

## GRAMOPHONE

## Chopin

Ballades - No 1, Op 23; No 3, Op 47. Barcarolle, Op 60. Berceuse, Op 57. Mazurkas - No 30, Op 50 No 1; No 31, Op 50 No 2; No 32, Op 50 No 3. Nocturnes - No 5, Op 15 No 2; No 8, Op 27 No 2; No 13, Op 48 No 1; No 16, Op 55 No 2. Scherzo No 4, Op 54

David Korevaar *pf*

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Given David Korevaar's penchant for putting together interesting and

cohesive concert programmes, it's not surprising that his all-Chopin disc embraces many moods and styles. Indeed, Korevaar's first selection, the C minor Nocturne, Op 48 No 1, runs the emotional gamut between its stark *mezza voce* opening and the middle section's tumultuous octave outbursts, helped by the pianist's full-bodied sonority and huge dynamic range. The contrapuntal textures of the E flat Nocturne, Op 55 No 2, don't float in the Friedman/Moravec/Rubinstein manner but are rather closer to Arrau's combative probity.

The A flat (Third) Ballade's filigree never sprints faster than it could be comfortably sung, and consistently holds attention, while the D flat Nocturne, Op 27 No 2, is spacious and cannily proportioned. Since Chopin's Mazurkas lend themselves to a wide interpretative berth, the three Op 50 selections easily absorb Korevaar's subjective breadth and harmonic pointing. By contrast, the meticulously detailed Barcarolle and Berceuse fall somewhat short of the lilt and poetic tenderness distinguishing Murray Perahia's classic recordings. The Fourth Scherzo's outer sections are supple and poised, yet don't quite take rhythmic wing.

Korevaar sheds fresh and often unconventional light on the G minor (First) Ballade. The opening theme's myriad repetitions markedly differ, yet are inevitably unified, while the pianist brings uncommon melodic clarity to the rapid fioritura and heroic virtuoso patterns. Inner voices (both real and implied) bubble up from the left-hand accompaniments, and transitions between sections are assiduously gauged. This revelatory interpretation alone is worth the disc's price. **Jed Distler**