

Valentin Silvestrov - Hieroglyphen Der Nacht (2017)

Written by bluesever

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Drei Stücke (Für Zwei Violoncelli) 1 I Hieroglyphen Der Nacht 1:56 2 II Nachhall Eines
Walzers 2:38 3 III Nachhall Einer Sarabande 3:49 Elegie
(Für Violoncello Solo Und Zwei Tamtam)
4 I 2:01 5 II 3:11 6 III 11:10
8.VI.1810...Zum Geburtstag R.A. Schumann (Für Zwei Violoncelli)
7 I Elegie 3:53 8 II Serenade 1:51 9 III Menuett 2:26 10 Augenblicke Der Stille Und
Traurigkeit (Für Violoncello Solo) 7:56
Serenaden (Für Zwei Violoncelli)
11 I Abendserenade 3:11 12 II Augenblicke Einer Serenade 2:29 13 Lacrimosa (Für
Violoncello Solo) 3:42
25.X.1983...Zum Andenken An P.I. Tschaikowskij (Für Zwei Violoncelli)
14 I Präludium "Geburt Der Melodie" 2:50 15 II Wiegenlied 4:38 16 III Serenade 3:46 17
Walzer Der Alpenglöckchen (Für Violoncello Solo) 4:04
Cello – Agnès Vesterman Cello, Tam-tam – Anja Lechner

This recording of music for cello solo and two cellos by the Ukrainian composer Valentin Silvestrov is a disc of two halves, as it were. Listeners familiar with the benign beauty that imbues much of Silvestrov's sacred choral works will be in for quite a shock. The opening Drei Stücke and three-movement Elegie belong to a very different world to the composer's liturgical songs and Alleluia settings (as heard, for example, on the recent, excellent 'To Thee We Sing' – Ondine, 10/15). Edgy and pointillist, the first study (whence the recording's title 'Hieroglyphs of the Night' comes), resembles Anton Webern at his most epigrammatic. The Elegie, this time for solo cello, is even more brittle – sounds snatched from the silences that frame them. Alternating between cello and two tam tams, and brilliantly performed by seasoned Silvestrov cellist Anja Lechner, the final elegy evokes a strange, disembodied ritualistic counterpoint.

The juxtaposition is made to sound even stranger by the familiarity of what follows. Two sets of homages – one to Schumann, the other to Tchaikovsky – demonstrate Silvestrov's oft-quoted

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comment that his music 'is a response to and an echo of what already exists'. The 'Abendserenade', an arrangement of the 'Evening Serenade' from the composer's Silent Music, gives full vent to the first cello's lyrical register, supported by delicate guitar-like pizzicatos on the second.

Perhaps even more surprising is that these two sharply contrasting worlds – dissonant, austere and inward-looking on the one hand, exuding a radiant tonal beauty on the other – often coexist in Silvestrov's creative imagination, making it almost impossible to predict what might come next: a 'hieroglyphic' music, formed out of the very layers of history. ---Pwyll ap Siôn, gramophone.co.uk

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