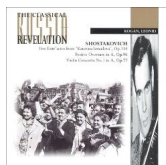


Dmitri Shostakovich – Violin Concerto No.1 (Kogan) [1964]

Written by bluesever

Sunday, 25 October 2009 23:18 - Last Updated Wednesday, 07 May 2014 14:25

Dmitri Shostakovich – Violin Concerto No.1 (Kogan) [1997]



• *Nocturne: Moderato* • *Scherzo: Allegro* • *Passacaglia: Andante* • *Burlesque: Allegro con brio - Presto* Leonid Kogan, violin Moscow State Philharmonic Orchestra Gennady Rozhdestvensky - conductor

Leonid Kogan, who died at the age of 58 in 1982, was among the Soviet musical elite, and he's usually the violinist from the Soviet era that one thinks of after Oistrakh. He has some recordings gathered on the EMI label, yet on the whole one must hunt among old Melodiya releases, many in dubious sound, that are scattered across a wide range of minor labels -- in other words, it's the same chaos we are used to from Russian artists of a certain time. This is a live concert under Rozhdestvensky (I can't supply a date since my copy is a download), and for a Soviet recording it's good, though not up to Western standards. The orchestra is placed far back, the bass is tubby, and inner detail is fairly dull. Kogan himself is close to the mike and sounds more than acceptable.

His reading of the Shostakovich Violin Cto. #1 is a gem, quite capable of standing with the best. All the familiar elements of the Russian violin school are evident in his big tone, passionate attack, and totally idiomatic ease with Shostakovich's style. Kogan doesn't attempt to outdo Oistrakh, the work's dedicatee, in the tragic passacaglia that bridges the slow movement and the finale, but he is just as engrossing, and I greatly admire his avoidance of prettiness -- the main focus is a strong musical argument. Indeed, every measure of the piece is imbued with complete assurance and with real finesse. In Rozhdestvensky he has an equal partner, happily. ---Santa Fe Listener, amazon.com

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