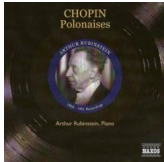


Frederic Chopin - Polonaises (Rubinstein) [2010]

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Frederic Chopin - Polonaises (Rubinstein) [2010]



01. *Polonaise No. 1 in C sharp minor, Op. 26, No. 1*
02. *Polonaise No. 2 in E flat minor, Op. 26, No. 2*
03. *Polonaise No. 3 in A major, Op. 40, No. 1, "Military"*
04. *Polonaise No. 4 in C minor, Op. 40, No. 2*
05. *Polonaise No. 5 in F sharp minor, Op. 44*
06. *Polonaise No. 6 in A flat major, Op. 53, "Heroic"*
07. *Polonaise No. 7 in A flat major, Op. 61, "Polonaise - fantasia"*
08. *Andante spianato*
09. *Grande Polonaise Brillante*

Arthur Rubinstein – piano

Chopin wrote mazurkas throughout his all-too-brief life, using this Polish dance as the basis for short pieces that encompass a world of harmonic explorations and varied emotions, from the subtly comic to the intensely sad. Rubinstein plays the 51 in the standard canon, skipping the unpublished youthful ones. Of his three recordings of the set, connoisseurs tend to prefer his first, from 1938-1939 (available on RCA, EMI, and Naxos) for their spontaneity. But these 1965-1966 stereo recordings in refreshingly alive transfers can't fail to please most listeners. They're a bit weightier than the early ones, but the added depth and Rubinstein's characterization of each piece yield big dividends. In the great C sharp minor Mazurka, Op. 50, No. 3, for example, he plays the beautiful opening theme with disarming simplicity that invests it with mournful regret, manages the transitions to bolder statements flawlessly, and turns a charming dance into a dramatic tone poem that says in five minutes what some composers need a full symphony to say. That miracle is repeated often in this set, as Rubinstein appears at first to be underplaying a piece until you realize the sophistication of his carefully modulated dynamics, gentle rubato, and varied tone. His was an outward simplicity that hid complex art. Throughout, he plays with a wonderful, singing tone, rhythmic life, and an aristocratic authority few have matched. ---Dan Davis, amazon.com

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