



corey



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# **COREY CEROVSEK plays WIENIAWSKI**

- 1 Scherzo-Tarantella, Op. 16 (4:51)
- 2 Polonaise No. 1 in D, Op. 4 (5:22)
- 3 Romance *from* Violin Concerto No. 2 in D Minor, Op. 22 (4:42)
- 4 Fantaisie brillante on the themes of  
Gounod's opera "Faust," Op. 20 (16:06)
- 5 Légende (7:39)
- 6 Polonaise Brillante No. 2 in A, Op. 21 (8:58)
- 7 Caprice in A Minor, Op. 18 (arr. Kreisler) (1:31)
- 8 Variations on an Original Theme, Op. 15 (11:24)

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 60:34

**COREY CEROVSEK, VIOLIN**

**KATJA CEROVSEK, PIANO**



Henryk Wieniawski ( 1835 - 1880 )

**“A true Romantic**, he poured forth melting melodies, then roused his public with brilliant technical feats, yet always with impeccable taste. The combination of Slavic temperament and French elegance was irresistible.”

*A description of Wieniawski's playing from Boris Schwarz's "Great Masters of the Violin"*

*This recording is dedicated to the memory of my wonderful teacher Josef Gingold — in celebration of a proud tradition of violin playing. C.C.*

**W**hen I went to Indiana University at the age of twelve, I had before me the thrill of studying violin with Josef Gingold. He remained my teacher and mentor until his death in 1995. I was the lucky recipient of ten years of the inspired teaching, amazing reminiscences, and personal warmth of a true exponent of a great tradition of violin playing.

From the age of eighteen to twenty-one, Mr. Gingold had studied with the great violinist Eugene Ysaÿe, who had studied

with **Henryk Wieniawski ( 1835 -1880 )**. Wieniawski was an enormous influence on the tradition of violin playing, particularly the romantic, virtuosic school passed down to me from Mr. Gingold, who had absorbed that tradition not only from Ysaÿe but also from older colleagues such as Fritz Kreisler.

It fascinates me how the pattern of mentorship was not essentially different in my generation from what it had been 150 years before in Wieniawski's time — even to putting up with a bit of academic bureau-

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## Comments from **COREY**



### **ON PRONOUNCING HIS NAME:**

" When I'm in the States, I say 'Ser-off-seck,' because it's just easier for everybody. But my parents, who are Austrian, say 'Tsehr-off-seck.' "

cracy to get to a great teacher!

When Wieniawski was eight years old, in 1843, he was sent to Paris to study with Joseph-Lambert Massart. Despite the barriers of age (under twelve) and citizenship (foreign) he was not only admitted to the Paris Conservatory, but went on to become the youngest award winner in the history of the school. The young Wieniawski developed a friendship with his teacher that was to last a lifetime. He stayed on after graduation to work with Massart until 1848. Kreisler, who was also a pupil of Massart, later said that Wieniawski "intensified the vibrato and brought it to heights never before achieved, so that it became known as the 'French vibrato.'"

Ysaÿe studied privately with Wieniawski as a

teenager (1874) through the Brussels Conservatory, and after that with Vieuxtemps in Paris. Ysaÿe is credited with modernizing the tradition of Wieniawski and Vieuxtemps, and with perfecting Wieniawski's vibrato and characteristic sonority. Ysaÿe's favorite instrument from the mid-1890s to the end of his life was a Guarneri del Gesù of 1740. (I play a del Gesù of 1742!)

When I studied with Mr. Gingold, a lesson rarely passed without his recalling his years in Belgium under Ysaÿe. He passed this tradition on with love and great respect. I think that being born right on the Polish-Russian border gave Mr. Gingold an additional sense of kinship with Wieniawski, and it was music he played with passion, verve and enthusiasm. He demonstrated an approach that not only

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## ON THE WIENIAWSKI DEL GESÙ VIOLIN:

"In my view, what makes a violin great is its ability to give you a sense that it is empathetic to you—that it moves in sympathy with your intentions. When I play the Wieniawski del Gesù, I find much more than a beautiful sound. The instrument has a soul, and I respond to its palette of colors and internal sense of timing. The way I want individual notes and phrases

— *continued* —



had temperament, but charm and sensitivity as well. The tonal warmth he inherited from these forebears was unmistakable.

