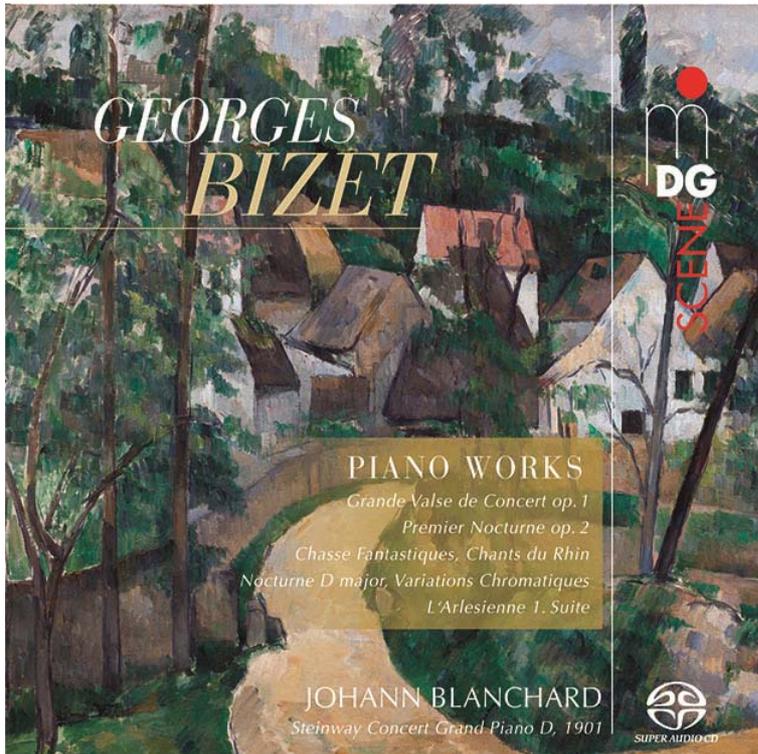


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06/17-(4)

Georges Bizet (1838-1875)
Piano Works

Johann Blanchard, piano

1 Hybrid-SACD

MDG 904 2018-6

UPC-Code:



222[®]
RECORDING

LC06768

Beyond Carmen

Carmen made Georges Bizet world famous, but he lived only a few months to enjoy the overwhelming success of this opera depicting love and jealousy among hot-blooded Spaniards. A swim in the cold Seine did him in. Today hardly anybody remembers that Bizet also composed piano music. To our good fortune, Johann Blanchard's inventory of his rarities cabinet has yielded more new discoveries that will make the hearts of music lovers beat faster - while the latest SACD technology will have the same effect on those of audiophiles.

Conservatoire Prodigy

Bizet was an outstanding pianist who already at the age of ten enjoyed the privilege of instruction at the Paris Conservatory - including lessons in composition. And so it is not surprising that his works for piano represent the very best of their times. Already the "Grande Valse de Concert" that the sixteen-year-old boldly labeled his Opus 1 and the "Premier Nocturne" op. 2 composed during the same year display the genuinely orchestral design so typical of Bizet's piano music.

In Memoriam

A good ten years later Bizet composed five "songs without words" based on the cycle *Les Chants du Rhin* and commemorating the poet Joseph Méry, who had died shortly before. Bizet remedies Méry's poetic geography situating gypsies by the Rhine with a piece of Hungarian character practically in the Lisztian manner. With the suite from the stage music to *L'Arlesienne*, a play by Alphonse Daudet (which was

a flop with the public and the critics) Bizet scored another great success. The orchestral version continues to be very popular today, while the piano version - for no good reason - is hardly ever performed.

Steinway Grand

Or if there is a reason, then it may be the considerable technical demands placed on the pianist. Johann Blanchard naturally passes this test with flying colors on this discovery disc very excellently complementing his debut featuring works by Cécile Chaminade. Of course this time too only the very best technology is employed: this meticulously produced SACD creates a sumptuous sound picture showing the legendary "Manfred Bürki" Steinway grand piano in its very best light. Splendid listening pleasure, filling acoustic space in three dimensions, is guaranteed for all!

Cécile Chaminade: Piano Works

Sonata op. 21, Souvenir d'enfance,
Etudes op. 28, 35, 118, 124,
132, 138, 139

Johann Blanchard, piano

MDG 904 1871-6 (1 Hybrid-SACD)

