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| Gian-Francesco Malipiero (1882-1973) |
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| Gian-Francesco Malipiero was an Italian composer whose life spanned an expansive period of Italian history, from the post-Risorgimento years through two disastrous wars and into the turbulent *anni di piombo*. Remembered as a Venetian tied to his beloved Asolo in the hills of the Veneto, Malipiero in fact spent his formative years in a variety of locations. His cosmopolitan upbringing took him to Trieste, Vienna, Paris, Berlin, and Bologna, where he absorbed a diversity of influences and studied with an array of tutors. Two principal musical spheres influenced his early life: Parisian modernism (he attended the riotous premiere of Stravinsky’s *The Rite of Spring* in 1913), and the *seconda prattica* of Claudio Monteverdi, whose renaissance works he studied and later edited in their entirety – antique music would form a thread of meaning that wove through much of his later work. Into the 1920s, Malipiero spent frequent amounts of time in Rome, and was (with Casella and the poet Gabrielle d’Annunzio) a founding member of the avant-garde group the *Corporazione delle Nuove Musiche*. This was the era in which Italian modernism and Italian Fascism formed an uneasy partnership, and this group played its role in the bombastic nationalism of the 1920s. Yet despite a burgeoning friendship with Mussolini, Malipiero’s career was almost derailed in 1932 when the fascist ‘Manifesto of Italian Musicians for the tradition of Nineteenth-Century Romantic Art’ criticised his music heavily, and in 1934 his opera *Il Figlio della Cambiata* was banned by the authorities due to its subversive libretto by Pirandello. From the war years onwards, Malipiero retreated from public life and spent longer periods in Asolo, with his influence on Italian musical life felt most keenly in his tutelage of a young Luigi Nono and Bruno Maderna. |
| Gian-Francesco Malipiero was an Italian composer whose life spanned an expansive period of Italian history, from the post-Risorgimento years through two disastrous wars and into the turbulent *anni di piombo*. Remembered as a Venetian tied to his beloved Asolo in the hills of the Veneto, Malipiero in fact spent his formative years in a variety of locations. His cosmopolitan upbringing took him to Trieste, Vienna, Paris, Berlin, and Bologna, where he absorbed a diversity of influences and studied with an array of tutors. Two principal musical spheres influenced his early life: Parisian modernism (he attended the riotous premiere of Stravinsky’s *The Rite of Spring* in 1913), and the *seconda prattica* of Claudio Monteverdi, whose renaissance works he studied and later edited in their entirety – antique music would form a thread of meaning that wove through much of his later work. Into the 1920s, Malipiero spent frequent amounts of time in Rome, and was (with Casella and the poet Gabrielle d’Annunzio) a founding member of the avant-garde group the *Corporazione delle Nuove Musiche*. This was the era in which Italian modernism and Italian Fascism formed an uneasy partnership, and this group played its role in the bombastic nationalism of the 1920s. Yet despite a burgeoning friendship with Mussolini, Malipiero’s career was almost derailed in 1932 when the fascist ‘Manifesto of Italian Musicians for the tradition of Nineteenth-Century Romantic Art’ criticised his music heavily, and in 1934 his opera *Il Figlio della Cambiata* was banned by the authorities due to its subversive libretto by Pirandello. From the war years onwards, Malipiero retreated from public life and spent longer periods in Asolo, with his influence on Italian musical life felt most keenly in his tutelage of a young Luigi Nono and Bruno Maderna.  Together with Casella and Pizetti, Malipiero was part of the *generazione dell’ottanta*, whose chief compositional gambit involved the purging of the sentimental and Verdian reputation of Italian music in order to establish a new generation of serious, mannered, and forward-looked composers. Their music was often labeled neo-classical, using language and style as colours on a canvas, renovating older music (note the many -ana compositions of these years, Scarlattiana, Paganiniana, etc.), and creating refined sounds that owed much to the music of Stravinsky, Hindemith, and de Falla. They treated the past as a reified object, suitable for use as subject material for the present. Malipiero’s *Sette* *Canzoni* (1918-19) and *Torneo Notturno* (1929) mark the boundaries of what Waterhouse calls Malipiero’s ‘vintage years,’ and both works display a strong conception of form and musical concentration whilst acting in their own right as highly effective musical theatre works. Though constituting a refreshing break from the sensuous world of *verismo* opera, this stylized aesthetic later concretised into a rather mannered, idyllic moderation, displaying the ‘ambivalent historical character of modernist classicism’ as Hermann Danuser judges it (Danuser, 275)  Nonetheless, Malipiero’s talent was so vibrant that later works gave the lie to any talk of ossification: the fifth of his *Dialoghi* (1955-57) is a masterpiece of his eighth decade, a romantic tone-poem in baroque form with a classical concerto dialogic, early twentieth-century harmony, and frequent use of 12 tone-rows. Malipiero was by all accounts an enigmatic figure, but as Waterhouse has argued, his unevenness does not disqualify him from being the most original Italian composer of his generation. Selected List of Works: *6 morceaux* (6 pezzi) (1905)  *Pause del Silenzio* (1917)  *Pantea* (1919)  *String Quartet n.1 ‘Rispetti e strambotti’* (1920)  *L'Orfeide* (1919–1922), Opera  *San Francesco d'Assisi* (1920–1921)  *Torneo notturno* (1929)  *Concerto n.1 for Piano and Orchestra* (1931)  *Epitaffio* (1931)  *Inni* (1932)  *Concerto n.1 for Violin and Orchestra* (1932)  *La favola del figlio cambiato* (1933)  *Giulio Cesare* (1935), Opera  *Sinfonia n.1 ‘In quattro tempi, come le quattro stagioni’* (1933)  *I capricci di Callot* (1942)  *Hortus conclusus* (1946)  *Mondi celesti for soprano and ten instruments* (1948)  *Mondi celesti ed infernali* (1949)  *Vivaldiana* (1952)  *Fantasie concertanti* (1954)  *I Dialogi* (1955-1957)  *Macchine per 14 strumenti* (1963)  *Bianchi e neri* (1964)  *Iscariota* (1971) |
| Further reading:  (Keller)  (Cattelan)  (Danuser)  (Gatti)  (Nicolodi)  (Waterhouse)  Stable URL for a collection of photos and resources on Malipiero:  <http://www.rodoni.ch/malipiero/homepagegfm.html>  Stable Spotify Link to selected music by Malipiero: [Gian Francesco Malipiero](http://open.spotify.com/artist/4EyY6oleYBgqoIGLu4WS2o) |