

G. FRANCESCO MALIPIERO
L'ESILIO DELL'EROE

CINQUE ESPRESSIONI SINFONICHE

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Gian Francesco Malipiero

(b. Venice, 18 March 1882 – d. Treviso, 1 August 1973)

L'esilio dell'eroe

(Pause del silenzio II), 1926

Preface

Gian Francesco Malipiero was born in Venice in 1882, in a family that boasted a long tradition in music and the arts. His father was a pianist, as well as his grandfather. Gian Francesco studied at the Conservatoire in Vienna, and attended the Liceo musicale in Venice and Bologna, where the composer and organ player Marco Enrico Bossi (1861 – 1925) introduced him to counterpoint and the symphonic style of the late German Romanticism. In 1908 he was at the Hochschule of Berlin, where he studied composition with Max Bruch. A few years later in Paris he became familiar with cultural milieus attended by important figures in his future life, such as Alfredo Casella (1883 – 1947), Maurice Ravel (1875 – 1937) and Gabriele D'Annunzio (1863 – 1938). In the French capital he discovered the music of Claude Debussy (1862 – 1918) and witnessed the première of Stravinsky's *Sacre* (1913), which exerted strong influence on the development of his creativity. Later, Malipiero would permanently settle in Italy, where he lived between Venice and Asolo, – his favourite place for composition, in the Venetian backcountry – while sometimes he left to Rome or other cities in order to keep his public activity alive. He joined forces with Alfredo Casella and Gabriele D'Annunzio to found the *Corporazione delle nuove musiche* (1923), an association for the development of modern music, which followed the *Società Italiana di Musica Moderna*, and was to lead to the formation of the Italian section of the International Society for Contemporary Music.

Malipiero was probably the most prolific of all the composers of the Italian '1880 Generation', those born around 1880, including Ottorino Respighi (1879 – 1936), Ildebrando Pizzetti (1880 – 1968), and the already mentioned Casella. He was the author of more than 200 works, including nearly 40 operas, 17 symphonies and much other symphonic, chamber and choral music, including works for solo instruments, notably piano. This production was highly recognized by his contemporaries – professional musicians and colleagues: Luigi Dallapiccola (1904 – 1975) hailed him as the most important Italian composer of the century. However, Malipiero's music never reached a broad audience, and was later dismissed as uninteresting. Lately, it has at long last been rediscovered and commercially recorded, and is gradually becoming better known. The present edition is a contribution to this rediscovery of the composer, presenting one of his less famous works. Malipiero is known for having given important contribution to the revival of Italian ancient music, which by the late 19th century was almost completely forgotten. While looking for new paths in his own music production, the composer deeply studied Italian works from the 16th up to the 18th century, and edited many works by authors such as G. B. Bassani, B. Marcello, G. Tartini, B. Galuppi, N. Jommelli, L. Leo, Frescobaldi and Claudio Merulo. He had been looking for their manuscripts in the Biblioteca Marciana since he was a student in Venice, in the very first years of the 20th century. With the collaboration of a group of friends – musicians and writers including the publisher Umberto Notari (1878 – 1950), Pizzetti, Respighi, Francesco Balilla Pratella (1880 – 1955), Casella and others, – Malipiero gave start to a music series titled *I classici della Musica Italiana* (The classics of Italian music), which aimed at rediscovering this forgotten musical legacy.

With the support of D'Annunzio, – who, after the military exploits during the First World War (the flights over Pola and Vienna), had retired to his estate by the Lake Garda, – Malipiero also published the critical edition of Claudio Monteverdi's complete works (*Tutte le opere di Claudio Monteverdi*, 17 vols., Vienna, Universal, 1926 – 1942), which music he discussed in a monograph (*Claudio Monteverdi*, Treves, Milan 1929). Malipiero was in Asolo – where he moved after refusing to move from Parma Conservatoire to Florence, – preparing the first volume of Monteverdi's opera omnia, when he composed *L'esilio dell'eroe* (The exile of the hero), between 1925 and 1926. The conception of this work was influenced by the editorial work he was doing on the ancient fellow composer. Monteverdi's language represented, in Malipiero's eyes, an alternative to the antiquated clichés of the Romantic forms based on the development of thematic material. As an alternative to Beethovenian thematism and the descriptivism of programme music, ancient composers proposed the free breath of singing, raising directly from the voice or the instrument, rather than rationalized within the compelling frame of development in the established forms of Classicism and Romanticism.

