

Mp3 Yi-jia Susanne Hou - Fantasy

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This album features truly soul-soothing classical music with a splash of Devilish explorations and Ave Maria as a cathartic ending. 3 MP3 Songs in this album (45:45) ! Related styles: CLASSICAL: Classical era, CLASSICAL: Sonata People who are interested in Vanessa-Mae Jascha Heifetz Anne-Sophie Mutter should consider this download. Details: *Artist Bios Program Notes following below forward* Beginning the journey with a note: To my dear Friends Listeners, This is the story of my violin me. This is also the beginning of my very own CD collection. The inspiration behind recording this disc is rather extraordinary, so I wanted to share it with all of you. I have been extremely privileged to have played on numerous great instruments in my very young career, including the 1692 Avery Fisher Stradivari from the Juilliard School. When I entered the Canada Councils National Instrument Bank Competition in August of 2003, I had no idea what I was getting myself into; all I knew was that I would be competing for the use of one of their eight violins, which included 3 Stradivaris and 1 Guarneri del Jesu. As luck would have it, I won the grand prize, and had first choice of the 8 violins! I remember that evening very well: I walked into Heins (on Church St. in downtown Toronto) where, in the back room, they had the 8 violins beautifully laid out in their brand new Gorge cases, awaiting their new partner. I thought I had died and gone to heaven! I knew that choosing one of these violins to be my voice for the next 3 years would be difficult. Violins are so personal they are really like people. Every instrument has a personality, and a voice of its own; every musician must get along with their instrument. For quite some time, I tried the violin each one beautiful, each one unique. However it was clear to me even then, that the 1729 Guarneri del Jesu was the one for me. I felt a connection with it right away; it responded to everything I did so organically. As an artist, I felt free to express everything and anything with this violin as my voice; thus to the surprise of many, I chose it above the 3 Stradivaris. During the last 3 years, I have traveled with my violin across the globe, and have fallen deeply in love with it. So you can imagine the pain of realizing that my 3-year loan was coming to an end! Fortunately, I had met the Anonymous donor and his wife, and they understood my pain. Extending their appreciation for my love of their instrument, they offered to support a recording as a memento of our time spent together. For this opportunity, I am eternally grateful to my Anonymous

donors! Thus, as a parting souvenir, and still in fear of losing the love of my life, I recorded this music at the end of my 3-year loan from the Canada Council for the Arts Instrument Bank, and their Anonymous donor. First steps: This is the first disc in my collection, and I am honoured to have you here with me as I begin my journey. The name Fantasy obviously derives from the large works on this album, but more importantly, it is symbolic of the beginning of my dream. Having grown up listening to the great violinists of the past, with their musical collections compiled after their death, I have decided to create my very own collection during my life. Thus I begin my collection here, now, today, until I die. I hereby vow my commitment to put every ounce of myself and my soul into all my albums, in creation and in performance. My hope is that this album, and every album henceforth will live on past my time carried by the timeless magic of music.

What Why: Deciding the repertoire for the very first CD in my collection was not easy. However, for this very purpose, the Schubert Fantasia for Violin Piano was a natural choice: it opens with the faintest tremolo in the piano, which paints the atmosphere with a magical shimmer. Then, from absolutely nothing, the violin enters with a timeless single note a single breath. The longest breath ever written and one that promises the life of the entire work. If you've ever thought, in one moment, that you understood the secret of the universe, this opening is the musical equivalent. The Sarasate Faust Fantasy is a work I discovered while choosing repertoire for the Sarasate International Violin Competition. I had never heard of it, and was amazed when I read through it for the first time. I instantly loved it for its dramatic and passionate character, ending with a playful waltz. I do not understand why it isn't performed as often as the Sarasate Carmen Fantasy; after listening to it, I hope you'll agree with me. Finally, I am ending this disc with none other than Schubert's Ave Maria. I still stop breathing every time I play it. And so, I invite you all to see how this Fantasy unfolds; for everyone, it will be a different journey, but one I hope you will find musically metaphysical satisfying.

In dedication: I would like to dedicate this first disc in my collection to my parents, who planted the love of music in my heart: thank you for sharing your passion and love of music with me, for all the countless hours of practicing with me, watching over me, taking care of me, driving me to New York in the middle of the night for lessons, supporting me, criticizing me, teaching me to never give up, and for giving me everything, even when it meant you would have nothing. Your unconditional love, and your dedication verve for life and music will forever be with me.

