Felix Mendelssohn - Piano Concertos 1&2 (2011)

Mendelssohn: Piano Concerto No.1 in G minor, Op.25 *1. Molto allegro con fuoco 6:55 2. Andante 6:43 3. Presto 6:01 4. Mendelssohn: Variations sérieuses, Op.54 10:58 5. Mendelssohn: Rondo capriccioso, Op.14 6:03*
Mendelssohn: Piano Concerto No.2 in D minor, Op.40
6. Allegro appassionato 8:38 7. 2. Adagio. Molto sostenuto 6:32 8. Finale. Presto scherzando 5:52
Jean Yves Thibaudet – piano Gewandhaus Orchestra Leipzig Herbert Blomstedt - conductor

Mendelssohn's two sparkling, scintillating piano concertos deserve wider acknowledgement of their quality, and Jean-Yves Thibaudet is just the pianist to take up their cause. These vivacious, capricious pieces suit this pianist's technique down to the ground: he is capable of glittering passage work, a dreamlike lightness and is easily the equal to Mendelssohn's myriad technical challenges. The Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra has a special historic relationship with Mendelssohn, indeed, in the 19th century he conducted the ensemble for more than a decade. Under Blomstedt, textures are clear and transparent and rhythms are consistently tight. There is obviously a close rapport between conductor and soloist, a meeting of kindred spirits, which shows these concertos in the best possible light. In addition, Decca's recording is crystal clear and perfectly focussed with just enough space around it.

It was an inspired idea to sandwich solo works in-between the concertos. The same qualities that distinguish Thibaudet's concertos shine through these pieces. He builds the Variations sérieuses to a resounding, thrilling close. The opening Andante section of the Rondo capriccioso is sung with the most beautiful, liquid legato. This disc will bring real and lasting pleasure. --Colin Clarke, amazon.com

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