



Edition Sergiu Celibidache | The complete RIAS recordings

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GRAMOPHONE

Germany in wartime and beyond

Furtwängler's Bruckner and a young Celibidache's Berlin broadcasts

[...] After the Second World War, initially while Furtwängler was being de-Nazified, a brilliant young Romanian by the name of Sergiu Celibidache was a popular principal conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic. Audite's collection of his Berlin broadcasts (1948–1957), which are shared between the Berlin Philharmonic and Berlin RIAS orchestras, includes one or two surprises. What isn't surprising is the distant drone of Berlin Airlift Dakotas that registers during the first CD (1948–49), which includes striking performances of Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue (broadly paced and grandly played by Gerhard Puchelt), Ravel's Rapsodie espagnole (full of dramatic contrasts in tone and tempo), Busoni's Violin Concerto (with BPO concertmaster Siegfried Borries, a very earnest reading) and a fiery, Furtwänglerian account of Cherubini's Anacréon Overture. Puchelt returns in the second disc for a superb reading of Hindemith's often delicate Piano Concerto and Gustav Scheck is the accomplished soloist in Harald Genzmer's wartime Flute Concerto, which echoes Hindemith's distinctive style. Celi and the BPO offer a sensitive and surprisingly idiomatic account of Copland's Appalachian Spring suite (you could easily be listening to, say, Mitropoulos and the New York Phil) and the last CD is mostly given over to music by Celibidache's composition teacher Heinz Tiessen. His Second Symphony includes much that is both dramatic and musically memorable, especially the second movement, one of the set's interpretative highlights. Tiessen's Hamlet-Suite (with a "Totenmarsch" that seems to anticipate Kurt Weill) and Salambo-Suite are also included, as is the world premiere of Reinhard Schwarz-Schilling's rigorous Introduction and Fugue for string orchestra. The sound is good and well-refurbished throughout (mastertapes were available). Audite has provided us with valuable insights into both the youthful art of a rostrum giant and the byways of German music in the early to mid-20th century.