all'ampiezza degli intervalli della serie collegati ad altrettanti gradi di durata e di intensità (*pp*, *p*, *f* e *ff*):



Il *Trio d'archi*, composto tra il 1978 e il 1980, è suddiviso in tre parti i cui titoli *Angry*, *Tortured* e *Burning* furono suggeriti al compositore da Stravinsky, che con tali aggettivi aveva definito lo sguardo di Arnold Schönberg. Finalmente emancipata da qualunque schematismo formale, l'indole fantastica di Togni si espande in maniera superba sulla materia, esprimendosi attraverso il variazionismo totale, in un contrasto apicale di modi d'attacco, agogica e intensità estremamente cangianti. Un linguaggio intrinsecamente drammatico, affine a quello del contemporaneo lavoro teatrale *Blaubart*, da cui il *Trio* deduce la serie, impiegandone la forma retrograda:



Un duplice contenuto programmatico è alla base della composizione dei *Cinque pezzi per flauto e chitarra*, scritti tra il 1975 e il 1976: l'omaggio alla memoria di Luigi Dallapiccola e la rilettura del poeta lirico Anacreonte di Teo. Il materiale seriale è direttamente dedotto, infatti, dalle misure iniziali di un abbozzo dell'ultimo lavoro incompiuto del compositore istriano,



mentre ciascuno dei pezzi riporta come titolo un frammento tratto da una citazione del poeta greco (*Rondine garrula*, *Fermente*, *Intreccio*, *Fiore di cinnamomo*, *Compianto*). Proporzioni architettoniche, figure ritmiche, valori di durata, densità orizzontale e gradi d'intensità dinamica rappresentano una diretta conseguenza della struttura dodecafonica, eppure direttamente proporzionale a tanta coerenza risulta la

straordinaria libertà, lo stile decisamente improvvisativo della scrittura.

Nei *Due preludi* per ottavino del 1980, eseguiti lo stesso anno a Perugia da Roberto Fabbriciani, Togni sembra far ricorso ad una scrittura più asciutta, caratterizzata da un'estrema parsimonia di mezzi espressivi. Nel primo è subito evidente la graduale acquisizione del totale cromatico: la serie - qualificata dal tritono, cinque volte ripetuta - è esposta progressivamente, allargando la distanza tra i suoni, che sono allontanati da sempre più frequenti ricorrenze dei precedenti:



Il secondo si basa invece su una *Alleintervallreihe* derivata dal nucleo dei tre suoni iniziali della precedente, sviluppato alternando sempre il semitono a ciascuno degli altri cinque intervalli. L'unità del gesto compositivo è subito chiara: si tratta di un graduale crescendo dinamico a partire dal *sottovoce* iniziale, connesso ad un'accelerazione ritmica progressiva ottenuta con la riduzione sistematica dei valori di durata sino alla 'cadenza' con note rapide *ad libitum* e la breve chiusa conclusiva.

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**Camillo
TOGNI
(1922-1993)**

Three Studies on Morts sans sépulture, Op. 31 (1950)		Five Pieces (1975/76) - [Cinque pezzi]		11:21
[Tre Studi per Morts sans sépulture]		13 No. 1. Kötflë chelidön (Rondine garrula)		1:48
Texts by Jean-Paul Sartre		<i>(solo flute)</i>		
1	No. 1. Andante	3:53	14 No. 2. Adoïástös (Fermamente)	2:56
2	No. 2. Quasi passacaglia	4:53	<i>(flute and guitar)</i>	
3	No. 3. Comodo	3:14	15 No. 3. Pléxis (Intreccio)	2:19
			<i>(solo flute)</i>	
Flute Sonata, Op. 35 (1953)		10:15	16 No. 4. Ámōmon Ánthos (Fiore di cinnamomo)	1:57
4	I. Comodo	2:41	<i>(flute and guitar)</i>	
5	II. Recitativo: Lento	4:03	17 No. 5. Hýmnos (Compianto)	2:21
6	III. Rondo: Vivace	3:31	<i>(solo flute)</i>	
Violin Sonata, Op. 37 (1955) *		13:31	String Trio (1978/80)	
7	I. Moderatamente sostenuto	4:11	18 I. Angry	4:40
8	II. Sarabanda: Lento assai	3:52	19 II. Tortured	6:59
9	III. Rondo: Deciso	5:28	20 III. Burning	7:32
Piece for guitar and cello (1959) *		4:47	Two Preludes (1980/81)	
10	I. — 1:07		21 No. 1. Andante	1:40
11	II. —	1:24	22 No. 2. —	1:00
12	III. —	2:16		

* *World Première Recording*

Lorna Windsor, Soprano (Tracks 1-3)

Ex Novo Ensemble

Aldo Orviето, Piano (piano: Borgato L282) (Tracks 1-9)

Daniele Ruggieri, Flute (Tracks 4-6 and 13-17); Piccolo (Tracks 21-22)

Carlo Lazari, Violin (Tracks 7-9 and 18-20)

Mario Paladin, Viola (Tracks 18-20)

Carlo Teodoro, Cello (Tracks 10-12 and 18-20)

Piero Bonaguri, Guitar (Tracks 10-12, 14 and 16)

Publishers: Edizioni Suvini-Zerboni – Sugar Music S.p.A., Milano (Tracks 1-3, 7-22); Universal Edition (Tracks 4-6)

This recording has been realized in collaboration with the Institute of Music of the Giorgio Cini Foundation (Venice, Italy), which preserves the archives of the composer Camillo Togni. Ex Novo Ensemble wishes to thank Mr Giulio Bruno Togni, Mr Luigi Borgato, Mr Gabriele Bonomo, Prof. Mauro Ferrante, Prof. Giovanni Morelli and Edizioni Suvini Zerboni.

We regret that we are unable to include the sung texts for copyright reasons.

Also Available



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8.557661-63



8.557676



8.572039



8.572074

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 Playing Time
73:45

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Since its foundation in 1979, the Ex Novo Ensemble has explored the international panorama of new music, particularly works that, although very beautiful, remain little known. For its début Naxos recording this virtuosic ensemble presents a selection of chamber music by the influential Italian composer, teacher and pianist Camillo Togni, whose fascination with German Expressionism and the Second Viennese School is evident in finely crafted, lucid compositions which are notable for their eloquent restraint and striking instrumental sonorities.



Camillo TOGNI (1922-1993)

Chamber Works

- | | | |
|-------|--|-------|
| 1-3 | Three Studies on Morts sans sépulture, Op. 31 (1950) | 12:00 |
| 4-6 | Flute Sonata, Op. 35 (1953) | 10:15 |
| 7-9 | Violin Sonata, Op. 37 (1955) * | 13:31 |
| 10-12 | Piece for Guitar and Cello (1959) * | 4:47 |
| 13-17 | Five Pieces for Flute and Guitar (1975/76) | 11:21 |
| 18-20 | String Trio (1978/80) | 19:11 |
| 21-22 | Two Preludes for Piccolo (1980/81) | 2:40 |

* World Première Recording

Lorna Windsor, Soprano Ex Novo Ensemble

Aldo Orvieto, Piano • Daniele Ruggieri, Flute / Piccolo • Carlo Lazari, Violin
Mario Paladin, Viola • Carlo Teodoro, Cello • Piero Bonaguri, Guitar

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 Universal Edition (Tracks 4-6)

A detailed track list may be found on page 8