

RUSSIAN PIANO GEMS: ROMANTIC TO AVANT-GARDE • Elena Dorozhkina (pn) •
NAVONA 6576 (47:25)

MOSOLOV Piano Sonata No. 4, op. 11. **GLINKA/BALAKIREV** *The Lark*. **SCRIABIN** Etude, op. 65/3. **Prelude for Left Hand in c-sharp**, op. 9/1. **Etude in c-sharp**, op. 42/5. **TCHAIKOVSKY** *Dumka*, op. 59. **RACHMANINOFF** *Morceau de fantaisie* in g. **Prelude in g-sharp**, op. 32/12. **Elégie in e-flat**, op. 3/1. **Prelude in c**, op. 23/7

Elena Dorozhkina is a Russian-born pianist who now makes her home in the Atlanta, GA region. A graduate of the St. Petersburg State Conservatory, Dorozhkina is both a performer and educator. A member of the faculty of Agnes Scott College, Dorozhkina has appeared in recitals in the US, Germany, Czech Republic, Russia, and Ukraine. In a preface to the liner notes for her Navona recital disc, *Russian Piano Gems: Romantic to Avant-Garde*, Dorozhkina relates: “this music is embedded in my DNA. It speaks deeply in my soul and I can feel the emotions conveyed in the pieces. I hope that through this music, I can speak these emotions from my heart to your heart.” Dorozhkina’s *Russian Piano Gems* comprises gratifyingly rich and varied repertoire, sequenced and contrasted in a most thoughtful, rewarding manner. The recital opens with Alexander Mosolov’s atonal, single-movement Sonata No. 4 (1925). Next is Balakirev’s piano transcription of Glinka’s bel canto-influence song “The Lark.” Three pieces by Scriabin follow. The composer/pianist’s late-period exploration of the limits of tonality is embodied in his 1912 Etude. Almost two decades earlier, Scriabin’s admiration for Chopin is evident in the *Prelude for Left Hand* (1894). The Romantic outpourings of the *Etude*, op. 42/5 (1903) conclude the Scriabin trilogy. Tchaikovsky’s take on the Slavic *Dumka* (1886) juxtaposes mournful lyricism with energetic, virtuoso writing. Four works by Rachmaninoff showcase the immortal pianist/composer’s trademark synthesis of brilliant display, elegance, and melodic genius. Dorozhkina performs this varied and challenging repertoire with impressive technique and style. Her keen identification with all of the featured works is palpable. And her phrasing exudes a beguiling flexibility, a broad spectrum of colors, and a searching, poetic spirit. A compelling and most enjoyable recital. Recommended. **Ken Meltzer**

Five stars: A superb and diverse recital of Russian piano works by Elena Dorozhkina