



MOZART

SONATAS & RONDOS

Marcia Hadjimarkos

Avie AV 2138
2004 · 76:29'



The fortepiano used by Marcia Hadjimarkos is a copy of a 1793 Sebastian Lengerer made by Christopher Clarke. Lengerer learned his trade as an apprentice to Johann Andreas Stein, whose very expensive pianos Mozart praised effusively for their mechanical (and therefore musical) superiority in letters to his father in 1777. Later, after his move to Vienna, Mozart had a piano made for him by the less expensive Anton Walther, copies of which are more often heard in period instrument recordings of his keyboard music. Lengerer's instruments retained the distinctive clarity and transparency of tone of Stein's fortepianos, whose sound was drier than the louder, rounder and (dare I say) marginally less refined Walters.

These qualities are beautifully exploited by Hadjimarkos in her recital of Mozart's sonatas K. 333, 545 (the so-called *Sonata facile*) and 457 and rondos K. 485, 494 and 511. Her gentle, almost introverted yet brilliantly intelligent manner evokes Mozart's famous injunction to his sister not to practise playing Clementi too much "... so that she may not spoil her quiet, even touch and that her hand may not lose its natural lightness, flexibility and smooth rapidity". Besides the wondrous sensitivity of her touch, two elements of Hadjimarkos's playing stand out: her very flexible approach to tempo (especially striking in the poignantly regretful K. 511) and her witty, sometimes daringly profuse and yet always idiomatic ornamentation.

In short, this is the most satisfying recording of Mozart on the fortepiano I have heard for some years. More, please, and as soon as possible! **CHRISTOPHER PRICE**