These cues suggested the modern composer to remain within the frame of a simple, diatonic writing, to develop a strong sense of melody, not devoid of the fancy of the Baroque style. The frankly melodic – and not thematic – character of its language can be found in the absolute lack of formal development: the melody is born and lives for itself, not by variation or amplification of the one that preceded it. The only law of causality, if ever, is given by the antithesis, so that Malipiero's writing often plays with sonic chiaroscuro, with contrasting tonal planes, and with rapid, sudden changes in mood. This had already been put into practice in the series *Pause del silenzio I, Sette espressioni sinfoniche* (Breaks in silence, seven symphonic expressions), which Malipiero composed in 1917 and published in 1919 (Universal-Edition, Vienna). This reference is no coincidence, since the title under which *L'esilio dell'eroe* is currently known is *Pause del silenzio II*. According to the composer, the title under which *Pause del silenzio II* had been first published (Universal-Edition, Vienna

– Leipzig 1927), which is the source used for preparing the present edition, was proposed – or better ‘imposed – to the work by Gabriele D’Annunzio when he listened the work for the first time. Malipiero was acquainted with the poet since the time when he had set to music his *Sonetti delle Fate* and his third *Ditirambo* (from the *Laudi del cielo, del mare, della terra e degli eroi*, Odes to the sky, to the sea, to the earth and to the heroes, (1909, for soprano and piano, Published in 1910 by Carisch, Milan), which he included in *Le stagioni italiane* (1923).

Malipiero ran through other titles before finally settling on *Pause del silenzio II*, as the author tells us in a note preceding the score in the first edition. This note takes the form of an open letter to a friend – ‘Mio diletteissimo Claudio!’ – who could be identified with the ‘divine’ Monteverdi, or to the composer Claude Debussy (1862 – 1918) whom Malipiero and D’Annunzio had in great esteem. Their common first name is often superposed in the composer’s correspondence with the friend-poet. In the preface to the score, the author declares the origin of the piece: an adventurous journey, which the musician accomplished in the winter between 1925 and 1926 “without leaving his own house”. The reference is probably to be understood as an ideal travel, an allegory of the experience of immersion in the music of Italian Renaissance and early Baroque, which musical language exerted strong influence on the conception of this collection. In later time Malipiero confessed that he hovered between calling his ‘espressioni sinfoniche’ *Il libro delle ore* (The book of hours), “because they mirror a whole season, musically” (“da sie wie ein Tagebuch den Rhythmus eines ganzen – musikalisch erlebten – Zeitabschnitts ausdrücken”), or *Sul fiume del tempo* (On the river of time), “because they follow its capricious course” (“weil sie genau dem eigenwilligen Gang der Zeit folgen”). Later the composer thought about renaming them *Il grillo canterino* (The singing cricket), confiding to his biographer John Waterhouse in 1963 that this connoted “a creature who goes on singing all day every day without knowing why – i.e. (it would appear) Malipiero himself!”

