

Rodolphe Kreutzer - Violin Concertos No.17, 18, 19 (2010)

Written by bluesever

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Violin Concerto No. 17 in G Major 1. I. Maestoso 00:06:30 2. II. Adagio 00:03:48 3. III. Rondo 00:06:37
Violin Concerto No. 18 in E Minor 4. I. Moderato 00:12:41 5. II. Adagio 00:07:18 6. III. Rondo: Allegro 00:08:51
Violin Concerto No. 19 in D Minor 7. I. Moderato 00:12:19 8. II. Andante poco sostenuto 00:05:18 9. III. Rondo 00:08:15
Axel Strauss (Violin) San Francisco Conservatory Orchestra Andrew Mogrelia – conductor

The name of French virtuoso-composer Rodolphe Kreutzer remains best known for the dedication of Beethoven's Violin Sonata No. 9 in A major, Op. 47, and for the grimly fundamentalist Leo Tolstoy novel named for that work. The CD booklet notes (in English and French) by Bruce R. Schuenemann for this Naxos release tell more about Kreutzer and include the entertaining sidelight that Kreutzer probably never performed Beethoven's sonata, which was unsuitable to his style. Nevertheless, these concertos, the last three Kreutzer wrote (they date from 1806 or later), show the influence of Beethoven, and they're quite attractive works. Virtuosity is matched to structure in the outer movements, with double-stopping and the like reserved for significant thematic junctions; there is little in the way of Paganini-like fireworks. The slow movements, beginning with unison or simply chordal statements like Beethoven's Violin Concerto, have long, serious melodies. For sheer musical interest these pieces outdo the concertos of Kreutzer's contemporary Viotti, which are more often heard, and San Francisco-based violinist Axel Strauss, with the San Francisco Conservatory Orchestra, offer lyrical performances that bring out the best early Romantic qualities in the music. The disc inaugurates a series of Kreutzer discs from the same forces, and one looks forward to hearing more music from this famous-named but largely forgotten composer. --- James Manheim, Rovi

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Rodolphe Kreutzer's final three violin concertos are among his greatest achievements as a composer. While handling a Beethovenian orchestra with a craftsman's sure touch, it is the purity and depth of tone, energetic fire and complete technical mastery required of the soloist that set these works among the most perfect examples of the French violin concerto. Axel Strauss, Professor of Violin at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and heard on concert stages worldwide, has been acclaimed 'an excellent violinist who plays these with wit and verve' (Limelight). Naxos plans to record all of Kreutzer's violin concertos. --- naxos.com

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