Since my parents are, like Mr. Gingold, immigrants from Central Europe, studying with him was like finding that I had an extended musical family!

My first exposure to the music of Wieniawski (and Vieuxtemps and Ysaÿe) came shortly after I had begun lessons with Mr. Gingold. The **Scherzo-Tarantella, Op. 16**, which dates from 1855 and is dedicated to Massart, was one of the first pieces Mr. Gingold introduced me to; he loved to show off the “whip” bowing of the opening triplets which Ysaÿe had shown him as Wieniawski’s way; and the beauty of his cantilena lines in the middle

sections was to die for! It was also one of the first pieces in which I discovered Mr. Gingold’s wonderful slides, which I came to love and incorporate into my own playing. What I heard was an unabashedly romantic, heartfelt manner of playing the violin that I’ve had fixed in my ear ever since. For several years the Scherzo-Tarantella was a favorite encore piece of mine. I think it’s safe to say I never had a bigger audience for it than when I played it on the Tonight Show in 1986. Great fun for a fourteen-year-old!

The **Polonaise No. 1 in D, Op. 4**, was another early discovery for me. The work dates from Wieniawski’s first tour abroad in 1848, when he was 13. He began with a visit to Warsaw, where he impressed Vieuxtemps greatly, then spent June to October touring

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to be shaped in time must coincide with the way the instrument responds to the note after it is played.

“The instrument is powerful and confident on the G and E strings and soulful in the middle—where there is a wolf that is frustrating but also endearing—in a way that resonates with my own personality. The wolf points to a register of the instrument and tells me that near that point I have to play in a particularly human way: assertively, joyfully, throaty, and whispering by turns.”



## ON BEGINNING THE VIOLIN:

“My parents spotted a quarter-sized violin in a shop window and bought it for me for Christmas when I was five.

the Baltic countries. In October he arrived in Warsaw for two concerts, continued to his native Lublin and finally to Dresden, where he was a guest of Polish violinist Karol Lipinski, and where he wrote the Polonaise in 1849, dedicating it to his host.

Mr. Gingold had an inimitable way of bending the rhythm in the opening section of the Polonaise; his rubato was very free, but the underlying rhythmic pulse always remained precise and incisive. "Rubato" may mean "stolen," but Mr. Gingold always taught me to give back what I borrowed! Here I borrow at least one other thing: a flautando sound which I use for certain moments in the slow interludes. It was a wonderful expressive tool in Mr. Gingold's hands, even if his bow sometimes slid com-

pletely onto the fingerboard in the process!

In the early years Mr. Gingold and I would sometimes play in church together, and one of his favorite choices for such occasions was the **Romance from the Violin Concerto No. 2 in D Minor, Op. 22**. As he told it, Ysaÿe loved combining the sound of the violin with the sonority of the organ, and just as Ysaÿe had had Mr. Gingold play with organ, so Mr. Gingold had me do likewise. I've associated a unique mood mixed of passion and lyrical simplicity with this work ever since.

The D Minor Concerto, dedicated to Pablo Sarasate, was written in 1861, the second year of Wieniawski's tenure as soloist at the court and the court theatres of St. Petersburg. He had taken this position in fulfillment of a promise

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I don't remember asking for a violin, but it was love at first sight. They actually have an audio tape of me running around the house yelling, 'I got a violin from Santa!' Apparently within weeks I was telling everyone I was going to be a violinist when I grew up. Somehow that wish never went away, and magically turned into reality without my knowing when it crossed that boundary."



