



Dmitri Shostakovich: Cello Concertos Nos. 1 & 2

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music

Pairing Shostakovich's cello concertos, both dedicated to Mstislav Rostropovich and premiered by him in 1959 and 1966 respectively, has become commonplace on recordings. To feature them in the same concert may be unique, but it makes sense, being a more varied journey than the one to be found in the two violin concertos. The greater part of the live intensity and atmosphere is to be found in the magnificent ensembles and (more often) solos of the Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra players under the ever-reliable Lawrence Foster. Wind and horn especially sound wonderful in Katowice's muchpraised orchestra, with plenty of air around the instruments but also much immediacy. A bit too much, perhaps, as Coppey launches mezzo forte rather than piano into the quest of the First Concerto. At the opposite extreme, too, the best interpreters tend to find more tearing intensity. Coppey's intonation and timbre at both extremes of the register, though, are always of the highest order. The interweaving of soloist and orchestra constantly holds the attention, and you find more genuine pianissimos in the Second Concerto, its final Allegretto one of the most compelling in the entire orchestral repertoire with its percussion-accompanied fanfares, cadenzas, ritornellos and marionette dances. Here you really do sense the depths of Shostakovich's later style, always rethought in each work's approach to the question of imminent death, always original. The many quotations, speculative or actual, and what Shostakovich would have called 'pseudo-quotations', are admirably covered in Michael Struck-Schloen's impressively detailed notes.

Shostakovich

Cello Concertos Nos 1 & 2
Marc Coppey (cello); Polish National
Radio Symphony/Lawrence Foster
Audite AUDITE9777 60:07 mins



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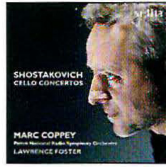
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PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

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