



(LEMS 8020)

THE ART OF THE LUTE

Joseph Iadone, lute

Joseph Iadone was born in New Haven, Connecticut on September 5th, 1914. Although now 81, he continues to perform and claims he feels as if he is still 18. Iadone's illustrious musical career began at age 5 when his father handed him a mandolin, along with a plectrum, and advised him to "play this." From the mandolin he went to the banjo, then to the guitar and finally to the double bass, the instrument on which he performed for a number of years. As a double-bassist, he became principal bass with a number of major symphony orchestras, and a guest artist with several noted chamber music groups, opera, theater and studio orchestras.

Iadone won a scholarship to Yale under somewhat unusual circumstances; he was accepted as a student without so much as having finished grammar school. While attending classes at Yale during the day, Iadone made up his elementary and high school credits by taking evening classes in New Haven's public schools. It was at Yale that Iadone formed a close, lifelong relationship with his teacher and mentor, the great composer Paul Hindemith. It was also as Hindemith's student that Iadone first became interested in the lute and Early Music.

Hindemith had a great love and interest in Medieval Renaissance music. Under his encouragement, Iadone began studying the lute (he is entirely self-taught) and seeking out all the information he could find concerning Elizabethan performance practice on the instrument. The results of these studies, both then and since, have resulted in a playing method that Mr. Iadone believes is much closer to the true Elizabethan style than is often followed. Instead of sounding the string with his fingernail he uses the fleshy part of the

finger with the aim of striking both strings of each course at once. As a result, the sound produced is unusually mellow, more legato, and capable of subtler variation of tone quality. It was this insight into performance practice, combined with his enormous skill and talent, which soon catapulted Joseph Iadone into the limelight as one of the most sought after lutenists of his time.

Another issue of Early Music lute performance on which Mr. Iadone has developed very strong opinions is concerning tempo, particularly in Medieval and Early Renaissance pieces: "The playing I used to hear usually sounded like it was performed in an old age home - the tempo was generally much too slow." He feels that a great deal of lute music has been played at a tempo that is too slow, not in keeping with the true spirit of much Early Music.

When playing Early Music, according to Mr. Iadone, the rhythm is more crucial than the tonal range. "In Medieval Music in particular, the notes were actually very limited. Therefore, the most accurate and generally more natural sounding interpretations are those performed with generally faster tempos." He feels that because so little information regarding tempo exists in medieval music, the natural or automatic tendency of interpreters - in the face of the unknown - is to slow things down in performance, erring too far (for him) on the side of caution.

Shortly after finishing his studies with Mr. Hindemith, Iadone became a member of Noah Greenberg's legendary Pro Musica Antiqua. Soon, he had what he calls "the greatest pleasure making music with (countertenor) Russell Oberlin in concert and recording" (see Lyrichord Early Music Series LEMS 8003 "Cantigas de Santa Maria" and LEMS 8011, "John Dowland Lute Songs").

Sometime later, he joined Sidney Beck's group: The Consort Players. The initial purpose of the group was to record Thomas Morley's Consort Lessons; a super and virtuoso work for the recorder, treble viol, lute, cittern, Pandora and bass viol.

Following this he became a member of the Renaissance Quartet. He also performed and recorded with such noted artists as Victoria de Los Angeles, Hughes Cuenod, Nancy Savin and others. Mr. Iadone has recorded for Decca, Columbia, Mercury, Experience Anonymous and Project Three. His wide range of teaching experience includes positions at: University of Denver, University of Colorado; Hartt College of Music; University of Bridgeport; Mannes College; Province town Early Music Workshop; and as director of Collegium Musicum at Windham College, Putney, Vermont.

