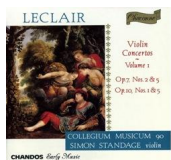


Jean-Marie Leclair – Violin Concertos Vol.1 (Standage) [1994]

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1. Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 7, No. 2*: I. Adagio - Allegro ma non troppo 6:31 2. Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 7, No. 2*: II. Adagio 3:51 3. Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 7, No. 2*: III. Allegro 5:40 4. Violin Concerto in A Minor, Op. 7, No. 5: I. Vivace 5:36 5. Violin Concerto in A Minor, Op. 7, No. 5: II. Largo - Adagio 4:24 6. Violin Concerto in A Minor, Op. 7, No. 5: III. Allegro assai 5:15 7. Violin Concerto in B-Flat Major, Op. 10, No. 1: I. Allegro 5:07 8. Violin Concerto in B-Flat Major, Op. 10, No. 1: II. Andante 3:52 9. Violin Concerto in B-Flat Major, Op. 10, No. 1: III. Giga - Allegro ma non troppo 5:07 10. Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 10, No. 5: I. Allegro ma poco 5:54 11. Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 10, No. 5: II. Largo 5:02 12. Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 10, No. 5: III. Allegro 5:48 Collegium Musicum 90 Simon Standage - violin & director

The three volumes in this series from the mid-1990s, comprising all twelve of Leclair's Op. 7 and Op.10 concertos, are uniformly excellent. Leclair doesn't go in for the intense pyrotechnics of some of his Italian contemporaries, but his concertos are full of grace and charm. It is all beautifully crafted and there is plenty of musical interest here as well as a very engaging overall effect, and it is quite right that Leclair is becoming rather better known.

Simon Standage and Collegium Musicum 90 judge it perfectly, I think. Their tempi are restrained without ever seeming plodding or turgid and they allow the music's character to shine through. The ensemble is quite small, giving the concerti an almost chamber feel in places, and the excellent musicians play together beautifully. There is plenty of virtuoso stuff here, too, but - as we would expect from Standage - it is played with that apparently effortless grace which serves the music rather than drawing attention to the skill of the soloist.

Each disc has a well chosen selection so that each makes an enjoyable programme (although I enjoy them more when I just listen to one or two concerti at a time). The recorded sound is very

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good and the presentation attractive with interesting notes. This is a delightful series, and recommended wholeheartedly. ---Sid Nuncius, amazon.com

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