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Sigismund Thalberg made his first appearances in London and Germany to great success. By the 1850s he had built up a major international career as a wizard of the piano, rivalled only by Liszt. For exceptional pianists such as Thalberg and Liszt, transcriptions were a useful vehicle for demonstrating their technical prowess, in a form with which audiences were familiar. Bellini's operas made ideal material for these compositions: they were packed with memorable melodies that transferred well to the keyboard, and contained enough dramatic interest to provide contrast. Thalberg's fantasies on themes from these operas exploit the full range of technical possibilities offered by the pianos of the mid-nineteenth century. They are both a fascinating glimpse into the musical taste of this period, and enjoyable evocations of operas both still popular and unjustly forgotten.

**Sigismond
THALBERG
(1812-1871)**

1	Grande fantaisie et variations sur des motifs de la Norma, Op. 12	15:46
2	Grande fantaisie et variations sur des motifs de I Capuletti, Op. 10	17:11
3	Fantaisie sur des motifs de Beatrice di Tenda, Op. 49	13:02
4	Fantaisie sur des motifs de La Straniera, Op. 9	12:42
5	Grande caprice sur des motifs de La Sonnambula, Op. 46	16:18

Francesco Nicolosi, Piano

Recorded at the Concert Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic in Bratislava from 28th May to 2nd June, 1990

Producers: Karol Kopernicky, Hubert Geschwandtner

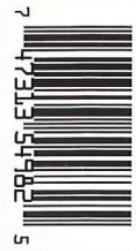
Cover Painting: Stage Design for Bellini's *La sonnambula* (Act II, Scene II) by Alessandro Sanquirico
(Teatro Carcano, Milano, 1831)

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Playing Time
74:59



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