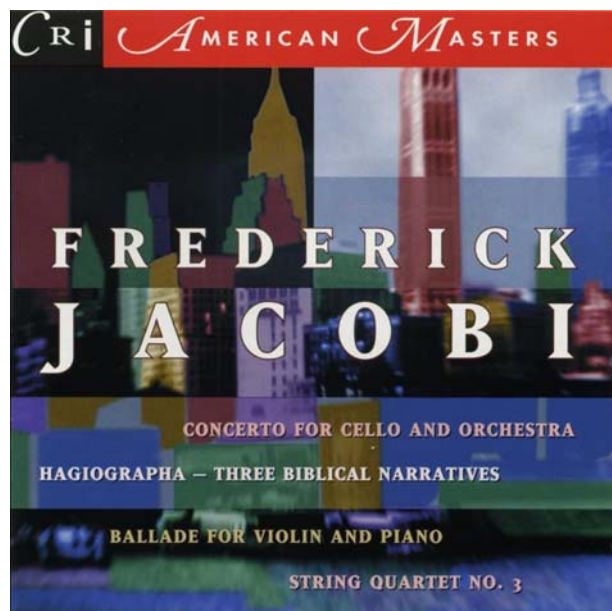


Frederick Jacobi



Concerto for Cello and Orchestra (1932) (15:56)

1. I. Allegro cantabile (6:06)
2. II. Allegretto (4:40)

3. III. Ritmico (5:11)
Guido Vecchi, cello; Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, William Strickland, conductor
- Hagiographa* (1938) (23:24)
Three Biblical Narratives for Piano and Strings
4. I. Job (Allegro appassionato) (8:21)
5. II. Ruth (Lento ma non troppo) (9:57)
6. III Joshua (Allegro agitato) (5:22)
Claremont String Quartet: Marc Gottleib and Vladimir Weisman, violins; Scott Nickrenz, viola; Irving Klein, violoncello
7. *Ballade* for Violin and Piano (1942) (11:37)
Fredell Lack, violin; Irene Jacobi, piano
- String Quartet No. 3 (1945) (26:30)
8. Allegro ma non troppo (9:44)
9. II. Andante espressivo (7:39)
10. III. Scherzo: Presto (3:29)
11. IV. Allegro ma non troppo (4:17)
Lyric Art Quartet: Fredell Lack and George Bennett; violins; Wayne Crouse, viola; Marion Davies, cello

Total playing time: 76:32

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Notes

"My conscious aim has been to write music which is clear, definite and concise: I am an anti-obscurantist. I am great believer in melody; a believer, too, that music should give pleasure and not try to solve philosophical problems. I believe that art and craft have much in common and that art, to be valid, must be more than the manifestation of a passing mode: in short, that there are some eternal values which transcend period and time."

Frederick Jacobi was born on May 4, 1891 in San Francisco. His early musical teachers included Raphael Joseffy, Rubin Goldmark, Ernest Bloch, Isidor Philipp and Paul Juon. From 1916 to 1917 he was an assistant conductor of the Metropolitan Opera in New York. Jacobi's teaching career began in 1924 at New York's Master School of United Arts. In 1936 he began a fifteen-year tenure at the Juilliard Graduate School. He also lectured at the University of California, Berkeley, Mills College, and the Julius Hart Musical Foundation at Hartford, Connecticut. His composition pupils included Alexei Haieff, Leonard Ratner, Robert Starer and Robert Ward. Jacobi also made important contributions to the cause of contemporary music by serving as a director of the American ISCM, as a board member of the League of Composers, and as a regular contributor to *Modern Music*. His catalogue of works includes two symphonies, concertos for violin, piano and cello, numerous chamber and choral works as well as songs and piano solos. His opera *The Prodigal Son* was completed in 1944 and partially performed at Stanford University in 1949.

As a composer, perhaps Jacobi's most overtly American

works come from what the American *Groves* describes as his "Indian period." In the 1920s, Jacobi returned to the west where he studied first hand the music of Pueblo and Navajo Indians of New Mexico and Arizona. Several compositions from that period show the influence of his immersion into Native American music, including the String Quartet No. 1 (1924) and *Indian Dances* for orchestra (1927–28).

