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PASC 405

PRISTINE SOVIET SERIES

Richter: Six Russian Piano Concertos

Pristine
XR

Mravinsky now belongs to the ages, and after Richter's open heart surgery this past summer even his limited career of recent years may also have ended. I have long remembered this as the great Richter performance of the Tchaikovsky concerto, greatly superior to the relatively bloated version with Karajan and the Vienna Symphony (now on Deutsche Grammophon 419 068-2) and more powerful than the otherwise entertaining performance with Ančerl and the Czech Philharmonic recorded for Supraphon (once available here on LP as Parliament PLP-120). Its drawback is, not surprisingly, the recorded sound quality. Urania has done a fine mastering job here, and I prefer the results to my previous choice for this recording, a Eurodisc LP set (89 831 XGK). But while Richter's playing is magnificent, Mravinsky and the great orchestra second him superbly, and the sound is as good as one could hope to hear in this recording, it is still limited in fidelity and has some traces of distortion.

I wouldn't want to be without this recording. Richter's interpretation of this concerto, somewhat different from the present-day norm, has interesting features in common with the acoustical 78 set by Vassily Sapellnikov, who had earlier played the concerto under the composer's direction. Note in particular the leisurely tempo of the first movement, and the extreme contrast between the sweet outer sections of the second movement and the very fiery scherzo inner section. But I'm not going to urge this as a purchase on you, with all the fine competition currently available, unless you are willing to put up with limited sound to savor this superlative performance.

Review by **Leslie Gerber, Fanfare**, Mar/Apr 1990 - *excerpt, Urania CD reissue of Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 1*

Producer's Note

These recordings were all made by Melodiya for LP (and, presumably in the case of the earliest, 78rpm) issue in the USSR in the 1950s, at a time when Richter was just about unknown in the West. They include a number of works for which these are his sole recordings - perhaps most notably the first Rachmaninov concerto - as well as in the case of the Tchaikovsky, possibly his finest recorded interpretation of this major work.

The sources for these transfers were all near-mint German reissues made in collaboration between Ariola-Eurodisc and Melodiya some years later, and benefit from far superior vinyl pressings than were available in the original Soviet issues. Even so, the original recordings were not perfect, and I've had to deal with a certain amount of peak distortion and wow and flutter throughout most of the series.

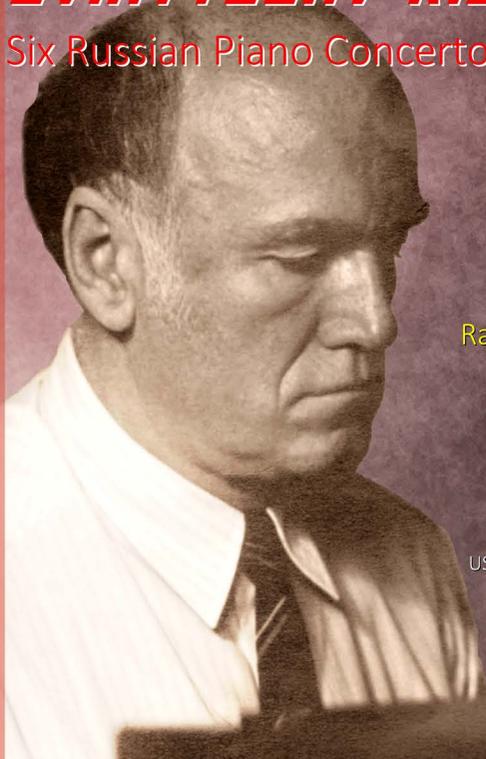
What I have also been able to recover in these XR remasters has been far superior overall sound quality than was apparent in any of the original recordings. Whilst this is especially true in the later issues, even the very earliest, 1950 recordings have also shown significant improvements. **Andrew Rose**

FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM
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SVIATOSLAV RICHTER

Six Russian Piano Concertos

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Tchaikovsky Concerto No. 1
Rimsky-Korsakoff Concerto
Rachmaninov Concertos 1 & 2
Prokofiev Concerto No. 1
Glazunov Concerto No. 1

Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra
Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra
Moscow Youth Orchestra
USSR Radio & TV Large Symphony Orchestra

Yevgeny Mravinsky
Kirill Kondrashin
Kurt Sanderling

Studio Recordings 1950-59

PRISTINE SOVIET SERIES

RICHTER *Six Russian Piano Concertos*

TCHAIKOVSKY Piano Concerto No. 1 in B flat, Op. 23

- 1 1st mvt. - Allegro non troppo e molto maestoso (20:37)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Andantino semplice (6:20)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Allegro con fuoco (7:08)

Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra *Yevgeny Mravinsky*

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV Piano Concerto in C sharp minor, Op. 30 (14:32)

Moscow Youth Orchestra *Kirill Kondrashin*

RACHMANINOV Piano Concerto No. 1 in F sharp minor, Op. 1

- 1 1st mvt. - Vivace (12:36)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Andante (6:21)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Allegro vivace (8:02)

USSR Radio & TV Large Symphony Orchestra *Kurt Sanderling*

RACHMANINOV Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 19

- 1 1st mvt. - Moderato (11:30)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Adagio sostenuto (11:55)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Allegro scherzando (11:57)

Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra *Kurt Sanderling*

PROKOFIEV Piano Concerto No. 1 in D flat major, Op. 10

- 1 1. Allegro brioso (3:36)
- 2 2. Meno mosso (2:59)
- 3 3. Andante assai (3:27)
- 4 4. Allegro scherzando (4:20)

Moscow Youth Orchestra *Kirill Kondrashin*

GLAZUNOV Piano Concerto No. 1 in F minor, Op. 92

- 1 1st mvt. - Allegro moderato (12:05)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Tema con Variazioni (16:10)

Moscow Youth Orchestra *Kirill Kondrashin*

Sviatoslav Richter *piano*

XR remastering by Andrew Rose

Cover artwork based on a photograph of
Sviatoslav Richter

Tchaikovsky Recorded 24 July, 1958
Rimsky-Korsakoff Recorded 17 February, 1950
Rachmaninov 1 Recorded 18 February, 1955
Rachmaninov 2 Recorded 18 February, 1959
Prokofiev Recorded 1952
Glazunov Recorded 14 December, 1952

Total duration: 2 hr 33:34

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