With deepest thanks To my Anonymous donors: thank you for making this dream a reality, for your love and inspiration, and for simply being you! I am deeply touched by your kindness and faith in me. I am

proud to have introduced you to the Schubert Fantasy, and now you have your very own recording of it, which you made possible! I hope you will enjoy this recording for years to come. To my family, my Godparents friends: thank you for always being there to support me in everything I do; I am the richest person in the world to have all of you in my life! To my teachers mentors: thank you for sharing your wisdom, and for guiding me to be who I am today. To my manager, Andrew: thanks for believing in me, for nurturing me, and for giving me a stage to perform on! To The Canada Council for the Arts: thank you for all your support through all my years of musical education, and for giving me the most incredible gift in this violin! What a truly amazing arts council country we have! To Ric, Tim, and everyone at Geo.Heinl Company: thank you for all your support, and for taking such amazing care of my voice. To the Chinese Artists Society of Toronto: thank you for supporting my music and career all these years, and for your dedication to enriching our community with culture and music. To Dennis Patterson, Charles Katchebaw: thank you for your time dedication to excellence, and for making the studio my home for our recording days. To Nicholas Sylvest: thank you for all the time dedication you have given to this project; I am eternally grateful to you for your kindness and generosity. To Evan Schultz: thank you for all your time, dedication, and energy in the unrelenting pursuit of perfection! And to all of you who have followed my career, and who have been watching out for me every step along the way: your continued support means the world to me thank you so very much!

ARTIST BIOS: Internationally celebrated violinist YI-JIA SUSANNE HOU is the first violinist ever to capture 3 Gold Medals with unanimous decisions at international violin competitions: Concours International Long-Thibaud (France, 1999), Lipizer International Violin Competition (Italy, 1999) and Sarasate International Violin Competition (Spain, 1997). HOU is also the first and only musician to win the Canada Council for the Arts Instrument Bank Competition for 2 consecutive terms, and would like to thank the Canada Council for the Arts and the anonymous donor for their support through the loan of the 1729 "ex-Heath" Guarneri del Ges fine stringed instrument. This \$5 million instrument is coupled with a priceless bow made by her father, Alec Hou. HOU is the featured violin soloist on Atom Egoyan's film "ADORATION" with music composed by Mychael Danna, which won the Ecumenical Jury Prize at Festival de Cannes, and received a special citation in the Best Canadian Feature Film category at the Toronto International Film Festival. ADORATION will open in Theatres February 2009. HOU was also the subject of a CBC 'The National' Documentary: "Shanghai Sensation", revisiting her childhood in Shanghai and following her musical journey with her father, Alec

Hou, a renowned violin pedagogue in China. A lead violinist for three seasons now with BOWFIRE, HOU has been seen on PBS and the TODAY SHOW amongst the top virtuoso violinists and fiddlers today in each genre of modern string playing. HOU has toured the globe and is a regular soloist with renowned orchestras such as The London Philharmonic, Radio France, Monte Carlo Philharmonic, SWR Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra, WDR Cologne, National Arts Centre Orchestra, Toronto Symphony, Vancouver Symphony, Chicago Sinfonietta, NHK Symphony Orchestra, Singapore Symphony, Hong Kong Philharmonic, Tokyo Philharmonic, Osaka-Kansai Philharmonic, Shanghai Broadcasting Orchestra, Czech National Orchestra, and Slovenia Radio-Television Orchestra. Born into a musical family, HOU had music surrounding her all her life. Both her mother and father are violinists, and thus at the tender age of 4, she began studying violin with her father, Alec Hou. Throughout her musical education, her father, Dorothy DeLay, Cho Liang Lin and Naoko Tanaka have been her strongest influences. She holds her Bachelor of Music, Master of Music, and the highly acclaimed Artist Diploma Program from The Juilliard School. YI-JIA SUSANNE HOU is an active advocate of cultural exchange and musical education. Shes absolutely phenomenal Lord Yehudi Menuhin "I was overwhelmed by the sensitivity of her playing...she is an extraordinary artist. The violin plays a huge part in the soundtrack of the film, and her detailed and highly charged performance is full of emotional nuance." Atom Egoyan Winner of the International Piano Competition of Paris and Arcachon, and first prizewinner in solo piano and chamber music at the Conservatoire National Superieur de Paris, VINCENT SANGAR BALSE has been performing since he was 8 years old and is now a very sought-after pianist. In the United States, he has been heard in New York, Los Angeles, and has been bestowed the New Orleans City Mayor's Honours for his solo performance with the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra. Mr. Sangar Balse has been a featured performer in many great halls of Europe and Japan such as the Thtre des Champs Elyses, and Salle Pleyel in Paris. Mr. Sangar Bales discography includes a solo album in the United States and a compact disc with the saxophonist Julien Petit is available under the label Lyrinx. A versatile musician, he is a member of "Language Tango", whose second album "La Ventana" was released last year. Mr. Sangar Balse has been piano faculty of the Luzerne Music Center and the Rencontres Musicales Internationales des Graves for the past four years. Mr. Sangar Balse began playing the piano at the age of six under the tutelage of Zoya Zorin. He is a graduate of the Sienna Academy in Italy, the Bordeaux Conservatory, and the Conservatoire National Superieur de Paris, where he studied with Nicholas

