

C D S P O T L I G H T

Blown Away

Marina Piccinini
plays Paganini -
recommended by
HOWARD SMITH



'... hypnotic interpretative gifts ...'

I was 'blown away' at hearing phenomenally gifted Italian/Brazilian flautist Marina Piccinini in Niccolò Paganini's breath-defying Twenty-Four Caprices, arranged here for flute by Piccinini herself.

The forty-six-year-old musician is clearly a 'Mullova of the winds', blessed with hypnotic interpretative gifts and with flawless, unexcelled technical skills.

I doubt if we'll encounter a greater gift of recorded, instrumental artistry in 2014.

Piccinini recalls: 'I was drawn to transcribe and record all the Caprices as a challenge and stimulus for my own development, a path towards pushing the envelope outside my personal comfort zone.'

Listen for her sensitive conclusion to Caprice No 1, the Arpeggio in E major.

Listen -- Paganini: Caprice No 1 in E, *Andante*
(CD1 track 1, 2:03-2:53) © 2014 Marina Piccinini :

Equally at the changes of tempo throughout the Caprice No 4 in C minor, she displays instances of outstanding feeling.

Listen -- Paganini: Caprice No 4 in C minor, *Maestoso*
(CD1 track 4, 0:26-1:43) © 2014 Marina Piccinini :

Her astonishing pursuit in Caprice No 5 takes one's breath away; flute skills of such an order seem barely possible.

Listen -- Paganini: Caprice No 5 in A minor, *Agitato*
(CD1 track 5, 2:05-3:01) © 2014 Marina Piccinini :

As the second disc begins Caprice No 13 has tantalizing grace notes, staccato and dizzying intervals.

Listen -- Paganini: Caprice No 13 in B flat, *Allegro*
(CD2 track 1, 0:05-0:54) © 2014 Marina Piccinini :

Furthermore, with No 17 and No 21 the fluid *Sostenuto* and *Amoroso* bring benign essays in mellifluous calm; like peaceful islands in choppy seas.

Listen -- Paganini: Caprice No 21 in A, *Amoroso*
(CD2 track 9, 0:01-0:51) © 2014 Marina Piccinini :

Contrasting technique is a dazzling part and parcel of the works as a whole with Piccinini the boss from start to finish.

The 24th Caprice, a launching pad for numerous composers, is so demonstrative in this version I find a choice between the violin original and the flute *à la* Piccinini almost impossible.

Listen -- Paganini: Caprice No 24 in A minor, *Quasi presto*
(CD2 track 12, 1:32-2:47) © 2014 Marina Piccinini :

No wonder she has appeared as soloist with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the London Philharmonic, the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra, Montreal Symphony Orchestra, Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra and the Hanover Symphony Orchestra.

Conductors working alongside her; Alan Gilbert, Seiji Ozawa, Kurt Masur, Pierre Boulez, Leonard Slatkin, Stanislaw Skrowaczewski, Peter Oundjian, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Myung-whun Chung, and Gianandrea Noseda.

Notable performances have taken her to New York's Town Hall, London's Southbank and Wigmore Hall, the Carnegie Weill and Zankell Halls, Kennedy Centre, Mozart Saal in Vienna's Konzerthaus, Casals Hall and Suntory Hall in Tokyo and at the Saito Kinen, Spoleto, Moritzburg and Augsburg Festivals.

In September 2001, Piccinini joined the faculty of Peabody Institute as a teacher of flute. She is married to Swiss pianist Andreas Haefliger; a duo accompanist as far back as 1992.

A solo musical experience to treasure.

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PAGANINI / PICCININI: 24 CAPRICES

NICCOLO PAGANINI

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