



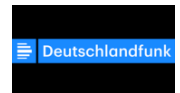
Jorge Bolet: The Berlin Radio Recordings, Vol. III

aud 21.459



Deutschlandfunk 11.04.2019 (Philipp Quiring - 11.04.2019)

Quelle: <https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/sternstun...>



Sternstunden

Der Pianist Jorge Bolet

Jorge Bolet stand wie sein großer Rivale Wladimir Horowitz für eine aussterbende romantische Klavierästhetik. Erstmals wurden Berliner Rundfunkaufnahmen aus den 1960er Jahren mit Neuheiten seines Repertoires kommerziell veröffentlicht.

Obwohl Jorge Bolet zu den großen Ausnahmebegabungen des vergangenen Jahrhunderts zählt, existiert bis heute keine Biografie über ihn.

Der gebürtige Kubaner steht in der von Czerny und Liszt ausgehenden, von Leschetitzky und Anton Rubinstein fortgeführten, romantisch-virtuosen Tradition des Klavierspiels. In den USA erhielt er seine Ausbildung bei Leopold Godowsky und bei dessen Schwiegersohn David Saperton.

Er debütierte bereits siebzehnjährig in der Carnegie-Hall unter Fritz Reiner und konnte einige Jahre später zwei bedeutende internationale Wettbewerbe gewinnen. Doch sein virtuosos Spiel kam nicht überall gleichermaßen an, einige Kritiker fanden seinen Stil zu unmodern. So suchte Bolet sein Glück zunächst in der Politik als Diplomat, bis er nach dem 2. Weltkrieg noch einmal bei Abram Chasins Unterricht nahm und dann durchstartete.

Sein Spiel war gleichermaßen geprägt von Noblesse und einer scheinbar mühelosen Virtuosität, die er jedoch nie als Selbstzweck ansah.

Gramophone March 2019 (Jeremy Nicholas - 01.03.2019)

Quelle:

<https://www.gramophone.co.uk/review/jorg...>



According to Audite's booklet, this is the final volume of Bolet's (West) Berlin recordings made between 1961 and 1974. The two earlier volumes featured RIAS recordings (12/17, 4/18). This third collection has those made by Sender Freies Berlin (Radio Free Berlin), the public radio and television service for West Berlin from 1954 until 1990. The sound quality throughout is amazingly good.

Bolet's legions of fans will need no words of encouragement from me to invest, for there are several valuable additions to this great pianist's discography. Not least among them is a superb live performance of the Emperor Concerto, boasting an especially exuberant and forthright finale, captured (uniquely in this set) in 1974 by ORTF in Paris. Preceding that are the complete Chopin Op 25 Études from 1968, full of delectable things, bold, confident and paraded in Bolet's wonderful range of touch and colours, among them the cello like plangency of No 7 and the fire and brimstone of No 11 (a breathtaking 'Winter Wind'). No 9 is more kangaroo than 'Butterfly', it will surely put a smile on your face. There are also three of Chopin's Polonaises (Nos 3, 4 and 6) that are new to the discography.

Debussy is a composer who one does not normally associate with Bolet. Perhaps hearing him in Images Book 2 and Masques (both from 1961) will change perceptions. On the other hand, as one of the piano's great tone colourists, maybe we shouldn't be surprised. If there is a surprise to be had it is that he was drawn to Norman Dello Joio's Piano Sonata No 2 of 1943 which, among other novelties, has a last movement in the unusual key of C flat major. Bolet revels in its harsh, expressionist effusion of rhythmic and technical challenges. Schumann is more familiar Bolet territory, though not his Piano Sonata No 3, the least played of the three (the so-called Concerto Without Orchestra). Given that Bolet was at his best in front of an audience, as with most of the recordings in this set, there is no sense of a studio performance, such as there was towards the end of his career. He makes a substantial (and in my view beneficial) cut in the finale.

Disc 2 has the Grieg Ballade, a piece with a particular Bolet association for this writer: on one memorable evening in the late 1970s after supper in my apartment with Bolet and some mutual friends, we managed to lure him to the piano on which happened to be the score of the Ballade. (After hearing that, we were treated to a late night recital from the Bolet back catalogue including Cuban dances and his own ending of the Don Juan Fantasy.) It is a piece Bolet obviously enjoyed. This account was recorded in October 1961 (the same day as the Debussy pieces, and the earliest session here) and appears, as does another Bolet favourite, Franck's Prélude, Aria et Final (the work that follows it on disc 2), on Vol 2 of Marston's retrospective of the pianist (7/15) heard live in Amsterdam in 1987.