Finally, the choice to rename the piece in reference to the previous cycle *Breaks in silence* was possibly driven by the analogy of the instrumental ensemble engaged in this work: 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets in B, bass clarinet in B, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns in F, 3 trumpets in B, 3 trombones, tuba, a rich percussion group (timpani, cymbals, bass drum, side-drum, tambourine, castanets, triangle, carillon), celesta, xylophone, harp, and string quintet. Nevertheless, the music writing of *L’esilio* is different from that of *Pause del silenzio I*. According to Waterhouse, *Pause del silenzio II* exemplifies “a strange and truly Malipierian feeling of event following event in a quietly inexorable yet essentially unstructured flow.” *L’esilio dell’eroe* is a suite of five separate movements (‘espressioni sinfoniche’), which are characterized by the absence of any rigid structure or reference to formal issues, according to the ideal of free expression that Malipiero inherited from French Impressionism and Italian Renaissance. Formally and stylistically the piece shows the composer’s determination to reject Austro-German-style ‘thematic development’, in favour of a symphonic ideal he saw as archetypally Italian, where “varied sections follow one another unpredictably, obeying only those mysterious laws that instinct recognises” (1948). Speaking to the American musicologist and composer Everett Helm (1913 – 1999), Malipiero described the Italian instrumental tradition as “a free conversation – logical, lively, and rarely with thematic repetition”, in the line traced by Domenico Scarlatti. Yet as early as 1927 he wrote: “The influence of Domenico Scarlatti on the instrumental music of his entire era has perhaps never been admitted by critics. No one dares to state that Beethoven constantly gathered up crumbs from the table of the great Italian harpsichordist. It is a simple act of justice to acknowledge the spiritual bond between two musicians who represent diametrically opposed musical currents.” The composer believed in the Italian symphony as “a free form of poetry in several sections that follow in whimsical succession, obeying only those intangible laws recognized and accepted by the instinct in order to express an idea or a series of musical thoughts.” In *L’esilio*, this aesthetic position is reflected in themes characterized by a continuous variety of rhythmic figures and tempo markings, which give raise to a music discourse proceeding by constantly new poetic (non descriptive) images. These are embellished by a rich orchestration, which is clearly associated with the Franco-Russian tradition. Modal diatonic patterns can be detected in the harmonic treatment of the parts, even though the consistency of the whole in the frame of an aforesought structure seems not to be among the inspirational factors of the composer. On the contrary, the melodic invention seems to be the leading element, and seems to flow directly from the composer’s imagination, juxtaposing contrasting elements. Nonetheless, the pieces do not lack the necessary coherence: this is granted by the motivic elaboration of melodic passages, where the composer exploits devices typical of the music of the Italian tradition cherished by the composer, such as the variation of *cantus firmus* and the imitation (with reduced or augmented note values) through different voices of the orchestral set.

The music of *L’esilio dell’eroe* shows a clearly private meaning for the composer. Maybe for this reason, it has far from frequently been performed. The first publication was concurrent with the Premiere, which took place in 1927 at the Symphony Hall of the American Academy of Music of Philadelphia, and was conducted by Leopold Stokowski (1882 – 1977). Subsequent performances were rare, to the point that the composer himself expressed a rueful comment on the work in 1952: “Perhaps, it sleeps the sleep of the just, and its true title should be *Unbroken Silence (Silenzio senza pause)*...”

This destiny is probably due to the peculiar position of this work in the context of Malipiero’s production of the 1920s. From the points of view of the style and inspiration, *L’esilio* appears isolated. However, Waterhouse has put an emphasis on the link existing between this and other, later works by the composer: *Sinfonia del tempo* (1950), which shows a

similar character, listless and indifferent, expressed by a language devoid of clear rhythmic features, different from that of Malipiero's previous symphonies. The freedom of *L'esilio* characterizes also the orchestral works *Fantasia di ogni giorno* (1953) and *Fantasia concertanti* (1954), the *Dialogo* No. 8, "La morte di Socrate" (1957) and *Abbracadabra* for baritone and orchestra (1962). The consideration of the relationships of *L'esilio dell'eroe* with these works by Malipiero led the musicologist to prefer for the piece the title *On the river of time*, which, according to him, rendered at best the idea of endless (and beginning-less) flowing.

Among recent sources, the piece is included, alongside with Malipiero's *Pause del silenzio I* and *Impressioni dal vero I-III* (1910-22) in a recording performed by the Rome Symphony Orchestra conducted by Francesco La Vecchia (Naxos, 2009). In line with the mission of "Repertoire & Opera Explorer" series released by Hoeslich Musikproduktion, the present edition will certainly contribute to the reassessment of a composer who, despite not creating a compositional school in Italian musical life, undoubtedly left a much profound and unmistakable cut through his national milieu, and beyond.

