

***Hungarian Rhapsody No. 13 (c. 1853)***

**Franz Liszt/Michael Zearott**

Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsodies* are paraphrases of urban folk music melodies which stand apart from the actual peasant folklore of the region. They have an elegance and charm of their own, and to quote Bela Bartok: "The *Rhapsodies*, especially the Hungarian ones, are perfect creations of their own kind. The material Liszt uses in them could not have been treated with more genius and beauty." Most of them contrast *lassu* (slow) with *friss* (fast), and No. 13 consists of a slow, defiant melancholic introduction, a capricious and lively *Allegretto*, and a virtuoso and stormy *Presto*. Originally written for piano solo, the present arrangement by the noted American conductor/composer Michael Zearott, was commissioned by the Verdehr Trio in 1982. The piano part is left largely intact, while the clarinet and violin—two instruments ideally suited to gypsy musical style of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—enhance and enrich these noble folk melodies.

Michael Zearott (b. 1937, San Francisco, California) is a conductor, composer, pianist, and music educator. He spent most of his early years in the Los Angeles area and was the first student to earn a Ph.D. in composition at the University of California, Los Angeles. His piano background includes work with Alexander Karnbach, Bernard Comsky, Gyorgy Sandor, Leo Smit, and Jakob Gimpel. Accompanying study was with Emanuel Bay and Gwendolyn Kodolfsky. Zearott has been a pianist for the Heifetz Master Class and toured the United States with the chorales of Roger Wagner and Robert Shaw.

Zearott is active as a composer with a large list of compositions in all media. He has transcribed several works for the Verdehr Trio. He has co-authored, with Annette Klover, a book on basic music theory called *MUSIC X 12*.

As a First Prize, Gold Medal winner of the Dmitri Mitropoulos International Conducting Competition, Zearott conducted the New York Philharmonic in Lincoln Center. He made his European debut on the special series *Les Concerts du Palais Princier* in Monaco on invitation of Prince Rainier. He has been Assistant Conductor of the Atlanta Symphony, Associate Conductor of *l'Orchestre National de Monte Carlo*, Music Director of the Ojai Festival and the Los Angeles Guild Opera. He frequently appears as a guest conductor for major orchestras in the United States and Europe.

Zearott has been a faculty member of the University of California, Los Angeles; California State University, Los Angeles and Long Beach; and Marymount College. He was Conductor-in-Residence and Visiting Professor at Michigan State University, and is currently on the faculty at Lewis-Clark State College.