

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW PENTATONE CLASSICS CD:  
*THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL*  
CHORAL WORKS BY GORDON GETTY



A new recording of choral music by composer Gordon Getty, *The Little Match Girl*, has just been released on the PentaTone Classics label (PTC 5186 480). Four of Getty's choral works are performed by the Münchner Rundfunkorchester (Munich Radio Orchestra) and Chor des Bayerischen Rundfunks (Bavarian Radio Choir), with soloists Nikolai Schukoff, Melody Moore and Lester Lynch. The world premiere recordings of *The Little Match Girl*, after the story by Hans Christian Andersen, and *A Prayer for My Daughter*, based on the Yeats poem, are coupled with *Poor Peter*, with text by the composer (a premiere recording of this arrangement), and *Joan and the Bells*, Getty's cantata for soprano, baritone, chorus and orchestra.

**Contents of the CD**

PentaTone Classics (PTC 5186 480)

***THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL***  
**COMPOSER GORDON GETTY (b. 1933)**

**Nikolai Schukoff, tenor**  
**Melody Moore, soprano**  
**Lester Lynch, baritone**  
**Chor des Bayerischen Rundfunks**  
 Chorus Masters: Jörn Hinnerk Andresen (tracks 1-5) and Robert Blank (6-8)  
**Münchener Rundfunkorchester**  
 Conducted by Asher Fisch (1-5) and Ulf Schirmer (6-8)

***A PRAYER FOR MY DAUGHTER\* (TRACK 1)***  
 For Chorus and Orchestra  
 Text by William Butler Yeats

***POOR PETER\* (TRACKS 2-4)***  
 For Tenor, Chorus and Orchestra  
 Text by Gordon Getty

***THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL\* (TRACK 5)***  
 For Chorus and Orchestra  
 Text by Hans Christian Andersen (English translation by H. B. Paull)  
 From the short story *The Little Match Girl*

***JOAN AND THE BELLS (TRACKS 6-8)***  
 Cantata for Soprano, Baritone, Chorus and Orchestra  
 Text by Gordon Getty

**Total playing time = 66:59**

**\* World Premiere Recording**

### **About Gordon Getty (Composer)**

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 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 the Oscar Wilde tale). The former was premiered in June, 2014 by the Welsh National Opera, the latter was premiered by the Leipzig Opera in May, 2015, with additional performances in June. (A recording of the *Canterville Ghost* will be available on PentaTone Classics in 2016) 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 on CD by PentaTone Classics.

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).

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 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 Gordon 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](http://www.gordongetty.com)

### **About Nikolai Schukoff (Tenor)**

The tenor Nikolai Schukoff was born in Graz, Austria. His repertoire is varied, ranging from Danilo in Lehár’s *Die lustige Witwe* and Pollione in Bellini’s *Norma* to Dionysus in Henze’s *Die Bassariden*. Other roles include Max in Weber’s *Der Freischütz*, which he performed in Geneva and Salzburg, and Don José in Bizet’s *Carmen*, which he sang in Baden-Baden, Zurich and, most recently, Hamburg.

Nikolai Schukoff was especially successful in the title role of Wagner’s *Parsifal*, which he performed in Munich and Dresden, among others cities. Subsequently, he was invited to sing this role in 2013 at the Easter Festival in Salzburg under the baton of Sir Simon Rattle.

As a concert singer, Nikolai Schukoff has sung with many major orchestras, including the Munich Philharmonic, the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, and the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Nikolai

Schukoff has often performed with conductor/pianist Christoph Eschenbach, with whom he also gives joint Lieder recitals.

### **About Melody Moore (Soprano)**

When Melody Moore made her debut in London at the English National Opera during the 2008-2009 season as Mimi in Puccini's *La bohème*, she was widely acclaimed for her magnificent voice. She was subsequently invited to sing the role of Marguerite in Gounod's *Faust*.

As a graduate of the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and a 2007 San Francisco Opera Adler Fellow, the young soprano had made her first career moves in her native America. Major performances in the US have included the Countess in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* in Los Angeles, the title role in Puccini's *Suor Angelica* at the Orlando Opera, and Donna Anna in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* with the Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra. At the New York City Opera, she sang in a contemporary opera, *Séance on a Wet Afternoon*, by Stephen Schwartz.

Melody Moore has collaborated with renowned conductors such as Kent Nagano and Donald Runnicles.

### **About Lester Lynch (Baritone)**

One of the most important American operas, Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, holds an important position in Lester Lynch's biography. The baritone, who was born in Ohio and studied at New York's Juilliard School of Music, has performed in this opera in Washington, Chicago, and San Francisco; and he has also toured Europe with *Porgy and Bess* (with the Houston Grand Opera), alternately singing the roles of Porgy and Crown.

Lester Lynch has also made a name for himself singing Verdi. Past roles have included the Count di Luna in *Il trovatore* at the Deutsche Oper am Rhein and the Minnesota Opera, and Germont in *La traviata* at the Cleveland Opera and Houston. At the Bregenz Festival 2011, he sang in Umberto Giordano's *Andrea Chénier* under conductor Ulf Schirmer. Lester Lynch has demonstrated his enormous stylistic range in the concert field in works such as Handel's *Messiah*, Fauré's *Requiem*, and Vaughan Williams' *Sea Symphony*.

### **About Münchner Rundfunkorchester**

Founded in 1952, the Münchner Rundfunkorchester (Munich Radio Orchestra) has developed over the course of its 60-year history into an ensemble that covers a vast artistic spectrum. Because of this great versatility, it has established a prominent position on Munich's orchestral landscape.

