

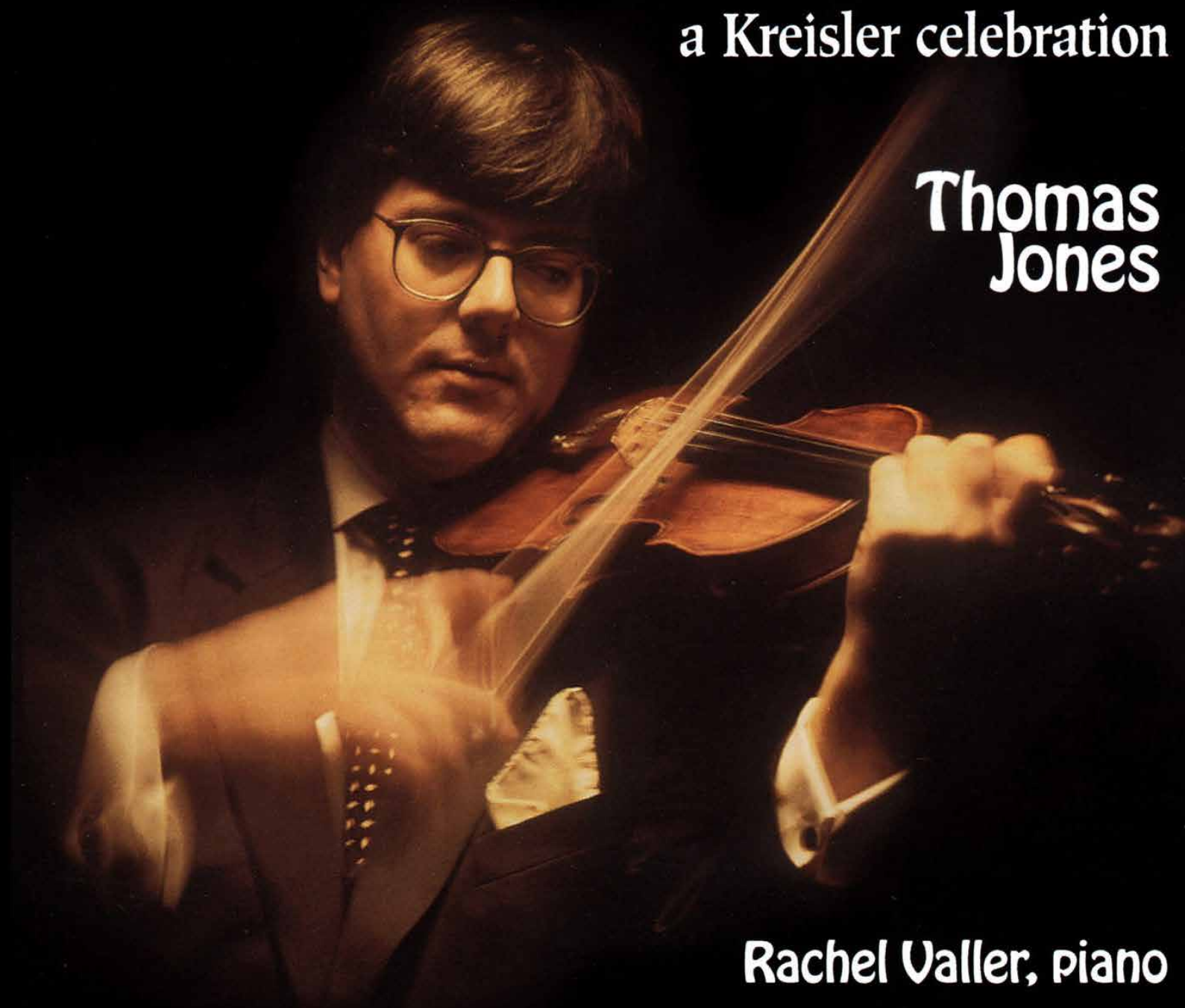
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Con Sentimento

