111 Years of Deutsche Grammophon - CD 39

Tchaikovsky: Violin Concerto Op.35 / Wieniawski: Etude-Caprices Nos.2, 4 & 5 / Sarasate: Navarra, Op.33

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840 - 1893) Violin Concerto in D, Op.35 *1 1. Allegro moderato [18:56] 2 2. Canzonetta (Andante) [6:58] 3 3. Finale (Allegro vivacissimo) [9:26]*
Henryk Wieniawski (1835 - 1880) Etudes-Caprices for 2 violins, Op.18
4 No.2 in E flat major [5:09] 5 No.5 in E major [1:55] 6 No.4 in A minor [1:33]
Pablo de Sarasate (1844 - 1908)
7 Navarra for two violins, Op.33 [6:01]
David Oistrakh, Igor Oistrakh - violin Staatskapelle Dresden Gewandhausorchester Leipzig
Franz Konwitschny – conductor

The Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 35, written by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky in 1878, is one of the best known of all violin concertos. It is also considered to be among the most technically difficult works for violin.

The piece was written in Clarens, a Swiss resort on the shores of Lake Geneva, where Tchaikovsky had gone to recover from the depression brought on by his disastrous marriage to Antonina Miliukova. The first performance was eventually given by Adolph Brodsky on December 4, 1881 in Vienna, under the baton of Hans Richter.

The Eight Études-Caprices, Op. 18, of Henryk Wieniawski are unusual in the genre of instructive works in that he wrote them for violin "with the accompaniment of a second violin." And for most of the eight, it isn't necessarily what is traditionally thought of as an

accompaniment either. The Etudes-Caprices were written in the same period as Wieniawski's Violin Concerto No. 2, while he was in St. Petersburg, and, along with his etudes in Lécole moderne, Op. 10, are often ranked with Paganini's Caprices as more than just challenging technical exercises.

Navarra by Sarasate - Rather than favoring one violin and letting the other off with easier material, this is a demanding showpiece for both soloists. A bracing piano (or orchestra) chord sets off a lyrical but impassioned passage for the two violins, which soon tear into a highly Spanish-flavored theme employing a jota rhythm. One violin may play trills while another provides a double-stop drone, but more often they play the melody together in close harmony. This is true in the ensuing section, a slower, gently loping melody. Next comes a passage with a new theme, one violin playing the melody while the other joins the accompaniment with pizzicato material. The two violins take swirling, intertwining lines in the increasingly finger-twisting material that follows, then ascend well beyond the top of the staff for something resembling a Spanish minuet before returning to a repeat of the main jota section. The final page is a whirl of pizzicato notes and high-lying bowed pyrotechnics. ---AMG

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