



# LINO LIVIABELLA

WORKS FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO



Gianluca Angelillo

Hans Liviabella

A mio padre Lucio, in ricordo della sua instancabile dedizione  
per la valorizzazione della musica di Lino Liviabella.  
Con l'affetto più profondo, sicuro che ascolterà questa musica  
a lui cara insieme agli angeli.

*To my father Lucio, in memory of his tireless dedication  
to the enhancement of Lino Liviabella's music.  
With the deepest affection, certain that he will listen to this music  
so dear to him together with the angels.*

Hans



# Lino Liviabella (Macerata, 1902 – Bologna, 1964)

## Works for Violin and Piano

<b>01</b>	<b>Sonata in un Tempo</b> (1934)*	10:41
<b>02</b>	<b>Concerto</b> (1956)*	09:28
<b>03</b>	<b>Bululù - Marionetta meccanica del romanzo "Eva ultima" di Massimo Bontempelli</b> (1930)*	02:02
<b>04</b>	<b>Canzonetta</b> (1925)*	02:10
<b>05</b>	<b>Canto andaluso</b> (1930)*	02:58
<b>06</b>	<b>Lucio e Renato. Marcetta</b> (1944)*	02:15
<b>07</b>	<b>Andante</b> for organ or for piano and violin (1926)*	04:02
<b>08</b>	<b>Aria</b> (1925)*	03:29
<b>09</b>	<b>Pastorale</b> (1943)*	02:36
<b>10</b>	<b>Sonatina per l'elevazione</b> (1924)*	02:10
<b>Sonata in A minor for violin and piano (1920-28)</b>		<b>22:59</b>
<b>11</b>	Allegro energico	07:57
<b>12</b>	Largo	04:53
<b>13</b>	Vivace	03:00
<b>14</b>	Allegro fantastico	07:07

### Running Time

**64:57**

\* **First recording**

Hans Liviabella, Violin - Gianluca Angelillo, Piano

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Lino Liviabella was born into a family of musicians. His grandfather on his mother's side was a pupil of Rossini and Chapel Master in the Basilica of S. Nicola di Tolentino; his father Oreste, who graduated from Rome's S. Cecilia Academy, was organist and Chapel Master in the Cathedral of Macerata. Lino was born in Macerata on 7th April 1902 and died in Bologna on 21st October 1964. In 1920 he graduated from high school and enrolled in the Faculty of Literature at the University of Rome. His later decision to dedicate himself entirely to music caused him to have a few contrasts with his parents, wherefore Lino courageously arranged to be economically independent by giving private lessons and playing the piano in cinemas (movies were still silent). After graduating in piano with L. Cozi from Rome's S. Cecilia Conservatory (1923), he went on to study organ with R. Renzi (earning his diploma in 1926) and composition with O. Respighi (graduating in 1927). In 1928 he was appointed director of the High School of Pescara, where he also taught piano; from 1931 he taught in Venice; and from 1940, having won a competition, he was given the Fugue and Composition chair at the Conservatory of Palermo. In 1942 he settled in Bologna. In the Conservatory of that city, he obtained the chair of Fugue and Composition; then he became the institution's Deputy Director and finally its Director, having also been director of the Conservatories of Pesaro (1953-59), and of Parma (1959-63). In 1958 he completed a treatise on Harmony, fruit of his intense didactical activity, and in 1964, in collaboration with R. Monterosso, he wrote the book "Sentir musica" (published by Cappelli).