(far left) Corey, 1982

(left) First full-length recital, Oct. 24, 1980, Vancouver Women's Musical Club

Prof. Gingold and Corey in 1990, Indiana University



to his father-in-law to seek financial stability for the sake of his wife, Isabella. Wieniawski's first child was born in the same year.

On March 29, 1865, the audience at the St. Petersburg Opera House was treated to the first performance of Wieniawski's new composition "**Fantaisie brillante on the themes of Gounod's opera 'Faust,'**" Op. 20, dedicated to King Christian IX of Denmark. The Faust Fantasy, a later discovery for me, is the longest work on this program. It shows Wieniawski's skill in reworking materials from Gounod's opera into an extended narrative. These are some great melodies! The cadenzas are expansive and in them the utterances of the violin seem almost vocal. Nearer the end there is a waltz marked "risoluto" where Katja and I pull back the reins, so to speak, to a "resolute" pace;

holding back the energy makes it twice as much fun to play! There are, of course, plenty of fireworks to bring this adventure to an end.

The **Légende**, Op. 17, also a recent find for me, is a somber, haunting piece. The ever-more-insistent middle section is written mostly in double stops, which makes for an appealing, rich sound. I think the outer sections speak for themselves. No one seems to know whether or not the story is true of Wieniawski writing this piece to win his wife's hand from her begrudging father, but the background is interesting in any case.

Beginning in late 1858, Wieniawski spent nine months in London, where he was a great success, both as soloist in symphonic concerts, and as chamber musician. Although he usual-

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## ON PLAYING THE PIANO:

"I had the good fortune to study piano with another marvelous teacher at Indiana University, Enrica Cavallo-Gulli. I started performing on piano about ten years ago. The Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra, a youth orchestra in California, asked me to tour Australia with them, mostly playing violin: *The Four Seasons* and the Mozart A-Major Concerto. Then somebody got the idea it would be fun if I played piano, too (Mozart's 'Jeunehomme' Piano Concerto). Since then I've occasionally played concerti on both instruments. It's good to have another musical perspective. Performing on the piano is informative, because it forces me, musically, to think differently. On the violin you have the luxury of shaping the sound a great deal after you start the note. On the piano, you've got to think ahead and plan out your phrasing, your attacks, and the articulation."



ly avoided London's high society, perceiving a lack of respect for the artist's profession, he paid a visit to the Hampton family in April of 1859 at the urging of his friend Anton Rubinstein. Mrs. Hampton was the sister of British composer George Osborne, and a great music lover. Wieniawski and the Hamptons' daughter, Isabella, soon fell in love. Isabella's father opposed the marriage, but eventually agreed on the condition that Wieniawski would make financial stability a priority. The story has it that Mr. Hampton was moved to make his decision in favor of the marriage after hearing the *Légende*, which Wieniawski had written out of love for Isabella.

Whether or not the *Légende* had such an effect on Mr. Hampton, it's an evocative tale, and when I first read it I felt doubly inclined

to include the piece in this program.

In 1876 and 1877 Wieniawski gave a series of concerts at Bösendorfer Hall in Vienna, where the fascinated critics wrote that he "played like a god." At the audience's insistence, he had to repeat the **Polonaise Brillante No. 2 in A, Op. 21**, a number of times. Another example of Wieniawski's blend of sparkling technique and melodic tunefulness, the Polonaise has one of the most infectious opening violin themes I know; interspersed with its returns are sections of dancelike character and lyrical declamations. Some lovely liquid elaborations lead, naturally, to a rousing finale! This work is dedicated to King Charles XV of Sweden and Norway.

When Mr. Gingold and I played together, the



## ON MATH:

"Math remains a big part of my personality and my mental life, and it provides a kind of restful oasis from the general zaniness of being a musician. It's like a hobby-plus. I love to read in the sciences, especially theoretical physics. When I'm out taking a walk, I often find myself just wandering off, thinking about the nature of space and time. I like doing that."

