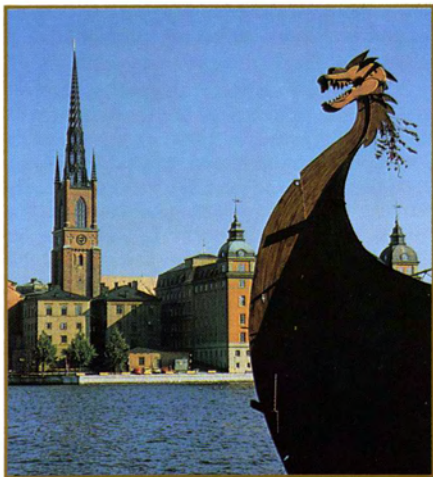


SCANDINAVIAN FESTIVAL

Swedish Rhapsody • Norwegian Dances • Lyric Suite
The Rustle of Spring • Norwegian Artists' Carnival
Karelia Overture • Symphonic Dance

CSSR State Philharmonic
(Košice)

Richard Edlinger



1988 Recording | Playing Time : 71'29"

Scandinavian Festival

The second half of the 19th century brought a development of national feeling in many parts of Europe, coupled with an interest in folk music, which for some became a source of inspiration. In Sweden a period in which the classical model of Vienna held sway was followed by the growing influence of German Romanticism and of the developing national music of Denmark and Norway. Hugo Alfven was one of the most important Swedish composers at the turn of the century. He was born in Stockholm in 1872 and studied composition and the violin in the Conservatory there, and made a career for himself as a choral conductor and as director of music at Uppsala University. The first of his three Swedish Rhapsodies, *Midsommarvaka* (Midsummer Vigil), was written in 1903 and has remained among his most popular compositions. The work is based on Swedish folk music and draws further inspiration from a peasant wedding.

Edvard Grieg, Scottish by remoter paternal ancestry but completely Norwegian in sentiment and culture, was born in Bergen in 1843 into a family with a keen amateur interest in music. It was on the advice of the violinist Ole Bull that he was sent, as a boy of fifteen, to study at Leipzig Conservatory, where initial disappointment at conservative musical attitudes was tempered by the wealth of music to which he was now exposed. It was through the encouragement of the Danish composer Niels Gade and, more particularly, through his friendship with the young Norwegian composer Rikard Nordraak and the enthusiasm of Ole Bull that he turned his attention to the folk music of Norway. He was to become the leading Romantic nationalist composer of his country, combining his career as a composer with that of a pianist, and collaborating with the leading dramatists of the day, Bjørnson and Ibsen. The Norwegian Dances, Opus 33, were written in 1881 for piano duet and later arranged for solo piano. The Lyric Pieces, Opus 54, formed the fifth of ten such collections that Grieg wrote during the course of his life, the first in 1867 and the last in 1901. Opus 54, written in 1891, consists of five short piano

pieces, the first four of which Grieg orchestrated and published in 1904 as *Lyrische Suite*. They are characteristic of his handling of harmonic and orchestral colour, using melodies and rhythms of clear national origin. The four *Symphonic Dances*, published in 1898 and also arranged by the composer for piano duet, again provided an opportunity for daring harmonic treatment of melodic material drawn from folk music.

Like his compatriot Grieg, Christian Sinding too studied at Leipzig Conservatory, in preparation, in his case, for a career as a violinist. This initial aim he abandoned in favour of composition, enjoying at home, at least, a reputation only second to that of Grieg. He was a prolific composer, but for many his name is associated only with *The Rustle of Spring*, a piano piece that he wrote in 1896 and published as one of a set of six such sketches, music that in orchestral arrangement suggests unusual meteorological disturbance for the time of year.

