

Adriano: In his 30th Year of Recording Out-of-the-Way Repertoire

An interview by Jim Westhead



Bratislava, November 1990: Video stills of Adriano recording Franz Waxman's 'Rebecca' at the Concert Hall of the Slovak Radio.

In February 2002, Rob Barnett conducted an email [interview](#) with Adriano, the Swiss conductor, composer and musicologist (born in 1944) who has enriched the recorded repertoire with many rare and almost unheard works by nearly forgotten composers. He has set down the complete orchestral works by Fritz Brun and music by Ernest Fanelli, Louis Bourgault-Ducoudray, Émile Jaques-Dalcroze and Mario Pilati to name but a few. His interests extend to recordings of film music such as a large selection of the score of Waxman's *Rebecca* (which is enthusiastically reviewed in the Penguin Guide's 1000 Best Classical Recordings), Bernard Herrmann's *Jane Eyre* and Georges Auric's *Beauty and the Beast*. I must also acknowledge his commitment to Respighi, which has resulted in some 'firsts' on disc, such as the delightful puppet opera *La bella dormente nel bosco* and his cantata *La Primavera*. Ian Lacey (who had already interviewed Adriano for 'Fanfare' in 1998) also did an [interview](#) for MusicWeb International in 2004 to coincide with Adriano's 60th birthday. This present interview is aimed at discovering what has been going on since then.

J.W.: In years gone by you have been involved in the creation of a large number of recordings. Considering the rarity of the repertoire, and that you are not a 'guest conductor' on the orchestral circuit, it has been a considerable achievement. Is there anything due for release that you would like 'rare repertoire' fans to look out for?

A.: To be exact, between 2002 and today, I was able to add 19 CDs to my discography, and this is a very lucky situation, considering all that happened in the crisis period of the classical music recording business. Today, even CDs with big stars can be realized only with the support of sponsors – and they don't sell as well as earlier star recordings. Considering that these stars rarely approach less-known or unknown repertoire, you can imagine how difficult it is for a maverick like me to raise money for all those crazy projects of mine! Furthermore, since I am not wanted on the concert podium and, apparently, not 'popular enough', I am not figuring amongst the protégés of successful and prolific 'special' labels like Chandos and CPO, who record a lot of unknown repertoire. Of the 30 CDs I was allowed to realise for Marco Polo-Naxos, only for a few of the later ones had I to raise some funds.

As far as Jaques-Dalcroze is concerned, two years ago more funds were raised to finance another CD, featuring his impressive cycle 'Tragédie d'amour' for soprano and orchestra, which might be considered the composer's masterwork. Since I am a friend and admirer of the soprano Elena Mosuc (I witnessed her debut and early activities at the Zürich Opera), I realized that it would be ideal for her tessitura. I succeeded in convincing her to study this difficult work. We recorded in Bratislava in April 2017, with the Bratislava Symphony Orchestra – a different ensemble than the Slovak Radio Symphony, with whom I had realized many Marco Polo-Naxos CDs between 1987 and 2002, even though in this ensemble there are quite a few musicians who have worked for me since my beginnings.

On this CD one can also hear a fascinating pastoral orchestral suite entitled 'La Veillée' ('The Vigil') and the swashbuckling overture to Jaques-Dalcroze's opera 'Sancho'. This item will be released this within a few weeks; and on our sessions with Elena, I have just realized a short promotional video: <https://vimeo.com/226476645>

J.W.: In previous interviews you have occasionally mentioned music that has had to be recorded with minimal rehearsal, presumably because of the limited finance available for such events. I would be interested to hear of your experiences when working with the orchestras and soloists in these conditions, how you went about obtaining/preparing orchestral parts, and how you related to the sound engineers.



Moscow, July 1999. With producer Edvard Shakhnazarian and balance engineer Vitaly Ivanov, recording Albert Fäsy's orchestral works.