Angelich, Christian Ivaldi and Alain Meunier. Currently, Mr. Sangar Balse resides in Paris and New York, where he holds a Masters of Music from the Juilliard School.

PROGRAM NOTES for Fantasy Franz Schubert (1797-1828) Fantasy in C for Violin and Piano, D. 934 This is one of Schuberts three great fantasies. Completed in December, 1827, it falls between The Wanderer Fantasy for piano solo (D. 760) of 1822, and the Fantasy in F Minor for Piano, four hands, D. 940, composed in April, 1828. D. 760 and D.940 are virtual symphonies for piano, in which four movements are connected as well as interrelated. D. 934 is similarly structured. It begins with a slow, portentous introduction, then proceeds without interruption to three sections akin to the three movements of a concerto. There are Schubertian touches: the second movement is a set of variations on one of the composers many songs, Sei mir gegrusst! (I greet you!), and the introduction returns before the Finale. It is an ideal piece for the violinist who wishes to master daunting technical challenges while playing music that is original, powerful, and beautiful. It also requires a pianist combining sensitivity, skill, and dedication. Schubert composed it for two young virtuosi, Josef Slavik and Carl Maria von Bocklet, who had previously performed his Rondeau brillant in B Minor (D.895) with great success. Sadly, the audience for their premiere performance in January, 1828 found the work incomprehensible, strange as that seems today. But perhaps not altogether strange: compared to most of Schuberts greatest achievements, this piece is rarely performed.

Pablo de Sarasate (1844-1908): Fantasy on Faust, Op. 13. From the era of Mozart onward, composers and publishers arranged arias from popular operas for voice and piano or other small ensembles. The great piano virtuoso, Franz Liszt introduced a new method of exploiting operatic arias, by arranging them for solo piano, complete with decorations, elaborations, and variations not in the originals. The great Spanish violinist, Sarasate, adapted Liszts practice to his own instrument, arranging opera fantasies for violin and piano, or violin and orchestra. Faust, an opera by Charles Francois Gounod (1818-1893) premiered in Paris in 1859, where Sarasate was completing his studies at the Conservatory. Based on Goethes celebrated narrative poem, Faust quickly became the most popular opera in the world. It was inevitable that Sarasate, who launched his international career in 1860, would compose and perform a Fantasy on Faust. He preceded it with fantasies on Verdis Forza del Destino, and Gounods Romeo and Juliet, then followed with fantasies on Webers Freischtz and Flotows Martha, among many others. Meanwhile he was drawing on his heritage to write pieces full of Spanish melodies, harmonies, and rhythms. This influenced a generation of French composers to write works with a Spanish flavor. Eduard Lalos Symphonie

Espagnole for violin and orchestra was dedicated to Sarasate. Georges Bizets opera Carmen, strongly influenced by Sarasate, was soon adapted by him for his Carmen Fantasy. By our own times, Carmen has overtaken Faust as the worlds most popular opera, and the Carmen Fantasy has become Sarasates most popular work. Yi-Jia Susanne Hou has recorded the work. It shares a disc entitled Fire and Ice (a title later used by some other violinist) with Sarasates Zigeunerweisen and the Violin Concerto of Jean Sibelius. Franz Schubert, arr. August Wilhelmj (1845-1908) Ave Maria, D. 839 Schubert wrote this, as he wrote most of his songs, for voice and piano. It has been arranged and rearranged for all sorts of combinations, none more effective than this by August Wilhelmj, a German virtuoso violinist. In Schuberts original, the text is not from the prayer so familiar to the Catholic faithful; it is a translation into German of Ellens Third Song, from Sir Walter Scotts narrative poem, The Lady of the Lake. Schuberts setting has two verses. The violin does not speak in words, but it can sing with more than one voice. By setting the two verses differently, Wilhelmj makes this a brief but effective fantasy on a song of Schubert. As indicated above, Wilhelmj was an exact contemporary of Sarasate, and like him a celebrated performer. He retired early from the concert stage and settled in London, continuing his activities as composer, arranger, and above all, teacher. Notes by: Robert McColley.

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