

CD REVIEW

The Piano at the Ballet. Anthony Goldstone (piano) (79.53) Divine Art dda 25073



Tchaikovsky	Pas de deux (The Nutcracker)
Weber	Invitation to the Dance
Falla	Ritual Fire Dance
Minkus	Pas de deux (Don Quixote) with two variations and a coda
Mozart	Ballet Music from Ascanio in Alba
Joplin	Elite Syncopations
Tchaikovsky	Pas de deux: The Black Swan (Swan Lake) with variations and a coda
Delibes	Waltz from Nai''la arranged by Dohnanyi
Elgar	Echo's dance (The Sanguine Fan)
Tchaikovsky	Pas de deux (Swan Lake) with introduction, two variations and a coda
Chopin	Waltz in C sharp minor Op 64 no.2

We are glad that Anthony Goldstone has broken away from the confines and predictability of Schubert and has made some very important discs of Russian music by Rebikov, whom Scriabin later aped and received the acknowledgment that was due to Rebikov, and discs of fine piano works by Gliere and Lyapunov

Anthony Goldstone is a very good pianist and a most congenial man. Some of the music on this disc is his own arrangements such as the Minkus and Tchaikovsky and the arrangements are very well conceived for the piano

I must confess that I am not a lover of transcriptions. Take, for example, the ballet music of Tchaikovsky. Some of it is exquisite such as the wordless chorus in the Nutcracker soaring above some of the most sumptuous orchestration you will ever hear. Whatever may be said of Tchaikovsky he was a magnificent orchestrator and I would always want to hear his orchestral music in that form. The Beethoven symphonies and the Liszt symphonic poems are vastly superior in their orchestral forms and I want to hear them in that form not confined to the piano.

Nonetheless, Goldstone revels in these transcriptions and his playing can only be admired. He has a wonderful ability to get to the heart of the music. He is a communicator of the highest order. We should have him more in concertos and recall his sensitive Beethoven Four.

But there is a justifiable moan. The first four tracks are called Pas de deux from The Nutcracker but the Pas de deux is track one, track three, for example, is the Sugar Plum Fairy. The four pieces should have been called a Suite since there are not four separate pas de deux. The same complaint can be made about the Minkus selection and the Swan Lake selection. It is both confusing and annoying. This really is bad on titling and planning.

The music varies in quality but that is not Goldstone's fault of course. The Elgar is not even worth its two minutes but the Chopin stands on its own although it is subject to some awful performances on discs.

One very interesting feature that this disc has brought to clearer light Mozart's influence on Tchaikovsky. No wonder the Russian wrote a suite called Mozartiana and I may never have reached this clear consideration had I not heard this disc.

It is a very pleasurable CD, deserves to find friends, shows us how gifted and dedicated a pianist Goldstone is and we admire and praise him for music off the beaten track. More rare Russian piano music please, Mr Goldstone.

The sound quality is very good. The picture of the cover is delightful.

David Wright