The chief conductors of the Münchner Rundfunkorchester have included Werner Schmidt-Boelcke (1952-1967), Kurt Eichhorn (1967-1975), Heinz Wallberg (1975-1981), Lamberto Gardelli (1982-1985), Giuseppe Patané (1988-1989) and Roberto Abbado (1992-1998). From 1998 to 2004, Marcello Viotti was the chief conductor of the orchestra.

Since September, 2006, Ulf Schirmer has served as artistic director of the Münchner Rundfunkorchester. With programs that have included such highlights as the world premieres of commissioned works at the "Paradisi gloria" series as well as rediscoveries in the fields of opera and operetta, he has introduced intriguing new repertoire.

Supplementing its activities at its home base of Munich, the Münchner Rundfunkorchester also makes regular guest appearances at concerts and well-known festivals like the Kissingen Summer and the Richard Strauss Festival in Garmisch-Partenkirchen. At the Salzburg Festival, the orchestra appeared in a series of operas in concert performances starring such acclaimed artists as Anna Netrebko, Plácido Domingo, Elina Garanča and Juan Diego Flórez.

### **About Chor des Bayerischen Rundfunks**

The Chor des Bayerischen Rundfunks (Bavarian Radio Choir) was founded in 1946. Its artistic development took place parallel to that of the Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks (Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra). Since 2003, Mariss Jansons has been chief conductor of both the choir and the orchestra. In 2005, Peter Dijkstra was appointed artistic director and has since presented a variety of programs in collaboration with both orchestras of the Bavarian Radio in the subscription series given by the choir. The main focus has been on contemporary vocal music, as well as the collaboration with early-music specialist orchestras, such as the Concerto Köln (Concerto Cologne) and the Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin (Academy for Ancient Music Berlin).

Thanks to its exceptional degree of homogeneity and stylistic range – which embraces all fields of choral singing, from medieval motets to contemporary works, and from oratorio to opera – the ensemble enjoys an exceptional reputation world-wide.

The choir has given guest performances in Japan, as well as at festivals in Bonn, Bremen, Luzern and Salzburg. Top European orchestras, such as the Berlin Philharmonic, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Amsterdam, the Staatskapelle Dresden from Saxony, and the Bamberg Symphonic-Bavarian State Philharmonic all enjoy working with the Chor des Bayerischen Rundfunks. In recent years, the choir has performed with renowned conductors such as Claudio Abbado, Andris Nelsons, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Ulf Schirmer, Herbert Blomstedt, Bernard Haitink, Riccardo Muti, and Christian Thielemann. The Chor des Bayerischen Rundfunks also sets new interpretive standards with contemporary music at the *musica viva* concerts as well as in the “Paradisi gloria” series with the Münchner Rundfunkorchester.

#### **About Asher Fisch (Conductor)**

Asher Fisch began his conducting career as Daniel Barenboim’s assistant and Kappellmeister at the Berlin Staatsoper. Since making his United States debut with the Los Angeles Opera in 1995, he has conducted the Metropolitan Opera (*Rigoletto*, *Parsifal*), Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, and San Francisco Opera. Now a regular guest at leading European opera houses, Fisch has conducted at all the major German and Austrian opera houses including Berlin, Munich, Dresden, Leipzig, and Vienna; Milan’s Teatro alla Scala; Paris Opera; the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

Among North American symphony orchestras, Fisch has conducted those of Boston, Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Dallas, Seattle, Atlanta, Cincinnati, Houston, St. Louis, Toronto, Montreal, Minnesota and the National Symphony in Washington, D.C. In Europe he appears regularly at the Munich Philharmonic and Staatskapelle Dresden, and has also conducted the Berlin Philharmonic, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Gewandhaus Orchestra, and Orchestre National de France, among others.

#### **About Ulf Schirmer (Conductor)**

Since 2006, Ulf Schirmer has been the Artistic Director of the Münchner Rundfunkorchester, with which he presents a varied program, ranging from operetta, opera and film music to the sacred music of 20th and 21st centuries in the series, “Paradisi gloria.” He often presents rarely performed or unjustly neglected works such as Richard Wagner’s opera *Das Liebesverbot* and Albert Lortzing’s opera *Regina*.

Ulf Schirmer was born in Eschenhausen (near Bremen, Germany). He received his musical training from György Ligeti, Christoph von Dohnányi, and Horst Stein. He was assistant to Lorin Maazel (chief conductor of the Vienna State Opera); Music Director in Wiesbaden; and house conductor of the Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra.

He is a regular guest at the Deutsche Oper Berlin and the Vienna State Opera, as well as at the Bregenz Festival where he presented Umberto Giordano’s *Andrea Chénier* in summer 2011. At the New National Theatre in Tokyo he conducted *Arabella* by Richard Strauss.

In 2000, Ulf Schirmer was appointed a professor at the Hamburg Academy of Music. In 2009, he was appointed Music Director of the Leipzig Opera, and shortly afterwards Artistic Director. In Leipzig, Ulf Schirmer has conducted performances of Puccini's *La bohème*, Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel*, and Wagner's *Lobengrin*, among other works.

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**THE FOLLOWING IS NOT FOR PUBLICATION:**

For additional information, pronunciation guides, interview access, CDs and photos, please contact Nancy Shear Arts Services, National Press Representative, at 212/496-9418 or [sheararts@nancyshear.com](mailto:sheararts@nancyshear.com).