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MAHLER RARITIES

Symphony No. 4 - Symphony No. 2

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Producer's Note

The present release brings together two supreme rarities within the Mahler discography, one of which only exists in a single source, and the other so scarce it might just as well be the sole copy.

The broadcast of Arnold Schoenberg conducting the second movement of Mahler's "Resurrection" Symphony stems from a unique radio transcription recording, probably taken down on a pre-grooved aluminum disc, which has circulated on a tape transfer. There is a gap in the middle, music most likely lost during a changeover to another record while using a single cutter.

The performance is rare not only in the scarcity of its source, but also for being the only recorded example of Schoenberg conducting a work by a composer other than himself. Unlike other acolytes and members of Mahler's inner circle who left complete recordings of one or more of his symphonies (Bruno Walter, Willem Mengelberg, Otto Klemperer and Oskar Fried), Schoenberg left only this movement, making it all the more valuable.

The choice of this work for the opening of a concert with the "Cadillac Symphony" (most likely a sponsor-dictated pseudonym for NBC's in-house Blue Network Orchestra), given shortly after Schoenberg's arrival in America in 1934, is a tribute to Mahler's early championship of the younger composer. Perhaps surprisingly for someone not primarily remembered as a conductor, Schoenberg leads a performance with a distinct personality, featuring a controlled rubato and a sure sense of pacing. (I might add that as noisy as this broadcast still sounds, I have cleaned up a good many of the transient noises that plagued the original transfer, as well as correcting the pitch.)

If the huge rallentando at the end of the opening phrase of Paul van Kempen's 1950 recording of the Mahler Fourth brings Mengelberg to mind, there is good reason. For a few years beginning in 1913, van Kempen played in the violin section of the Concertgebouw orchestra, and knew the elder conductor's way with the symphony very well. After that, however, it becomes more distinctly a van Kempen interpretation, with swift tempi and flowing lines.

This was van Kempen's sole commercial recording of a Mahler work. It was never released on LP, and its only previous CD appearance was as a supplement to a very expensive Mahler discography. It has been restored here from a CD-R containing the unjoined 78 rpm sides provided by a private collector, as original sets are so scarce none could be located to transfer directly.

The recording is problematic in many ways. There is much volume manipulation by the original engineers, some of which I was able to counteract; but other portions (principally the climax toward the end of the third movement) were so extreme as to be unfixable. Add to this the distant miking of the soloist in the fourth movement and some faint recording elsewhere, and one can understand why this recording never received an "official" reissue. This new transfer at least makes it more accessible to interested listeners than it has ever been before.

Mark Obert-Thorn

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SYMPHONY NO. 4

Corry Bijster soprano

Paul van Kempen conductor

Hilversum Radio Philharmonic Orchestra

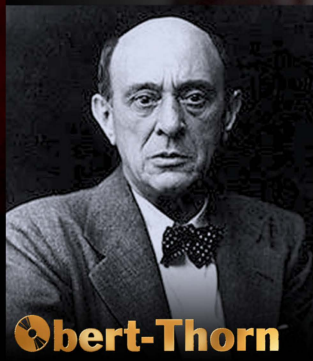
Studio recording, 1950

SYMPHONY NO. 2 2nd mvt.

Arnold Schoenberg conductor

Cadillac Symphony Orchestra

Live recording, 1934



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Producer and Audio Restoration
Engineer: **Mark Obert-Thorn**

Special thanks to Henry Fogel for
providing source material

Cover artwork based on photographs of
Mahler, Schoenberg, Corry Bijster
and **Paul van Kempen**

Symphony No. 2, 2nd mvt
From the NBC broadcast of
8 April 1934 in New York City

Symphony No. 4
Recorded January, 1950 in the
Concertgebouw, Amsterdam
Matrix nos.: 035751/62
First issued on Telefunken SK 3862/7

Total duration: **62:08**

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MAHLER RARITIES SYMPHONY No. 2 - SYMPHONY No. 4
SCHOENBERG, CADILLAC SO - KEMPEN, HILVERSUM RPO

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MAHLER Symphony No. 2 in C minor, "Resurrection"

- 1 Introduction by Milton Cross (0:37)
- 2 2nd Mvt. - Andante moderato (10:43)

Cadillac Symphony Orchestra

Arnold Schoenberg, conductor

MAHLER Symphony No. 4 in G major

- 1 1st mvt. - Bedächtig. Nicht eilen – Recht gemächlich (15:30)
- 2 2nd mvt. - In gemächlicher Bewegung. Ohne Hast (8:50)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Ruhevoll (Poco adagio) (18:03)
- 4 4th mvt. - Sehr behaglich – 'Wir genießen die himmlischen Freuden' (8:25)

Hilversum Radio Philharmonic Orchestra

Paul van Kempen, conductor

Corry Bijster, soprano