The Art of the Lute contains examples of various styles and types of Early Music: Solos, two, three and four-part pieces, short score, and figured bass pieces. When asked why he had decided to use the process of multi-track recording in committing the two three and four-part pieces to tape on this disc (a somewhat unorthodox method in most classical music recording, to be sure), Iadone said that though he has performed with several excellent lutenists over the years, opportunities for this type of collaboration are rare, and besides, he finds that the multi-track recording process provides the only means in which

he is he is able to fully realize his vision of precisely how he thinks these pieces should be performed. He then adds, “so if that is true, why not?”

For Iadone, using the multi-track process to realize all the parts himself is also perhaps a method that is not out of keeping with the many complex and varied skills employed by the Renaissance lutenist, as he understands it. He explains: “The art of the lute has a broader meaning to me than merely the performance of a particular collection of lute pieces. It also means the art and artistry of lutenist. A lutenist of the time, particularly in 16th Century England, would play solo works, two, three, and four-part music, would read from tablature, proportional notation, and they would do what we call short-score playing - meaning that he would take a piece of music scored for four or five parts and (depending on the piece), might leave the top line for voice, and the three or four other parts would be made into one single lute part.

STATEMENTS FROM ARTISTS WHO STUDIED AND WORKED WITH JOSEPH IADONE

Along with having achieved world-wide recognition as a true pioneer in Early Music and peerless virtuoso lutenist, Joseph Iadone is, by all accounts, one of the most extraordinary teachers of music who has ever stood before a class. Many of his former students have gone on to become top instrumentalists, vocalist and scholars in Early Music. In preparing the notes for this CD, several of them graciously shared their feelings and memories about the profound effect that Mr. Iadone had on their careers and their lives.

Here are a few:

“Joseph Iadone used to speak of musicians as magicians. I have always thought of him as both. He is one of the greatest of our time, both as a performer and as a teacher. I welcome the release of this recording of solo work.”

- Martha Bixler is a well-known recorder player and former President of the American Recorder Society.

“Joseph Iadone was one of the strongest musical personalities ever in mine or anyone else's life. He proposed a strict work-ethic for me to go by. Any performance was nothing less than intense and he always encouraged me to play it better (and faster) each and every time. I know of only a few people with that relentless goal for perfection, uncompromising musicianship and endless encouragement. He was more than a pioneer in the field of Early Music, e was an example for anyone who wanted to be the best musician they could possibly become.”

- Wayne Hankin is a virtuoso multi-instrumentalist, scholar, teacher, recording artist and member of New York's Ensemble for Early Music.

Meeting Joseph Iadone at a 1970 summer workshop changed my life. What I had heard passed off as “Early Music” up to then, was usually (at best) pretty, and pretty staid - the aesthetic equivalent of an exquisite insect embedded in amber for millions of years. Hearing Joe's lute playing and watching him direct ensembles blew that misconception to...well where that kind of idea about Early Music belongs. He played with a beautiful sound, the passion of a great opera singer and the elasticity and rhythmic nuance (not to mention chops) of a Django Reinhardt. Joe stressed these qualities for all levels of music making - this included performance of and exercises from Hindemith's “Elementary Training for Musicians,” which was a daily part of his teaching and which he approached as the miniature gems that they actually are. He was alternately frightening and inspiring. It didn't matter which - meeting Joe Iadone hooked me on Early Music.”

- David Carp

David Carp is the producer of WNYC Radio's live performance program “Around New York.”

“Working under Joseph Iadone was like being apprenticed to a great Renaissance master. It was a practice, eat, drink, dream if you could find time to sleep - and music! His standards sometimes seemed beyond reach for mortals. For as we strove for perfection on the level of detail, the expanding goals served by those details, and our increasing awareness of what he himself could do, would lead us ever further onward. He brought his vast experience of jazz, classical, 20th Century, choral, orchestral, chamber - all music - to bare in his devotion to what he knew as the pinnacle of achievement: the Art of the Renaissance.” Lucy Cross

- Lucy Cross is a noted lutenist, writer and ficta-scholar on music of the 14th Century.

