

*The Steinway* grand piano used for this recording was made in 1892 in Hamburg, on an American frame, and sold the same year in Stockholm. A few years later all traces of it were lost, until it reappeared in Rome in the 1990s. After being bought by the Valli piano workshop of Ancona it was subject to a carefully-planned and comprehensive restoration, allowing it to be played again in public in 1997. Since then '70,000', as it is affectionately known, has been loaned for concerts only to Michele Campanella and Ratko Delorko, both involved in research into original timbres, including by means of historic instruments. All of its principal parts are original, notably the strings, mechanism and the whole soundboard area. The aim of the experts who are now responsible for the piano, Roberto Valli and Luigi Lamacchai, has been to preserve as far as possible the sound as intended at the time when, through a chain of unknown circumstances, it returned to us miraculously intact and in working order: the result of a delicate balance between the pianist's touch, the striking mechanism

and the materials. This is why, in order that this essential balance should not be lost, the care and maintenance of '70,000' is entrusted only to those involved in its restoration: Roberto Valli, Luigi Lamacchai and Enrico Ricci. Despite undeniable advances in the production of pianos, playing a real period instrument can be a genuine revelation. The abilities of this piano are different from those of modern-day instruments, even though their structures are similar. Its very special and characteristic timbres are clearly audible to an audience wanting to experience something new which, however, has its origins in the past.

*Roberto Valli*

