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BARBER

SYMPHONY No. 2 Op. 19 (Rev. 1947)

THE NEW SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
CONDUCTED BY SAMUEL BARBER

- 1 I. Allegro Ma Non Troppo (10:47)
- 2 II. Andante Un Poco Mosso (7:50)
- 3 III. Presto Senza Battuta - Poco Sostenuto - Allegro Risoluto (9:00)

Recorded 1951
First issued 1951 by The Decca Record Company Limited on LX 3050

Producer and Audio Restoration Engineer: Peter Harrison
XR Process and Ambient Stereo: Andrew Rose
Cover artwork based on a photograph of Samuel Barber
Total duration: 27:37 © 2009 Pristine Audio.

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BARBER



SYMPHONY No. 2, Op. 19 THE NEW SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA CONDUCTED BY SAMUEL BARBER

RECORDED IN 1951

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BARBER

SYMPHONY No. 2

OP. 19 (REV. 1947)

THE NEW SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CONDUCTED BY SAMUEL BARBER

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BARBER, THE NEW SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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Restorer's Notes by Peter Harrison

The transfer for this restoration was made from an original, probably unplayed Decca "Factory Sample" disc and shows dramatically the astonishing recorded sound quality that Decca were able to achieve in the early days of the mono LP. Listening to the result it is hard to believe that this recording is over 57 years old. However the recording isn't without its faults: for example occasional patches of tape flutter and scrape can be heard - but I don't think they materially detract from a remarkable historic document.

Barber's Orchestra Music

Barber intensely played and studied the music of J.S. Bach. He also was an adherent of Brahms, from whom he learned how to compress profound emotions into small modules of highly charged musical expression (Cello Sonata, 1932). In 1933, after reading the poem "Prometheus Unbound" by Percy Bysshe Shelley, Barber composed the tone poem *Music for a Scene from Shelley*. In 1935, the work was premiered at Carnegie Hall, and this was the first time the composer heard one of his orchestral works performed publicly. Barber's compositional style has been lauded for its musical logic, sense of architectural design, effortless melodic gift, and direct emotional appeal as evident in *Overture to The School for Scandal* (1931) and *Music for a Scene from Shelley* (1933). These characteristics remained in his music throughout his lifetime.

Through the success of his *Overture to The School for Scandal* (1931), *Music for a Scene from Shelley* (1933), *Adagio for Strings* (1938), *(First) Symphony in One Movement* (1936), *(First) Essay for Orchestra* (1937) and *Violin Concerto* (1939), Barber garnered performances by the world's leading conductors—Eugene Ormandy, Dimitri Mitropoulos, Bruno Walter, Charles Münch, George Szell, Artur Rodziński, Leopold Stokowski, and Thomas Schippers.

His compositions would later include characteristics of polytonality (*Second Symphony*; 1944), atonality (*Medea*, 1946; *Prayers of Kierkegaard*, 1954), Twelve-tone technique (*Nocturne*, 1959 and the *Piano Sonata*, 1949), and even jazz (*Excursions*, 1944; *A Hand of Bridge*, 1959). Although not pathbreaking, Barber's compositions distill an eclectic blend of the "musical currents hovering about in his time". John Corigliano succinctly described Barber's style as "an interesting dichotomy of harmonic procedures—an alternation between post-Straussian chromaticism and often diatonic typical American simplicity."

Among his finest works are his four concertos, one each for Violin (1939), Cello (1945) and Piano (1962), and also the neoclassical *Capricorn Concerto* for flute, oboe, trumpet and string orchestra. All of these works are extremely rewarding for the soloists and public alike, as all contain both highly virtuosic and extremely beautiful writing, often simultaneously. The latter three have been unfairly neglected until recent years, when there has been a reawakening of interest in the expressive possibilities of these masterpieces.

NOTES FROM WIKIPEDIA - FULL NOTES ON THIS RECORDING CAN BE FOUND AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM