

ARSIS

Daniel Pinkham

piano music, vol. II



Sally Pinkas & Evan Hirsch
pianists



DANIEL PINKHAM

June 5, 1923 — December 18, 2006

A collaboration with Daniel Pinkham often meant an unexpected call or e-mail, to the effect that he was “putting in the mail” a piece for one of us, or both, to look over and comment upon. Inevitably there ensued the process of sight-reading, learning, revising and correcting together, culminating in a first performance: yet another convivial occasion to celebrate (accompanied by feasting somewhere, naturally). The professional association became a friendship of the best sort; one which combined our passion for music with our personal admiration and love.

Daniel Pinkham’s works are presented here as premiere recordings. Dan knew we were about to record, and even saw a copy of the cover, before his death. We were told of his passing when we were already in New Hampshire, preparing for the session. The profound sadness we felt was tempered by the knowledge that we had indeed been blessed by his music and his presence in our lives. His honesty, humor and generosity of spirit live on in his compositions.

—Sally Pinkas and Evan Hirsch

DANIEL PINKHAM: PIANO MUSIC, Vol. II
Sally Pinkas and Evan Hirsch, Pianists

PRELUDES FOR PIANO, BOOK II (2003)

1	I. Allegro moderato	0:48	7	VII. Maestoso	1:52
2	II. Allegretto	1:08	8	VIII. Andante cantabile	1:57
3	III. Tempo di forlana	1:38	9	IX. Allegro grazioso	1:23
4	IV. Andante sereno	1:18	10	X. Andantino con dolcezza	1:27
5	V. Presto possibile	0:44	11	XI. Impetuoso	1:22
6	VI. Andante tranquillo	2:14	12	XII. Vivace e scorrevole	1:11

Sally Pinkas, piano

ROMANCES (2004)

13	I. Andantino con dolcezza	2:29	16	IV. Allegro	1:44
14	II. Allegretto e delicato	1:37	17	V. Presto	2:54
15	III. Ballando	1:46	18	VI. Vivace con brio	1:56

Sally Pinkas, piano

FOREST MUSIC, Second Duet Book for Young Pianists (2002)

19	1. We enter the deep and silent forest	1:16
20	2. We stop abruptly at each unfamiliar sound	1:18
21	3. We cross a gently flowing brook	1:19
22	4. As we walk along, birds, ignoring our presence, chirp in the treetops	1:11
23	5. We come upon a cold and dank cave	2:14
24	6. On the way home, dancing light plays on our path	1:32

Hirsch–Pinkas Piano Duo

25	SNOWFLAKES (2005)	2:48
26	BARCAROLE (2005)	4:21
27	BLUE BLAZES (2004)	4:02

Evan Hirsch, piano

MUSINGS (2006)

28	I. Allegretto	1:48	31	IV. Ballando	1:29
29	II. Adagietto	3:26	32	V. Dolce e delicato	2:05
30	III. Poco allegro	1:16	33	VI. Vivace e sciolto	1:24

Sally Pinkas, piano

OCTOBER MUSIC, Third Duet Book for Young Pianists (2006)

34	1. The maple tree shimmers in scarlet and gold.	1:00
35	2. The birds contemplate their long flight south.	3:40
36	3. The field promises a bountiful harvest.	2:32
37	4. A gust chases a dry leaf on the porch.	1:31

Hirsch–Pinkas Piano Duo

Total CD Time: 69:38

Recorded December 19th and 20th, 2006, at Spaulding Auditorium, Hopkins Center, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH, on a Hamburg Steinway D

Recording Engineer: Antonio Oliart Ros

Producer and Editor: Evan Hirsch

Cover Art: Adriaan Jobse

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PROGRAM NOTES

The music on this disc is the result of a close collaboration between the two performing artists and the composer. With the exception of two titles (*Forest Music* and *Blue Blazes*), all the other works were composed for and premiered by them.

PRELUDES FOR PIANO, BOOK II (2003)

In 1995 I received a substantial commission from the Board of Trustees of the Longy School of Music in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to honor Victor Rosenbaum on his tenth year as Director of the school. For this I produced *Six Preludes for Piano*, which Sally Pinkas premiered on September 8 of that year. I subsequently composed six additional preludes and dedicated them to Sally, who performed the world premiere of the now dozen pieces on January 30, 1997 at the Hopkins Center, Dartmouth College. She later recorded them for the Arsis label.

The present set, *Book II*, is similar to *Book I* in that the pieces range from extremely simple to virtuosic. Sally Pinkas premiered this set on May 25, 2004 at the Hopkins Center.

ROMANCES (2004)

The *Harvard Dictionary of Music* informs us that in the 18th and 19th centuries the *Romance* (German *Romanze*) was an instrumental work, often of lyrical character and often ABA in form. In the 18th century the term was often interchangeable with *Ballade*.

Robert Schumann and others used this title for piano pieces in a variety of forms. Later composers would propose that the *Romance* was a sort of program music which contained a hidden narrative.

I. The opening *Andantino con dolcezza* is a hesitant yet expressive song. The central section grows in intensity. The concluding measures end tranquilly.

II. The *Allegretto e delicato* is a plaintive melody played in the extreme high register of the piano. The left-hand accompaniment is spare but supportive.

III. *Ballando* translates “dancing.” Do we not hear a distant tango?

IV. This *Allegro* is essentially a cheerful Bach-like invention for two voices.

V. This movement, *Presto*, alternates between fast and sinister material and a confident yet serene chorale.

VI. The finale, *Vivace con brio*, is turbulent and virtuosic. Early on it builds to triple-forte chords. A fleeting waltz enters and then disappears. The opening material returns and the work ends brilliantly.

FOREST MUSIC, Second Duet Book for Young Pianists (2002)

1. *We enter the deep and silent forest*
2. *We stop abruptly at each unfamiliar sound*
3. *We cross a gently flowing brook*
4. *As we walk along, birds, ignoring our presence,
chirp in the treetops*
5. *We come upon a cold and dank cave*
6. *On the way home, dancing light plays on our path*

The work is inscribed to A. Ramón Rivera, who has done such marvelous work with the students in the Preparatory Department of the New England Conservatory. The premiere was presented at the Conservatory on January 25, 2003 by pianists Ko Eun Lee and Lisa Rah.

SNOWFLAKES (2005)

I composed this brief work for Evan Hirsch. Although the work is cold and static, it reminds us that all flawless hexagons may melt.

BARCAROLE (2005)

The *New Harvard Dictionary of Music* has this to say: “A song of the Venetian gondoliers, or a vocal or instrumental composition modeled on such a song. In the latter, a rhythmically repetitive accompaniment, usually in moderate 6/8 or 12/8 meter, evokes the motion of a boat in waves.” Earlier composers for the piano such as Mendelssohn, Chopin and Fauré have written barcaroles. This work is inscribed to Evan Hirsch.

BLUE BLAZES (2004)

This work was commissioned by Bank of America Celebrity Series for Sergey Schepkin, who premiered it in Jordan Hall (Boston) on April 16, 2005. Writing about it, Richard Dyer commented, “Pinkham’s *Blue Blazes* is a light passing through a cobalt blue bottle that contains a message.”

I have never before written a work which requires such virtuosity.

MUSINGS (2006)

I. *Allegretto*. The work begins in imitation of the chain of sequences such as an extrovert Corelli might have written in a cheerful Trio Sonata.

II. *Adagietto*. Highly chromatic, its shifting harmonic centers produce an unsettling atmosphere.

III. *Poco allegro*. This gentle movement is a lively and genial pastorale.

IV. *Ballando*. *Ballando* means dancing. Do you not hear the haughtiness of the proud tango dancer?

V. *Dolce e delicato*. A solitary shepherd pipes his exotic melody from a high mountain pasture. From the deep valley below comes a lyrical response.

VI. *Vivace e sciolto*. A rhythmic and nimble three-note motive opens this finale over a “walking bass.” A slower contrasting material enters. The opening motive is rejoined and the movement ends in a fiery display.

OCTOBER MUSIC, Third Duet Book for Young Pianists (2006)

1. *The maple tree shimmers in scarlet and gold*

2. *The birds contemplate their long flight south*

3. *The field promises a bountiful harvest*

4. *A gust chases a dry leaf on the porch*

The work is inscribed to the Hirsch-Pinkas Piano Duo, and was premiered by them on August 4, 2006 at the Abbazia di Santa Lucia, Abruzzo, Italy.

—Notes by Daniel Pinkham, November 2006

Since its 1992 debut, the **HIRSCH-PINKAS PIANO DUO** has presented one- and two-piano recitals to enthusiastic audiences throughout the world. Sally Pinkas and Evan Hirsch, each an active soloist, bring to their collaborations virtuosity, enthusiasm, and striking warmth (they are married). Dedicated to an exploration of twentieth-century music, their repertoire includes rarely-heard works such as Messiaen’s *Visions de l’amen*, Milhaud’s *La création du monde* and Rochberg’s *Circles of Fire* (which they premiered). Equally at ease with the standard repertoire, the Duo’s offerings range from Byrd to Mozart and Rachmaninoff, and include works especially arranged by Hirsch. Popular with young audiences, the two often present Masterclasses and Performance Workshops in conjunction with their concerts.