During my early Marco Polo-Naxos years I had already gained the reputation of being an uncomplicated and 'fast recording' conductor. The latter is not always a compliment, but in my case, it was. With the little time I was given to record, I had to know the score perfectly and exactly how much time could be invested in each section – and where exactly one could make eventual concessions. Since my conception of a CD recording is not that one of a dry and too perfect studio thing, I always tried to reach a 'near to live' atmosphere. Perceptive reviewers would notice this – and appreciate it! From the many conductors I had watched rehearsing over years (and this being present, not just watching edited videos!), I had learnt that orchestras just want to go on playing and hate to be lectured about the music waiting on their stands. And also, that constantly interrupting after just a few bars makes the music increasingly worse. A first uninterrupted reading-through is, in any case, necessary – but during this, first corrections must be 'recorded' by the conductor's brains – and

communicated at the end of a longer section. And one also must not forget the sound balance, on which some technicians have strange ideas sometimes... Marco Polo-Naxos were recording very adventurously at that time – and there never were post-production facilities other than joining takes together. We certainly did good multi-channel recordings, but these mixes were immediately transformed into a 2-channel DAT or (a few years later) a U-Matic tape! Much later in Moscow – and of course now in Bratislava – I would be given better equipment, better producers and better balance engineers.

After the mentioned first ‘run-throughs’, longer sections (according to the recording schedule) had to be rehearsed once or twice – and then immediately recorded. The Bratislava and Moscow Orchestras I have worked with are excellent, highly professional ensembles, and, what is also very important, they like to play unusual repertoire!

Needless to say, a conductor must also be able to feel an orchestras inner pulse, radiate calm competence, be always in the best mood, and able to criticise (or correct) with a sense of diplomacy and humour.



Moscow March 2007, with Producer/Balance Engineer Maria Soboleva, recording Fritz Brun's 10th Symphony

J.W.: And of course, reviewers and other listeners would know nothing of these recording obstacles that you faced. Moving on, I have taken a look at your discography, and I am not surprised to discover that you have made pioneering recordings of the music of Swiss composers. Names like Hermann Suter and Pierre Maurice to name but two, appear on the Sterling label. Going back to Naxos (Marco Polo), I find such luminaries as Albert Fäsy, and, of course, Arthur Honegger.

My studio conductor's career actually begun thanks to my research on Honegger's film music. Klaus Heymann of Naxos-Marco Polo had heard a 1983 LP test pressing with Honegger's music from 'Napoléon' and 'La Roue' which I had recorded with a Swiss youth orchestra. He consulted two American friends of mine, in order to learn more about me – and so he spontaneously engaged me to conduct a first CD. Three more Honegger followed in the years 1987-1993, I was also allowed to record

film scores by Jacques Ibert, Aram Khachaturian, Franz Waxman, Bernard Herrmann, and Arthur Bliss. From 1991 onwards, Klaus Heymann considered me to be good enough for symphonic music – and therefore my Marco Polo-Naxos repertoire would be enriched with music by Ottorino Respighi, Jacques Ibert, Ernest Fanelli and Mario Pilati. In 1993 I was also given the opportunity to work with the Moscow Symphony Orchestra – and to record film music by Georges Auric and Dmitry Shostakovich, besides CDs with music by George Templeton Strong, Sylvio Lazzari and Albert Fäsy. But this all ended abruptly in the year 2000.

The idea about a Marco Polo film music series was actually mine, including its CD cover layout. I had also proposed to launch a series with forgotten Swiss composers, but since the first item – music by Albert Fäsy – did not sell well enough, this project was not continued. Fortunately, enough I was able to take this ‘Swiss project’ to the Sterling label, which had already gained a good reputation with recordings of Symphonies by Hans Huber and Robert Hermann. Thanks to a few sponsors, we could realise those 5 CDs with music by Jacques-Dalcroze, Pierre Maurice, Hermann Suter and Fritz Brun. Besides this, I also raised funds for a recording with music by the forgotten German Romantic Heinrich Schulz-Beuthen. And the Moscow Symphony, which at that time was being used less by Klaus Heymann, was therefore more than happy to continue working with me.

