

Beethoven – Piano Concerto No. 3 in C Minor - Zimerman (2007)

Written by bluesever

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I. Allegro con brio

II. Largo

III. Rondeau. Allegro

Piano: Krystian Zimerman

Leonard Bernstein

Wiener Philharmoniker

Krystian Zimerman is my absolute No. 1 among the pianists of our time, not because he's Polish of course, but because he is a true magician. He is often accused, though, that his recordings lack passion, some kind of spontaneity etc. Indeed, it is a fact that Zimerman prepares each of them very carefully and releases them rarely. It is a fact that he studies the notes very long and corrects almost every phrase played before, in order to find even better way of interpretation. But I ask: what's the matter? Do this spontaneity really is necessary while buing a recording, especially a set of recordings? Or maybe one rather seeks his/her ideal, perfect in technique and deep in interpretation, and every "scratch" on these technique and interpretation makes him disappointed? Well, I know that I am such a person; when I buy a recording, I want it to be ideal. Absolute ideal. Whereas for Beethoven's e.g. Violin Concerto or Fidelio I haven't managed to find my ideal - I actually have for Missa Solemnis (Gardiner!), String Quartets (Alexander)... and for the magnificent Piano Concertos.

This set doesn't give me much place to write about, because, as I've just said, there is not even a scratch on this precious gem. Zimerman plays so wonderfully, that when I got the set and listened to all the pieces - I knew I'd immediately forget about my all 3 previous sets of the

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Concertos. And this happened. Now I listen to it no matter which movement of which concerto I want to hear, because here it is played far better than anywhere else. Do you imagine every note, every second played perfectly? I bet that in all recordings you have there are some moments you'd want to correct, play better. Not here. The cadenzas, brilliant. Parts in the foreground, as well as in the background, behind the orchestra, brilliant.

As for the orchestra, I can say with pleasure, that Bernstein is surely in his best form here. He doesn't conduct too slow, as he often does; he is the master of the orchestra, he controls them totally.

I should shut up, because it's getting too long, but one small thing: just listen to the samples. The comparison of small details in different recordings is great fun. I don't know whether it is in the sample, but try to compare e.g. the sound of the orchestra in the main theme of the Emperor Concerto's 1st movement in few recordings. Only here it is such a magnificent, sharp, clear melody. Or the beginning of Rondos in the 1st and 3rd. Or... OK, finished. This is the recording of your dreams. Believe me. —Gustaw Jokiel

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