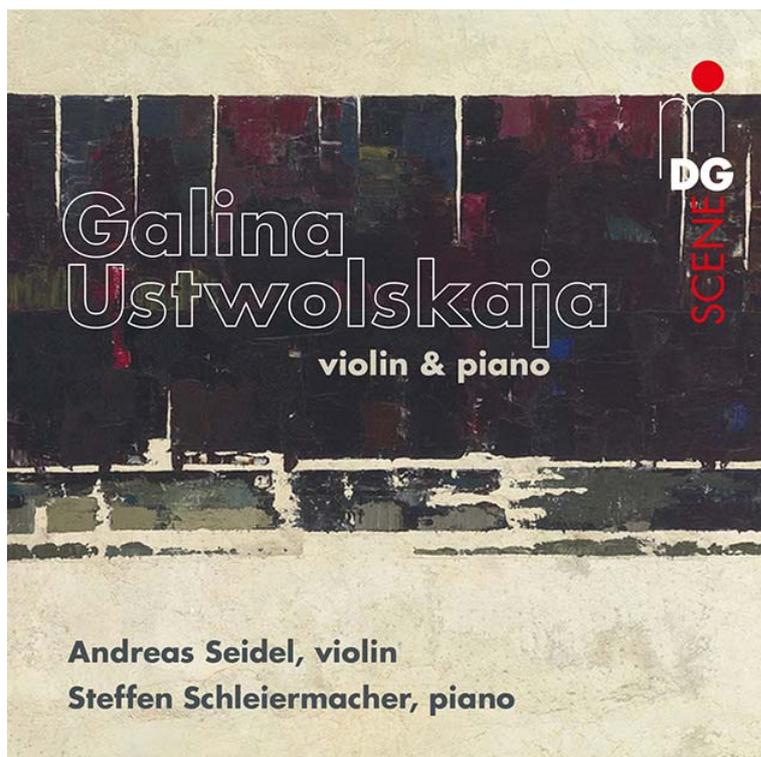


NEW • NOUVEAUTE • NEUHEIT

MDG
SCENE



02/18-(5)

Galina Ustvol'skaja (1919-2006)
violin & piano
Sonata (1952), Duet (1964)
Sonata for Piano No. 5 (1986)

Andreas Seidel, violin
Steffen Schleiermacher, piano

1 CD

MDG 613 2055-2

UPC-Code:



7 60623 20552 6

LC06768

Elemental Clout

This is music of brute force and elemental clout. The listener absolutely cannot resist the penetrating power of the three pieces brought together on this CD by the Gewandhaus concertmaster Andreas Seidel and the perennial discoverer Steffen Schleiermacher. Galina Ustvol'skaja's compositions surpass all analysis, pleasurable listening, and (to a certain extent even) interpretation. Despite this fact (or precisely because of it) they generate spellbinding fascination.

Clues Excluded

Throughout her life Ustvol'skaja did her part to promote such fascination. No interviews, no photographs, only a very few personal statements, and a religious mystification of her oeuvre above all during her later years created an aura of inapproachability and inscrutability. However, at first glance her music does not suggest great sophistication. Either very loud or very quiet, either very high or very low, without rhythmic refinements of any kind, not to mention counterpoint – clues leading to interpretation and analysis are nowhere to be found.

Everything Collapses

The simple motif with which the Violin Sonata opens this CD is a model example here. Its five tones (A flat – E flat – A flat – A flat – E flat) can hardly be termed a theme. However, since it is repeated more than eighty times during the course of the one-movement work, it clearly plays a dominant role in the marching structure otherwise striding in dissonant quarter notes.

And when, after a good twenty minutes, varied ones for Ustvol'skaja, everything collapses at the end, hesitant knocking is all that is left of the initial motif, the question is: Is this the end of all music?

Clusters Exploded

Ustvol'skaja's uncompromising musical language has occasionally earned her the title of a "heavy hitter." Her Piano Sonata No. 5, which Steffen Schleiermacher has placed between the Violin Sonata and the concluding Duet, shows why this is so. In Schleiermacher's hands the sixfold fortissimo, which along with the extraordinary note clusters, calls attention to itself even in the printed score, is conveyed to the listener with explosive force. And Andreas Seidel spares neither himself nor his instrument in order to hurl Ustvol'skaja's totalitarian tones toward the audience. A musical experience that we will not so soon forget!

Other recordings with Andreas Seidel and Steffen Schleiermacher:

Erik Satie, Franz Liszt: „Distant Friends“
MDG 613 2011-2
John Cage: Violin and Piano
MDG 613 1607-2
Morton Feldman: Violin and Piano
MDG 613 1524-2 (2 CDs)
Wolfgang Rihm: Violin and Piano
MDG 613 1672-2

