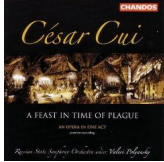


César Cui – A Feast In Time Of Plague (2004)

Written by bluesever

Wednesday, 28 February 2018 13:45 -

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1 *A Feast In Time Of Plague* 31:39 Three Scherzos, Op. 82 18:47 2 *No 1 In C Major* 4:43 3 *No 2 In F Major* 7:49 4 *No 3 In C Minor* 6:09 - 5 *Les Deux Ménétriers, Op.42* 6:14 6 *Fair Spring - Echoes Of War, Op.66 No.4* 9:15 7 *Budrys And His Sons, Op.98* 5:31
Tatyana Sharova - soprano Ludmila Kuznetsova - mezzo-soprano Alexei Martinov - tenor
Andrei Baturkin - baritone Russian composer, kompo Dmitri Stepanovich - bass Russian State
Symphony Orchestra Valeri Polyansky - conductor

Chandos presents the premiere recording of the one-act opera 'A Feast in Time of Plague', Three Scherzos, Op.82 and three songs for solo voice and orchestra. César Cui is the least-known member of the group of five Russian nationalist composers (with Balakirev, Rimsky-Korsakov, Mussorgsky and Borodin) who together became known as 'The Mighty Handful'. He was considered to be the most dramatic of these composers. His music is highly tuneful and approachable, full of the colour we expect from the Russian romantic tradition.
---Editorial Reviews, arkivmusic.com

Cezar Antonovich Cui is probably the member of the Russian Mighty Handful least known in the United States. Mussorgsky, Borodin and Rimsky-Korsakov are the stars, even Balakirev's name is recognized. Cui was born in Lithuania of a French father (from Napoleon's army) and a Lithuanian mother. His parents sent him to study engineering in Russia and, like many of the Handful, he had a major career in a profession aside from music. His operas were very successful at home but haven't traveled well or at all outside their country of origin -- which, on the evidence here, is a great shame.

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A Feast in Time of Plague is based on a Pushkin, the literary father of so much Russian opera. Barely over half an hour long, it is a small gem, richly melodic and beautifully sung by a fine cast in Chandos' excellent recording. The remainder of the CD is filled with the lovely Three Scherzos, Op. 82, and three songs sung by members of the opera's cast. Valeri Polyansky and the Russian State Symphony Orchestra provide great support. Complete libretto and notes in Russian, English, German and French accompany the well-filled CD. The music is unfailingly lovely and interesting, and makes me want to search out more of Cui's work. ---William Fregosi, amazon.co.uk

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