It was the Sterling recording of Brun’s 3rd Symphony who, actually, would cause an important change in my musical life, since it made possible my project of recording this composer’s complete orchestral works, a project, started in 2003, which could be completed in 2016. Detailed info on this can be found in this special link of my website: <http://www.adrianomusic.com/styled-10/styled-13/index.html>

J.W.: In an attempt to listen to a little of the music before opening my wallet (again), I found a YouTube video of Suter’s ‘Le Laudi di San Francesco d’Assisi’, which has impressed me enormously. In fact, I have just ordered a CD of it, which brings to four the number of CD’s I have ordered (three conducted by you) since starting this interview.

I suppose you have ordered one of the two Swiss recordings of this piece (on the labels ‘Musikszene Schweiz’ and ‘Ars Musici’), which are the only available. But, in the 1970s, a reference LP had already been produced, featuring soloists like Edith Mathis, Norma Procter, Eric Tappy and Fernando Corena (of which I have made a good private digital transfer, if anybody would be interested).

Suter’s magnificent ‘Le Laudi’ is the Swiss cantata par excellence. It became a sudden international success and is still being performed in many countries today. The composer had premiered it in Basel in 1924, Wilhelm Furtwängler had conducted it in Vienna in 1926 – the same year as Fritz Brun in Paris’s ‘Trocadéro’, in front of an audience of several thousands (and in presence of the composer). The idea of setting these beautiful 12th century texts to music, was not totally new, since Franz Liszt had already written a ‘Sonnenhymnus des Heiligen Franziskus’ for baritone, male choir and orchestra in 1862. Better known are Liszt’s two piano homages to St. Francis ‘Franziskuslegenden’ (which, incidentally, have been superbly orchestrated by Dr. Friedrich Georg Zeileis, an Austrian internist and composer).

Though I feel sad that I have never been able to conduct or to record ‘Le Laudi’, at least I can be happy that I have been allowed to record Suter’s great Symphony in D minor – a work inspired by Swiss landscapes and folklore – and even containing (in its Scherzo) sardonic criticism against Swiss bureaucracy and stubbornness – as Fritz Brun would later do in one of his Symphonies.

J.W.: You have obviously undertaken a labour of love in bringing these Swiss works to the recording studio. I have often felt that many, many British composers are neglected in the concert hall here, whilst one can hear Tchaikovsky and Dvorak repeated endlessly. Are the Swiss people prepared to give Swiss composers a hearing? Have you been involved in giving public performances of rare works?

As already mentioned in earlier interviews, I have never been allowed to perform in public. After I had proved to be able to conduct, I met concert agents and orchestra managers. Not only they considered me 'too old' (I was 43 by then, but they found that it was already too late for them to 'invest in me'), and, anyway, they did not like my 'uncommercial' preferences for unusual repertoire.

Can you imagine? In all these years, I have not even been allowed to conduct a film music concert... Now I am 73, and looking back to a nice bunch of 49 CDs with interesting music, I even get a bad conscience for still wanting for more. But in the meantime, I have learnt to be resigned...

I seem to be the Swiss conductor who has recorded the largest quantity of CDs (21) with classical Swiss music, but this too does not impress my country's cultural authorities at all. Over here I am practically ignored and, occasionally, even ridiculed. Anyway, that I have a good international reputation proves once more that nobody is a prophet in its own land.



Moscow October 2012. Recording Brun's 1st Symphony with the Moscow Symphony Orchestra

J.W.: Has the topic ever arisen of you becoming an occasional guest conductor with the Orchestras that you have worked with?

Since I am unable to work with orchestras, I don't really know if they would really like me as a permanent guest, although the ensembles I am working with since 1987 love not only the repertoire I am bringing over, but also that I am coming down well-prepared and that I work with them quite nicely.

