

ALC 1005 Shostakovich & Tchaikovsky Piano Trios / Rosamunde Trio (new rec.)  
 ALC 1010 Sonatas with Richter: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven (also Oleg Kagan)  
 ALC 1011 Liszt: Piano Concertos 1,2 / Sonata B minor / Mephisto Waltz/ Jorge Bolet  
 ALC 1012 MacDowell: Pno Concs 1,2 / To a Wild Rose/New England Sketches/ Donna Amato  
 ALC 1016 Beethoven "Named Piano sonatas" Moonlight, Appassionata, Pathétique"/ Brendel  
 ALC 1019 Khachaturian: Widow of Valencia/ Battle of Stalingrad/ Masquerade/ Armenian PO  
 ALC 1021 Myaskovsky: Symphonies 15, 27 / Russian Academic F.O/ Svetlanov  
 ALC 1022 Myaskovsky: Symphonies 16, 19 / Russian Academic F.O / Svetlanov  
 ALC 1023 Myaskovsky: Symphonies 17, 21 etc / Russian Academic F.O / Svetlanov  
 ALC 1024 Myaskovsky: Symphonies 23, 24 / Russian Academic F.O / Svetlanov  
 ALC 1029 Sviridov: Choral Music: 3 Choruses Pushkin's Garland, Troubled Times etc  
 ALC 1030 Rachmaninov Symphony 3/ Slavonic Dances/ Moscow State Orch/ Pavel Kogan  
 ALC 1031 Rachmaninov Symphony 2 / Vocalise/Scherzo/ Moscow State/ Orch Kogan  
 ALC 1032 Rachmaninov Symphony 1/ Isle of the Dead / Moscow State Orch/ Pavel Kogan  
 ALC 1036 Weinberg: Chamber syms 1 & 4 / Umea Symphony Orch/ Thord Svedlund  
 ALC 1037 Weinberg: Chamber sym 2 & Sym.2 / Umea Symphony Orch/ Thord Svedlund  
 ALC 1040 Brendel plays Schubert: Sonatas D840, 958, German Dances  
 ALC 1043 Myaskovsky: Alastor; Lyric Concertino Op32/3; Sinfonietta Op68/2 / Svetlanov  
 ALC 1044 Dvořák Piano music played on Dvorak's own Bosendorfer piano/ Kvapil  
 ALC 1046 Brendel plays Schumann: Fantasy in C; Symphonic Studies  
 ALC 1047 Brendel plays Mozart in Vienna: Pno.Concs 9 (K271), 14 (K449), Sonata K310  
 ALC 1049 Golden Operetta of Vienna: Wunderlich / Schwarkzopf/ Gueden/ Tauber / etc etc  
 ALC 1050 Segovia plays Lo Mestre (Catalan folksong) plus Bach, Villa Lobos, Rodrigo etc  
 ALC 1052 Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra/ Music for Strings etc/ Minnesota / Skrowaczewski  
 ALC 1057 Martinů: Cello Sonatas & Variations etc/ Karine Georgian/ Ian Munro  
 ALC 1058 Dvořák Piano Trios F minor and Dumky / Rosamunde Trio  
 ALC 1060 Monteverdi Duets/ Emma Kirkby & Evelyn Tubb/ Consort Musicke/ Rooley  
 ALC 1062 Shostakovich: Symphony 15/ Violin Conc 2/ David Oistrakh / Moscow/Kondrashin  
 ALC 1064 Berlioz: Symphonie Fantastique/3 Overtures incl Carnival Romain/ RPO/Mackerras  
 ALC 1065 Wagner Orchestral Favourites from the operas / RPO / Simonov  
 ALC 1066 Davidoff: Cello Concertos 1,2 / Salon Pieces incl At the Fountain / Marina Tarasova  
 ALC 1067 Shostakovich 5<sup>th</sup> sym/ Excerpts "Gadfly" / L.S.O / Maxim Shostakovich  
 ALC 1068 Scriabin Preludes & Mazurkas / Artur Pizarro (Penguin 3\*)  
 ALC 1069 Gretchaninov Liturgy of St John Chrysostom / Cantus Sacred Ensemble Moscow  
 ALC 2008 Britten: Peter Grimes (2CD) Pears / Watson / Covent Garden / Britten  
 ALC 2501 (3CD) Mozart: Nozze di Figaro / Guden/ Della casa / VPO/ Kleiber (special price)  
 ALC 5001 (5CD set) Complete Sibelius Piano Music / Annette Servadei

## Sviatoslav Richter plays Rachmaninov

### Études-tableaux for Piano Op.33\*

- |   |      |
|---|------|
| 1. No.9 in C sharp minor. <i>Grave</i>      | 2.39 |
| 2. No.5 in D minor. <i>Moderato</i>         | 2.53 |
| 3. No.6 in E flat minor. <i>Non allegro</i> | 1.40 |