a Kreisler celebration

**Thomas
Jones**

Rachel Valler, piano





Con Sentimento

a Kreisler celebration

- 1** Liebesleid (Love's Sorrow) Fritz Kreisler 4'29"
- 2** Allegretto Fritz Kreisler, in the style of Luigi Boccherini 4'02"
- 3** La Folia Arcangelo Corelli, arr. Fritz Kreisler 12'30"
- 4** Midnight Bells Anton Heuberger, arr. Fritz Kreisler 4'06"
- 5** Praeludium and Allegro Fritz Kreisler, in the style of Gaetano Pugnani 6'14"
- 6** Songs My Mother Taught Me Antonín Dvorák, arr. Fritz Kreisler 3'03"
- 7** Caprice 13 Nicolò Paganini, arr. Fritz Kreisler 3'30"
- 8** Caprice 20 Nicolò Paganini, arr. Fritz Kreisler 3'21"
- 9** Melodie Christoph Glück, arr. Fritz Kreisler 3'33"
- 10** Schön Rosmarin Fritz Kreisler 2'03"
- 11** The Old Refrain Viennese folksong, arr. Fritz Kreisler 3'56"
- 12** Liebesfreud (Love's Joy) Fritz Kreisler 4'01"
- 13** A Night Waltz (A Homage to Kreisler) Wilfred Lehmann 4'01"
- 14** Menuett Fritz Kreisler, in the style of Nicolò Porpora 3'16"
- 15** Variations on a Theme of Corelli
Fritz Kreisler,
in the style of Giuseppe Tartini 3'59"
- 16** Farewell to Cucullain
("Danny Boy")
Irish folksong,
arr. by Fritz Kreisler 4'43"
- 17** Tempo di Minuetto
Fritz Kreisler, in the style of Gaetano Pugnani 4'01"

Thomas Jones, violin
Rachel Valler, piano

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Con **Sentimento** is the character marking at the beginning of **Liebesleid**, one of Kreisler's most loved works. It is best translated as "with feeling", and it is feeling, whether it be tender or passionate, which is at the heart of Kreisler's music.

Fritz Kreisler, violinist and composer, achieved a level of public renown and even adoration that only a rock star could dream of today. It is surely because his music not only charms the ear, but touches the heart.

Kreisler's formative years

Kreisler was born in Vienna in 1875 and died in New York in 1962. He was a child prodigy and, after violin studies in Vienna with Josef Hellmesberger, went to Paris to study with the great French teacher Massart at the Conservatoire. He was awarded the Premier Prix at the age of twelve and soon embarked on a highly successful tour of the United States with the pianist Moritz Rosenthal.

Kreisler's father, a doctor and friend of Sigmund Freud as well as an eager amateur violinist, was determined that Fritz should receive a proper education and consequently Kreisler returned to Vienna to complete his academic schooling. He was passionately interested in languages and began to study medicine although he later abandoned

it in favour of music.

Kreisler also had an excellent training in composition: in Paris he studied with Leo Delibes, and in Vienna in the class of Anton Bruckner. His easy grace and charm seem to owe more to the former, although his lyricism and depth of feeling might even have impressed Bruckner.

Kreisler's career took off in the early years of the century but was interrupted by World War I, during which he served in the Austrian army until he was invalided out after an injury. Between the wars he lived in Berlin and only moved to the United States after the rise of fascism in Germany.

A great man, as well as a great musician, Kreisler was famed for his humour and generosity. He provided for orphaned children after both world wars and reputedly even played the violin of a hapless busker in Melbourne during his Australian tour (which occurred during the Depression years).

The music

The selection of works on the CD reflects the breadth and diversity of Kreisler's output as a composer and arranger. Despite that diversity, everything Kreisler touched, be it a Corelli Sonata, a Paganini Caprice, or an Irish popular song, is stamped with his own inimitable style.