**Etudes-Caprices, Op. 18**, which Wieniawski himself used as teaching tools in St. Petersburg, made handy encores. The optional second violin parts are minimal but Mr. Gingold played them with disarming charm and buffoonery by turns; keeping from giggling was as much a challenge as the rapid fingerwork! I came across this Kreisler transcription recently and it seemed a perfect addition, since it lets Katja in on the fun of the A minor Caprice.

The last of the works Mr. Gingold introduced me to was the **Variations on an Original Theme, Op. 15**. The work dates from 1854, when Wieniawski and his brother Josef had performed 122 concerts over a period of two years, mostly in Germany. The piece is dedicated to Rajmund Dreyschock, a professor at the Leipzig Conservatory and concertmaster of the Gewandhaus Orchestra.

Mr. Gingold was famous for his file cabinets filled with musty, disintegrating, out-of-print music. One day after I had heard Josh Bell play these variations in a master class, Mr. Gingold pulled a copy out of the depths for me. I think the jaunty theme and insistent up-bow staccato make a good send-off, and Katja and I have often found the work to be the perfect close to a recital.

When I had the chance not only to record some of Wieniawski's music but, thanks to the generosity of my wonderful sponsor, to record this music on a glorious instrument once *owned* by Wieniawski himself, there was no question about leaping at the opportunity. It was a great pleasure to record, and I hope it affords some similar pleasure to the listener!

*Corey Cerovsek*

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## Comments from the critics:

"Corey Cerovsek is such an abundantly talented musician in every sphere that one walked away from the concert full of admiration for the depth of his musicianship, his taste and intelligence, as well as his gleaming sound and brilliant technique."  
*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, February, 1998

"Cerovsek displayed a naturally dazzling technique, as if he were born with a violin in his hand."  
*The Cincinnati Enquirer*

"What Mr. Cerovsek has to offer is well beyond the dazzling but clinically fastidious playing one so often hears from young wizards. . . . His playing, all told, was closer to the style of Elman's or Kreisler's time than to what one expects of a polished newcomer. And one had the sense that he arrived at this style intuitively. . . ."

*The New York Times*



## Corey and Katja Cerovsek

### BIOGRAPHIES

With over a dozen years of performing on the world's classical music stages, violinist **Corey Cerovsek** has matured into a musician known for his dramatic performances, clear sound and stylistic flexibility. At age 25, Corey has appeared with conductors such as Mehta, Dutoit, Litton, Levi, Pinnock, Comissiona, Worby, Tilson Thomas, Davis, Jarvi, Comet, Lopez-Cobos

and Alsop, to name a few. He has performed in the United States with the orchestras of Philadelphia, San Francisco, Cincinnati, St. Louis, Indianapolis, Buffalo, Baltimore, Colorado, Detroit, Milwaukee, Atlanta, Houston, San Antonio, Phoenix, San Diego, Denver, Kansas City, Utah and the New World Symphony, and internationally, with the Israel Philharmonic, Iceland Symphony, Prague Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra (Ireland), Hong Kong Philharmonic, Residentie Orkest of the Hague, Montreal Symphony Orchestra, Edmonton Symphony, Calgary Philharmonic, Winnipeg Symphony, Vancouver Symphony, Bournemouth Symphony, Vienna Chamber Orchestra, Toronto Symphony and National Arts Centre Orchestra, among others. In recital, Corey has performed throughout the United States and Canada. He performs regularly at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston. Other recital credits include Lincoln Center's Walter Reade Theatre and the Frick Collection in New York, SUNY Purchase, the Place des Artes in

Montreal, the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra "Debut Series," and the Spoleto Festival in Charleston and in Italy. He has toured Australia, Canada, Denmark, Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan and the Netherlands.

On the television front, Corey has been featured twice on NBC's *Tonight Show* with Johnny Carson and Jay Leno, on the *David Frost Show* in England, on the PBS special *Musical Encounters* and on CBS' *Sunday Morning*.

