

## Weber - Piano Concertos, Polacca Brillante, Konzertstück (1994)

Written by bluesever

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01. Piano Concerto No. 1 in C Major, Op. 11: I. Allegro [0:09:22.07] 02. Piano Concerto No. 1 in C Major, Op. 11: II. Adagio [0:04:17.70] 03. Piano Concerto No. 1 in C Major, Op. 11: III. Presto [0:07:52.23] 04. Piano Concerto No. 2 in E Flat Major, Op. 32: I. Allegro maestoso [0:09:10.37] 05. Piano Concerto No. 2 in E Flat Major, Op. 32: II. Adagio [0:05:46.65] 06. Piano Concerto No. 2 in E Flat Major, Op. 32: III. Rondo: Presto [0:08:36.48] 07. Polacca Brillante, Op. 72 [0:09:55.00] 08. Konzerstück in F Minor, Op. 79 [0:16:43.47] Benjamin Frith [Piano] RTE Sinfonietta Proinnsias O Duinn [Conductor]

Carl Maria von Weber gave the first performance of his Opus 11 Concerto in C Major on 19 November 1810 in Mannheim. This work provides a connection between Mozart and Beethoven and those who followed as Classical eventually gave way to Romantic. There are considerable technical demands made on any pianist who attempt to play Weber's piano works. This was because Weber's hands had a particularly wider stretch than most. The soloist on this recording is Benjamin Frith, who seems to be up to the challenge. Weber's Piano Concerto No. 2 in E flat was completed in 1812, with the first performance given by the composer on 17 December. He started on a 3rd concerto in 1815, which turned out to be just a single movement Konzertstück (Concert-Piece) in F minor, Op. 79. It was completed in 1821. Gramophone magazine's review stated that "The Konzertstück goes very well, with plenty of colour in the phrasing and a lively orchestral accompaniment to match." The very challenging arpeggios and other heavy demands are expertly dispatched by the soloist Frith. The Penguin Guide states that Frith "receives splendid support from (conductor) O'Duinn and the excellent Dublin Sinfonietta...(the Konzertstück is particularly fine)". As a nice bonus Naxos adds Weber's solo piano work, the Polacca Brillante, that was transcribed by Franz Liszt for piano and orchestra. Liszt uses as an introduction to this work part of Weber's earlier Grande Polonaise. All in all, this CD is very well recorded, if a little heavy on the timpani. This is contrary to the anonymous reviewer below. Although perhaps not quite up to Steven Hough's full-priced recording on Hyperion, this budget price release on the highly-respected Naxos label is an attractive alternative. --- JohnL, amazon.com

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