

A Kalmus Classic Edition

Nicolai
RIMSKY-KORSAKOV

CAPRICCIO ESPAGNOLE

Opus 34

FOR ONE PIANO/FOUR HANDS

K 05296



FOREWORD

“The Capriccio Espagnole” for symphonic orchestra, composition No. 34, was written in 1887. Rimsky-Korsakov wrote of its composition: “I worked ardently the entire summer on the orchestration of ‘Prince Igor’ and succeeded in accomplishing a lot. In the middle of the summer, I interrupted this work with ‘The Capriccio,’ which I wrote from the sketches intended for a virtuoso violin fantasy on Spanish themes. According to my calculations, ‘The Capriccio’ should have glittered with a virtuosity of orchestral coloration, and apparently, I did not miscalculate.”¹

Further on, while talking about the first performance of “The Capriccio,” the composer analyses and then characterizes his work: “...at the first rehearsal, as soon as the first part was finished (2/4 A-Major), the entire orchestra started to applaud me. The same applause accompanied the other parts also, where the *fermatas* allowed. I asked the orchestra permission to dedicate this musical piece to them, and the musicians responded with general approval.

“‘The Capriccio’ presented no difficulties in performance, and sounded brilliantly. At the concert itself, it was performed with such perfection and enthusiasm as never again, even under the direction of Nikish. This musical piece, despite its length, provoked persistent ‘encores.’ The opinion of the critics and of the public, however, who find that ‘The Capriccio’ is superbly orchestrated, needs qualification. ‘The Capriccio’ is brilliant in its composition for orchestra. The change of timbres, the successful selection of melodic designs and figurative patterns corresponding to each kind of instrument, the small virtuoso *cadenzas* for solo instruments, the rhythm of the percussions, and so on, constitute the very essence of the composition, and not the orchestration, which is its attire. The Spanish themes, predominately of dance character, provided me with rich material for producing various orchestral effects. Undoubtedly, ‘The Capriccio’ is in general a completely external musical piece, but, at the same time, it is lively and brilliant. It is somehow less successful in its third part (Alborada – B Major), where the brass instruments deaden a bit the melodic lines of the woodwinds. This effect, however, could be completely overcome, if the conductor pays attention to this and diminishes the nuances of force for the brass instruments, by replacing *fortissimo* with a simple *forte*.”²

The first performance of “The Capriccio” took place in St. Petersburg on October 31, 1887, in the second Russian symphonic concert, directed by the author. The score and the arrangement of “Capriccio Espagnole” were first published by the press of M. P. Beliaiev in 1888.

The present edition is based on the manuscript of the arrangement in the Saltykov-Shchedrin Public Library, on the arrangement published by Beliaiev, and on the printed score in volume 21 of “*The Complete Works of Rimsky-Korsakov*,” published by Muzgiz in 1958.

On the arrangement manuscript, the title page reads: “N.R.-K. Capriccio Espagnol pour orchestre. Arr. par l’auteur.” On the last page is written: “Fine. N. R.-K.”

Translated by Dr. Olga Browning

1.) *Ibid.*, pp. 164-165.

2.) *Ibid.*, pp. 165-166.

CAPRICCIO ESPAGNOLE

OP. 34

1887

I Alborada

Vivo e strepitoso $\text{♩} = 132$

The first system of the musical score consists of four staves. The top staff is the right hand of the piano, featuring a rapid sixteenth-note pattern with slurs and fingerings (5, 3, 5, 3, 5, 3, 5, 3). It is marked with a forte *ff* dynamic. The second staff is the left hand, providing a rhythmic accompaniment with chords and eighth notes. The third staff is the right hand of the violin, playing a melodic line with slurs and accents. The fourth staff is the left hand of the violin, playing a bass line with slurs and trills (*tr*) in the final measures.

The second system continues the musical score with four staves. The piano right hand (top staff) continues with the sixteenth-note pattern, ending with a trill (*tr*). The piano left hand (second staff) continues with its rhythmic accompaniment. The violin right hand (third staff) continues with its melodic line, and the violin left hand (bottom staff) continues with its bass line.

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The third system of the musical score consists of four staves. The piano right hand (top staff) features trills (*tr*) and a section marked with a piano *p* dynamic. A section marked with a box 'A' is present. The piano left hand (second staff) continues with its rhythmic accompaniment. The violin right hand (third staff) continues with its melodic line, and the violin left hand (bottom staff) continues with its bass line.