

Rossini - Instrumental Music (2009)

Written by bluesever

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- 01 - *Overture to La scala di seta (The Silken Ladder)*
- 02 - *Serenata per piccolo compresso (1823)*
- 03 - *String Sonata in G major (1804)-Moderato*
- 04 - *Andantino*
- 05 - *Allegro*
- 06 - *Le Rendez-vous de chasse (1828) 'Grande fanfare par Rossini'*
- 07 - *Variazioni a piu strumenti obbligati (1809) Variations for solo clarinet, solo string quartet and orchestra*
- 08 - *Andante, e Tema con Variazioni per quattro strumenti a fiato (1812) Variations for wind quartet*
- 09 - *Semiramide-Overture (1823)*

Budapest Festival Orchestra
Ivan Fischer – conductor

This only has 2 of the overtures: La Scala di Set and the Semiramide Other works include Serenata per piccolo compresso, the String Sonata No.1 in G major, Le Rendez-vous de chasse, Variazioni a piu strumenti obbligati, and Andante, e Tema con Variazioni per quattro strumenti a fiato. The forte passages are clean, clear and articulate. The high frequencies are perhaps the sweetest I ever heard, and if that is true, and I really believe it is, this is the best sounding recordings of any type I ever heard. But multi-channel SACDs go to the head of the class anyway....This one is just so exceptionally fine! --- Bruce Zeisel

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Gioachino Rossini is most readily associated with opera overtures than opera -- to whom he was a major contributor -- and to some extent with sacred choral music and piano literature. Perhaps least of all he is recognized as a composer of instrumental and chamber music; while he did not produce an inconsiderable amount in these areas, much of his symphonies, concertante-styled works, and chamber music is early and simply cannot keep their pride of place in comparison with his far mightier operas. Nevertheless, Ivan Fischer and the Budapest Festival Orchestra have found much to admire in this neglected area of Rossini's efforts, and have recorded the Super Audio CD Gioacchino Rossini: Instrumental Music for Channel Classics. It includes two opera overtures, from La Scala di Seta and Semiramide, the first of his six String Sonatas in G major, two sets of variations, and a Serenata for rather odd combinations of instruments and finally a fanfare for four horns. The recording quality is strikingly immediate and forward, and the playing crisp and very professional. However, there is a rather bland, formal, and conservative feeling to most of it; the explosive excitement that kicks the disc off with the Overture to La Scala di Seta doesn't take hold and most of the rest comes off like a set of rather polite and uninteresting set pieces. There is a little peak of interest when the Andante, e Tema con Variazioni begins, owing to soloist Ákos Ács' lovely clarinet tone and the unanimity of the wind doublings, though once the piece gets rolling the same sense of ennui returns. It is not Rossini's music that's the issue here; certainly the string sonatas have been recorded as a set numerous times, perhaps most successfully by I Musici. The problem is that while Fischer and the Budapest Festival Orchestra achieve great precision and discipline in this music, they lack inspiration; tempi are sluggish and the sparkle one usually encounters in Rossini's music is reduced to a dull glint. While the basic idea of putting together a program of Rossini's purely instrumental compositions -- and therefore providing an alternative to the mountains of CDs devoted to his opera overtures -- is a good one, as a vehicle for that, Channel Classics' Super Audio CD Gioacchino Rossini: Instrumental Music is simply out of gas. ---Uncle Dave Lewis, Rovi

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