

JASCHA HORENSTEIN

Bach - Brandenburg Concertos

Pristine
XR

PASC 468

One might expect a 1954 recording of the Brandenburg Concertos to be laughably old-fashioned when compared with modern period-instrument readings, but one should never prejudge anything with Horenstein's name on it. Vox calls this "the very first recording of these concertos performed on original instruments." This is only partially true. The soloists indeed play some original instruments (recorders, violino piccolo, gambas), but the tutti consists of modern strings. Nevertheless, these are performances of great distinction.

Horenstein is startlingly up-to-date in his tempos. Fast movements are sprightly, energetic, and always evocative of the dance; slow movements never drag, often moving at quite a pace, as in the true *Andante* feeling of the second movement of the second concerto. The clarity of line is especially impressive in complex passages: the opening of the first concerto, where the horn triplets clearly cut through the surrounding texture; the finale of the third concerto, where Horenstein brings different voices to the fore as ideas pass from instrument to instrument; or in the beautifully balanced interplay between the soloists in the first movement of the Fifth.

The sound of the monaural recording is good with, of course, some reservations. The remastering has brought an edge to the higher strings and flutes, but there is a good deal of presence and lots of detail. The soloists and the small group of performers who comprise the tutti are excellent (a young Nikolaus Harnoncourt is a member of the continuo). While these recordings, even at Vox's bargain price, would certainly not be a first, or even a second, choice for a complete set of the Brandenburg concertos, they are a must for period-instrument devotees and, of course, for fans of Horenstein.

Richard Burke Issue 19:5 (May/June 1996) of Fanfare Magazine

The Musicians:

Walter Schneiderhan (*solo violin*) • Dimitri Tortschanoff (*violin*) • Paul Trimmel (*violin*) • Ernest Opawa (*violin*)
Rudolf Lindner (*violin*) • Paul Angerer (*solo viola, violino piccolo, harpsichord, 2nd recorder*) • Karl Troetzmüller (*viola, 1st recorder*)
Josef de Sardi (*viola*) • Viktor Goerlich (*cello*) • Nikolaus Harnoncourt (*viola da gamba*) • Hermann Hoebarth (*viola da gamba*)
Emil Kremer (*contrabass*) • Camille Wanausek (*flute*) • Friedrich Wachter (*oboe*) • Rudolf Spurny (*oboe*) • Josef Koblinger (*oboe*)
Leo Cernak (*bassoon*) • Franz Koch (*horn*) • Karl Buchmayr (*horn*) • Adolf Holler (*trumpet*) • Josef Ortner (*trumpet*)
Josef Nebois (*continuo*)

Producer's Note

The release of this pioneering 1954 recording of Bach's Brandenburg Concertos has been brought forward to commemorate the life and work of the great conductor Nikolaus Harnoncourt (1929-2016). In his online notes for this release, Misha Horenstein observes the presence in the orchestra here of both Harnoncourt and Austrian composer and conductor Paul Angerer, suggesting: "It is not inconceivable that both these musicians, and some of the others, derived inspiration for the future direction of their careers from their work on this recording of the Brandenburgs." This new XR remastering brings a greater sense of life, space and clarity to the recordings, as well as correcting for the first time a number of pitch issues present on the original tapes.

Andrew Rose

horenstein

conducts bach

six brandenburg concertos

Wiener Soloists
Studio recordings, 1954

Pristine
XR



horenstein

CD 1 BACH Brandenburg Concerto No. 1 in F, BWV.1046

- 1 1st mvt. - (Allegro) (4:28)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Adagio (4:23)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Allegretto (4:46)
- 4 4th mvt. - Menuetto; Trio I; Menuetto; Polacca; Menuetto; Trio II; Menuetto (8:23)

BACH Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F, BWV.1047

- 5 1st mvt. - (Allegro) (5:24)
- 6 2nd mvt. - Andante (3:50)
- 7 3rd mvt. - Allegro assai (3:17)

BACH Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G, BWV.1048

- 8 1st mvt. - Allegro moderato (6:10)
- 9 2nd mvt. - Allegro (3:13)

CD 2 BACH Brandenburg Concerto No. 4 in G, BWV.1049

- 1 1st mvt. - Allegro (7:27)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Andante (3:03)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Presto (5:34)

BACH Brandenburg Concerto No. 5 in D, BWV.1050

- 4 1st mvt. - Allegro (10:19)
- 5 2nd mvt. - Affetuoso (5:54)
- 6 3rd mvt. - Allegro (6:03)

BACH Brandenburg Concerto No. 6 in B flat, BWV.1051

- 7 1st mvt. - Allegro (6:07)
- 8 2nd mvt. - Adagio ma non tanto (6:21)
- 9 3rd mvt. - Allegro (5:17)

Wiener Soloists *Jascha Horenstein*

XR remastering by Andrew Rose

Cover photo of Jascha Horenstein taken during the recording sessions in Vienna, with violinist Walter Schneiderhan. From the collection of Peter Horenstein

Bach Brandenburg Concertos
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