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JASCHA HORENSTEIN

Mahler - Symphony No. 5

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For many years it was assumed that no recordings existed of Horenstein conducting Mahler's Fifth Symphony, but in the last few years no less than three have surfaced: with the London Symphony Orchestra, the Goteborg Symphony Orchestra, and this one with the Berlin Philharmonic, recorded live during the 1961 Edinburgh Festival.

Horenstein first conducted Mahler's Fifth in Berlin in 1927 with the Berlin Philharmonic. That concert brought him his first really big success as a young conductor, with extremely favorable reviews from highly respected musicians and critics such as Walter Schrenk ("Horenstein is the most significant and by far the most gifted of our young generation of conductors"), Klaus Pringsheim, formerly an assistant of Mahler's ("he reminds one of the young Klemperer who, it is said, reminded his audiences of the young Mahler"), and Rudolf Kastner, who had attended the world premiere of the Fifth Symphony conducted by Mahler in 1904 ("Since then I have rarely heard the piece as I did now... Horenstein is one of the most remarkable conductors we have encountered in recent years and has, like few others, a most particular affinity for Mahler's music"). It was this concert that secured Horenstein's reputation as one of the finest interpreters of Mahler's music by a new generation of conductors that had no personal contact with the composer, and it must have been with these memories in mind that he approached the performance in Edinburgh presented here.

Of the three extant recordings of the symphony conducted by Horenstein, the Berlin Philharmonic performance is by far the most dramatic, a white-hot, tension-filled, powerfully driven presentation that confirms Horenstein's widely recognized and unrivaled authority in this repertoire.

Misha Horenstein

Producer's Note

I was contacted earlier this year by Misha Horenstein, cousin of the great conductor, with the idea of remastering and releasing rare and special recordings from the Maestro's career. The Mahler Fifth was the most notable gap in Horenstein's extensive recorded legacy and this off-air recording of a blazing Edinburgh Festival concert with the Berlin Philharmonic was regarded as by far the most promising place to start a new Horenstein series at Pristine. I've pulled out all the stops to try and bring out as much of the passion and brilliance of the performance as remains in the recording, whilst eliminating or reducing crosstalk, interference, a good deal of hiss, swish and other defects. A very short sequence towards the end of the piece was missing from the original source, and here we've patched in one of the other Horenstein recordings, matched as closely as possible to this in order to maintain the musical flow. **Andrew Rose**

FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM
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Horenstein

conducts
Mahler
Symphony No. 5

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra
Jascha Horenstein, conductor

Live broadcast recording
Edinburgh Festival, 1961



HORENSTEIN *conducts Mahler*

MAHLER Symphony No. 5

- 1 1st mvt. - Trauermarsch (13:12)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Stürmisch bewegt, mit größter Vehemenz (16:19)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Scherzo (19:09)
- 4 4th mvt. - Adagietto (9:38)
- 5 5th mvt. - Rondo-Finale (17:34)

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra
Jascha Horenstein, conductor

"Of the three conductors who have taken the Berlin "Phil" this week, it is Horenstein who has got at the truly human, the living warmth, of most of the music. Who wants to live in an iceberg of perfection? We need the seemingly useless grace note, like the seemingly useless appendix; we need the human touch above all in music. These Horenstein put in, and one critic at least is deeply grateful to him and his orchestra."

Edinburgh Evening News, 1 September 1961

XR remastering by Andrew Rose

Cover artwork based on a
photograph of Jascha Horenstein,
courtesy of John Goldsmith

Mahler Symphony No. 5
Recorded 31 August, 1961
Usher Hall, Edinburgh

Special thanks to Misha Horenstein and
Aaron Z. Snyder for their invaluable
assistance in the realisation of this project

Total duration: 75:52

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