Pinkas and Hirsch made their European debut in 1995 at the Officina Musicale dell’Altopiano in Abruzzo, Italy, where they have been performing regularly ever since. In 1998 they were in residence at the Kfar Blum Music Festival in Israel, and in 1999 they toured Nigeria and Russia to critical acclaim. In 2001, following a second highly-acclaimed and extensive tour of Nigeria, the Duo was invited to participate in a conference on Piano Duet Literature at the Rimsky-Korsakov State-Conservatory of Music in St. Petersburg, Russia. The Duo celebrated its 10th anniversary season with performances throughout New England, Israel and Italy, and followed with an extensive concert and teaching tour in Bulgaria. In 2004 they embarked upon their first China visit, playing and teaching at the Xian Conservatory (Xian) and the China Conservatory (Beijing). For the past four years they have participated in the Masters de Pontlevoy Summer Festival in the Loire Valley, France. Other recent engagements include a residency at the Conservatorio di Musica Santa Cecilia in Rome, Italy, and a second extensive tour in Bulgaria. The Hirsch-Pinkas Duo’s recordings of music by George Rochberg, Daniel Pinkham and Thomas Oboe Lee are available on the Gasparo and the Arsis labels.

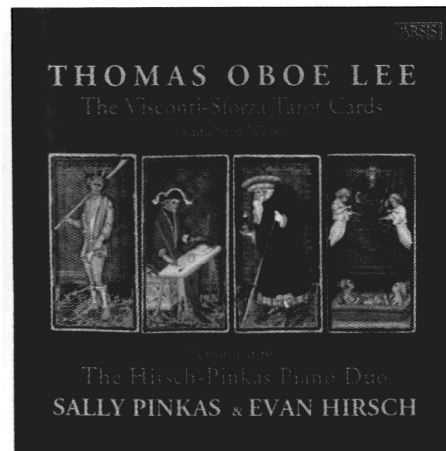
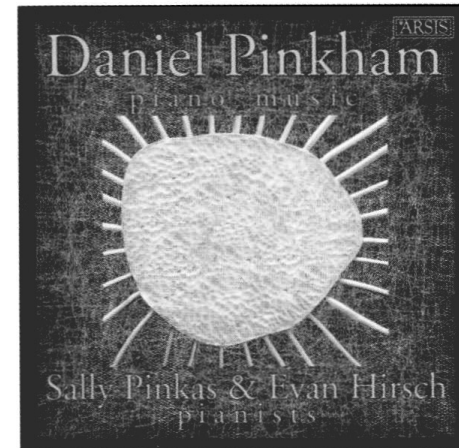
DANIEL PINKHAM (1923–2006) was born in Lynn, Massachusetts. He was educated at Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts; at Harvard University as a student of A. Tillman Merritt, Walter Piston, Archibald T. Davison and Aaron Copland; and at Tanglewood as a student of Arthur Honegger, Samuel Barber, and Nadia Boulanger. He also studied harpsichord with Putnam Aldrich and Wanda Landowska. Pinkham taught for a short time at Simmons College, Boston University, Dartington Hall (Devon, England) and at Harvard University before joining the faculty of the New England Conservatory of Music where he spent most of his teaching career. Pinkham was also Music Director of historic King's Chapel in Boston from 1958 until 2000. He was the recipient of six honorary degrees from Nebraska Wesleyan University, Adrian College, Westminster Choir College, New England Conservatory, Ithaca College, and Boston Conservatory. Pinkham was a prolific and versatile composer whose catalog includes four symphonies and other works for large ensembles; cantatas and oratorios; concertos for piano, piccolo, trumpet, violin, harp, three organ concertos, and other works for solo instrument and orchestra; theatre works and chamber operas; chamber music; electronic music; and twenty documentary film scores for television. His orchestral works have been played by major orchestras throughout the United States. In 1990 Pinkham was named Composer of the Year by the American Guild of Organists, and in 1996 he received the Alfred Nash Patterson Foundation Lifetime Achievement Award for contributions to the Choral Arts.

ARSIS CD 125

**Daniel Pinkham: Piano Music
(Volume I)**

Sally Pinkas and Evan Hirsch, pianists

Holland Waltzes for two pianos
Preludes (Book I) for piano solo
*Weather Reports: Duet Book for
Young Pianists*
Shards: Six Short Pieces for
piano solo
Quarries for piano four-hands



Thomas Oboe Lee

The Visconti-Sforza Tarot Cards
Opus 66

22 Salon Pieces for Two Pianos (1966)

The Hirsch-Pinkas Piano Duo
Sally Pinkas and Evan Hirsch, pianists

ARSIS CD 148

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