J.W.: Looking at some of your Marco Polo and Naxos recordings, I see several Respighi CD's, one devoted to the Italian Mario Pilati. and another to the Swiss Albert Fäsy.

I was also very lucky to be able to record 6 CDs with music of my beloved Ottorino Respighi – and that I still would adore to conduct some more of his less-known pieces. However, in the meantime, there is an almost questionable abundance of Respighi recordings! Mario Pilati is another favourite of mine. He was a virtuous orchestrator like Ravel and has a great sense of humour. It's Marco Polo's loss that they refused to produce a second Pilati CD – which I was fortunately able to do on the Inedita label shortly afterwards. Just recently, Brilliant Classics has issued a splendid recording of Pilati's chamber music, a repertoire which I had also proposed to Marco Polo ages ago, but they were not interested. The Lazzari CD is another one of those Marco Polo items which, unfortunately, had a very short life. I

feel very much at home in this full-tempered music. Fortunately, it's still available online. In the meantime, HNH International has withdrawn his complete Marco Polo repertoire, and re-issued it only partly on Naxos.

J.W.: You have also recorded little known music by the French composers Ernest Fanelli, Sylvio Lazzari and Jacques Ibert. I am a little surprised by the latter – Ibert is relatively well known and has had recordings from the major record labels, so what spurred you on to champion his music?



Moscow, August 1995. With the Moscow Symphony Orchestra, after recording Sylvio Lazzari's Symphonie and Tableaux Maritimes.

Ibert is another virtuoso orchestrator – and the real exponent of French 'esprit' in music. It all started with a CD with Ibert's film music – which became very successful, although Marco Polo were just 'breaking even' with these three Ibert CDs! Fortunately enough, I was allowed to record less-known pieces. Other labels, before and at that time, had recorded 'Escales' and 'Divertissement' repeatedly, but in 1973 and 1975, EMI had released two splendid Ibert LPs conducted by Louis Frémaux and Jean Martinon, which already included premier recordings of 'Symphonie marine', 'Bacchanale' and 'Tropismes'. Marco Polo were unable to record Ibert's 'Le Chevalier Errant' (a dramatic oratorio), which was only available on an old mono LP. As recently as 2014 Timpani produced a great new recording of this piece, coupled with 'Les Amours de Jupiter', a ballet which I had hoped to do on a fourth Marco Polo CD. But they preferred continuing with another conductor, and produced (in 1996) an excellent Naxos CD with the Lamoureux Orchestra, featuring 'Escales', 'Divertissement', 'Symphonie Marine', 'Bacchanale' and 'Ouverture de Fête'. Still, I had been good enough for those proposed odd pieces – and for film music. Jean-Claude Ibert highly appreciated my approach to his father's music.

Incidentally, my Naxos CD with film music by Jacques Ibert is one of my most successful and best sold item, but, as usual, Naxos artists are not entitled to royalties. It was even proposed for the 'Grand Prix Du Disque', but the jury felt confused, since at that time, apparently, this repertoire was not found appropriate to be honoured!

J.W.: There you are! You reveal another interesting aspect of the recording world – many people reading this will be completely unaware that Naxos do not pay royalties, and you must be intensely frustrated that you missed out on a 'Grand Prix du Disque'. Even so, your enthusiasms carried you on,

and I am also intrigued by your CD's of the American George Templeton Strong, who was quite unknown to me until I prepared this interview. 'Why an American', I asked myself, until I read that he had spent many years living in Switzerland. I have managed to acquire the three CD's you made of his music and so far, have listened to two of them, those containing the symphonic poem 'Ondine', his 'Sintram' Symphony, the orchestral suites 'From a Notebook of Sketches' and the short 'Chorale on a Theme of Hans Leo Hassler'. I find his music very attractive and his abilities to portray images in music comes through strongly, particularly in the third movement of the symphony and the orchestral suites. It seems to me that whilst one could never describe his music as 'easy listening', he never attempted to keep up with the dramatically changing musical world of the 1900's. Perhaps he found enough artistic satisfaction in his paintings.

