

Prokofiev: On Guard For Peace, Queen Of Spades Suite (2009)

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Pikovaya dama (The Queen of Spades) Suite (arr. M. Berkeley) *I. Introduction and Allegro* 9:38 *II. Adagio* 4:51 *III. Scherzo* - 2:19 *IV. Finale* - 11:26 *V. Epilogue: Dumka* 3:50

Na strazhe mira (On Guard for Peace), Op. 124
I. Scarce has the Earth recovered 2:25 *II. Those who are ten today* 2:01 *III. Stalingrad - City of Glory* 2:35 *IV. Let enduring peace of Earth be the heroes' reward* 2:25
V. We do not want war 2:32 *VI. Dove of Peace* 2:25 *VII. Lullaby* 6:30 *VIII. At the Festival of Peace* 4:34 *IX. Radio conversation* 2:34 *X. The whole world is ready for war against war* 5:38

Irina Tchistjakova - Mezzo-Soprano Niall Docherty – Treble Mary McCarthy - A&R Royal Scottish National Orchestra Chorus Royal Scottish National Orchestra Junior Chorus Royal Scottish National Orchestra Neeme Järvi - Conductor

While neither of these works could be described as first-rate Prokofiev, listeners seriously interested in the composer should not let this release slip by unheard. Arranged and adapted from the composer's incomplete score by English composer Michael Berkeley, The Queen of Spades symphonic suite is typical of Prokofiev's work in the late '30s: richly colorful, intensely dramatic, and hauntingly melodic. The oratorio On Guard for Peace is characteristic of the composer's postwar style: unbelievably bombastic, incredibly bathetic, and determinedly patriotic. In both pieces, experienced Prokofiev conductor Neeme Järvi and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra turn in entirely idiomatic and completely committed performances. As with the pairing's exemplary recordings of the composer's symphonies and other orchestral works, made in the late '80s, Järvi and the Scottish orchestra deliver performances that bring out the best in every movement, from The Queen of Spades' beautifully evocative Adagio, to the violently trivial finale of On Guard for Peace. With the sterling contributions in On Guard for Peace of mezzo-soprano Irina Tchistjakova, boy soprano Niall Docherty, and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra's Chorus and Junior Chorus, this disc will be mandatory listening for fans of the composer. Chandos' sound is big, bold, and colorful, if a trifle too loud. ---James Leonard, Rovi

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