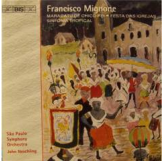


Francisco Mignone: Maracatu de chico rei - Festa Das Igrejas - Sinfonia Tropica (2005)

Written by bluesever

Wednesday, 03 October 2018 12:44 -

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Festa Das Igrejas (1940) 1. *Sao Francisco da Bahia* 2. *Rosario de Ouro Preto - Minas* 3. *O Outerinho da Gloria - Rio de Janerio* 4. *Nossa Senhora do Brasil - Aparecida* ----- 5. *Sinfonia Tropical* (1958) Maracatu de chico rei (1933) 6. *Introduction* 7. *Arrival of the Maracatu* 8. *Dance of the Mucambas* 9. *Dance of the Three Macotas* 10. *Dance of the King Chico and Queen N'Ginga* 11. *Dance of the Prince Samba-Eb* 12. *Dance of the Six Slaves* 13. *Dance of the White Princes* 14. *The Liberation of the Slaves - Final Dance*

São Paulo Symphony Orchestra (OSESP) John Neschling - conductor

One might expect from these titles that this music is brilliantly and colourfully orchestrated, filled with exotic rhythms and sounds, and one would be correct. The notes explain why it is that some of it sounds very much like Respighi, and some of it does not.

Brazil has a long and deep musical tradition so we should not be surprised that the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra is a world class ensemble and is able to play this complicated music brilliantly and with an assurance that makes them the envy of some better known ensembles. Conductor Neschling, born in Argentina of Austrian parents, studied in — and built a solid reputation in — Europe before returning home to take charge of this orchestra. He also composed the score to the film “Kiss of the Spider Woman.”

Composer Mignone was born in São Paulo, Brazil, of Italian parents, part of an Italian musical culture from which emerged pianist Guiomar Novaes. In 1920, at the age of 23, Mignone went to Milan to study for five years. A number of his works of this period were presented by Strauss, Serafin and other famous conductors.

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This is very original music. If in the next sentences I compare the sound to other composers it is only because of similarities in style, or brief reminiscences. I don't mean that Mignone has copied anyone. He condemned himself for sounding too much like Puccini, but I think that is not the first comparison a listener would make — Respighi or early Ginastera would come to mind first. Festa das Igrejas (Think Spanish: Fiesta de las Iglesias) consists of four tone poems descriptive of the moods of four famous Brazilian churches. Dramatically it builds from a quiet opening to a rousing finale, quoting church melodies and Brazilian musical styles. Sinfonia Tropical begins mysteriously and proceeds on a course about exactly half-way between Ginastera and Villa-Lobos, with just a whiff of Copland or Sibelius here and there. A flute tune seems reminiscent of Stravinsky's Petrouchka. At the rousing, suspenseful finale we move rather decisively in the direction of Respighi. Maracatu de Chico Rei is the earliest music on the disk, descriptive of a Brazilian festival with some African origins, and it is the most rousing, finishing with the chorus chanting rhythmically along with a riotous dance movement which may again remind you of Ginastera.

This music is not dangerous competition for Respighi's Roman Trilogy. However, if you enjoy Respighi but are disappointed by his Sinfonia Drammatica and not too excited over Belkis Queen of Sheba, you'll love the music on this disk. Recording quality is BIS's usually stunning standard, probably ready for issue on SACD at the proper time. ---Paul Shoemaker, musicweb-international.com

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