



Franz Schubert: Impromptus D. 935 & D. 899

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[Fanfare](#) (Jerry Dubins - 2019.08.01)

Turkish-born, Hannover-trained pianist and composer Kemal Cem Yilmaz has thus far had one album reviewed in Fanfare, his Audite recording of Bach's Goldberg Variations. It was reviewed in 41:6 by James Maiello, who didn't find much to recommend it.

Schubert's two sets of Impromptus are played by many and beloved by all. I'm not sure why, on the present album, Yilmaz and/or Audite's production team chose to program the two sets in reverse order. Both, it's true, were written in 1827, the last full year of Schubert's life, but at least the D 899 set was partially published while the composer was still alive, whereas the D 935 set wasn't published until 1839, 11 years after his death. I suppose it doesn't really matter what order you listen to them in, but I'm always struck by the perversity of it when works are programmed, for no discernible reason, contrary to expected norms and common sense.

That said, I like Yilmaz's performances a lot. He plays with a singing tone, nimble finger work, the right amount of pedal in the right places, and he's quite adept at sculpting the melodic lines from out of the accompaniment. We hear the contours of the song hidden within and emerging from the rhythmic patterns and shifting harmonies.

Yilmaz is not unique, however, in these respects, and I'd be hard-pressed to say that he is better at it than five of my favorites: Andreas Haefliger (Sony), Maria João Pires (Deutsche Grammophon), Krystian Zimerman (Deutsche Grammophon), Wilhelm Kempff (Deutsche Grammophon), and Radu Lupu (Decca). That I would put Yilmaz in this same company is high praise indeed.

Since we've been asked to mention it, I will tell you that if you're interested in acquiring this release in surround-sound format, it's available as an HD download at audite.de.