



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**GORDON GETTY
PIANO PIECES
PERFORMED BY CONRAD TAO
NEW CD RELEASED BY PENTATONE CLASSICS**



A new CD, Gordon Getty's Piano Pieces, performed by Conrad Tao, has just been released on the PentaTone Classics label (PTC 5186 505).

These seven works span the breadth of the composer's career thus far. The five pieces of the *Homework Suite* date from Gordon Getty's time at San Francisco Conservatory of Music (1962); *Andantino* and *Scherzo Pensieroso* were written last year (2012).

Mr. Getty states, "Orchestral versions of most of these works have been performed and recorded, but these piano originals may never have been heard by the public. I'm not a good enough pianist to have been sure of them, and crossed my fingers when PentaTone proposed to record them. Not to worry when Conrad Tao is the pianist. Everything came out as I had imagined it."

Prodigiously gifted young pianist/composer Conrad Tao was named a Gilmore Young Artist and awarded an Avery Fisher Career Grant, both before the age of 20. In a concert review, *All Things Strings* declared, “he plays music as if the composer were at his side, with color, joy, and spontaneous poetry.”

Contents of the CD
PentaTone Classics (PTC 5186 505)

GORDON GETTY (1933)
PIANO PIECES
Conrad Tao, piano

Homework Suite

1. Seascape
2. Giga
3. Ghost Waltz
4. Berceuse
5. Night Horses

Ancestor Suite

6. Zwei Walzer
7. Waltz of the Ancestors
8. Schottische
9. Waltz-Ländler
10. Polka Polonaise
11. Gavotte
12. Gothic Waltz
13. March-Sarabande-Presto
14. Madeline
15. Ewig Du
16. Finale

Three Traditional Pieces

17. The Fiddler of Ballykeel
18. Tiefer und Tiefer
19. Ehemals

20. First Adventure

21. Raise the Colors

22. Andantino

23. Scherzo Pensieroso

Total playing time = 53:12

GORDON GETTY – PIANO PIECES is available for purchase online at
www.pentatonemusic.com, www.amazon.com and www.arkivmusic.com, and on iTunes

About Gordon Getty

The music of the American composer Gordon Getty has been widely performed in North America and Europe in such prestigious venues as New York's Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center, London's Royal Festival Hall, Vienna's Brahmsaal, and Moscow's Tchaikovsky Hall and Bolshoi Theatre, as well as at the Aspen, Spoleto, and Bad Kissingen Festivals. In 1986, he was honored as an Outstanding American Composer at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and he was awarded the 2003 Gold Baton of the American Symphony Orchestra League.

Getty has recently devoted considerable attention to a pair of one-act operas, *Usher House* (derived from Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher*) and *The Canterville Ghost* (after Oscar Wilde's tale). The former will be premiered in 2014 by the Welsh National Opera. Getty's first opera, *Plump Jack*, involving adventures of Shakespeare's Sir John Falstaff, was premiered by the San Francisco Symphony in 1984 and has been revived by the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic, and London Philharmonia, among other ensembles. In 2011 the Munich Radio Orchestra and an international cast conducted by Ulf Schirmer performed a new concert version of *Plump Jack*, which was simulcast on Bavarian Radio and released by PentaTone Classics. The same label is preparing the release of *Usher House*, with Lawrence Foster conducting the Gulbenkian Orchestra Lisbon.

Getty, who studied at the San Francisco Conservatory, has produced a steady stream of compositions since the 1980s, beginning with *The White Election* (1981), a much-performed song cycle on poems by Emily Dickinson. It has been recorded twice—by Kaaren Erickson for Delos and by Lisa Delan for PentaTone—and has been performed in Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall and the Morgan Library (in New York), the Kennedy Center and National Gallery of Art (in Washington, D.C.), and the Hermitage Theatre (in St. Petersburg, Russia), among many other venues. His three-song cycle *Poor Peter* (2005) was included by Lisa Delan and pianist Kristin Pankonin on their PentaTone recital *And If the Song Be Worth a Smile*, which features songs by six contemporary American composers.

Poetry from the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries has often inspired Getty in his vocal compositions. His choral works *Victorian Scenes* (1989, to texts by Tennyson and Housman) and *Annabel Lee* (1990, to a poem by Poe) were premiered by the Los Angeles Master Chorale and Sinfonia at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. Michael Tilson Thomas led the San Francisco Symphony and Chorus in *Annabel Lee* in 1998 and 2004, on the latter occasion also premiering Getty's *Young America* (2001), a cycle of six movements for chorus and orchestra to texts by the composer and by Stephen Vincent Benét. *Joan and the Bells*, a cantata portraying the trial and execution of Joan of Arc, has been performed widely since its 1998 premiere, notably in a 2004 revival in St. George's Chapel of Windsor Castle, under the baton of Mikhail Pletnev. In 2005, PentaTone released a CD of Getty's principal choral works up to that time, performed by the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra and Chorus (Michael Tilson Thomas conducting) and the Eric Ericson Chamber Choir and Russian National Orchestra (conducted by Alexander Verdernikov). Getty has recently completed choral works based on Keats' *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*, Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Match Girl*, and an original poem that he modeled on Masefield, *The Old Man in the Night*. He has written a new setting of the traditional text *Hodie Christus Natus Est* for children's chorus or women's chorus accompanied by chamber ensemble, and is currently expanding that into a triptych of similarly scored Christmas pieces.

