



C. Saint-Saëns: Piano Concertos Vol. II

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Recently we reviewed a fine SACD of three piano concertos of Saint-Saëns (1, 2 and 4) played by Anna Malikova with the WDR Symphony Orchestra directed by Thomas Sanderling. Now we have the second SACD which offers the two other piano concertos including the delightful, imaginative Concerto No. 5, subtitled "Egyptian" which the composer called "a sort of tour of the orient", including a Nubian love song and the chirping of crickets on the Nile. It's a terrific concerto that should be played more often; Sviatoslav Richter made a famous recording in 1952 in Russia. As with the previous Audite SACD, performances are expert, sonics everything they should be. The only debit is that the composer's other works for piano and orchestra — Africa, Rhapsodie d'Auvergne and Wedding Cake — weren't included as they were on the splendid recent Hyperion set of all five concertos played by Stephen Hough.