He was also a well-known pianist. He won numerous awards: first prize at the "Propaganda Musicale" national competition with his *Sonata in A minor* for violin and piano (1928); at the "Terza Mostra Nazionale di Musica Contemporanea" with his *Sonata in One Movement* for violin and piano (1934); at the "Concorso Scaligero" with his *Sonata ciclica* for cello and piano (1938); he was a prize-winner at the Berlin Olympic Games with his symphonic poem *Il Vincitore*, performed by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by the author (1936); at the "Prix Alice Lumbroso" with *La gondola* (Paris, 1937); at the "Fondazione Respighi" competition with the symphonic poem *Monte Mario* (1937); he won the "S. Remo" prize (1940); the prize of the "Scarlatti" national competition with the symphonic poem *La mia terra* (1943); the "Premio Roma" with the cantata *O Crux, ave!* (1950); and the "Premio Friuli" with *Tema, variazioni e fuga* for organ. He was moreover awarded an honorary diploma by the "Comitato Internazionale per l'Unità e l'Universalità della Cultura" (1962).

From 1960 he was a member, for symphonic music, of the Central Committee for the Supervision of Broadcasting. He published articles in various magazines, such as *Laus decora* (L'insegnamento del canto gregoriano nei Conservatori, 1957); *Arti* (La cattedra di composizione nei Conservatori Musicali, 1959); *La Scala* (Dove va la musica? 1960). His works include the operas *Antigone*, *La Conchiglia*, *Canto di Natale*; the cantatas *Marina di neve*, *Sorella Chiara*, *Caterina da Siena*, *O Crux, ave!*, *Le sette parole di Gesù sulla Croce*; the symphonic poems *Monte Mario*, *La mia terra*; the

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*Symphony in Four Movements* for soprano and orchestra (from T. S. Eliot); the *Poem for Piano and Orchestra*; a *Violin Concerto*; a *Concerto for Orchestra*. He moreover composed numerous chamber works and songs for voice and piano. All his works have been performed in Italy and beyond, and some have been recorded.

(Biographical notes taken from the site [www.linoliviabella.com](http://www.linoliviabella.com), last consulted on 26<sup>th</sup> December 2023)

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### **Brief introductory notes**

In Italian music we find some fascinating cases of composers who are singularly inclined towards a specific instrument, either because of its particular sound or because of a composing approach that is especially suited to it. Such a propension, often exclusive, can evolve, in time, into its exegetical exploration and a total symbiosis. An eloquent example of this is that of composer Lino Liviabella (Macerata, 1902 - Bologna, 1964) and of his musical production dedicated to the violin. Liviabella is known not only as a musician and teacher, but also for his pioneering role within the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century renewal movement of Italian music, when a group of composers endeavoured to revitalize Italian instrumental music and emancipate it from 19<sup>th</sup>-century opera. The concept of innovation, as a desire of stylistic rebirth and achievement of an original style, was prominent in Liviabella, matching his personal nature free of programmatic assumptions. A fertile composer with original ideas and avant-garde technique, he was a remarkable exponent of his generation,

whose activity deserves, today, a thorough investigation. In this regard, the authoritative Paolo Peretti (1954) stated: "Liviabella's productiveness, versatility, and multiformity are undoubtedly qualities of the composer's, but to the critics they offer a challenge, for they require a comprehensive analysis that so far has not been attempted; this has led to concentration only on particular facets of Liviabella: the operatic composer or the symphonic one, the composer of chamber music or of folk-inspired music."<sup>1</sup> Liviabella's music has a characteristic spirit, which manifests itself as a creative journey through evocative sounds, fleeting impressions, and strong dynamic contrasts. We shall explore these sounds from the past, which reflect a beautifying and original world seeped in delicate and gentle emotions, closely and with passion. Music represents an irreplaceable part of Liviabella's universe, an endless source of pleasure and curiosity. In his music, the influence of the teachings of Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936) clearly emerges, fully accepted as a cultural and moral message but also as a pedagogic lesson in composing, remaining a firm point in the composer's artistic and human baggage. The most consistent part of Liviabella's output consists of orchestral works, but his chamber compositions, some of which never published (such as the *Andantino Mosso* from 1925 or *Canto Andalus* from 1930), represent the first important works for violin and piano written in Italy in the first half of the 1900s. The deep reflection the composer went through

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<sup>1</sup> For further knowledge re: Paolo Peretti, *Lino Liviabella nella cultura musicale italiana del Novecento*, San Giuseppe, Pollenza, 2003, p. 402.

