

Henryk Wieniawski - Works for Violin (1996)

Written by bluesever

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Henryk Wieniawski (1835-1880) [01:34] 01. *Caprice in A minor* [02:07] 02. *Obertass-Mazurka, Op. 19 No. 1* [08:41] 03. *Polonaise brillante No. 2 in A major, Op. 21* [04:41] 04. *Polonaise de concert No. 1 in D major, Op. 4* [04:32] 05. *Scherzo-tarantelle in G minor, Op. 16* Itzhak Perlman, violin Samuel Sanders, piano
Violin Concerto No. 1 in F sharp minor, Op. 14 [15:22] 06. *I Allegro moderato* [05:21] 07. *II Preghiera. Larghetto* [07:10] 08. *III Rondo. Allegro giocoso*
Violin Concerto No. 2 in D minor, Op. 22 [11:20] 09. *I Allegro moderato* [05:06] 10. *II Romance. Andante non troppo* [05:52] 11. *III Allegro con fuoco - Allegro moderato*
Itzhak Perlman, violin London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Seiji Ozawa Recording: (6-11) 1973, (4-5) 1974, (1) 1977, (2-3) 1979

"Poor Wieniawski!", Tchaikovsky wrote to their mutual patroness Nadezhda von Meek. "I reckon him very gifted. . . . His charming Legend and a few parts of the D minor concerto give evidence of a serious creative talent". When he died, in Moscow in 1880, not yet 45, one of the great talents of nineteenth-century violin virtuosity was lost; he is the link between the Franco-Belgian school and the modern Russians, who have always followed Tchaikovsky in holding him in great honour. He was the first violin professor at Anton Rubinstein's new Conservatory in St Petersburg in 1862; his assistant was Leopold Auer, who followed some of his methods and was the teacher of Elman, Heifetz and Zimbalist. His work and his music are directly connected to a style of violin playing we may still hear on our concert platforms today.

The music, too, could do with an occasional airing. The Second Concerto has not lacked enthusiasts to echo Tchaikovsky's admiration; and it is, indeed, easy to see how the easy lyrical line and the gipsy exuberance of the finale would appeal to Tchaikovsky. The First Concerto, in F sharp minor, earns a dismissive comment in the current edition of Grove, I see, which seems less than fair: the middle movement, a *Preghiera*, is a dark, intense and very beautiful

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movement and the finale has a lively kick to it, a sense of joie de vivre and of joy in mastery of the instrument. It is obviously very much the music of the man of whom the young Hubay could write (in a translation of a notice written for a Budapest paper in 1877), "Wieniawski is equally far removed from German sentimentality and Italian exaggerated sweetness of which Paganini himself was not free. Even in moments of highest emotion and ardour he never transgresses elegance of style and noble taste".

The latter sentence could well describe Perlman's glowing performances. Even more casual manner, or than Ida Haendel, Concerto (coupled to Kabalevsky's Concerto) with much dash but in somewhat more casual manner, or than Ida Haendel, whose playing is careful and lyrical but lacking in the drive also demanded (her coupling is Glazunov's Concerto), Perlman captures the warmth and fervour and brilliance and the more than slight salting of showmanship which are part of what is also a genuine lyrical gift. This is superb playing of superb virtuoso music, well worth attention from many music-lovers to whom Wieniawski can be hardly more than a name. The recording is suitably warm and vivid. --- arkivmusic.com

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