Disc 3 begins with an account from 1971 of the Andante spianato and Grand Polonaise which I did not enjoy at all. It sounds thoroughly bad-tempered, the Andante played as if it were Rachmaninov and the fioritura passages in the Polonaise tight and scrambled. After the three Polonaises (Bolet at his most magisterial) come two specialities: Schumann-Liszt Frühlingsnacht (unmissable) and the J Strauss II-Godowsky Symphonic Metamorphosis on Die Fledermaus (sui generis). All in all, a pianophile delight.

International Piano May 2019 (Bryce Morrison - 01.05.2019)

This third and final volume of Jorge Bolet's Berlin recordings (1961-1974) provides ample confirmation that he was one of the finest pianists of the 20th century. For Gilels he was „the only great pianist in America“, while Alicia de Larrocha could only exclaim, with characteristic candour, „Jorge, you're wonderful. The rest, they're all sh*t“.

Bolet's playing ranges from „blow your socks off“ virtuosity (heard here in the Strauss-Godowsky paraphrase in Die Fledermaus) to a „safety comes first“ approach. His Emperor Concerto (with Moshe Atzmon) is as poetic as it is imperious, and his performance of Schumann's Third Sonata (the „Concert sans orchestre“) features tonal opulence and grand sweeping lines. Bolet may have been celebrated latterly for his „divine showiness“ but his way with the finale's wild prestissimo tells us that his speed and dexterity were no less divine. His intensity, too, in the shuddering tremolandi climax – like a sudden bolt of lightning – reminds you of music as anarchic as anything in Schumann.

There is sensuous magic in Bolet's Debussy, even when he is ponderous in Masques. His Chopin Etudes Op. 25 are among the most musical on mood, effortlessly crossing the Rubicon from pragmatism to poetry. Delectably light-fingered in No 6 and a true singer oft he keyboard in No 5, he is magnificent in No 12, riding the ocean wave with idiosyncratic grandeur. His Schumann-Liszt Frühlingsnacht and Strauss-Godowsky blaze with a brilliance known to few pianists.

Transfers are admirable and these memorable discs come luxuriously packaged with several photos of Bolet, including one with Boston, his beloved pug.

Piano News Mai/Juni 3/2019 (Carsten Dürer - 01.05.2019)



Jorge Bolet ist und bleibt einer der größten Pianisten des 20. Jahrhunderts. Dass nun auch weiteres Repertoire mit ihm bekannt wird, ist dieser Dreierserie mit je 3 CDs von Audite zu verdanken.

Rezensionstext wird aus urheberrechtlichen Gründen nicht angezeigt.

Süddeutsche Zeitung 21. Januar 2019 (Harald Eggebrecht - 21.01.2019)

Quelle: <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/kultur/klass...>



Noble Wehmut

Die Etüden op. 12, vier Polonaisen und das Fantaisie-Impromptu op. 66 von Frédéric Chopin stellt Bolet leuchtend transparent, durchaus auch mit machtvoller Zugriff, aber nie als bloße Pianistik dar. Robert Schumanns f-moll-Sonate op. 14 wird zum nachdenklichen Fest romantischer Erregungen, Claude Debussys "Images II" werden zu traumverlorenen Gebilden, gewonnen aus feinstem Klangespür.

Rezensionstext wird aus urheberrechtlichen Gründen nicht angezeigt.

www.artalinna.com 9 February 2019 (Jean-Charles Hoffelé - 09.02.2019)

Quelle: <http://www.artalinna.com/?p=10958#more-1...>



Les inédits d'un génie

Jorge Bolet au sommet de son art, capté idéalement sur de très beaux pianos par des ingénieurs du son saisissant toutes ses couleurs et son grand jeu polyphonique. Quel plaisir tout au long de ce troisième volume qui clôt la publication de ses enregistrements pour la Radio de Berlin.

Rezensionstext wird aus urheberrechtlichen Gründen nicht angezeigt.

www.ClassicsToday.com April 2019 (Jed Distler - 08.04.2019)



Historic Gems: More Prime Jorge Bolet From Audite

Throughout these archival recordings you get a realistic picture of Bolet's luminous sonority and his sense of projection. This is the real Jorge Bolet.