Anna Giust, 2018

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Gian Francesco Malipiero

(geb. Venedig, 18. März 1882 – gest. Treviso, 1. August 1973)

L'esilio dell'eroe

(Pause del silenzio II), 1926

Vorwort

Gian Francesco Malipiero wurde 1882 in Venedig in eine Familie geboren, die sich einer langen künstlerischen und musikalischen Tradition rühmte. Sein Vater und Grossvater waren Pianisten. Gian Francesco studierte am Konservatorium in Wien und besuchte das Liceo musicale in Venedig und Bologna, wo der Komponist und Organist Marco Enrico Bossi (1861 – 1925) ihn in den Kontrapunkt einführte und mit dem symphonischen Stil der deutschen Spätromantik bekannt machte. Im Jahre 1908 zog er nach Berlin, um bei Max Bruch Komposition an der Musikhochschule zu studieren. Einige Jahre später in Paris öffneten sich ihm kulturelle Kreise, in denen Persönlichkeiten verkehrten, die für sein späteres Leben von Bedeutung sein sollten, wie zum Beispiel Alfredo Casella (1883 – 1947), Maurice Ravel (1875 – 1937) und Gabriele D'Annunzio (1863 – 1938). Hier entdeckte er die Musik von Claude Debussy (1862 – 1918) und war Zeuge der Premiere von Strawinskys *Sacre* (1913), das einen starken Einfluss auf die Entwicklung seiner Kreativität ausübte.

Später liess sich Malipiero dauerhaft in Italien nieder, wo er im venezianischen Hinterland zwischen Venedig und Asolo lebte - sein Lieblingsplatz zum Komponieren -, während er gelegentlich nach Rom und in andere Städte reiste, um seinen öffentlichen Verpflichtungen nachzukommen. Mit Alfredo Casella and Gabriele D'Annunzio tat er sich zusammen, um die *Corporazione delle nuove musiche* (1923) zu gründen, eine Vereinigung für die Entwicklung der modernen Musik und Nachfolgeorganisation der *Società Italiana di Musica Moderna*. Ausserdem hatte er die Aufgabe übernommen, die italienische Abteilung der *International Society for Contemporary Music* zu leiten.

Innerhalb der Gruppe der Komponisten der italienischen „1880er Generation“, also derjenigen, die um 1880 geboren wurden, war Malipiero war wahrscheinlich der mit dem grössten Werkkatalog. Unter anderen gehörten Ottorino Respighi (1879 – 1936), Ildebrando Pizzetti (1880 – 1968) und der bereits erwähnte Casella zu dieser Generation. Malipiero schrieb mehr als 200 Werke, darunter fast 40 Opern, 17 Symphonien und zahlreiche weitere symphonische Werke, Kammermusik und Chorwerke, nicht zu vergessen Musik für Soloinstrumente, vor allem für Piano. Seine Zeitgenossen - professionelle Musiker und Kollegen - schätzten seine Arbeiten ausserordentlich hoch: Luigi Dallapiccola (1904 – 1975) pries den Kollegen als den bedeutendsten italienischen Musiker des Jahrhunderts. Jedoch konnte Malipieros Musik nie ein breites Publikum erreichen, später galt sie schlicht als uninteressant. Erst vor kurzem hat eine Wiederentdeckung seiner Musik mit kommerziellen Einspielungen begonnen, und allmählich werden seine Arbeiten bekannter. Die vorliegende Ausgabe ist ein Beitrag zur Wiederbelebung des Komponisten und präsentiert eines seiner weniger bekannten Werke.

Malipiero ist bekannt für seine bedeutenden Beiträge zur Wiederbelebung der italienischen Alten Musik, die gegen Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts fast vollständig vergessen war. Während er nach neuen Wegen für seine eigene musikalische Arbeit suchte, versenkte sich der Komponist tief in die italienische Musik des 16. und 18. Jahrhunderts und gab zahlreiche Kompositionen von Komponisten wie G. B. Bassani, B. Marcello, G. Tartini, B. Galuppi, N. Jommelli, L. Leo, Frescobaldi