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and the dedication he put into his work are conveyed by his creative process, making his output brilliant and peculiarly attractive.

### **Lino Liviabella and the violin**

The **Sonata in un Tempo (1934)** is noteworthy for its rigorous consistency and unity of purpose, proving remarkably demanding both from the formal and expressive points of view. The work's structure has some overall distinctive elements: a conscientiously sought formal balance and a fluctuating game of cold and warm tonalities, in addition to its immediacy of expressiveness and sound technique. From the very beginning, the composer aims to highlight the instruments' liveliness and dynamic agility and the musical theme's peculiar character, which influences the nature of the relationship between the various melodic, harmonic, and tone-colour ideas, creating a constant structural tension. The piano's chromatic chords interweave with the violin's vigorous staccatos, reaching a temporary tone-colour disintegration (*p con desiderio*) followed by momentary, spontaneous and never conventional motives. In the reprise of some thematic ideas, the violin part emphasizes energetic slurs, then supported by the piano's chordal, contrapuntal, and obstinate accompaniment. Undulating effects (bars 127-131) are achieved through the constant sparkle of rapid demisemiquavers and nervous articulation of thematic fragments; meanwhile, the rare slow passages of the piano have refined tone-colours and are supported by vitalistic lyricism. Worthy of note are the virtuosic effects, which

require of the interpreters the utmost attention and commitment.

The **Violin Concerto (1956)** is a remarkably important work, worthy of the consideration of today's performing and editorial contexts, typically Italian in its intense and solemn afflatus. This concerto shines for its passionate though measured lyricism and seems to introduce the Italian instrumental milieu into a new world. The composer, trained at the school of Ottorino Respighi, often engages in sound explorations that are not a mere exercise in experimentation but aim to pinpoint the distinctive traits of his music, which had already stood out in the more important works he had written at that point.

The first movement, *Vivace aggressivo*, is characterized by a Debussy-like alternation of moments of rhythmic frenzy and of quiet, ruled by a solid constructive principle. In the following movements, fascinating is the rhythmic freedom with which the violin leads the listener into a dizzy dynamic contrast bordering on improvisation.

The character of **Bululù**, a mechanical puppet that appears in the novel "Eva ultima" by Massimo Bontempelli (1930), is light and subtly humorous in the initial introduction, as if the curtain were magically about to open on a scene drawn from the book. The latter, originally (between 1918 and 1919) conceived as a theatrical text and later adapted in the form of a novel, is inspired by the paintings of Giorgio De Chirico. Bontempelli reinvents Auguste de Villiers de L'Isle-Adam's "L'Ève future", re-

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versing roles: now it is a woman who falls in love with a puppet, which she considers her masculine ideal. The composer recreates with graceful irony the puppet's mechanical movements, transforming the musical figure into a theatrical gesture. The marked spatial and dynamic rarefaction, emphasized by the violin's evocative tone-colour effect, generates a sensation of sonic elation. The piano accompaniment mainly consists of staccato chords, leading (*con anima*) to a new, descending figure (*f*) that tones down the elation and leads back to composure through a short episode characterised by elegant cycles of sextuplets accompanied by long slurs on the violin. A brief moment of respite (bars 40-43) precedes the return of the initial part, which then flows into a hurried and intense epilogue.

The introduction of **Canzonetta (1925)** is entrusted to the piano; with a sudden change of key, the violin then delicately joins in. With its freely flowing musical structure, seemingly simple but effective use of language, and unique tone-colour effects, this brief work is full of thematic ideas and original effects. In that same year Liviabella appeared before Roman audiences in the performance of his "chamber poem" *Natale*, while he was still a pupil in the fugue class of Ottorino Respighi at Rome's St. Cecilia Conservatory.

