



SHADOWS

THE UNACCOMPANIED VIOLA SONATAS OF GÜNTER RAPHAEL

Gregory K. Williams, viola

Street date: February 2, 2024

Format: Digital and 1 CD

SRP: \$16.00

Label: Affetto



RELEASE INFO:

Günter Raphael (1903–1960) was a prolific and versatile composer from a musical family, but because his music was banned in his lifetime due to his Jewish ancestry, his music did not gain commensurate recognition to the canon. Though he wrote for viola and other members of the string family, he is better known for his orchestral, choir, and organ works. As a performer, he was an organist, pianist, violist, and violinist. Gregory K. Williams first encountered the viola music of Günter Raphael in 2012 at a used bookshop in Dresden, Germany, where he discovered Raphael's first unaccompanied viola sonata, op. 7, no. 1. Over the course of his career, Raphael wrote three unaccompanied viola sonatas, two romances, two sonatas for viola and piano (opp. 13 and 80), a Concertino for Viola and Chamber Orchestra, and duos for violin and viola as well as for viola and cello. Raphael's works are compelling due to their provocative and wide-ranging harmonic language and their technical complexity. What makes his viola works fascinating is how the styles evoked reflect the works' historical context and at the same time reveal a clear stylistic arc across his compositions. *Shadows: The Unaccompanied Viola Sonatas* of Günter Raphael is the American premiere recording of these works, as they have only been recorded and released in Germany to date. This recording also represents the first time that all three of Günter Raphael's unaccompanied viola sonatas have been recorded and presented together.

TRACK LISTING:

Sonata, op. 7, no. 1 (1923)

1. Praeludium (4:12)
2. Fuga (3:38)
3. Gavotte (3:25)
4. Andante mit Variationen (6:16)
5. Menuett (5:48)
6. Gigue (3:58)

Sonata, op. 46, no. 3 (1940)

7. In Sanfter Bewegung (In Gentle Motion) (3:53)
8. Menuett-Trio (5:58)
9. Frisch und Lebendig (Fresh and Lively) (4:04)

Sonata, op. 46, no. 4 (1946)

10. Sehr Beseelt und Bewegt (Very Animated and Moving) (4:19)
11. Äußerst Lebhaft, Rauschend (Extremely Lively and Rushing) (1:47)
12. Schlicht und Einfach (Plain and Simple) (3:26)
13. Lebendig (Lively) (2:27)

Total: 53:11