

ROBERT HAMILTON BIOGRAPHY

Internationally respected pianist and recording artist Robert Hamilton has had the distinction of being enthusiastically reviewed by two former Chief Music Critics of the New York Times. Harold C. Schonberg (who also authored *The Great Pianists*) wrote: "He is a very fine artist. All of Hamilton's playing has color and sensitivity....one of the best of the million or so around." And his successor, Donal J. Henahan wrote: "It was an enthralling listening experience. A major talent."

Mr. Hamilton's performance beginnings were varied. Fluent as a high school student on three instruments - piano, clarinet and bassoon - he performed with orchestra five standard concerti representing his three solo areas. He studied at Indiana University with the first winner of the coveted Levintritt award, Sidney Foster, and graduated summa cum laude. A move to New York City brought studies with Dora Zaslavsky of the Manhattan School, additional coaching from legendary pianist Vladimir Horowitz, and a number of monetary awards from the Rockefeller Fund and U.S. State Department, launching a strong career here and abroad.

Hamilton has made countless concert tours of four continents, appearing in many leading music capitals. His orchestral engagements have included the Chicago Symphony, National Symphony, St. Louis Symphony, Milwaukee Symphony, Phoenix Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, Grant Park, Chautauqua and S.O.D.R.E. orchestras. An appearance at the great hall of the Moscow Conservatory brought a ten-minute standing ovation, and he made an appearance in St. Petersburg that was televised nationally in Russia. Mr. Hamilton has been heard over numerous radio networks including NPR, ABC, BBC London, Voice of America, Armed Forces Network, DRS Zurich and Radio Warsaw. He has recorded for Phillips, Orion and Summit Records.

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART NOTES

Some say there is one Mozart. I believe I have met many. How, for instance, could a single force unveil the charming personality of K. 331, the bittersweet elegance of K. 333, and the intense emotions of K. 457 and K. 475?

These sonatas and fantasy have seemed to have evolved before my ears as the years go by. I must have performed K. 333 hundreds of times. And yet the "singing allegro" of the first movement now wants to move along more gently, less rapidly, than it once did, while the Andante, a movement I used to take at a slower pace, now wants to stroll more briskly than before. Even the third movement, which I once thought of as simple undisturbed sunshine, now reveals layers of clouds and second thoughts.

In the haunting and beautiful theme and variations of K. 331, I find that, once again, striving to achieve the right tempo can strike the difference between eloquent expressiveness and excessive sentimentality. And while a uniform tempo is suggested, it must within itself remain flexible. Along the same lines, the Minuet ought not to be shackled by its form, but permitted its intrinsic quirkiness. May some flexibility even extend to the very venue in which a piece is performed? Perhaps so. In fact, I have been persuaded of late to regard the Turkish March as rather a different piece when performed separately (as an encore, perhaps) while thinking of it as somewhat more restrained and dignified in the context of the sonata as a whole.

In the C Minor Fantasy and Sonata, I see still another Mozart. The Fantasy in particular appears to reach into our own time with an uncompromising sternness. As it leapfrogs the generations of musical styles it seems to demand a wider range of dynamics and contrasting tempi. The thrust of K. 457's first movement, powerful as it is, repeatedly falls back on itself, under which circumstances a static tempo seems inappropriate. The anachronistic nature

of K. 457, or so it seems to me, does not give its interpreters unlimited license however. Exaggeration, for example, would wreck the heartfelt quality of the second movement, wouldn't it? Likewise in the final movement marked "Allegro assai" the temptations of "presto" would surely belie its underlying sense of tragedy.

In closing, a word or two on the subject of invisible collaboration. In preparing this program I was fortunate to have working with me one of the best editors and sound engineers for piano recording, in the world today, Mark Fuksman. An outstanding pianist himself, Mark was a student of the legendary pedagogue, Lev Naumov, an assistant to Neuhaus. As a sound technician, Mark "builds" virtually all of his equipment from the tiniest of components. And so in this remarkable individual I have found not only a masterful recording engineer but a trusted musical ally. My deepest thanks to him. I am also indebted to pianists Paul Aurandt, Alla von Buch and Phillip Kawin for their assistance.

— Robert Hamilton

CREDITS

Recorded: Bard College, New York, January 5-6, 2006 with tube microphones, tube preamplifier, and A/D converter designed and built by Mark Fuksman

Recording Producer: Robert Hamilton

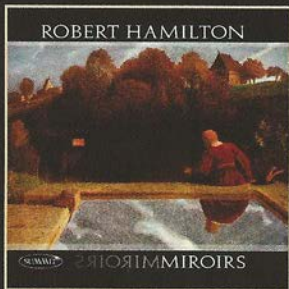
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Piano: Hamburg Steinway D

ROBERT HAMILTON ON SUMMIT



MIROIRS [SMT-382]

"Hamilton has a blazingly brilliant approach to this repertoire, delivering very powerful and often breathtaking interpretations. Exposure to these performances will make future hearing of these works seem palid."

– *Audiophile Audition*

"Hamilton's playing is full of integrity, rare brilliance and grandeur. This is a pianist I would like to have studied with."

– *The American Record Guide*

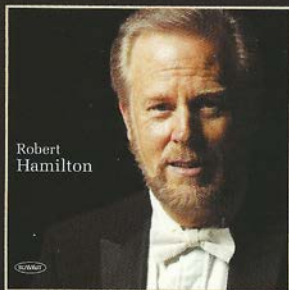
ROBERT HAMILTON [SMT-278]

"The Aurandt Sonata is a gigantic chunk of music with virtuosity so demanding it can only be played by an artist of steely endurance and fabulous technic... a performance in the heroic tradition."

– *Kenneth LaFave, Arizona Republic*

"The Aurandt Sonata is a virtuoso piece with touches of Rachmaninoff and Debussy. It works very well under Hamilton's hands, but then again he is a very fine pianist. All of his playing has color and sensitivity. He is a fine artist... one of the better ones of the million or so around."

– *Harold C. Schonberg, American Record Guide*



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ROBERT HAMILTON PIANO

WOLFGANG AMADEUS
MOZART

Sonata in A Major, K. 331

- 1 Andante grazioso [13:58]
- 2 Menuetto [6:12]
- 3 Alla Turca: Allegretto [3:53]

Sonata in B Flat Major, K. 333

- 4 Allegro [7:48]
- 5 Andante cantabile [7:17]
- 6 Allegretto grazioso [7:04]

Fantasie in C Minor, K. 475

- 7 Adagio-Allegro-Andantino-
Piu allegro-Primo tempo [12:58]

Sonata in C Minor, K. 457

- 8 Molto allegro [5:56]
- 9 Adagio [7:56]
- 10 Allegro assai [5:17]

Total time: 78:25

