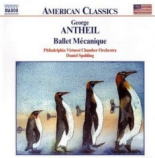


George Antheil – Ballet Mekanique etc. (2001)

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 17 August 2010 20:54 - Last Updated Monday, 29 July 2013 14:55

George Antheil – Ballet Mekanique etc. (2001)



1. *Ballet Mécanique (Revised 1953)*
2. *Serenade for String Orchestra, No 1: Allegro*
3. *Serenade for String Orchestra, No 1: Andante Molto*
4. *Serenade for String Orchestra, No 1: Vivo*
5. *Symphony for Five Instruments (Second Version) : Allegro*
6. *Symphony for Five Instruments (Second Version) : Lento*
7. *Symphony for Five Instruments (Second Version) : Presto*
8. *Concert for Chamber Orchestra*

Philadelphia Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra
Daniel Spalding – conductor

George Antheil's reputation as the Bad Boy of Music (the title of his fascinating autobiography) was earned largely with his Ballet Mécanique, written to accompany an abstract silent film by the artist Fernand Leger. It was composed for player pianos and percussion, with harsh, driving rhythms, and it caused the kind of riots in Paris that were useful to a composer's reputation. Today, that reputation may keep Antheil from being taken seriously. But when you hear the Ballet (as rescored in 1953 for an early mono recording) today, it's a substantial and exciting piece of music, formally tight and not at all hard on 21st century ears. The remainder of this program shows more of Antheil's range. The Serenade is a lovely piece of Americana, with a particularly touching slow movement. The Symphony and Concert owe much to Stravinsky's "neoclassical" style; both hold up very well. Spalding drives the Ballet hard, and it sounds more frenetic than that old mono recording, but the music can take the heat. This and the remaining performances are splendidly played by the excellent chamber orchestra, and the recording is clear, well-balanced, and realistic in sound. Another Naxos winner. --Leslie Gerber, amazon.com

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