Liebesleid (Love's Sorrow) **1** is one of Kreisler's most popular pieces. It is a Ländler (a slow Viennese dance in triple time) which, together with its counterpart **Liebesfreud** (Love's Joy) **12**, covers the whole range of love's moods and emotions, each one deftly characterised by changes in tempo and tonal colour. For example, the middle section of **Liebesleid** is marked "con passione", perhaps reflecting the turbulent aspects of love as well as indicating the intensity with which it should be played.

Like the **Allegretto** in the style of Boccherini **2**, the **Praeludium and Allegro** **5**, **Tempo di Minuetto** **17**, **Menuett** **14** and **Variations on a Theme of Corelli** **15** are all examples of Kreisler's "Classical Manuscripts". Kreisler became embroiled in quite a controversy when he revealed in 1935 that these "Classical Manuscripts" were in fact entirely his own work. It had previously been assumed (with Kreisler's encouragement) that the works were based on baroque and classical fragments which he had discovered. Ernest Newman, the renowned music critic of the London Times, was outraged and accused Kreisler of perpetrating a fraud on the musical public.

A heated public correspondence ensued with Kreisler professing amazement that the true origin of the works was ever doubted. It has been suggested that Newman was just angry

because he had never realised that the works were pure Kreisler!

Works such as the **Praeludium and Allegro 5** and **Tempo di Minuetto 17** exemplify the romantic conception of the baroque with its emphasis on sweeping phrases and grandiose gestures. It is a conception not without a certain appeal in an era which sometimes treats the baroque with an overly academic reverence! Kreisler was also a wonderful arranger. Never afraid to impress his own personality upon a work, he nevertheless displayed an uncanny ability to heighten the emotional impact of the original. This is nowhere more obvious than in Kreisler's extraordinary arrangement of Corelli's **La Folia 3**.

Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713) was called "the father of the violin" and was a great innovator in his own time. The "Folia" was a wild Spanish dance in triple time which became transformed in the baroque era into a noble melody over a ground bass. Kreisler's arrangement of Corelli's more sober original captures both these characteristics. The variations become wilder and more virtuosic, culminating in a dramatic and almost frenzied cadenza before returning to a restatement of the original theme with added chords and marked "fortissimo" in the violin's most strident register. The work employs a full battery of pyrotechnics such as double-

stop trills (Variation 4), and rapid passages in thirds (Variation 7), as well as some startling harmonic effects like the modulation to the major in the recapitulation of the theme in Variation 10.

Some of the other arrangements are perfectly crafted miniatures. Perhaps the most magical of all is **Midnight Bells 4**, an arrangement of an aria from Heuberger's operetta "The Opera Ball". It is difficult to imagine a more luscious evocation of fin de siècle Vienna. How wonderfully too Kreisler captures the pathos of Orpheus grieving over the loss of Euridyce in his arrangement of Gluck's **Melodie 9**, and the passionate ardour and gypsy freedom of Dvorak's **Songs My Mother Taught Me 6**.

More unusual are Kreisler's arrangements of two of the **Caprices 7+8** of the great Italian virtuoso Nicolò Paganini (1782-1840). Kreisler isn't the only person to have arranged Paganini's Caprices for violin and piano: Karol Szymanowski and the violinist Nathan Milstein also did so. Kreisler's arrangements are even more difficult than the originals since they employ additional trills and double-stops. They also display Kreisler's wit — for example the waltz accompaniment to the middle section of **Caprice 20** and the delicious pianissimo ending.

Nowhere is Kreisler's affinity with the ordinary person more obvious

than in his folk song arrangements. In **The Old Refrain 11** and **Farewell to Cucullain 16** (also known as "Danny Boy") Kreisler strikes a sentimental chord in us all and shows that the emotional impact of music is often inversely proportional to its complexity. This is Kreisler, the great entertainer, at his best.

