



Edition Géza Anda (I) – Mozart

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 Though Mozart's piano concertos are not by any means the most technically difficult works in the repertoire, and though, too, they may not reach the extremes of profundity and passion that Beethoven's sonatas do, they find shortcomings out more relentlessly than any other pieces in the keyboard repertoire. Any failure of taste is highlighted by the sheer fact that no amount of virtuosity or portentousness can be employed to disguise it, for those are qualities that are not involved. Looking back over the history of great piano recordings, there are fewer of these works than of any other masterpieces that I would want to keep. Géza Anda's belong in that class, however, both the complete set that he made in the 1960s and these performances from the Cologne archives.

On this pair of discs he plays four of Mozart's finest concertos, and if they don't rank with the classic performances, that is more because of the conductors than because of Anda. In Concerto No. 22 in E flat, K482, which I sometimes think is my favourite of all, Constantin Silvestri mainly conducts with an insight to match his pianist's, but there are places in the slow movement and in the sublime andante section in the middle of the last movement where he lapses, and so does the orchestral playing. Joseph Keilberth is more reliable in the famous C major Concerto, K467, and between them he and Anda purge the famous slow movement of any hint of sickness, so that it emerges as another of Mozart's finest. Anda looking after the orchestra and playing the piano in the A major Concerto is good, but another pair of hands would have made the performance still better. Enough quibbling: these accounts must be heard. The sound quality varies over the 13-year period of the recordings, but is always quite good, sometimes exceptional.