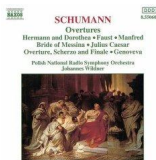


Schumann – Overtures (1993)



1. *Overture, Scherzo and Finale, Op. 52* 00:17:21 2. *Genoveva, Op. 81* 00:08:13 3. *Bride of Messina, Op. 100* 00:08:09 4. *Julius Caesar, Op. 128* 00:09:37 5. *Hermann and Dorothea, Op. 136* 00:08:24 6. *Faust* 00:08:57 7. *Manfred, Op. 115* 00:10:49 Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra Johannes Wildner - conductor

It was a nice idea to include most of the pieces of music by Schumann that have "overture" in their name. Missing is a choral overture on the *Rheinweinlied*, but otherwise, this CD covers the topic. However, the performances and recording leave something to be desired. The best performances here--of the little-known "*Bride of Messina*" and "*Hermann und Dorothea*"--are maybe fueled by the element of discovery. The tempos seem judiciously handled, and Johannes Wildner does everything he can to get the lumbering, four-square rhythm of the "*Bride*" to move. Not much he can do about those squeals from the piccolo, though--Schumann for some reason wrote them into the score thinking, I guess, that they added an element of doom and terror to the "curse" motif that dominates the overture. No such problem with the more successful "*Hermann und Dorothea*," an atmospheric little piece with (as far as I know) Schumann's one concession to the extra color that a snare drum could add to his often opaque scoring.

The other performances, unfortunately, suffer from a variety of ails, including a very much off-pitch clarinet in the lovely second melody of the "*Faust*" Overture (plus uncalled for dissonances from the brass at the start of the coda--let's tune it, gentlemen!); a lumbering gait to the opening of the "*Julius Caesar*" Overture (one of Schumann's least inspired works, it must be said); a labored trio section in the Scherzo of the "*Overture, Scherzo, and Finale*" (though this is a pretty good performance for the most part); a strange pause (a bad edit?) before the final dash in the coda of the "*Genoveva*" Overture (one of Schumann's real triumphs); and a bit of slap-dash in the faster passages of "*Manfred*" despite a general trend toward sclerotic rhythms (though this fine overture is hard to kill and emerges mostly unscathed in a decent performance overall).

Schumann – Overtures (1993)

Wpisany przez bluesever

Sobota, 16 Sierpień 2014 09:04 -

The recording has good stereo spread and depth and a definite sense of the concert hall but is a tad too distant for the kind of definition that Schumann's thick scoring cries out for. So if you want this music--some of it obscure but worth hearing--the current CD is an OK way to acquire it, but we could have hoped for more than that. --- M. C. Passarella, amazon.com

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