**Canto andaluso (1930)** immediately welcomes the listener into a context seeped in a special atmosphere promptly enriched by innovative nuances, through which the composer confides his emotions in a way that is

deeply captivating. The *Spanish* charm proves a source of inspiration also for the twenty-two-year-old Liviabella, who had just brilliantly concluded his study of organ, earning his diploma under the guidance of Renigio Renzi. In this work from the typical sound, the melodic aspect comes to life through notes that seem to dance, in lively keys alternated via sweet and spontaneous modulations. The instrumental dialogue seems to flow directly from the performers' souls, in a frenzied whirlwind of rhythms.

**"Lucio e Renato" (1944).** *Marcetta* is dedicated to Liviabella's two sons: Lucio, former violinist and viola player in the RAI Symphony Orchestra of Turin, and Renato, a lover and connoisseur of music. This brief composition expresses happiness, energy and spontaneity, leaving the listener with pleasant feelings. The spirit of this joyful march constantly glimmers against a dreamy backdrop, blossoming into a healthy vitality, and delightful and refreshing smiles.

The ***Andante per organo o pianoforte e violino (1926)*** has an intensely dramatic and emotional character played out in the key of E minor, with the violin's delicate and sweet melodies interweaving with the piano's soft but incisive interpolations. The meditative mood that ensues seems to anticipate a more concrete melodic statement: this, indeed, arrives in the central section, which, although more delicate in its expansive nature, is characterised by ample lines that lend themselves to developments rich in nuances and harmonies, then returning to the tonality of E, this time major. There emerges here, in the way he entrusts the

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work's conclusion with the role of meditative epilogue, a significant trait of Liviabella's art. The violin's lyrical moments dialogue with the harmonic broadness of the piano, as the piece gradually comes to its end.

The ***Andantino mosso o Aria (1925)*** immediately shows its strong identity with the generous expression of gentle feelings and the ability to convey intense lyricism through a tranquil mood, almost the waiting of a soul, mostly developing over light tones. This charm is also found in the A major section, which is engrossing with its emphasis on long values and touching intimate emotion, reaching their apex in the return of the initial theme. The moments of lyrical expansion seek constant clarity and the serenity of eloquent gestures. In the conclusion, colours gently tone down, and the dialogue of the two instruments is carried out in absolute equality.

The ***Pastorale (1943)*** opens with a series of repeated fifths performed by the violin, then developing into an original and broad discourse, initially joyful, then glowing with a chromaticism bright with variable colours. The central section, *Ninna nanna*, a reassuring episode, it is as if it wanted to emerge from the development of the first part to embrace an affectionate impulse; however, seemingly not finding a fulfilling release, it retires into a delicate conclusion.

The ***Sonatina per l'elevazione per violino e armonium (1924)*** is a brief piece of music characterised by a lighter and more colloqui-

al style. A delicate theme in A major leads the listener to progressively deeper and nobler depths, generating very lyrical episodes. The piano accompaniment introduces an intimate mood, while the violin above it creates a continuous dialogue, with the two instruments intimately blending. Some typical traits of the composer's are revealed by this composition, proving his admirable formal mastery despite his being only in his twenties.

The ***Sonata in A minor in four movements (1920-28)*** is immediately distinguishable because of its tonal character, though it also presents numerous polytonal episodes. Liviabella's creative activity in the 1920-1930 decade takes a fruitful and articulate path, but it has a unifying guiding line of evident truth. Those were the crucial years of his first compositions, and it is surprising to see how the direction and basic poetics of his entire activity were already clearly outlined. The most attractive element of this piece is its stylistic worth, tied to a truly original language. The first movement, *Allegro energico*, is dominated by a rich variety of tone-colours and expressive effects, as well as by the substantial respect for formal balance. The *Largo*, sweet and lulling, painfully beautiful, is accompanied by repeated chords on the piano and followed by a joyous *Vivace*, in which the composer's creativeness displays all its vigour. The last movement, *Allegro fantasioso*, characterised by liveliness and rhythmic vivacity, loses itself in a tortuous path before ending with an abrupt final chord. One notices interesting innovations also in the rhythmic structure, and a profound thematic intensifi-



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cation permeates this work seeped in a lively rhythm. The Sonata won first prize at the “Concorso Nazionale della Propaganda musicale” and was particularly appreciated by the critics of the day.

