

## Pletnev plays Schumann (2004)

Written by bluesever

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Symphonic Studies, Op.13 Version 1852 with Etudes from 1837 version 1. *Theme. Andante* 1:35 2. *Variation I. Un poco più vivo* 1:32 3. *Variation II. Marcato il canto* 2:59 4. *Etude III. Vivace* 1:21 5. *Variation III* 0:56 6. *Variation IV* 1:07 7. *Variation V. Agitato* 0:49 8. *Variation VI. Allegro molto* 0:52 9. *Variation VII* 2:26 10. *Appendix (1st published 1873) - Variation V* 2:49 11. *Appendix (1st published 1873) - Variation I* 1:13 12. *Etude IX. Presto possibile* 0:39 13. *Variation IX. Con espressione* 3:04 14. *Finale. Allegro brillante* 6:40  
Fantasie in C, Op.17  
15. 1. *Durchaus fantastisch und leidenschaftlich vorzutragen - Im Legenden-Ton* 14:42 16. 2. *Mäßig. Durchaus energisch - Etwas langsamer - Vielbewegter* 7:56 17. 3. *Langsam getragen. Durchweg leise zu halten - Etwas bewegter* 10:35  
Bunte Blätter, Op.99  
18. *Albumblätter I: Ziemlich langsam, sehr gesangvoll* 1:50 19. *Albumblätter II: Schnell* 0:44 20. *Albumblätter III: Ziemlich langsam, sehr gesangvoll* 1:41 21. *Albumblätter IV. Sehr langsam* 2:31 22. *Albumblätter V. Langsam* 1:36 23. *Schumann: Arabeske in C, Op.18* 6:36  
Mikhail Pletnev, piano

Mikhail Pletnev is a phenomenal pianist. His technique is truly stunning and as effortless as brushing a feather-duster across the keyboard. His tone is beguilingly beautiful, smooth as silk and velvet; he seems to caress the keys, coaxing from them entire layers of sonorities and an endless variety of colors, nuances and dynamics. Gold Medalist at the Tchaikovsky Piano Competition, his repertoire ranges far and wide; his award-winning recordings include music by Scarlatti, C.P.E. Bach, Grieg, Rachmaninov, Prokofiev, and, being a conductor and composer as well, his own works and transcriptions. Musically, he must be one of the most individualistic and original performers before the public. This disc shows that Schumann, the quintessential romantic, has found a kindred spirit, but one whose approach is very much his own. Pletnev does not hesitate to bring out changes of mood, dynamics and character with quite drastic shifts of tempo, heralded by big ritardandos and long pauses. Thus, his playing is extraordinarily free, yet simple, leisurely, comfortable and without fuss. And though all the liberties are obviously carefully thought out (and might at times seem a bit excessive), they have an almost

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improvisatory spontaneity that gives them a feeling of being freshly experienced, as if he were making everything up on the spot. He underlines the contrasts between the variations of the Symphonic Etudes (and replaces a variation of the work's later, standard version with two from the earlier one); the Fantasie is truly fantastic, rhapsodic, heroic, passionate, deeply felt. Of the five rather unfamiliar "Album Leaves" (or Colored Leaves), four are slow and singing, one is a wispy witches' dance, and the Arabesque is all tenderness, ardor and charm. ---Edith Eisler, amazon.com

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