Johan Svendsen, the son of an army musician, followed his father's trade, employed in a military band as a clarinettist, but later embarking on an early career as an orchestral violinist, before travelling to Leipzig to study at the Conservatory, where his teachers included Ferdinand David. He was to make a name for himself also as a composer and as a conductor, for a time sharing the direction of concerts in Christiania (the modern Oslo) with Grieg. His international career and his reputation as the most important Scandinavian conductor of his generation won him in 1883 appointment as conductor at the Royal Opera in Copenhagen, where he died in 1911. His *Norwegian Artists' Carnival*, written about 1874, depicts the carnival of the title in Rome, the city represented by an Italian folksong and the Norwegian artists by music of their own country.

Jean Sibelius, Finnish by birth but Swedish, in common with others of his age and class, in early language and cultural background, is by far the most important figure in Finnish music, a major symphonic composer in the wider context of later Romanticism. His first musical ambition was to become a

violinist, but his gifts as a composer, fostered by Wegelius in Helsinki and by later teachers in Berlin and Vienna, ensured the path that his career would take. His music often draws direct inspiration from the knowledge of Finnish literature and legend that he had acquired at school and from the patriotic nationalism of his time. The Karelia music was written in 1893 to illustrate a patriotic pageant, its inspiration the south-eastern province of Finland, a region later absorbed into the Soviet Union.

CSSR State Philharmonic Orchestra (Košice)

The East Slovakian town of Košice boasts a long and distinguished musical tradition, as part of a province that once provided Vienna with musicians. The State Philharmonic Orchestra is of relatively recent origin and was established in 1968 under the conductor Bystrík Režucha. Subsequent principal conductors have included Stanislav Macura and Ladislav Slovák, the latter succeeded in 1985 by his pupil Richard Zimmer. The orchestra has toured widely in Eastern and Western Europe and plays an important part in the Košice Musical Spring and the Košice International Organ Festival.

Richard Edlinger

The Austrian conductor Richard Edlinger was born in Bregenz in 1958 and directed his first concert at the age of seventeen. In 1982 he completed his studies in conducting and composition at the Vienna Academy, having by then already acquired considerable professional experience on the podium. He was the youngest finalist in the 1983 Guido Cantelli Conductors' Competition at La Scala, Milan, and since 1986 he has been Artistic Director of the Capella Istropolitana, an orchestra with which he has undertaken various European tours. Richard Edlinger has made recent appearances with the Vienna Chamber Orchestra, the Zagreb Philharmonic, the George Enescu Philharmonic, the orchestra of La Scala, Milan, and the RTSI Orchestra in Lugano. In 1987 he was appointed Music Director of the Kamptal Festival in Austria.

SCANDINAVIAN FESTIVAL

CSSR State Philharmonic (Košice)

Richard Edlinger

DDD

Playing
Time :
71'52"

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1 SINDING: The Rustle of Spring Op. 32 No. 3 (2:44)
(arr. Hans Sitt)</p> <p>GRIEG: Norwegian Dances, Op. 35</p> <p>2 No. 1 Allegro marcato (6:04)</p> <p>3 No. 2 Allegretto tranquillo e grazioso (2:18)</p> <p>4 No. 3 Allegro moderato alla Marcia (3:13)</p> <p>5 No. 4 Allegro molto (5:41)</p> <p>6 SIBELIUS: Karelia Overture Op. 10 (9:25)</p> | <p>7 ALFVEN: Swedish Rhapsody Op. 19 (13:24)</p> <p>GRIEG: Lyric Suite Op. 54</p> <p>8 No. 1 Shepherd's Boy (4:57)</p> <p>9 No. 2 Norwegian Rustic March (3:56)</p> <p>10 No. 3 Notturmo (4:30)</p> <p>11 No. 4 March of the Dwarfs (3:06)</p> <p>12 SVENDSEN: Norwegian Artists' Carnival Op. 14 (6:18)</p> <p>GRIEG: Symphonic Dance Op. 64</p> <p>13 No. 3 Allegro giocoso (6:16)</p> |
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Recorded at the Concert Hall of the CSSR State Philharmonic (Košice) in October 1988.

Producers: Rudolf Hentsel

Gejza Toperczer

Music Notes: Keith Anderson

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