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Franz
CLEMENT
(1780–1842)

Solo Violin Works
12 Caprices • Variations

Haoli Lin, Violin



Franz
CLEMENT
(1780–1842)

12 Caprices: Nos. 2, 3 and 10

10:33

- | | | |
|----------|-------------------------|------|
| 1 | Vol. 2: No. 10. Andante | 5:46 |
| 2 | Vol. 1: No. 2. Allegro | 2:10 |
| 3 | Vol. 1: No. 3. Moderato | 2:29 |

Variations sur la Romance de l'Opéra *Joseph* de É.-N. Méhul

8:02

- | | | |
|-----------|------------------------|------|
| 4 | Theme: Andante | 1:16 |
| 5 | Variation 1 | 0:59 |
| 6 | Variation 2 | 1:02 |
| 7 | Variation 3 | 1:03 |
| 8 | Variation 4: Più lento | 1:28 |
| 9 | Variation 5 | 1:14 |
| 10 | Variation 6 | 1:00 |

12 Caprices: Nos. 4–6

9:25

- | | | |
|-----------|------------------------|------|
| 11 | Vol. 1: No. 4. Allegro | 2:29 |
| 12 | Vol. 1: No. 5. Allegro | 4:23 |
| 13 | Vol. 1: No. 6. Allegro | 2:33 |

Variations sur un Thème tiré de la Pantomime *Die 3 Sclaven*

6:24

- | | | |
|-----------|----------------|------|
| 14 | Theme: Andante | 1:06 |
| 15 | Variation 1 | 0:40 |
| 16 | Variation 2 | 0:51 |
| 17 | Variation 3 | 0:44 |
| 18 | Variation 4 | 0:59 |
| 19 | Variation 5 | 0:52 |
| 20 | Variation 6 | 1:12 |

12 Caprices: Nos. 7–9**6:46**

- | | | |
|-----------|------------------------------------|------|
| 21 | Vol. 2: No. 7. Cadenza: Allegretto | 1:39 |
| 22 | Vol. 2: No. 8. [Cadenza]: Moderato | 2:16 |
| 23 | Vol. 2: No. 9. Allegro | 2:51 |

**Variations sur le Air ‘Wer hörte wohl jemals mich klagen’ de l’Opéra
Die Schweizer Familie de J. Weigl****5:54**

- | | | |
|-----------|----------------|------|
| 24 | Theme: Andante | 1:04 |
| 25 | Variation 1 | 0:45 |
| 26 | Variation 2 | 0:45 |
| 27 | Variation 3 | 0:59 |
| 28 | Variation 4 | 0:43 |
| 29 | Variation 5 | 0:44 |
| 30 | Variation 6 | 0:54 |

12 Caprices: Nos. 1, 11 and 12**14:22**

- | | | |
|-----------|--|------|
| 31 | Vol. 1: No. 1. Andante | 5:04 |
| 32 | Vol. 2: No. 11. Allegro moderato – Tempo di Marcia | 5:47 |
| 33 | Vol. 2: No. 12. Allegro | 3:29 |

8 Variations sur la Marche tirée de l’Opéra *Die Neger* de Salieri**9:41**

- | | | |
|-----------|---------------------|------|
| 34 | Theme: [Allegretto] | 1:00 |
| 35 | Variation 1 | 0:55 |
| 36 | Variation 2 | 1:09 |
| 37 | Variation 3 | 1:08 |
| 38 | Variation 4 | 1:14 |
| 39 | Variation 5 | 1:04 |
| 40 | Variation 6 | 1:02 |
| 41 | Variation 7 | 0:57 |
| 42 | Variation 8 | 1:14 |

Franz Clement (1780–1842)

Solo Violin Works

12 Caprices • Variations

Franz Joseph Clement was born in Vienna on 17 November 1780. His father was a butler (or 'table decorator') and violinist in the private musical establishment of Generalfeldzeugmeister ('Ordinance-Master General') of Philipp Graf von Harsch zu Almedingen (1704–1792). Clement first received violin instruction from his father. At age seven he began lessons under the tutelage of Franz Kurzweil, the concertmaster of Prince Grassalkovich. He performed in public as early as April 1788, and appeared at the Hofberg Theater in 1789. During concerts in 1789, Clement began playing works of his own composition. The *Wiener Zeitung* published a poem celebrating the eight-year-old prodigy: 'For thou, dear child, art worthy, / As one can plainly see, / That emperor, king, prince, and count- / Yea, all the world – give ear to thee.' Clement's father took his son on a three-year tour through Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and England (France was bypassed because of the Revolution). Two of these years were spent in England, where he twice performed for the King. In 1790 he performed at the same concert with George Bridgetower, another prodigy about his own age. He also performed at a concert in Oxford given in honour of Haydn, who received an honorary doctorate. He performed in Handel oratorios and was accorded a benefit concert sponsored by the Prince of Wales. During the tour, Clement began keeping a book entitled *Album of Franz Joseph Clement, dedicated to the eternal remembrance of his tours. 1789. Munich, August 31*. The book contained all manner of encomiums from the elite of European society, and not just musicians. In 1792 in Prague, on his way home, he played for the coronation of Emperor Franz of Bohemia.

In 1792 Clement was back in Vienna, and he continued his great success as a performer. In 1794 Beethoven added his praises to Clement's album: 'Go forth on the way which you hitherto have travelled so beautifully, magnificently. Nature and art vie with each other in making you a great artist. Follow both and, never fear, you will reach the great – the greatest – goal possible to an artist here on earth.' At age 19 he was appointed soloist and assistant to the conductor at the National Theatre. He became a member of the emperor's chamber music ensemble and accompanied Empress Maria Theresa, and in 1804 became one of two directors of the orchestra at the Theater an der Wien. In 1805 he was appointed music director. At a benefit concert organised for Clement in 1805, Beethoven's *Third Symphony* ('Eroica') was premiered, with Beethoven himself as conductor. Also in 1805, Clement premiered perhaps his own best known work, the *Violin Concerto in D major*. This work was influential in Beethoven's creation of his *Violin Concerto, Op. 61*, which Clement premiered in December 1806, famously also performing another work at the same concert while holding the violin upside down.

In 1811 he took a leave of absence from the Theater an der Wien in order to tour Russia. Suspected of being a spy when he reached Riga, he was arrested and brought to St Petersburg, and was jailed for a short time. Upon his release, he was forcibly removed to the Austro-Hungarian border, by this time somewhat impoverished. He worked at Baden and then in Prague under Carl Maria von Weber (1786–1826), also visiting Dresden and Leipzig, finally returning to Vienna in 1817, where he resumed his former position at the Theater an der Wien, a position he held until 1824. He conducted the Vienna concerts of Angelica Catalani (1780–1849) in 1821 and then accompanied her through southern Germany to the Rhine. He performed for the last time outside of Vienna in Munich, Augsburg, and Stuttgart before returning to Vienna for the remainder of his life.

His perceived decline as an artist is indicated by the changed attitude of Beethoven, who refused Clement the role of concertmaster at the premiere of the *Ninth Symphony* and wrote in his conversation book, after a concert in 1819 which featured Clement's variations on a theme of Beethoven, that Clement's work was 'Poor stuff, empty, quite ineffective ... with great monotony he contrives 15 or 20 variations, and ends each one with a fermata. You can imagine what one had to put up with!' He also wrote that 'He has lost a great deal, and seems too old to be entertaining with his capers on the fiddle.' This was far different than Beethoven's warm regard in 1806. By the time of his death on 3 November 1842, Clement had fallen into obscurity.

Clement's compositions include a Mass, a piano concerto (1803), the *Violin Concerto in D major* (1805), the *Violin Concerto in D minor* (1810), an uncertain number of additional concertos, several other works for orchestra, and solo works for violin, especially the twelve caprices. In addition, as a man of the theatre, he wrote several stage works, including the Singspiel entitled *Der betrogene Betrüger* ('The Deceiver Deceived') and an 1823 drama called *Die beiden Säbelhiebe* ('The Two Sabre Blows').

As with almost all violinist-composers, Clement composed music based on themes from the theatre. The typical pattern consisted of a statement of the theme followed by a series of variations. Usually, such works are accompanied by piano or orchestra; this programme presents theme and variation works that Clement composed for violin alone. Clement also composed two sets of six études for violin alone.

The programme begins with *Caprice No. 10* in D major ('Pizzicato'), an *Andante* in common time and the longest of the set. The caprice is written on two staves, the top staff for the usual bowed strokes and the second staff for the pizzicato accompaniment, which continues throughout the piece. *Caprice No. 2* in D major is an *Allegro* in triplets. *Caprice No. 3* in D major is a *Moderato* piece featuring some double-stopping and alternating quaver and semiquaver notes.

Clement's *Variations on a Romance from Méhul's Joseph* presents a lovely romance theme and six variations. Étienne-Nicolas Méhul's (1763–1817) *Joseph* was premiered in Paris at the Opéra Comique (Théâtre Feydeau) in February 1807. The opera is a recounting of the familiar Genesis story of Joseph and his brothers. Méhul's musical 'tag' that begins the romance is used as a recurring motif by Clement throughout the variations.

Caprice No. 4 in F major (*Allegro*) features triplets throughout. *Caprice No. 5* in D minor (*Allegro*) is a study in ascending and descending semiquaver notes. *Caprice No. 6* in D major (*Allegro*) has alternating bars in triplets, quavers, semiquavers and demisemiquaver notes.

Pantomimes had long been popular in both England and the continent, sometimes as stand-alone works as well as embedded within orchestral or stage works. Clement's *Variations sur un Thème tiré de la Pantomime Die 3 Sclaven* presents a beautiful theme played with double-stopping, followed by six variations.

