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ARTUR SCHNABEL
Beethoven Piano Concertos 3 & 4

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On Concerto No. 3: "...It was Beethoven who freed the basses, as he freed other creatures of the musical world. This slow movement is sentimental, if you will, but do music-lovers tire of it? I hope not. But Schnabel does not let the music languish. At the turn to side 6 we have the short middle-part tune (bassoon and flute : pianist, arpeggios, in which we mark with pleasure the evenness of the piano's recorded scale from top to bottom)..." - October 1933 (W.R.A.)

On Concerto No. 4: "...Beethoven wrote no more radiant or masterly work than his Fourth Piano Concerto. Its place is between the *Eroica* and the fourth symphonies; immediately after the *Appassionato* sonata, immediately before the great *Rasoumofsky* quartets. Of those works, the nearest to it in spirit are the fourth symphony and the first *Rasoumofsky* (except the slow movement). But here there is nothing but perfect serenity and happy contentment, united to a splendid mastery, strength, and solidity. Most wonderful of all, there is no movement that falls from the level of the rest. And this is, on the whole, a splendid recording, Schnabel is brilliant, with the freedom of a master-pianist who has made the work his own, or has rather put himself into the work; a freedom used not to distort, but to make every note inevitable. Indeed, he never really departs from the letter of the notes, but merely gives them athletic life and freedom, instead of restricting them, frigid and lifeless. Dr. Sargent links the orchestra unanimously to Schnabel..." - May 1933 (C.M.C.)

The Gramophone - first reviews, original 78rpm issues (*excerpts*)

Producer's Note

Schnabel and Sargent recorded two Beethoven concertos in two days in February 1933, and it is those two which are brought together on the present release: Nos. 3 and 4. They had first played the two works in the two first ever Courtald-Sargent concerts in London in the Autumn of 1929 to rapturous reviews, and it must have seemed only natural to engage Sargent again for these studio recordings four years later. Schnabel had a reputation for "taking over" rehearsals - the youthful Sargent on 1929 must have seemed less likely to complain than an older, more established conductor - but whatever the precise reasons for the continued coupling, the pairing certainly was to work in both musicians's favour. The present transfer builds on the LP transfers carried out for EMI by Keith Hardwick, who was almost certainly working from specially-made vinyl pressings from the HMV metal masters, rather than noisy shellac originals. This has allowed me far more scope to bring out the full tone of both piano and orchestra than has ever been heard before in these recordings, with XR remastering realising a dynamic and frequency range that is for much of the time nothing less than astounding for a recording of this vintage. Indeed, it is only in those rare passages when a little surface noise or a slight edginess to the string tone interferes that one is suddenly reminded that these recordings were made some 82 years ago; for the vast majority of the time one can simply sit back and enjoy these extraordinary performances in truly unprecedented sound quality. **Andrew Rose**

Schnabel plays BEETHOVEN

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Piano Concerto No. 3
Piano Concerto No. 4

LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
DR. MALCOLM SARGENT

HMV studio recordings, 1933



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BEETHOVEN PIANO CONCERTOS NOS. 3 & 4
SCHNABEL, LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA, SARGENT

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SCHNABEL *Beethoven Piano Concertos*

XR remastering by Andrew Rose

Cover artwork based on a
photograph of Artur Schnabel

BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37

- 1 1st mvt. - Allegro con brio (15:12)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Largo (10:45)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Rondo (Allegro) (8:15)

Piano Concerto No. 3
Recorded 17 February 1933
Issued October 1933 as DB.1940-44
Matrix Nos. 2B.4140-48

Piano Concerto No. 4
Recorded 16 February 1933
Issued May 1933 as DB.1886-89
Matrix Nos. 2B.4132-39

Recorded at Abbey Road, Studio 1
Producer: Walter Legge

Total duration: 65:45

BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No. 4 in G major, Op. 58

- 1 1st mvt. - Allegro moderato (17:37)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Andante con moto (4:47)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Rondo (Vivace) (9:09)

London Philharmonic Orchestra
Dr. Malcolm Sargent, conductor

Artur Schnabel *piano*

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