After completing his studies in Germany under Salomon Jadassohn and Joachim Raff, G. T. Strong moved to for a short time to Vevey, but his fellow student Edward McDowell called him back to the USA, where, as it turned out, more chances were given to teach and to play the piano than to become a self-living composer. In 1879 he returned to French Switzerland, hoped that the region would not only be favourable to his poor health, but also to his ambitions. There he was occasionally engaged as an oboe/English horn player (Strong was also a gifted pianist and violist!) by the Orchestra of the Montreux Kursaal which, later in 1918, would become Ansermet's Orchestra de la Suisse Romande. Ansermet appreciated Strong's music and premiered his two tone poems 'Le Roi Arthur' (written in 1918 and dedicated to the conductor) and 'Ondine' (Ansermet advised to substantially revise this work of 1882-3 for his 1939 performance). Strong's three-part suite 'Die Nacht' (composed and premiered by Ansermet in 1913) is a work I am really fond of; it gives the conductor splendid interpretative opportunities. It would also be performed one year later in Lausanne by Ansermet's predecessor Carl Ehrenberg (its dedicatee) and in 1939 (in the USA) by Arturo Toscanini! Strong's dramatic program symphony 'Sintram' (dedicated to McDowell, written 1887-88 and premiered in the USA by Anton Seidl in 1893 and performed by Ansermet in 1913) is another piece I identify myself and where I was able to 'put in' a lot of my own temper and personal ideas about musical interpretation. I never thought to be allowed one day to record 3 CDs of Strong's complete published orchestra works! I was also intending to record his pieces for solo instrument and orchestra, two youthful tone poems and an unfinished 1st Symphony, but that was not possible for Naxos. I still keep photocopies of unpublished manuscripts, which I had already started transcribing with computer software...

Whilst the Strong project was still running, I was happy to become a friend of Mrs Betty Rivier-Strong – a direct descendant of the composer, who still lives in the canton of Vaud. She gave me a lovely landscape watercolour of G. T. Strong. Strong's conventional painting style is definitely no comparison with that of him as a composer. He decided to switch over from music to painting in a resigned mood, after having witnessed that 'modern' music was getting increasingly *à la mode* rather than his descriptive post-Romanticism. He was a great admirer of Richard Strauss (in fact, some passages in 'Le Roi Arthur' prove this), but at that, which composer would not become jealous of his genius and success? I once came across some passages of Strong's devastating criticism of dissonant music; through its lines one can read also feelings of envy. One must consider that Strong's 'Ansermet period' span over 30 years, which is not too much for just a handful of works. He may have found an easier platform in Germany if he had returned there, but he would have been co-involved in two World Wars instead and, first of all, he was a modest character, not having the necessary sharp elbows to enable him to push himself to the fore of the competitive crowd.

J.W.: Can you tell me if you have made any new recordings for release in the near future?

After the two last items of my Fritz Brun series and the already mentioned Jaques-Dalcroze CD, I am also appearing on a CD with works by German composer Martin Scherber (1907-1974), featuring his 28 minutes long First Symphony. The remaining items of this disc are Scherber's practically complete (and very beautiful!) songs with piano, performed by the tenor Thomas Heyer, and accompanied by the pianists Lars Jönsson and Hedayet Djeddikar. Since Scherber's two other Symphonies had been

already recorded and there were no other orchestral works around by this composer, we decided on this unusual coupling. Scherber's music sounds like Bruckner, but it's based on a different conception. In his excellent liner notes, author Christoph Schlüren writes: 'Scherber himself pointed out that the first movements of Beethoven's and Bruckner's Ninth Symphonies contained the essence of what he perceived as necessary for a further development of symphonic form: the principle of metamorphosis, invoked by Goethe and assimilated from nature. A logical consequence of this formal type, in which all the details are related, is a single-movement structure'.

To conduct this Symphony was for me an exciting experience, and, since I was never allowed to conduct Bruckner, I plunged myself deeply into his fascinating kind of 'esoteric' music – and landed quite near to him, so that some orchestra players said that I would actually make a good Bruckner interpreter.

The Dalcroze and the Scherber items will be released November-December 2017. After having written so many liner notes to my CDs I am happy now that other authors will take care of this, which I always considered a rather agonising task. Performing musicians mostly don't like writing about music. The (fortunately!) always well-reviewed extended liner notes to the 10 Brun CDs make up a book of 60 pages now; presently I am just revising them for a forthcoming 10-CD box reissue, where all texts and many photos will be figuring on a separate CDR.

J.W.: I have heard that Guild closed down some of their operations and this affected the distribution of your Fritz Brun recordings. I am interested that you say you were writing extended notes for that series – such a thing makes a boxed set doubly interesting, and the fact that there are nine Brun symphonies together with concertos, orchestral works, choral works and song cycles rather goes to prove that you have been very busy for over a decade.



Bratislava, August 2013. With soloist Tomas Nemeč, during recording session of Fritz Brun's Piano Concerto.



Bratislava, August 2015. Recording Fritz Brun's 'Verheissung' with the Bratislava Symphony Choir and Symphony Orchestra.



With cellist Claudius Herrmann (2nd from right) and the Bratislava team, after recording Fritz Brun's Cello Concerto.

My 'Brun years' 2003-16 were very busy ones, since I also needed to research intensively into a composer about whom very little has been written so far, and so it was necessary to promote him better. There are a few shorter biographical essays and articles, but no musicologist studies and not a single biography in book form! I have even been asked to write such a book, but I categorically refused. I knew quite a few of Brun's scores years before I had started recording them – feeling resigned, since thinking that I would never be able to do so. But then, the impossible happened!

Since most of Brun's scores are still in manuscript form, it was necessary to consult them in libraries and archives. Of his 10 Symphonies, only Nos 2-4 were published. Of some works I even had to edit new scores and instrumental parts, including new piano extracts of concertante works and of 'Verheissung' (for choir and large orchestra). I needed to dig in a dozen Swiss archives to find all kinds of missing biographical material – and could even find highly interesting documents in German, Austrian and French archives. In Berne libraries over 200 concert program leaflets came to light, proving Brun's immense activities as a repertoire conductor – but I am still missing about another 100 – which probably may never turn up. Now I suppose I am considered the scare of Berne's archives, after so many insistent visits!

Between 1909 and 1941, Brun was not only chief of the local Symphony Orchestra, but also of two choral societies, with whom he gave memorable performances, as for example, in Berne's cathedral, of Bach's Masses, Passions and Cantatas, but also of Requiems by Verdi and Berlioz and of Beethoven's 'Missa Solemnis' and Ninth Symphony. Besides such monoliths, he also performed choral pieces by

less-known, or at that time modern Swiss composers like Schoeck, Honegger and Burkhard. Also, as far as his subscription concerts were concerned, what Brun did for the city of Berne is simply unique and this city should be proud – even though I don't get this impression from its present musicians and concert promoters.

Of course, we have to do with very special and difficult music (also as far as the performance level is concerned), and concerning myself, I have come to believe that I am of Brun's same temperament, conceptions and tastes. I have the impression that, at first, this music had been given to me to slumber inside me for many years, and that the time had come to allow me to bring it to life again. Occasional Swiss performances of his symphonies occurred after his death, but Brun can still be considered as unjustly neglected. In the 1990s, two interpretations of his Second Symphony and one of his Variations for strings and piano were even released (in collaboration with Swiss Radio), but these 3 CDs have meanwhile become difficult to find. The historical 1946 broadcast of Brun conducting his 8th Symphony has been released by Guild in 2009, but it has also been deleted. This superb performance – Brun's only sound document as a conductor! – is coupled with a 1946 recording of his 'Variations for Strings and Piano' conducted by Paul Sacher. As far as Brun's chamber music is concerned, there is a CD with his First Violin Sonata (released in 1993) and another with his Third String Quartet (released in 2005).