A Night Waltz

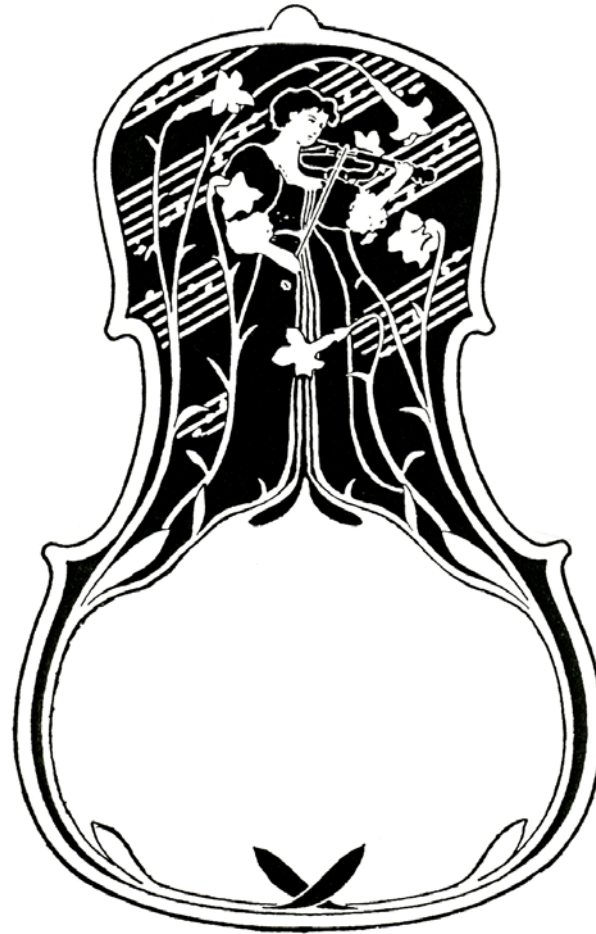
Wilfred Lehmann composed **A Night Waltz 13** especially for Thomas Jones in January and February 1995, and the work receives its premiere recording on this disc. It is intended to provide a modern perspective on Kreisler's work by a richly gifted Australian violinist and composer, who himself spent a considerable period of time in Vienna. Subtitled "A Homage to Kreisler", the work is both a witty reminiscence of some of Kreisler's most popular pieces such as **Liebesfreud 12** and **Schön Rosmarin 10** and an evocation of Kreisler's lushly romantic style with its expressive slides and double-stops. However, it is also a highly original and effective concert piece in its own right with a natural lyricism and a pungent wit. The title refers to certain nocturnal adventures (whether real or imagined is not made clear!) in Vienna during the composer's youth.

Kreisler the violinist

Kreisler reached his maturity at the height of the Romantic era and carried on the legacy of the immortal Belgian virtuoso Eugene Ysaÿe. In fact Kreisler was, in the words of one noted critic, Ysaÿe's "direct heir". The overt emotionalism of Ysaÿe, with its emphasis on dramatic expressivity replaced the dry academicism of Joseph Joachim (1831-1907) and the glittering but rather detached virtuosity of Pablo de Sarasate (1844-1905).

The spirit of romanticism was particularly evident in Kreisler's approach to sound and tone colour. Like Ysaÿe, he brought a sensuality and vibrancy to violin sound that had been hitherto unknown. In "Great Violinists in Performance", the noted American musicologist and commentator Henry Roth states that Kreisler "sought and achieved robustness and resonance of sound at all times".

Kreisler's most distinctive feature was his tone which, in the words of the same critic, was "magical in its effect, different from any other; bewitching yet virile; fragrantly sweet but never cloying". He also employed a whole array of expressive devices such as slides, portamenti and above all rubato which gave his playing such warmth and individuality.



A great human being

Kreisler's greatness was perhaps best expressed by the editorial staff of The New York Times when they stated under the heading "Kreisler at 75":

"Mr. Kreisler is a great human being ... one of our most magnificent contemporaries. In both his composition and his performance Mr. Kreisler has succeeded in making people

happy. It is a bit better to be alive for having heard him play and it is a far more pleasant human experience to have listened to the things he has written. No-one will ever know how many thousands of burdens he has lightened in a burdensome world."

What greater tribute can there be?

