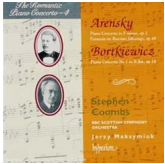


Sergei Bortkiewicz – Piano Concerto No 1 In B Flat major Op.16

Written by bluesever

Monday, 22 March 2010 13:46 - Last Updated Wednesday, 11 September 2013 19:26

Sergei Bortkiewicz – Piano Concerto No 1 In B Flat major Op.16



1. *Lento - Allegro deciso*
2. *Andante sostenuto*
3. *Molto vivace e con brio*

Stephen Coombs – piano
BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra
Jerzy Maksymiuk – conductor

Since the release of Stephen Coombs's recording of the Piano Concerto No 1 Bortkiewicz has become something of a cult composer amongst lovers of late romantic piano music. A man after his time, Bortkiewicz became all but forgotten after the First World War. He fled communist Russia to live first in Istanbul and then Vienna but his music remained resolutely that of pre-Revolution Moscow; like Rachmaninov in style but with even more 'tunes' and sentiment.

Bortkiewicz's piano style was very much based on Liszt and Chopin, nurtured by Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff, early Scriabin, Wagner and Russian folklore. He was unaffected by the music trends of the 20th century — the composer never saw himself as a "modernist" as can be seen from his *Künstlerisches Glaubensbekenntnis*, written in 1923. His workmanship is meticulous, his imagination colourful and sensitive, his piano writing idiomatic; a lush instrumentation underlines the essential sentimentality of the melodic invention. But Bortkiewicz was not merely an imitator — he very much had his own style that drew upon all the influences of his life and that can be immediately recognised as a typically Bortkiewicz tone: lyrical and nostalgic.

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