Born in 1972 in Vancouver, Canada, Corey began his violin studies at the age of five. At age nine, he won the highest marks over 3,000 other musicians in the Canadian Music Competition. He graduated at age 12 from the University of Toronto's Royal Conservatory of Music with a gold medal for the highest marks in strings. That same year, he was accepted by Josef Gingold as a student and enrolled at Indiana University, where he received bachelor's degrees in mathematics and music at age 15, master's in both at 16, and completed his doctoral course work in mathematics and music at age 18.

of Cremona, c. 1742.

Corey Cerovsek plays the "*ex Wieniawski*" violin, made by Joseph Guarneri del Gesù



Corey Cerovsek with Professor Gingold at Harvard University

**Katja Cerovsek**, born in Vienna and raised in Vancouver, British Columbia, began her piano studies at the age of six. She started taking Royal Conservatory of Music exams at seven, graduating at thirteen with a diploma in piano performance (A.R.C.T.) and the gold medal for the highest mark in Canada. Six times she was a national finalist and first-place winner in the Canadian Music Competition. She is a three-

time recipient of a Canada Council Arts Grant.

Ms. Cerovsek has given recitals alone and with her brother Corey, in Canada, the United States, Europe, Japan, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. These have included performances at Lincoln Center and the Frick collection in New York; the Kennedy Center, Supreme Court, and Canadian Embassy in Washington, D. C.; the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in

Boston; and the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra's "Debut Series." International highlights include recitals at Wigmore Hall (London), Cemal Resit Ray Concert Hall (Istanbul), Suntory Hall (Tokyo), the National Theater in Taiwan, and the Spoleto Festival *Dei Due Mondi* in Italy. In addition to numerous broadcasts on CBC and National Public Radio, including *St. Paul Sunday Morning* and *Performance Today*, she has appeared twice with Corey on NBC's *Tonight Show*.

She has been a frequent concerto soloist since her debut with the Calgary Philharmonic at age ten, appearing with such ensembles as the New World Symphony, Victoria Symphony, Quebec Symphony, Carmel Symphony, and Hamilton Philharmonic; she made her U.S. orchestral debut with the

Indianapolis Symphony in 1985.

Ms. Cerovsek has made the U.S. her home since beginning her studies at Indiana University in Bloomington in 1984. There she received her Bachelor of Music degree with Highest Distinction in 1988, studying with Gyorgy Sebok and serving as studio accompanist for cellist Janos Starker. Continuing her studies with Menahem Pressler of the Beaux Arts Trio, she took her Master of Music degree and an appointment as Associate Instructor of Piano. Under the guidance of Leonard Hokanson she completed the academic requirements for the Doctor of Music. Ms. Cerovsek currently lives in San Diego, California where she does freelance work and maintains an active recital and teaching schedule.

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Recording Producer: *Ramiro Belgardt*  
Recording Engineer: *Jeff Mee*  
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Production Assistant: *Phyllis Bernard*

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## THE WIENIAWSKI DEL GESÙ

On this recording, Corey Cerovsek plays the famed Wieniawski del Gesù violin, ca. 1742, an instrument once used by virtuoso concert violinist and composer Henryk Wieniawski himself.

The del Gesù violins of the 1742 period have been among those most sought after by concert artists, generation after generation. Nicolo Paganini, Yehudi Menuhin, Pinchas Zukerman and Jascha Heifetz all played them. Younger artists such as Maxim Vengerov and Gil Shaham praise their tonal qualities.

All parts of the Wieniawski del Gesù are original, including a great deal of its varnish, an important factor enhancing its exceptional value. Tonally it is considered one of the top dozen or so concert del Gesù's in existence.

As more and more late period del Gesù's enter museum collections, the number that can be heard in concert halls or on recordings has become fewer and fewer. In this recording Corey Cerovsek's artistry allows the listener to appreciate fully those qualities which make this particular instrument so special.





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(800) 364-0645 • (707) 996-3844  
*contactus@delosmusic.com • www.delosmusic.com*  
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