Rezensionstext wird aus urheberrechtlichen Gründen nicht angezeigt.

www.musicweb-international.com Friday April 5th (Jonathan Woolf - 05.04.2019)

Quelle: <http://www.musicweb-international.com/cl...>



This 3-CD set is the third and final volume in the sequence of Berlin radio recordings made by Jorge Bolet. Recorded between 1961 and 1974 all the pieces are new to disc with the single exception of Leopold Godowsky's Fledermaus 'symphonic metamorphosis' and were made available to Audite by Donald Manildi of the International Piano Archives, University of Maryland. What's especially valuable is the amount of material new to Bolet's discography – Beethoven's Fifth Piano Concerto in a Paris concert recording, Debussy's Masques and Images (Book II), Norman Dello Joio's Second Sonata, Schumann's Third Sonata, Chopin's Polonaises 3, 4 and 6 and the complete Chopin Op.25 Etudes.

The Etudes were recorded in 1968 in splendid sound with Bolet on powerfully communicative form, bringing a rich coloristic palette to the Aeolian Harp, drollery to No.4, plangency to No.7 and true con fuoco to No.10. If No.9 tends to float less like a butterfly and sting rather more like a bee, the Winter Wind has an irradiating ferocity to it. His 1974 Beethoven Concerto performance in Paris with the Berlin Radio Symphony and Moshe Atzman – a decided asset throughout – offers robust and commanding power in similarly fine stereo sound. Some of the wind harmonies sound rather jarring, but the horns are on impressive form and Bolet proves expressive and technically accomplished. It's a reading that marries majesty with sensitivity.

Both Schumann's Third Sonata and Grieg's Ballade in G minor are heard in mono. The former receives a particularly attractive reading, notably in the third movement variations, whilst the Grieg is at its very best when Bolet explores the music's flightier variations, notably an ingeniously witty Allegro capriccioso and the burlesque frivolity of No.10. Was it for reasons of radio timing that Bolet cut the music – for example he excises the whole of No.12? Altogether around three minutes (or so) of music is lost. Franck's Prélude, Aria et Final is another example of his way with a work that is also available on a Marston release.

The final disc is quite wide ranging, and includes a bullish Chopin Andante spianato and Polonaise, those three characterful Polonaises, heard in excellent 1966 stereo, and a richly contoured Images Book II. Of particular interest in the light of Bolet's promotion of new music is Dello Joio's Second Sonata of 1943 (January 1966, stereo). Full of rhythmic vivacity and astringent sonorities its harmonically drifting slow movement is equally well surveyed by Bolet. Just what would his Bartók have sounded like? His Godowsky offers a suitably ebullient and virtuoso envoi.

The remastering does as much justice to Bolet's tonal qualities as it can – which is a significant amount – and Wolfgang Rathert's bi-lingual notes are succinct and helpful.

www.pizzicato.lu 12/01/2019 (Remy Franck - 12.01.2019)
Quelle: <https://www.pizzicato.lu/virtuos-und-aus...>



Virtuos und ausdrucksvoll

Audite präsentiert die letzte Folge der RIAS-Einspielungen mit dem in Kuba geborenen amerikanischen Pianisten Jorge Bolet (1914–1990). Die drei CDs enthalten etliche Repertoire-Novitäten, die nach Verleger-Angaben erstmals veröffentlicht werden.

Die erste CD enthält die 12 Etüden op. 25 von Frédéric Chopin in einer meistens unbeschweren, leichten und fast verspielten Aufführung sowie eine in keinerlei Hinsicht aufsehenerregende, routinierte Darbietung von Beethovens 5. Klavierkonzert.

Da ist die Interpretation von Robert Schumann's 3. Klaviersonate auf der zweiten CD schon von einem anderen Kaliber. Sie ist frisch, leidenschaftlich drängend und sehr spontan. Ein Highlight sind auch die Auszüge aus der selten zu hörenden Ballade op. 24 von Edvard Grieg, die dennoch ein richtiges Meisterwerk ist, ein Werk von epischer Größe und ungewöhnlichem Ausdruck von Schmerz und Trauer. Hier wie auch in César Francks 'Prélude, aria et final' erreicht Bolet eine große rhetorische Ausdruckskraft.

Technisch Beeindruckendes gibt es auf der dritten CD mit den Chopin-Polonaisen, Godowskis Strauss-Metamorphosen sowie der 2. Klaviersonate des amerikanischen Komponisten Norman dello Joio, der diese Komposition laut eigener Aussage bewusst so komponierte, dass Jorge Bolet darin seine phänomenale Technik und die Kraft seiner massiven Hände zeigen könnte.

Jorge Bolet is at his best in the virtuoso pieces of this program, but he can also be very expressive like in the passionate account of Schumann's Third Sonata or in Grieg's dolorous Ballade op. 24. Beethoven's Fifth Piano Concerto is definitely not interesting enough to match the level of the solo performances.

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