

YEHONATAN BERICK



*Paganini: 24  
Caprices*



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PAGANINI: 24 CAPRICES  
Yehonatan Berick

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*24 Caprices for Solo Violin, Op. 1*

Niccolò Paganini

Caprice No. 1 "The Arpeggio" in E major: Andante

Caprice No. 2 in B minor: Moderato

Caprice No. 3 in E minor: Sostenuto — Presto — Sostenuto

Caprice No. 4 in C minor: Maestoso

Caprice No. 5 in A minor: Agitato

Caprice No. 6 "The Trill" in G minor: Lento

Caprice No. 7 in A minor: Posato

Caprice No. 8 in E-flat major: Maestoso

Caprice No. 9 "The Hunt" in E major: Allegretto

Caprice No. 10 in G minor: Vivace

Caprice No. 11 in C major: Andante — Presto — Andante

Caprice No. 12 in A-flat major: Allegro

Caprice No. 13 "Devil's Laughter" in B-flat major: Allegro

Caprice No. 14 in E-flat major: Moderato

Caprice No. 15 in E minor: Posato

Caprice No. 16 in G minor: Presto

Caprice No. 17 in E-flat major: Sostenuto — Andante

Caprice No. 18 in C major: Corrente — Allegro

Caprice No. 19 in E-flat major: Lento — Allegro Assai

Caprice No. 20 in D major: Allegretto

Caprice No. 21 in A major: Amoroso — Presto

Caprice No. 22 in F major: Marcato

Caprice No. 23 in E-flat major: Posato

Caprice No. 24 in A minor: Tema con Variazioni (Quasi Presto)

# Paganini: 24 Caprices

Young players face many challenges as they embark on the lifelong quest of mastering an instrument. The violin has always posed special challenges: adapting to the geometry of the bio-mechanics of the instrument, achieving a tone that does not induce grimaces, and learning about intonation without any frets or keys. Niccolò Paganini's music places the bar for excellence much higher than these challenges. For centuries the name Paganini has carried a special meaning for violinists, classical musicians, and audiences alike.

Paganini revolutionized violin playing with new techniques and daring feats, creating effects beyond anything heard before. He was rumored to have sold his soul to the devil in exchange for his remarkable abilities. Undoubtedly, he was the first superstar of the music world; his fans were hysterically devoted; he achieved wealth and notoriety in his lifetime, and to this day, his legacy serves as the benchmark for today's musical idols.

And yet, while famous for being an über-pioneer in the technical aspects of violinistic prowess, Paganini's 24 Caprices display the highest level of musical

artistry. The Caprices hold a special place among Paganini's compositions. His other works were composed for his concertizing endeavors, and as such are deemed more popular. The Caprices, however, were the only works published during his lifetime, bearing the inscription "To the Artists".

It is difficult to tell if the technique inspired the character of the music or vice versa, since they are so interdependent. Each caprice is highly individualized, employing one or two techniques exclusively, with a distinctly recognizable theme that one could easily whistle; at the same time, the harmonic complexity is extremely rich, often utilizing chromaticism and functional harmonic manipulation of Wagnerian scope.

It is no surprise that Paganini greatly influenced his contemporaries and followers, among them Ernst, Ysaÿe, and of course, Franz Liszt. Great composers such as Brahms and Rachmaninoff paid musical tribute to the Caprices. Even today, their influence is apparent in the works of Ligeti and Corigliano (Red Violin Caprices), and more recently Justine Chen, Kenji Bunch, and Cornelius Dufallo. Thus, the Caprices are also the subject of composition seminars and research in music schools worldwide. Even as I draw great satisfaction from teaching them to my students, enabling them to achieve such a great feat, I stress and prioritize the importance of their musical wealth.

It is this perspective that lead me to take on the exciting challenge of recording the Caprices (and touring with them as a cycle), allowing me the unique opportunity to paint 24 scenes. While there are many audio recordings available, video recordings of the Caprices are rare. This being the first BluRay DVD, the high definition visual aspect serves to greatly enhance the experience the Caprices offer. This disc is offered with my deepest appreciation and gratitude to the greatest master who ever held a violin.





# Yehonatan Berick

Hailed as "superb" by Montreal Gazette, and "godly" by the Ann Arbor News, Naumburg prizewinner YEHONATAN BERICK enjoys a busy international schedule as soloist, recitalist, chamber musician and pedagogue.

Berick has been featured at the world's most important music centers and has collaborated with many internationally renowned artists. He has performed, among others, with the Quebec, Winnipeg, Jerusalem and Haifa Symphonies, the Israeli, Cincinnati, Montreal and Manitoba Chamber Orchestras. His recital programs have included complete cycles, such as Bach's complete Sonatas and Partitas, and Paganini's 24 caprices, performed on a 12-city tour. His numerous festival and chamber series credits include Marlboro, Ravinia, Seattle, Vancouver, Music@menlo, Ottawa and Jerusalem. On CD, Berick has recorded for the Centaur, Summit, Gasparo, Acoma, JMC and Helicon labels, winning rave reviews. His concerts are regularly broadcast on Radio and TV in Canada, Europe and Israel.

As a pedagogue, Berick is equally sought after as violin teacher and chamber music mentor. Prior to his current appointment as Professor of Violin at the University of Ottawa, he served on the faculties of the University of Michigan, McGill University, the University of Toronto and the Eastman School of Music. He has been invited as teacher and artist-in-residence at Bowdoin Music Festival (Maine), Killington Music Festival (Vermont), The Shouse Institute (MI), The Beethoven Seminar (New York), Music@Menlo (CA), Keshet Eilon, Sounds in the Valley, and the JMC Young Players' Unit (Israel), and has been featured in masterclasses

worldwide. Many of his students hold positions in leading orchestras, ensembles, and academic institutions.

Yehonatan Berick's principal violin teachers were Ilona Feher, Henry Meyer, Kurt Sassmanshauss, and Dorotyh DeLay. He also studied theory with composer Sergiu Natra, and performed in masterclasses for such artists as Isaac Stern, Henryk Szeryng, Max Rostal and Josef Gingold.



For more information about  
Yehonatan Berick, please visit  
[www.yehonatanberick.com](http://www.yehonatanberick.com).