

Liszt - Symphonic Poems (Mehta) [1997]

Written by bluesever

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1. *Préludes*, S. 97 (LW G3) (16:14) 2. *Orpheus*, S. 98 (LW G9) (11:53) 3. *Mazeppa*, S. 100 (LW G7) (17:48) 4. *Hamlet*, S. 104 (LW G22) (15:47) 5. *Hunnenschlacht*, S. 105 (LW G17) (14:16) Berliner Philharmoniker Zubin Mehta – conductor

Liszt is accredited with inventing the Symphonic/Tone Poem and these are some of his big ones. Most are inspired by a literary source rather than a visual one, but Liszt paints some very dramatic pictures. This modern recording of Symphonic Poems renders a true picture of Liszt's wild imagination.

His most famous, *Les Preludes*, is played magnificently, featuring a quirky little melody, erupting in a glorious ending.

Hamlet and *Orpheus* are the quieter selections of this recording and played with stunning beauty. The harps of *Orpheus* bring a brilliant shine to the music, and the drama of *Hamlet* is wrung-out in a truly revolutionary, yet Shakespearian manner.

The two showstoppers, however, are *Mazeppa* and *Hunnenschlacht*. In both the brass takes over and blasts away the rest of the program. While both are truly exciting, it is the *Battle of the Huns* that features organ in a most majestic manner, on this particular recording, it creates a gothic feeling, adding to the wild Bohemian nature of Liszt's writing.

No need to worry, Zubin Mehta, as the wrangler of the Berlin Philharmonic, has let his wild

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steeds buck in this recording while keeping them fenced in. All aspects of the sound, interpretation, and performance are pristine, with great color and imagination. If you are a true music lover this CD is a must. If you are new to the orchestral music of Liszt this will be far from a disappointment. If you love exciting music in a romantic fashion, click on order this CD. ---
Brett A. Kniess (Madison, WI)

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