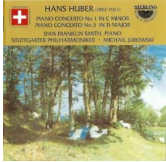


Hans Huber – Piano Concertos Nos.1 & 3 (2003)

Written by bluesever
Friday, 26 May 2017 11:38 -

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Hans Huber: Piano Concerto No.1 in C minor, Op. 36 1.*Langsam, düster gehalten*
2.*Langsam, in wehevoller Stimmung* 3.*So rasch wie möglich - Trio: Doppelt so langsam* 4.*Mit Feuer und Schwung* Hans Huber:

Piano Concerto No.3 in D Major, Op. 113

5.*Introduction. (Passacaglia über den Bass des I. Themas im Finale.) Allegretto molto moderato* 6.*Scherzo. Allegrissimo* 7.*Intermezzo. Adagio ma non troppo* 8.*Final. Allegro con Fuoco*

Dan Franklin Smith - piano Stuttgart Philharmoniker Mikhail Jurowski - conductor

Having recorded all eight of Huber's symphonies, Bo Hyttner's Sterling label turns its attention to the Huber concertos.

Huber was born in the Solothurn canton of Switzerland. His mature studies took place in Leipzig. These culminated in a public performance of Schumann's Op. 92 Konzertstück with Huber as pianist. In 1877 he moved to Basle where he wrote the First Piano Concerto. The work is written much under the Schumann spell: limber, gracious, elegant without being thin, decorous without dullness, entertaining without plumbing Brahmsian stürm und drang. There is a trace of glittering Liszt in the galloping third movement. The Third Concerto from 1899 has a tawny Brahmsian quality under its decorative surface. The work has more emotional depth than the first. The scherzo is quite magically weighted and constructed - a wonderful example of what can be done with the romantic concerto. There are intimations here and there of the Macdowell, Schumann and Grieg concertos. Certainly if you like those works (and few do not) you will find plenty to fascinate in the Third Piano Concerto. Huber lavished first class ideas on this work and in a performance as sensitive and seemingly well prepared as this we are in for a treat. It stands head and shoulders above the First Concerto. Listen for example to the tenderness of the violin-borne theme at the end of the third movement - Intermezzo. The final movement ends with a conventionally perfunctory flourish; the only weakness in a work that deserves much more public exposure.

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Once again this recording project was financially bolstered by the Czeslaw Marek Foundation for which we owe them thanks.

The considerable strength of this disc lies in a magically performed and honestly recorded Third Concerto. This is an example of profundity and sincerity in the silver-plated realms of the romantic piano concerto. Sterling have on this occasion beaten Hyperion to the draw. ---Rob Barnett, musicweb-international.com

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