Jacobi's most mature and important works come from the period after 1930, the year in which he was commissioned by New York's Temple Emanu-El to compose a Sabbath Evening Service. Though he had never been subject to formal religious education, he was deeply aware of the Jewish spiritual and cultural heritage and it was to the lore of the Bible that he turned for much of his subsequent creative work

The Concerto for Cello and Orchestra was written in 1932 in Switzerland, shortly after the completion of the *Sabbath Evening Service* (1930–31) and in many of the Sabbath Evening Service (1930–31,) and in many ways it is a clear outgrowth of the composer's initial liturgical writing. The Concerto was first performed in Paris in 1933 by cellist Diran Alexanian, to whom the work is dedicated, with Alfred Cortot conducting at the École Normale. The three movements are each prefaced by a quote from the Psalms:

I. "Lord, Thou halt been our dwelling
place in all generations."
(Psalm 90)

II. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High

shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (Psalm 91)
III. "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord,
and to sing praises unto Thy name, O most High." (Psalm
92)

The *Hagiographa* (Holy Writings) for piano quintet was written in 1938 on a commission from Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, to whom it is dedicated. The best known of Jacobi's chamber works, it was first performed at the 1938 Pittsfield Festival by the Kolish String Quartet. The pianist was Irene Jacobi, who was the composer's wife and also an acclaimed virtuoso and noted new-music champion of the period.

When *Hagiographa* was first recorded in 1942 for the RCA Victor label, the composer wrote the following notes:

"In the first movement I endeavored to reproduce the dramatic intensity of the Book of Job: the sorrows piled high upon the head of the patient Job; his resignation to them; the advent of his friends; his stormy argument with God and the final reconciliation. '*So the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends ... So Job died, being old and full of days.*'"

"*Ruth* is in a mood-picture, idyllic and pastoral. What drama there is occurs in the middle section, the climax of which finds its inspiration in the famous words, '*Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for wither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I shall lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.*' The story is, therefore, told somewhat in reverse; both the beginning and the end of this piece mirror the calm and the tenderness, with sacrifice requited and sorrow seen from afar.

"*Joshua* is the siege of Jericho: the battle, the trumpets; the city's fall; the hymn of thanksgiving and the suggestion of a ritualistic dance.

"Despite the programmatic content, each of the movements is written in a form which would be convincing from the purely musical point of view. The first is a sort of sonata ... The second is an amplified song form...The last is in a modified A-B-A form in which the principal subject, rather fully amplified song form The last is in a modified A-B-A form in which the principal subject, rather fully developed in the beginning, is barely suggested on its return; it gives way rather speedily to the coda: the ritualistic dance."

Both the *Ballade* for Violin and Piano (1942) and the String Quartet No. 3 (1945) use Romantic and Impressionistic devices to engage audiences and display the technical and interpretive abilities of the performers. The *Ballade* was written for and premiered by violinist Eudice Shapiro and pianist Irene Jacobi. The String Quartet No. 3 was first performed in San Francisco by the Budapest String Quartet: It is a lyrical work drawing on traditional sonata form. The first and final movements share some thematic materials, while the first movement includes a lively cadenza for the second violin.

After the death of Frederick Jacobi on October 24, 1852, Olin Downes wrote a lengthy tribute in the *New York Times*, from which the following is excerpted: "By birth, training and faith an American composer, Jacobi intensely loved his land and was fascinated by its phenomena. But (he) was never a flag-waver or propagandist...he was widely traveled, mentally as well as circumstantially, hence a citizen of the world...As a composer he was no revolutionist, and least of all a stylistic poseur in search of tonal idioms or effects that would give his productions a momentary sensational effect...He was himself, which is the alpha and omega of becoming a creative artist."

Production Notes

Digitally remastered recordings from the historic CRI catalogue of American music.

from CRI SD 146:

Concerto for Cello and Orchestra Published by Theodore Presser Co.

from CRI SD 174:

Ballade for Violin and Piano Published by Carl Fischer Inc.

Hagiographa and String Quartet No. 3 Published by Theodore Presser Co. CRI *American Masters*

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Cover Art E Design: Bernard Hallstein

Digitally remastered by Joseph R. Dalton and Ellen Fitton at Sony Classical Productions, Inc., New York City.

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