Although most of Getty's works feature the voice, he has also written for orchestra, chamber ensembles, and solo piano. In 2010, PentaTone released a CD devoted to six of his orchestral pieces, with Sir Neville Marriner conducting the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, and in 2013 it followed up with a CD of the composer's solo-piano works played by Conrad Tao. Currently in preparation is a PentaTone CD of his chamber music, which will include a string-quartet version of his Four

Traditional Pieces, a work that was performed in a string-orchestra arrangement by Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg and the New Century Chamber Orchestra in 2012. Other recent performances of particular note featured his ballet *Ancestor Suite*, which in 2009 was given its premiere staging, with choreography by Vladimir Vasiliev, by the Bolshoi Ballet and Russian National Orchestra at the Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow, and was then presented at the 2012 Festival del Sole in Napa, California.

Of his compositions Getty has said: “My style is undoubtedly tonal, though with hints of atonality, such as any composer would likely use to suggest a degree of disorientation. But I’m strictly tonal in my approach. I represent a viewpoint that stands somewhat apart from the twentieth century, which was in large measure a repudiation of the nineteenth and a sock in the nose to sentimentality. Whatever it was that the great Victorian composers and poets were trying to achieve, that’s what I’m trying to achieve.”

Getty’s music is published by Rork Music.

www.gordongetty.com

About Conrad Tao

The only classical musician on Forbes’ 2011 “30 Under 30” list of people changing the world, 18-year-old Chinese-American pianist Conrad Tao was found playing children’s songs on the piano at 18 months of age. Born in Urbana, Illinois, he gave his first piano recital at age 4; four years later, he made his concerto debut performing Mozart’s Piano Concerto in A Major, K. 414. In June of 2011, the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars and the Department of Education named Conrad a Presidential Scholar in the Arts, while the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts awarded him a YoungArts gold medal in music. Later that year, Conrad was named a Gilmore Young Artist, an honor awarded every two years highlighting the most promising American pianists of the new generation. In May of 2012, he was awarded the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant.

In January of 2012, Conrad’s performance of Saint-Saëns’ Piano Concerto No. 2 with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra was hailed by the *Detroit News* as “a blazing debut...a performance no less seductive in its lyrical beauty than hair-raising in its technical brilliance.” Following a recital at Carnegie’s Weill Hall in February of 2012, the *New York Times* wrote of the “lovely colors and poetic nuances” of his Liszt, and the eloquence and “fiery panache” of his Prokofiev. Later that year, in June, a writer for *All Things Strings* attended Conrad’s performance at the Montréal Chamber Music Festival and noted that “Tao is ready for his own TV show: he plays music as if the composer were at his side, with color, joy, and spontaneous poetry. He composes, studies, researches, writes...like that whiz kid on the West Coast, Conrad Tao should be licensed to operate by the time he’s 21.”

Sporting a truly international career, Conrad has appeared as soloist in the United States with the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Russian National Orchestra, and the Baltimore, Dallas, Detroit, and San Francisco Symphonies, among others. He has made multiple tours of Europe, giving solo recitals in Paris, London, Munich, Berlin, and Verbier, and performed with orchestras in Brazil, China, Hong Kong, Mexico, Moscow, and Singapore. Highlights of his 2012-2013 season include two more tours of Europe, including a concerto debut at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam and a third re-engagement at the Louvre in Paris, appearances at the Mostly Mozart and Aspen Music Festivals, debuts with the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Canada and a return to Asia with the Hong Kong Philharmonic, and performances of all five Beethoven piano concertos in the United States.

As an accomplished composer, Conrad has won eight consecutive ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards since 2004; he also received BMI’s Carlos Surinach prize in 2005. For the 2012-2013 season, Conrad has been commissioned by the Hong Kong Philharmonic to write a concert

overture ringing in their new season – frequent colleague Jaap von Zweden’s inaugural season there as music director – as well as celebrating the region’s annual China Day. He was also asked by the Dallas Symphony to compose a work observing the 50th anniversary of President John F. Kennedy’s assassination, which will be performed in November of 2013.

As an award-winning violinist, Conrad has performed with orchestras in Pennsylvania and Florida; in 2009, he gave nine performances of Mendelssohn’s Violin Concerto in E minor (followed by Mendelssohn’s Piano Concerto No. 1 in G minor in the second half) with the Symphony of the Americas in Boca Raton. Conrad’s violin prowess was featured on Jackie Evancho’s *Dream With Me* PBS special, on which Conrad also traded spots with David Foster behind the piano.

His first album, released by EMI Classics as an iTunes exclusive in February of 2012 as part of the “Juilliard Sessions” series, comprised works by Debussy, Stravinsky, and Conrad himself. His next record will also prominently feature Conrad’s own compositions, and is expected for release in 2013.

Conrad currently attends the Columbia University/Juilliard School joint degree program and studies piano with Professors Yoheved Kaplinsky and Choong Mo Kang at Juilliard. He studies composition with Professor Christopher Theofanidis of Yale University, and studied violin with Ms. Catherine Cho for five years at Juilliard’s Pre-College Division.

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