### Études-tableaux for Piano Op.39\*

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| 4. No.1 in C Minor. <i>Allegro agitato</i>                   | 2.54 |
| 5. No.2 in A minor. <i>Lento assai</i>                       | 7.00 |
| 6. No.3 in F sharp minor. <i>Allegro molto</i>               | 2.46 |
| 7. No.4 in B minor. <i>Allegro assai</i>                     | 3.35 |
| 8. No.9 in D major. <i>Allegro moderato, tempo di marcia</i> | 3.41 |
| 9. No.7 in C minor. <i>Lento</i>                             | 6.57 |

### Six Preludes from Op.23

- |   |      |
|---|------|
| 10. No.1 in F sharp minor. <i>Largo</i>         | 3.52 |
| 11. No.2 in B flat major. <i>Maestoso</i>       | 3.24 |
| 12. No.4 in D major. <i>Andante cantabile</i>   | 4.12 |
| 13. No.5 in G minor. <i>Alla Marcia</i>         | 3.44 |
| 14. No.7 in C minor. <i>Allegro</i>             | 2.24 |
| 15. No.8 in A flat major. <i>Allegro vivace</i> | 3.06 |

### Seven Preludes from Op.32

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| 16. No.1 in C major. <i>Allegro vivace</i>       | 1.11 |
| 17. No.2 in B flat minor. <i>Allegretto</i>      | 3.02 |
| 18. No.6 in F minor. <i>Allegro appassionato</i> | 1.18 |
| 19. No.7 in F major. <i>Moderato</i>             | 2.10 |
| 20. No.9 in A major. <i>Allegro moderato</i>     | 2.34 |
| 21. No.10 in B minor. <i>Lento</i>               | 5.21 |
| 22. No.12 in G sharp minor. <i>Allegro</i>       | 2.19 |

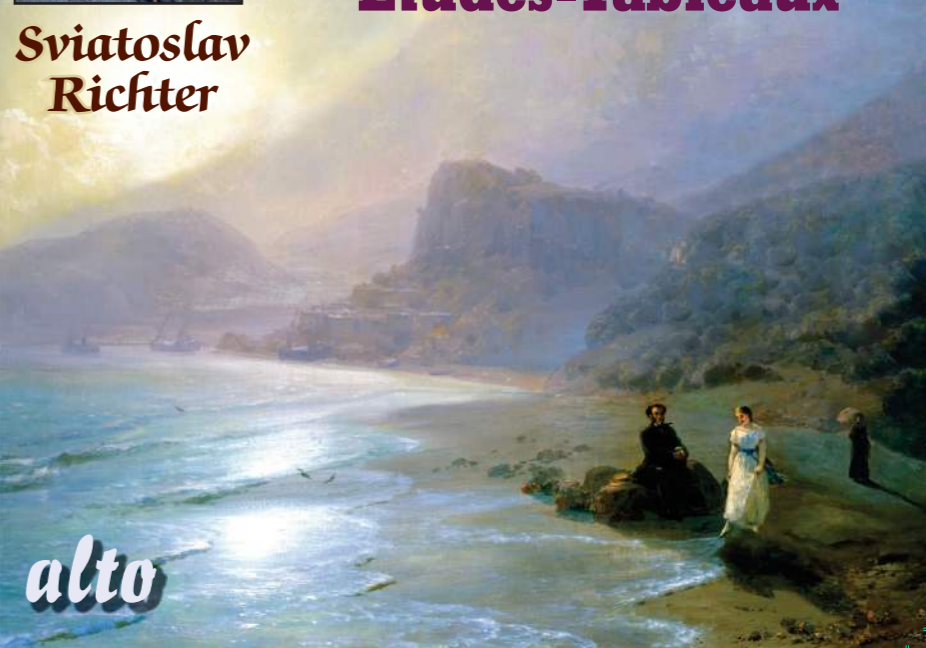
Time 74:30 Recordings\* DDD (1988) (rest 1971)  
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Sviatoslav  
Richter

# Rachmaninov

## Preludes & Études-Tableaux



alto

When in 1910 **Sergei Rachmaninov** (1873-1943) wrote a further set of thirteen Preludes to add to his existing opus 23 set and the famous early C sharp minor Prelude (1892), he found, like others before him, that he had composed a complete set using every major and minor key. It is not known whether the series was planned to accomplish this feat but they were published in alternating major and minor keys.

The ten **Preludes** that make up the opus 23 set were composed between 1899 and 1903. The *first Prelude in F sharp minor* is in complete contrast to its strenuous predecessor in C sharp minor, for the melodic line is kept simple albeit to a rather nervous accompaniment. The *second Prelude in B flat major*, whose rich powerful bell-like tones so excited the elderly critic Vladimir Stasov (champion of Russian nationalism in the arts), carries one away with its vigour. The deeply lyrical *fourth Prelude in D major* takes us back to the world of the Chopin Nocturne. The melody in two flows gently alongside the three-quaver accompaniment like 'a lake in spring flood' (Ilya Repin, painter). The martial *fifth Prelude in G minor* is thought to have been composed in 1901. It can be seen by now that there is tremendous contrast in mood between one Prelude and another, whilst this fifth Prelude has two wholly contrasting sections, with a vigorous opening and a middle section redolent, as Rachmaninov's biographer Riesemann wrote, of the limitless Russian landscape.