Wilfred Lehmann

Australian born Wilfred Lehmann is internationally known as a violinist, composer and conductor. He studied violin with Nathan Gutman and David Oistrach and served as Concertmaster of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the Nashville Symphony. He began composing in Nashville and subsequently received a number of commissions and prizes.

In addition to **A Night Waltz** **13** he recently composed a clarinet quintet and a violin concerto entitled "A Requiem for Child Victims of War" which he performed with the Queensland Symphony on a violin of his own making.

Herald Sun
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 Sunday, May 19, 1996 \$1.20

Fiddler courts music fame
 By BOB CRIMEEN

15 this is a sneak preview of the high fashion violin players will wear on the world's concert platforms next century!

Not quite. Thomas Jones, the rebar and rugged fiddler on the footpath outside the Supreme Court, is Australia's — and, he believes, perhaps the world's — only legal eagle with a second career as a concert violinist and recording artist.

Child prodigy Jones, 33, whose violin tuition began 74 years ago, was recently admitted as a barrister and solicitor of the Supreme Court of Victoria.

"That honor, however, has not lessened Jones's desire to make music his life."

"I've always passionately loved music and the violin and intended to be purely a soloist," said Jones, a telecommunications law specialist with legal giant Mallessons Stephen Jaques.

"I certainly haven't thrown that away."

"In a word, we can use another cliche and, excuse the pun, I have another string to my bow."

"Music is a wonderful life, but at times an intensely frustrating profession."

"So often in the music world people of real ability and individuality are blocked out by a hierarchy that sometimes favors mediocrity," he said.

"What determines who is the absolute elite is very often not ability."

"It often is a combination of who you know, an incredibly dogged determination and an ability to be totally unaffected by any type of disappointment and criticism."

"The other thing is that I'm sick and tired of being in a position, as a musician, where my creative future is being controlled by often incompetent administrators and failed performers."

"Frankly, I don't give a damn if these in the music profession approve or disapprove of the way I do things."

With flute-playing fiancée Laura Chislett, Jones recently completed an international concert tour during which they performed in London, Amsterdam, throughout Ireland and in Bangkok.

His debut recording, *Cou Souffrante... A Kreiser Celebration*, has been released by Move Records.

Jones plays a valuable 1799 Nicholas Kopet violin.

Of the violin maker, Jones says: "He was known as the French Stradivari."

Another string in his bow: Barrister-solicitor-treasurer Thomas Jones serenades the Supreme Court. Picture: BRAD WILSON

Australian violinist **Thomas Jones** recently returned home after an extended period of study and performance in the United States. After studying at the Sydney Conservatorium under Christopher Kimber, Jones received a Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Award and became a student of the late Josef Gingold at Indiana University. Gingold was once described by The Smithsonian magazine as "the best living teacher of violin technique and repertoire in the world today".

Gingold was a friend of Kreisler and himself a student of the great Belgian virtuoso Eugene Ysaÿe. It was Ysaÿe who originated that blend of passionate fervour and lush sensuality which is the very essence of Romanticism. Kreisler inherited this style and infused it with his own inimitable elegance and charm. Under the guidance of Gingold, Thomas Jones was able to absorb the legacy of this great romantic tradition.

In 1988 Jones became the violinist with the Atlanta Chamber Players, the leading ensemble in the Southeast and toured extensively with them throughout the United States. He also appeared

as guest artist with the Borodin Trio and performed as soloist with various Australian and American orchestras including the Dekalb Symphony, the Tampa Bay Chamber Orchestra, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and the Queensland Pops Orchestra.

Rachel Valler, OAM, has been associate artist for many of the ABC's performers and has appeared as a soloist with the Melbourne, Sydney

and Queensland symphony orchestras. She has performed regularly for Musica Viva, the Sydney Mozart Society, and the Hazelwood Trio. She is an examiner with the Australian Music Examinations Board, a tutor for the NSW Amateur Chamber Music Society and a member of the Committee of Musicians for World Peace.



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 Piano technician: Brent Ottley
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