

EDITIONS

BEETHOVEN: KLAVIERSONATE NR. 27 E-MOLL, OPUS 90

Urtext edition by Norbert Gertsch · Murray Perahia

Fingering by Murray Perahia

G. Henle Verlag, 2017. HN1124

ix+16+6pp.

ISMN 979-0-2018-1124-6

€8.50

Dedicated to Moritz von Lichnowsky, the E minor sonata – described as a contemporary as “aside from two passages, one of Beethoven’s easiest” – consists of two movements, the first a troubled piece in sonata form whose innocent opening gives no hint of the searching doubt to be explored as the composer’s imagination takes flight, and a rondo in the major key which, though not without drama, is far more tuneful, the calm after the storm, as it were. After the introduction which details the work’s history and hidden story (which explains the opening movement’s tumultuous character), a separate text by Perahia discusses its structure (both are given in three languages); as seems to be the norm for Henle, the critical notes after the edition itself are restricted to German and English. The score is beautifully laid out, with footnotes drawing attention to aspects of performance practice and possible variant readings in the autograph source. Even if you have the complete sonatas on your shelves, this pristine version will be a valuable addition to your collection.

Brian Clark

ROSSINI: UNE LARME

Urtext Edition by Tobias Glöckler

G. Henle Verlag, 2017. HN571

Score (v+4+2pp) and part (Urtext and fingered/bowed).

ISMN 979-0-2018-0571-9

€9.00

Tobias Glöckler’s edition of this short lament from 1858 was inspired by the discovery of a second autograph manuscript in St Petersburg, which helped to date its composition. His informative introduction is given in French and German, as well as

English, but there are no critical notes in French. The musical text is given twice, once in A minor (for bass in standard orchestral tuning) and again a tone higher for the brighter solo tuning. The solo part (a single sheet) has the clean Urtext version on one side and the editor’s minimal additions on the reverse; in other words, help where it might be needed without unnecessary interference. From a practical point of view, this consists of fingering and bowing marks, one suggested extra slur (Rossini already marks the phrasing), and the replacement of the original’s tenor (C4) clef with the treble (G2) clef expected nowadays when the music goes beyond ledger lines. Footnotes offer further performance advice. All in all, an excellent little edition, worth every cent.

Brian Clark

RECORDINGS

THE ROMANTIC CLARINET IN GERMANY

Pierre-André Taillard, Edoardo Torbianelli

65:53

Pan Classics PC10381

Playing a copy by eminent Swiss maker Rudolph Tutz of a nine-keyed clarinet by Heinrich Grenser, Pierre-André Taillard gives us fine performances of four major chamber works of the Romantic period. It is perhaps ironic that the work by the best-known composer, Mendelssohn, is possibly the least impressive of the four pieces. By contrast, Franz Danzi applies a profound knowledge of woodwind instruments to his tuneful and dramatic *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano*, while Carl Reissiger’s *Duo Brillant* is sparkingly virtuosic, and stretches the nine-keyed clarinet to extremes. The big discovery of this CD though is the op. 15 *Duo* by Norbert Burgmüller, a talented composer much admired by Mendelssohn and Schumann whose early death at the age of twenty-six undoubtedly deprived the world of much fine music. The Burgmüller and Reissiger call for some highly virtuosic playing from both clarinetist and pianist, in this case, Edoardo Torbianelli playing a lovely 1824 Conrad Graf piano. The instrument’s clearly defined tone is beautifully captured, and Torbianelli is in many ways the perfect accompanist, responding sympathetically to the expressive clarinet playing, but also rising to considerable heights of virtuosity himself when the part demands it. Taillard finds a warm vocal tone and responsive articulation in his B \flat period clarinet, which he generally manages to maintain throughout the challenging

passages in all four works. Clarinettists generally dismiss the Mendelssohn Sonata as juvenilia – a mistake with this famously prodigious composer – and while Burgmüller’s *Duo* is occasionally performed, it rarely sounds as effective as it does here! This lovely recital disc makes a powerful case for all four of these impressive works to be more frequently featured in concert programmes. This is a lovely CD and not just of interest to clarinettists!

D. James Ross
