

The Not-So-Classical Chamber Ensemble was formed by Richard Amoroso in 1979 as an offshoot of a cello recital program which incorporated many exotic and colorful instruments in unique combinations. Originally named "Our Masters Voice", it was renamed in 1981 to more accurately represent the musical sphere of the group. The Ensemble concentrates primarily on light Romantic popular music, with particular emphasis on Spanish music. The group has performed on college campuses and in recitals in and around the Delaware Valley (Pennsylvania/New Jersey/ Delaware) area.

Richard Amoroso is the leader, chief arranger, and cellist for the group. He studied cello with Samuel Mayes and Lorne Monroe and is currently a member of the faculty of the Philadelphia College of the Performing Arts. He has performed throughout the United States as solo cellist with the Air Force Symphony, in addition to frequent appearances with the Concerto Soloists.

Other members of the ensemble represented on this recording include Ronald Amoroso, classical accordian, who attended the Philadelphia Musical Academy and won major national accordian competitions while still in his teens. Patrick Mercuri and Regecca Mercuri, mandolin and guitars, are both graduates of the Philadelphia College of Performing Arts. Mr. Mercuri has performed with many major theater orchestras in Philadelphia. Mrs. Mercuri is currently a faculty member at the Philadelphia College of the Performing Arts. Walter Pfeil, harp, was formerly principal harpist with the Minneapolis, Baltimore, and St. Louis Symphony, and is presently a member of the Delaware Symphony. Nick Mastripolito, piano, is music director of the Maywood Ballet and founder of the Maywood Ensemble, a concert group that performs regularly in the Delaware Valley area. Nick D'Amico, marimba, is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music and is currently on the teaching staff of the Philadelphia College of the Performing Arts. John Leitham, string bass, is a frequent performer in the Delaware Valley, specializing in jazz. Harvey Price, percussion, is a graduate of the Philadelphia College of the Performing Arts and a freelance percussionist.

This Direct-to-Tape recording was made using two Schoeps microphones and open reel recording equipment. No compression, equalization or limiting was used during its recording or editing. No splices or edits were made within any pieces.

Like all Direct-to-Tape recordings, we recorded using only two microphones with the goal of duplicating the sound of the music as you would hear it at the live performance.

Credits Producer and Engineer: Bob Sellman Recorded August and September, 1981 All

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Classical Expressions

The Not-So-Classical Chamber Ensemble

Richard Amoroso, leader



The pieces on this recording are performed on a wide variety of instruments. There is a piece for solo harp (Whirlwind), pieces for cello and harp; cello and accordian; two guitars; cello, harp, accordian and piano; through those including the entire ensemble of cello, harp, accordian, two guitars, piano, marimba, string bass, and percussion. Except as noted, the compositions were arranged or transcribed by Richard Amoroso to take advantage of the many instrumental colors available within the group.

It would be safe to say that the Sabre Dance written by Khachaturian for his Gayne Ballet is the single most popular piece of music to have come from the U.S.S.R. during the Twentieth Century. It consists of savage rhythms and a blazing ferocity designed to accompany swords and leaping enemies. It was composed in 1942 and won instant acclaim.

Nostalgia is a relatively unknown piece which was originally composed by Eloya Barroso for solo piano. It was later arranged by Laurindo Almeida for two guitars.

Whirlwind, one of five poetic preludes by Carlos Slazedo, takes advantage of the harp's wide dynamic range. It is a tempestuous finale for his five preludes.

Enrique Granados wrote a group of twelve Spanish Dances for solo piano. Orientale, which is "Spanish Dance #2", is performed here in an arrangement for classical accordian and cello. It combines melodic and rhythmic charm with tasteful elegance in its treatment of folk material.

Pablo de Sarasate was a violinist born in Pamplona in 1844. He was well known for his lively and exciting compositions written for violin. Zapateado was a favorite encore piece for violinists. It is presented here in an arrangement for cello, harp, accordian, and piano.

The Prelude in G by Rachmaninoff is a well known prelude for piano which has been

arranged here by Ron Amoroso for cello, harp and accordian.

Ravel originally composed the Piece in the Form of a Habanera as a wordless song for voice and piano. It later achieved popularity as a violin and piano transcription. It is transcribed here for cello and harp. The Bee, originally composed for violin and piano by Franz Schubert and later transcribed for cello and piano by Pablo Casals, is presented here on cello and accordian.

Prelude II is the second of Gershwin's three preludes for solo piano. The influence of the American Blues form is evident in this composition in terms of both its harmonic progressions and its melodic figures. In his transcription for cello and guitar, Pat Mercuri has raised the key from C sharp to D in order to take advantage of the natural resonances of the instruments.

Flight of the Bumble Bee is from Rimsky-Korsakoff's opera "Tsar Sultan", composed in 1899. It has enjoyed immense popularity as a virtuoso solo piece for almost every instrument. This piece is acknowledged by virtually every musician to be one of the most difficult pieces to play because of its unending chromatics.

Debussy originally wrote The Girl with Flaxen Hair as a prelude for solo piano. It has been arranged for many instruments and is here performed on cello and classical accordian.

Tico Tico, composed by Zequinha, is a popular classic which is written in a Latin American style. It is a lively exciting showpiece that highlights the various members of this group.

-Rich Amoroso & Bob Sellman

Classic Expressions

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| 1. | Sabre Dance (Aram Khachaturian) | 2:18 |
| 2. | Nostalgia (Eloysa Barroso. arr. Almeida) | 2:18 |
| 3. | Whielwind (Carlos Salzedo) | 2:58 |
| 4. | Oriente - Spanish Dance No. 2 (Enrique Granados) | 3:54 |
| 5. | Zapateado (Pablo de Saraste) | 3:34 |
| 6. | Prelude in G (Rachmaninoff, arr. Ron Amoroso) | 3:32 |
| 7. | Piece in the Form of a Habanera (Ravel) | 3:15 |
| 8. | The Bee (Franz Schubert) | 1:20 |
| 9. | Prelude II (Gershwin, arr. Pat Mercuri) | 4:23 |
| 10. | Flight of the Bumble Bee (Rimsky-Korsakov) | 1:19 |
| 11. | The Girl with Flaxen Hair (Debussy) | 2:48 |
| 12. | Tico Tico (Zequinha) | 1:38 |

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