Zürich, March 2015. Editing a documentary on Brun's Piano Concerto.

Fritz Brun: Piano Concerto:
<https://vimeo.com/142860891>

Fritz Bruin: Cello Concerto:
<https://vimeo.com/141051073>

Fritz Brun: Symphony No. 8
<https://vimeo.com/143711085>

After having realised a handful of short 'promo'-documentaries on some particularly attractive works by Brun (three of which can be seen by clicking the links above) – also showing my work with the Moscow and Bratislava orchestras – I am now editing my 80-minute video biography on this composer. This will be completed by the beginning of next year. It will also contain about a dozen clip-like musical extracts, with views of/ from Swiss mountains and sea landscapes including a helicopter flight over the Jungfrau range. There are also animated montages using some figurative works of arts – in order for the viewer to relax in-between all the biographical information.

Finally, a film about music, with no music being played (heard), must deliver some sort of images to it. The need to show extracts from autograph scores cannot be ignored, but only occasionally. For example, I have created a sequence showing a full-screen (and full-page) autograph score scrolling over 37 bars like a background 'tapestry' – from which figures from paintings by Ferdinand Hodler become 'protagonists', emerging and disappearing again into it, to create a dramatic narrative, interpreting the soundtrack...

This film will be available on a private internet link or for didactical purposes only and not commercialised. This is due to lack of funds to cover eventual copyright fees. Swiss and German TV stations did not show the least interest in this project when I approached them two years ago, so I decided to create and produce it all by myself. Later it would be useful perhaps to make an English version (since there is, actually, more interest for Brun in English- than German-spoken regions), but one can never tell...

J.W.: I know that amongst all your other artistic activities, you compose too. Have you time to create new music at the moment?

Once this documentary will be completed, I will take up composing – although I am aware that nobody is really interested in this other side of mine. Finally, there are so many better composers around, that I get a bad conscience for even daring to consider belonging myself to this category...

My last completed work is a Concertino for Ondes Martenot and strings entitled 'Nudités' – and that was 5 years ago! During my 'Fritz Brun' years I had agreed to commitments of chamber group arrangements as, for example, a wind nonet version of Saint-Saëns' 'Introduction et Bacchanal' (from 'Samson et Dalila'), a wind quintet suite of pieces from Smetana's 'Bartered Bride', an arrangement for flute, clarinet, harp and string quartet of Debussy's 'Trois ballades de François Villon'. My string sextet arrangement of five early songs with piano by Fritz Brun can be considered as 'bonus tracks' to my last volume of the Brun CD series). Fortunately enough, my most performed arrangement of Debussy's 'Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune' (written in 2008, also for flute, clarinet, harp and string quartet) still seems to please...

And there is an 'Impertinent Concertino' for harpsichord and Strings which awaits a performance since 2010, but I have given up promoting it after realising that even here in Switzerland (one of the richest countries in the world), state or private sponsors are only interested in supporting composers who have already enough money and reputation... I have written this work for my friend, the great harpsichordist Jory Vinikour.

But just two weeks ago, in-between my very demanding film editing work, I needed a break, so I decided to go out for a walk. Then it started to rain very heavily, so I returned home in a hurry. I opened my music software and just wrote down a rather strange Foxtrot and Tango for brass quintet...



In Bratislava's Radio Studio with the Mucha Quartet, after recording the clarinet quintet 'Thoughts and Associations'.

J.W.: So, the urge to be creative in the compositional sense is definitely still there, and you sometimes feel that you have to do it as a sort of 'release' from other activities. You have sent me a CD of your Clarinet Quintet 'Thoughts and Associations' dating from 2005 which I have just listened to, and so my experiencing Adriano the Composer as well as Adriano the Conductor brings my role in this interview to an end. I would like to thank you for being prepared to reveal so much of your life as a recording artist.

Thank you Jim! Last but not least I can only say that the present world situation concerns me much more than my own one as an artist...