

C D S P O T L I G H T

A Boy Prodigy

*Piano music by  
Niklas Sivelöv -  
heard by  
GERALD FENECH*



'... marvelous technique and improvisational skills.'

Born in 1968, Niklas Sivelöv is one of the leading pianists not only in his native Sweden, but in the Nordic countries as well. With a number of international awards and accolades to his name, he is continually commissioned not only to perform but also to compose, and his discography already numbers some twenty-five CDs. Sivelöv can be regarded as a boy prodigy, playing the organ when he was six, and winning prizes across the whole of Scandinavia while attracting attention for his dexterity both as an improviser and composer. When he was fourteen he switched to his beloved instrument, the piano, and three years later he started his serious studies at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm.

Sivelöv made his debut in 1991 with Bartók's second Piano Concerto, a monster of a work, and since then he has worked with several eminent conductors such as Paavo Berglund, Thomas Dausgaard and Esa-Pekka Salonen. He has also performed with many great orchestras such as the Bucharest Philharmonic, the MDR in Leipzig and L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, not to mention all the major Scandinavian orchestras.

As a pianist his repertoire is immense, encompassing around fifty concertos extending from Bach to contemporary music, and he has been the catalyst of many world premieres.

His own compositions total some forty in number, with three piano concertos among them. He has been a member of the teaching staff at the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen since 2000 and a professor at the same Academy since 2007.

This CD, interpreted by the composer himself, is his first for the Toccata label, and comprises a programme of his best piano works composed over a period of twenty-six years, although apart from the 'Due Notturmi', the music dates from 2010 onwards.

His music belongs most definitely to the modern sound world, but on closer scrutiny, one can detect a certain colouring by a range of influences from Bach to jazz.

Space constraints do not allow me to enter into details, but the composer's own description of his works in the sleeve note is certainly invaluable, and is a must read exercise if you want to appreciate this highly mature yet multi-faceted language which needs repeated listening to get to the bottom line of Sivelöv's marvelous technique and improvisational skills. Not everyone's cup of tea, but certainly worthy of serious investigation. Sound and presentation are first-rate.

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