

1004. On a Persian market

Backgrounds from S. Radic

Albert William Ketèlbey (1875-1959), was an English composer and conductor. At the age of eleven he composed a piano sonata for which he received the Sir Edward Elgar Prize, and at thirteen won a scholarship to study composition at Trinity College of Music in London. In 1891 he became organist at the Church of St. John in Wimbledon and musical director of the Vaudeville Theatre in 1897, as well as music director at Columbia Gramophone. Soon he published his first compositions, partly under the pseudonyms Anton Vodorinski and Raoul Clifford, and created piano arrangements of works by various composers.

Ketèlbey became famous for his short, very picturesque orchestral pieces of "Light Music", but he also composed a large number of accompanying music for silent films. He has conducted throughout Europe. The success of his works enabled him later a pleasant life in retirement on the Isle of Wight; there he indulged his further passion, the billiards game, besides the compositional activity.

The 1920 composition "On a Persian Market" is a so-called "character piece". This is a shorter piece of music especially for piano. It should express a mood that is usually described by a title. The title can describe the mood itself as "longing" (Franz Liszt) or the picture or event that leads to this mood, as "Wilder Reiter", "Erster Verlust" (Robert Schumann), "Die Mühle im Schwarzwald" (Richard Eilenberg) etc. Sometimes retrospective titles turn a piece into a character piece such as "Tristesse" for the etude op. 10 No. 3 by Frédéric Chopin. Due to their popularity, character pieces are often considered banal, but this does not diminish their true artistic greatness.

The character pieces at the end of the 19th century always focus on a musical effect. Examples of this are the "Petersburger Schlittenfahrt" (there are recordings with whip cracking and dog barking) and "Auf einem persischen Markt" by Albert Ketèlbey (in circus music the epitome of the Oriental). This composition is one of his most famous Orchestral works. In the intermezzo scene, a truly oriental



atmosphere dominates this work. The camel drivers are gradually approaching, the beggars' calls for gifts are being heard. The beautiful princess appears, accompanied by her servants. The caliph is now passing the market. The princess gets ready to leave and the caravan continues its journey. The motives of the princess and the camel driver can still be heard in the distance and the market place becomes lonely again.....

The version of KLAUS WUNDERLICH sounds in tempo 100 at first as a kind of syncopated Latin jazz music, whereby the accompaniment consists of rhythmic intervals and the drums play continuously with toms. Then - in contrast to the lyrically designed original - a swing part with organ-walking bass and sometimes very jazzy harmonies is played. The tempo 100 remains, but Wunderlich packs two full swing bars into a single Latin bar, so that the walking bass actually runs at the tempo 200 with an eighth run!

Main 1 (Latin-Part) Main 2 (Swing-Part)

Organ

Guitar

Bass

Perc. Toms

Drums

Latin & Swing, T=100

	Main 1 (Latin-Part)	Main 2 (Swing-Part)
Organ		
Guitar		
Bass		
Toms		
Perc.		
Drums		

Programming instruction

The version of KLAUS WUNDERLICH sounds in tempo 100 at first as a kind of syncopated Latin jazz music, whereby the accompaniment consists of rhythmic intervals and the drums play continuously with toms. Then - in contrast to the lyrically designed original - a swing part with organ-walking bass and sometimes very jazzy harmonies is played. The tempo 100 remains, but Wunderlich packs two full swing bars into a single Latin bar, so that the walking bass actually runs at the tempo 200 with an eighth run!