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Delectable Scarlatti Recreations

Review by: Jed Distler



Artistic Quality: 10
Sound Quality: 10

What a wonderful idea: Here's a program that features transcriptions of Domenico Scarlatti's keyboard sonatas along with original works that use the sonatas as a jumping-off point. Many Classical- and Romantic-period composers and pianists felt the need to update Scarlatti's keyboard textures by filling in chords, adding double notes or octaves, or spicing up the harmonies. Politically incorrect by 21st-century standards, true, but "inauthenticity" can be fun, especially in the hands of a pianist like Sandro Russo.

He revels in Louis Brassin's unabashedly upholstered transformation of the K. 525 F major sonata and its humorously leaping embellishments, and conveys the full impact of Granados' subtle, full-bodied piano writing with little help from the sustain pedal. The multi-layered strands of Ignaz Friedman's busy rewrite of K. 523 suggests an overdubbed second piano, while Russo captures the impetuous quality of Marc-André Hamelin's bitonal Scarlatti-based etude with no less sparkle than in the composer's own performances. And although several pianists have taken up Raymond Lewenthal's nutty, harmonically pungent Scarlatti-like Toccata in recent years, Russo's crisp rhythms and slightly dry touch are just what the doctor ordered. Even after you've finished playing this disc, your ears will continue to smile.

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Recording Details:

Album Title: Scarlatti Recreated: Transcriptions and Hommages
 Works by Tausig, Brassin, Granados, [Russo, Sandro](#) (piano)
 Czerny, Friedman, Alkan, Hamelin, Françaix, [Musical Concepts](#) - 149
 Lewenthal, & Habermann
 CD

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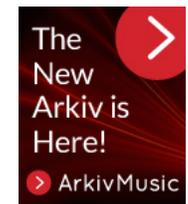
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