

lingering effects of his disease (certainly, his left-hand recordings of Korngold and Schmidt, recorded about a decade ago, display more of the grit and intensity of his earlier years). In any case, the new style is a mixed blessing. Any band on this disc, heard on its own, is a breath-taking experience; as a whole, though, the CD is arguably too consistent in its emotional temperature, as if the Chopin Nocturne—played so pensively, molded with such aching gentleness—had served as the expressive template for everything else.

Still, this is a major release. The notes are unforgivably skimpy, but the sound on my advance copy was fine. Recommended with minor caveats.

Peter J. Rabinowitz

CHOPIN Waltzes: in D \flat , op. 70/3; in f, op. 70/2; in A \flat , op. 69/1; in F, op. 34/3. **Polonaise** in e \flat , op. 26/2. **MOZART** Sonata in C, K 330. **HAYDN** Sonata in E \flat , Hob 49. **STRAVINSKY** Tango. **WOLFF** *Peruvian Honeymoon*. **VALEN** Variations, op. 23 • Andrew Rangell (pn) • BRIDGE 9154 (73:06)

This intriguing recital is entitled, after the piece by Christian Wolff, “Peruvian Honeymoon.” As a glance over the headnote will demonstrate, despite a second reference to South America with Stravinsky’s *Tango*, there’s nothing Peruvian about it. It doesn’t help me understand particularly that Wolff’s piece is based on the relatively pedestrian Beatles tune, *Eight Days a Week*. The lyrics of *Eight Days a Week* proclaim that the singer can barely wait to get home to his spouse from the harsher outside world. This is the kind of husbandly affection that Oscar Wilde called washing your clean linen in public. Perhaps there is a colloquialism I don’t know—does a Peruvian honeymoon take place at home? Wolff’s variations barely recall the original song: these are not typical variations, especially as new material, a melody over strummed chords and some neatly spaced, tightly voiced, chords, is introduced in the last minute. This is a pleasing piece nonetheless, with its own emotional logic.

Rangell’s Chopin is gentle even as it plays up dynamic contrasts. I find the Mozart, which does the same thing, a little mannered, with slightly arch pauses and accents. An innocent piece should be phrased innocently. Rangell’s vigorous Haydn is, however, a joy throughout. Rangell seems to enjoy Haydn’s wit and boisterous good nature: his tendency to emphasize contrasts is beautifully employed here. The Variations by Norwegian composer Fartein Valen are, as the notes accurately tell us, concise and lyrical. This is an appealing 12-tone work that ends as quietly as it began. Rangell finishes with Stravinsky’s humorous *Tango*, which he plays exquisitely. Rangell’s “Peruvian Honeymoon” is a winning collection, especially valuable for its rare pieces of music and, to my ears, for its nearly ideal rendition of a wonderful Haydn sonata.

Michael Ullman

EARL WILD AT 30: LIVE RADIO BROADCASTS FROM THE 1940S • Earl Wild (pn) • IVORY 64405-74003, mono (53:40)

CHOPIN Polonaise in A \flat , op. 53. **DAQUIN** *Le coucou*. **LISZT** Sonata in b. **MACDOWELL** *Hexentanz*, op. 17/2. **MENDELSSOHN** Scherzo, op. 16/2. **MUSSORGSKY** *Ein Kinderscherz* in D. **RACHMANINOFF** *Polichinelle*, op. 3/4. *Prelude* in G, op. 32/5. **SCARLATTI** Sonata in D, K 96

Earl Wild has been such a consistently youthful presence throughout the LP and CD eras that you can easily forget that the pianist who taped the “Virtuoso Piano” collection and the complete Rachmaninoff concertos 40 years ago was already a seasoned performer. Indeed, the pianist who churned out music-on-demand for ABC and NBC two decades before that was already a seasoned performer, too—as this souvenir of those years makes clear. To be sure, these performances don’t boast the depth of artistry or the control of tone heard in Wild’s more recent recordings. Next to the aching and artfully shaped 1993 version of Rachmaninoff’s regretful *Prelude* in G, for instance, this version from half a century earlier, nearly half a minute quicker, seems slightly impatient and under-nuanced. And those who turn to Chopin’s A \flat Major Polonaise for nobility and nostalgia may find Wild’s account too uninhibited. But whatever these performances lack in depth, they more than compensate for in brilliance: whether in the sting of the Mendelssohn, the spit of the rarely-heard Mussorgsky trifle, the rhythmic kick of the Scarlatti, or the quick reaction time of Rachmaninoff’s *Polichinelle* (played with an irrepressibly bold comedic spirit), they have a rare combination of sizzle and wit that’s impossible to resist.

The gem of the collection, not surprisingly, is the lean, nervous account of the Liszt Sonata, a frankly virtuosic reading marked by sharp edges, striking accents, and torrents of sound in the cli-