### **Andrea Bayou**

*Artists live in a night full of surprises, they carry their lamp painfully wrapped in a circle of shadows; they bring light, the essence of which they know and do not want to know, because for them it is not important to know but to give.*

Lino Liviabella

Translated by Daniela Pilarz

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**Hans Liviabella** was born in Turin into a family of musicians. His great-great-grandfather was a pupil of Rossini, his great-grandfather was a chapel master, his grandfather a composer, and his father a viola player, who introduced him to the study of the violin at the age of four. He then entered the Conservatory of Milan, graduating under the guidance of Christine Anderson, and studied at Cremona’s Stauffer Academy with Salvatore Accardo and at Vienna’s Musikhochschule with Dora Schwarzberg, where he was chosen as one of the best pupils to perform in a live radio concert in Moscow in memory of the famous Russian teacher Jan-kelevich. After an audition with Gidon Kremer, he was directed to further his studies with Maja Glezarova at the Conservatory of Moscow, and

thanks to the scholarship for talented young musician of Turin’s “De Sono” association he was able to broaden his training also with Stefan Georghiu, Franco Gulli, the Trio di Trieste, and Valentin Berlinsky. He is a member of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe and has worked with them since 1992. He has been invited by Claudio Abbado to perform with the Lucerne Festival Orchestra and Orchestra Mozart di Bologna, and he has played first violin in the Filarmonica della Scala and Mahler Chamber Orchestra. He is the first violin of the Quartetto Energie Nove, an ensemble with which he carries out an intense concert activity, and he has worked with A. Lonquich, I. Pogorelich, V. Mendelsshon, and J. Rachlin. Energie Nove has made radio and television recordings for RTSI and regularly records for the Dynamic label. Currently, he is the leader of the second violins section of the Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana, with which he performed Prokofiev’s first Violin Concerto under the baton of Alain Lombard and made the world première recording, for Forlane, of Joseph Boulogne Chevalier de St. Georges’s Violin Concerto Op. 7 No. 2, and of the concertos by A. Casella, Lino Liviabella, and G. F. Malipiero. For this recording he played the 1683 Dubray-Savile Stradivari and an 1848 Enrico Rocca (ex-Conte Ignazio di Salabue, ex-Annibale Fagnola). The instruments were lent for the occasion by Lugano’s “Adopt a Musician” association.

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**Gianluca Angelillo** was born in Turin and graduated with honours from that city's Conservatory under the guidance of Vera Drenkova. Thanks to a scholarship of Turin's "De Sono" music association and of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he then furthered his studies for three years at the Moscow Conservatory with Lev Naumov. He has performed in numerous European and extra-European countries (appearing at the "Malij sal" of Moscow's Conservatory, "Sala 500" of the Lingotto and Teatro Regio of Turin, Teatro Valli of Reggio

Emilia, Teatro Carlo Felice of Genoa, the Italian Cultural Institutes of Brussels, Stockholm, Lisbon and Porto), and has worked with the RAI Orchestra, Orchestra della Radio Svizzera Italiana, and Mahler Chamber Orchestra. "A lively impulsiveness, a fiery temperament blend in him with intellect, emotion, and style; he is full of imagination. It is always very interesting to hear him".

"The interpretative skills of this artist are captivating, warm, sincere." (Lev Naumov)

**Hans Liviabella**



**Gianluca Angelillo**



**Photos:** © Simone Battistoni



**Lino Liviabella**

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