The *seventh Prelude in C minor* is Rachmaninov at his most moody (he was famously described by Stravinsky as 'six and a half feet of Russian misery') with overtones of Bachian improvisation. The *eighth Prelude in A flat* has a lovely left hand melody whilst the right hand busies itself with decoration. Finally the two hands come together for the coda.

Rachmaninov did not enjoy composing the opus 32 set of Preludes: he wrote grumpily to a friend that it spoiled his humour and prevented him from breathing easily. The *first in C major* has been compared to the famous *Prelude in C sharp minor* with its insistent repetition of the opening three notes. The *second in B flat minor* is restless but beautiful with a deep sense of longing. *Number 6 in F minor* is defiant and has nothing of the long melody that typifies much of Rachmaninov's previous work whereas the *seventh in F major* brings a sense of calm, being essentially a dialogue between right and left hand. The *ninth Prelude in A major* features left hand ascending and descending diatonic scales around which the composer has improvised freely. It seems that the famous *tenth Prelude in B minor* was inspired by a Böcklin painting of an old man (to judge by the funereal aspect of the music he is evidently on the point of death) looking at a distant cottage.

We know that *number twelve in G sharp minor* was composed with number five before the main group as it was played as an encore following the premiere of his *Piano Concerto No. 3* the previous Spring. The tinkling right hand again accompanies a gorgeously warm melody in the left.

The following opus number (33) consisted of a series of **Etudes-Tableaux** (Study-Pictures) although initially three of them were called Prelude-Pictures. The Etude part of the title is entirely apt however as each piece taxes the pianist's ability to the full. Commentators have always been tempted to speculate just which paintings inspired these works (Rachmaninov only revealed the identities of three of them). For some reason best known to himself the composer withheld the *fifth in D minor*, keeping it locked away in Moscow where it was found in 1947. For obvious reasons the chilly *sixth Etude-Tableau in E flat minor* has earned the nickname 'Snow Storm'. Apart from the hesitant opening and ending of this piece the pianist must pursue a sinuous, hectic and exhausting course. The massively grave *ninth Etude-Tableau in C sharp minor* grinds inexorably throughout the entire compass of the piano to a triumphantly minor key conclusion.

Rachmaninov's collection of **Etudes-Tableaux opus 39** appeared not long after the death of not only his father, but also Taneyev and Scriabin. The theme of death pervades this group of piano pieces like a dark shadow and the majority of them feature the *Dies Irae* in some form. We know from Reisemann that the opening *Etude-Tableau in C minor* was inspired by Böcklin's 'Waves' and a furious and nightmarish sea it is too! The *second in A minor* appears to also have a marine theme as one can hear the cry of the gulls in the music, but the mood of the piece is restless rather than stormy. The *third in F sharp minor* might also be at sea as with energetic bursts a storm gathers momentum and recedes. The fourth piece is a toccata, with a persistent rhythm, that unusually for Rachmaninov repeats both its first and second (of three) sections.

The composer let it be known that the main theme of *number seven in C minor* represented a funeral march with the subsidiary theme depicting the choir and a semi-quaver passage 'fine, incessant and hopeless rain' (Rachmaninov). Such was the impression made on Rachmaninov of Scriabin's funeral held under similar conditions that it is thought that this piece is its representation in music. The *ninth in D major* is apparently a bustling oriental fair and is atypical of the set as a whole, bringing the opus 39 to an optimistic conclusion. It will be noted that Sviatoslav Richter

does not play these works in strictly numerical order.

**Sviatoslav Richter** (1915 – 97), considered by many as the greatest pianist of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, was born in 1915 and was taught by Heinrich Neuhaus. In Russia he gained a formidable reputation and premiered three of Prokofiev's piano sonatas, winning the Stalin Prize in 1949. He gave his first public recital in Odessa in 1934 and was taught by Heinrich Neuhaus at the Moscow Conservatory. Having played Prokofiev's *Fifth Piano Concerto* under the composer's direction, Richter gained a formidable reputation in the USSR and played in the West for the first time in 1960. Each subsequent visit was eagerly awaited, however Richter became highly selective in his choice of venue, (always preferring smaller venues and following an extensive tour of the USA in 1970, he chose not to return to that country; Aldeburgh and selected sites in France and Italy became his preferred venues outside Russia). In 1986 Richter gave ninety-one concerts over a four-month period during a massive tour by car from Leningrad to Vladivostok and then back to Moscow. In addition to numerous solo concerts Richter often played alongside friends such as Britten, Rostropovich, Fischer-Dieskau, Schreier, Oistrakh and Fournier.

Richter, whose repertoire was vast, was nevertheless often highly selective in his choice of works (as here), disregarding those he felt disinclined to play. On one occasion he was criticised by the composer Shostakovich for only picking some of the *Preludes and Fugues* to play. Richter's reply was to say 'There was no reason for him to feel offended: I played the ones that I liked, why should I play the ones that I didn't?' (*Sviatoslav Richter: Notebooks and Conversations* Faber 2001).  
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**Others available:**  
ALC 1074 Schubert: Piano Sonatas D958, D960 / Sviatoslav Richter