“Joseph Iadone was my first inspiration for Early Music, and also he knew how to make it swing. He taught me how to get inside music and rhythm. He had an amazing way of making music come alive that it was much more than notes on a page. I remember him saying that you must treat each note as if they are pearls or jewels.” John La Barbera

John La Barbera, composer, guitarist, lutenist and musical director of the Southern Italian Music and Theater Company, “I Giullari di Piazza.”

“...a consummate musician who was always an inspiration to work with. Joe Iadone plays the lute with a distinctive, authoritative and authentic Renaissance style.”

- Russell Oberlin

Internationally acclaimed countertenor Russell Oberlin performed with Iadone on several recordings and in concert.

TRACKS AND TIMES:

SOLOS:

1. Luis Milan (ca. 1500 - 1561) - Three Pavans (4:05)
2. Vincenzo Capirola (fl. mid-16th century) - Recercar (2:32)
3. Luis Milan - Fantasia IX for vihuela (3:19)
4. Alonso Mudarra (fl. mid-16th century) - Fantasia for guitar (2:48)
5. Ionanambrosio Dalza (fl. Early-16th century) - Tostar de corde, Recercar dietro, for lute (2:10)
6. Luis Milan - Fantasia No. XXII (El maestro) (3:24)
7. Luis Narvaez Diferencias (fl. mid-16th century) "Guárdame las vacas" (2:09)
8. Luis Milan - Fantasia X for vihuela (2:03)
9. Francesco da Milano (ca. 1490-1566) - Fantasia (3:27)

DUETS:

10. Orlando de Lasso (1532-1566) - Fantasia (1:57)
11. Thomas Morley (1557- 1603) - La Rondinella, fantasia (1:26)
12. Jaun Ponce (fl. 1500) - Torre de la Nina (1:39)
13. Orlando de Lasso - Fantasia (1:47)
14. Anonymous Composer (late 15th century) - Dime, Robadora (published 1556) (:55)

TRIOS AND QUARTETS:

15. Guillaume Costeley (ca. 1531-1606) - Allon, Gay, Gay, Gay Bergres for 4 voices (1:27)
16. Anonymous Composer - Die Katzenpfote (1:30)
17. Francisco de la Torre (died ca. 1500) - Danza a tre "la alta" (2:22)

18. Anonymous Composer (mid 16th century) *Ignacio es tan bella* (:50)
19. Anonymous Composer (mid 16th century) - *Mon Coeur se recommande* (Marot) (*Mon Coeur se rend a toi; Qui labore champ ou vigne*), chanson for 5 voices (1:45)
20. Guillaume Dufay (ca. 1400-1474) - *Credo*, for three voices (2:11)
21. Nicholas Craen - *Si Ascendro in Caelum* (1:17)
22. Heinrich Isaac - (ca. 1450-1517) *Si dormiero*, in 3 parts (textless, playable by instruments; also known as "Guretsch") (1:45)
23. Tielman Susato (died ca. 1501) - *Pavane ("Si Par Souffrir")* (2:15)
24. Heinrich Isaac - *Helas que devera*, chanson for 3 voices (1:04)
25. Josquin des Pres (1450 - 1521) - *De tous biens playne*, motet for 4 parts (1:04)
26. Gase Brule (1179 - 1212)/Bernart de Ventadorn (? - 1195) - Medley: *Je ne puis pas/Quan vei L'acloete/Je ne puis pas* (2:13)

ABOUT THE ARTIST:

JOSEPH IADONE AND THE ART OF THE LUTE RECORDING

The various pieces that make up this recording were recorded during the years 1980 to 1994 at several locations. Tracks 1, 3, and 9 were recorded in concert and the rest were recorded either in the studio and Mr. Iadone's own studio. Many different machines and microphones were used to make these original recordings, which are of varying quality. A great deal of effort was my by Lyrichord engineer Vivian Stoll and Elliot Federman of DSW Mastering Studios to create as high a degree of sonic consistency and uniform quality in the digital remastering process as modern technology will allow.

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