Caprice No. 7 in E flat major is a short cadenza marked *Allegretto*. *Caprice No. 8* in D major (*Moderato*) features several long trills. *Caprice No. 9* in A major is a study in triplets.

Die Schweizer Familie ('The Swiss Family') is an 1809 opera (Singspiel) by the Austrian composer Joseph Weigl (1766–1846). Clement's *Variations on a Theme from J. Weigl's Opera Die Schweizer Familie* features the theme and six variations. Charles Dancla (1817–1907) also used Weigl's theme in his *Six Airs variés, Op. 89 (No. 5)* for violin and piano.

Caprice No. 1 in B minor (*Andante*) is a mournful work which features double-stopping. *Caprice No. 11* begins in G minor (*Allegro moderato*), but after a transition to G major ends in a legato *tempo di marcia*. *Caprice No. 12* in an *Allegro* in E major.

Antonio Salieri's (1750–1825) *Die Neger* ('The Negroes') was premiered in 1804. The story is set entirely in the Caribbean; the libretto was written by Georg Friedrich Treitschke (1776–1842), who was one of the librettists for Beethoven's *Fidelio*. Clement's *Huit Variations sur la Marche tirée de l'Opéra Die Neger de Salieri* consists of the theme and eight variations.

Bruce R. Schueneman

Performer's Perspective

I'm thrilled and humbled to be the premiere violinist of this collection of solo violin pieces by Franz Clement, a 19th-century Austrian composer and violinist.

I'm deeply grateful to Naxos for this unforgettable journey. Discovering Franz Clement's historic scores, dating back two centuries, was exciting and made me curious. He was the first to perform Beethoven's *Violin Concerto*! While working on Clement's unaccompanied works, editing and practicing them, and even recreating the music sheets, I felt like I was travelling back to early 19th-century Vienna, at the cusp of the Classical and Romantic eras. Clement felt like an intimate friend, showing me the unique elegance and beauty of that time through his music. This solo journey of exploration, reflection, and performance has been very special to me.

The twelve caprices are a mix of colours and skills. Set in Vienna during the shift from late Classical to early Romantic, each caprice shows Clement's creative vision of the coming Romantic golden era. He absorbed influences from Viennese masters and combined elegance and exquisiteness with an imaginative vision for the future. His violin works include many technical challenges, bridging Classical and Romantic styles. For example, his *Caprice No. 1* has emotional, polyphonic harmonies; *No. 7* and *No. 8* are virtuosic, akin to improvisational cadenzas; and *No. 10* blends challenging pizzicatos with lyrical melodies.

His four distinctly styled themes and variations captivated me. As a brilliant and intelligent violinist, he brought new life to opera themes from other composers, adding Viennese flair. I played each repeat from the variation with different emotions, expressions, bowings, and fingerings, following Clement's subtle traces in the music. It was an honour and a joy! In the *Variations on a Romance from Joseph by Étienne Méhul*, I explored Vienna's charm, French opera themes, and creative techniques – a wonderful, intertwined challenge!

A collection of unaccompanied works, a 1732 Gagliano violin, and a personal journey – this was an incredible experience. It made me feel deeply connected to the long history of classical music. I am truly thankful to all the people who supported me in this special journey, and I sincerely hope you enjoy this unique recording.

Haoli Lin

Haoli Lin

Photo: Chao Deng



Violinist Haoli Lin is an internationally recognised talent, and his career spans solo performances, chamber music and education. The youngest winner of the China National Violin Competition in 2008, and the winner of the Andrews International String Competition in 2013, Lin has graced prestigious stages across China, Southeast Asia and the United States. He is also the founder and artistic director of the New World Chamber Players, and the ensemble has given over 200 concerts in China since 2017. A Starling Scholar on a full scholarship at the University of Cincinnati College – Conservatory of Music, Lin studied for his doctoral degree under renowned violin pedagogue Kurt Sassmannshaus. He has lectured at institutions such as Tsinghua University and Portland State University, and served as guest concertmaster for the Jakarta Simfonia Orchestra and Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra. Previous albums, including *Clara Schumann and Robert Schumann: Music for Violin and Piano* (Naxos 8.579067) and *Romantic Journey* (MSR Classics), have been critically acclaimed by *American Record Guide*, *Musicalifeiten* and *Ritmo*, among others. Lin plays a 1732 Nicolò Gagliano violin.

www.haolilinvolin.com



Franz Clement was the first soloist to perform Beethoven's *Violin Concerto* – 'nature and art vie with each other in making [Clement] a great artist', wrote Beethoven. Clement was a Viennese-born virtuoso who composed his own influential violin concerto and a sequence of challenging works for solo violin. The *Twelve Caprices* were composed on the cusp of the Classical and Romantic eras and offer a lexicon of technical demands but also suave lyricism and imaginative writing. Clement brings his own wit and flair to the themes and variations on popular stage works of the time, which are interspersed throughout the programme.

Franz CLEMENT

(1780–1842)

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WORLD PREMIERE RECORDINGS

Haoli Lin, Violin

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet.

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