

# BRAHMS

## “DOUBLE” CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN, CELLO AND ORCHESTRA IN A MINOR, OP. 102

JOHN CORIGLIANO, VIOLIN

LEONARD ROSE, CELLO

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

CONDUCTED BY BRUNO WALTER

1 1st mvt. - Allegro (15:32)

2 2nd mvt. - Andante (8:31)

3 3rd mvt. - Vivace non troppo (8:23)

Recorded in concert at Carnegie Hall, 2nd February 1951

This transfer from BBC, rebroadcast, 25th December, 1977

Transfer and XR remastering by Andrew Rose at Pristine Audio, April 2009

Cover artwork based on a photograph of Leonard Rose

Total duration: 32:26 ©2009 Pristine Audio.

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## CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN CELLO & ORCHESTRA

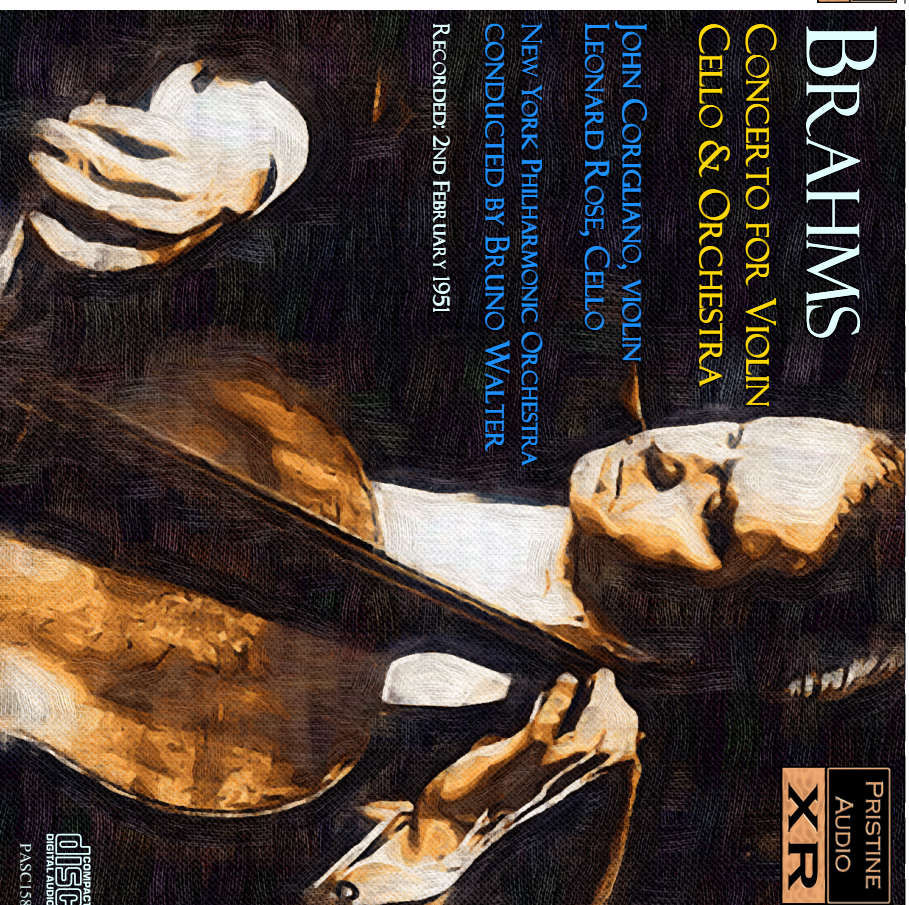
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RECORDED: 2ND FEBRUARY 1951



# BRAHMS: CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN, CELLO AND ORCHESTRA IN A MINOR, Op. 102

## CORIGLIANO, ROSE, NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC, WALTER

The Double Concerto in A minor (Op. 102) by Johannes Brahms is a concerto for violin, cello and orchestra. Composed in the summer of 1887, and first performed on 18 October of that year, it was Brahms' final work for orchestra. Brahms, approaching the project with anxiety over writing for instruments that were not his own, wrote it for the cellist Robert Hausmann and his old estranged friend, the violinist Joseph Joachim. The concerto was, in part, a gesture of reconciliation towards Joachim, after their long friendship had ruptured following Joachim's divorce from his wife Amalie. Brahms had sided with Amalie in the dispute, and this led to the estrangement between Brahms and Joachim. The Double Concerto acted as a form of musical reconciliation. The concerto also makes use of the musical motif A-E-F, a permutation of F-A-E, which stood for a personal motto of Joachim, *frei aber einsam* ("free but lonely").

The composition consists of three movements in the fast-slow-fast pattern typical of classical instrumental concertos:

1. *Allegro* (A minor)
2. *Andante* (D major)
3. *Vivace non troppo* (A minor → A major)

Joachim and Hausmann repeated the concerto, with Brahms at the podium, several times in its initial 1887-88 season, and Brahms gave the manuscript to Joachim, with the inscription "To him for whom it was written." Clara Schumann reacted unfavourably to the concerto, considering the work "not brilliant for the instruments". Richard Specht also thought critically of the concerto, describing it as "one of Brahms' most inapproachable and joyless compositions". Brahms had sketched a second concerto for violin and cello but destroyed his notes in the wake of its cool reception. Later critics have warmed to it: Donald Francis Tovey wrote of the concerto as having "vast and sweeping humour". It has always been hampered by its requirement for two brilliant and equally matched soloists.

This 1951 live recording was amongst a very large collection of quarter-inch tapes donated to Pristine Audio in 2007, the result of a lifetime's collection of fine and rare recordings. Of the many thousands of recordings held in this priceless archive, this one was additionally hand-annotated "The Best Performance", and thus caught my eye. Although taken from an excellent BBC rebroadcast, it was clear that the audio quality of the original recording was at times less than optimal, with the often excellent acoustic of Carnegie Hall rather poorly captured during full orchestral sections. However, the soloists were well-recorded, and much cleaning up of background hiss and rumble has been possible, together with a gentle re-equalisation through the XR remastering process which has served to bring a greater focus and clarity to the recording. Additionally, a very short gap was evident in the original broadcast, and a single orchestral chord from a more recent recording has been seamlessly merged in from another recording to provide continuity, having first been tonally matched to this recording. It is unclear as to whether this very short gap was present in the BBC's tape copy or was a broadcast error on the day - the music faded out for about half a second, partway through an orchestral section of the first movement, and then faded quickly back in. Some residual tape hiss is still evident during quieter sections of the recording, but should not serve as a distraction from this 'best performance', a sentiment it's hard to disagree with. **A.R.**

CONCERTO NOTES FROM WIKIPEDIA - FULL NOTES ON THIS RECORDING CAN BE FOUND AT [WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM](http://WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM)