



Beecham

at the Royal Festival Hall, Volume 2



Sir Thomas presented a programme which with other conductors might not have been free of tedious moments. The "Clock" symphony of Haydn was followed by Lalo's G minor symphony, a work hardly consistently engrossing, though not without agreeable periods linking it to Chausson (who also wrote a symphony now sadly neglected here) [*BEECHAM at the Royal Festival Hall, Volume 1, Pristine Audio PASC502*]. Next we heard the G major Symphony of Dvorak. Sir Thomas found the right approach to each of these pieces from its first phrases, and though every bar was suffused by his own personality, Beechamised unmistakably, yet each composer spoke, or rather sang, in his own voice.

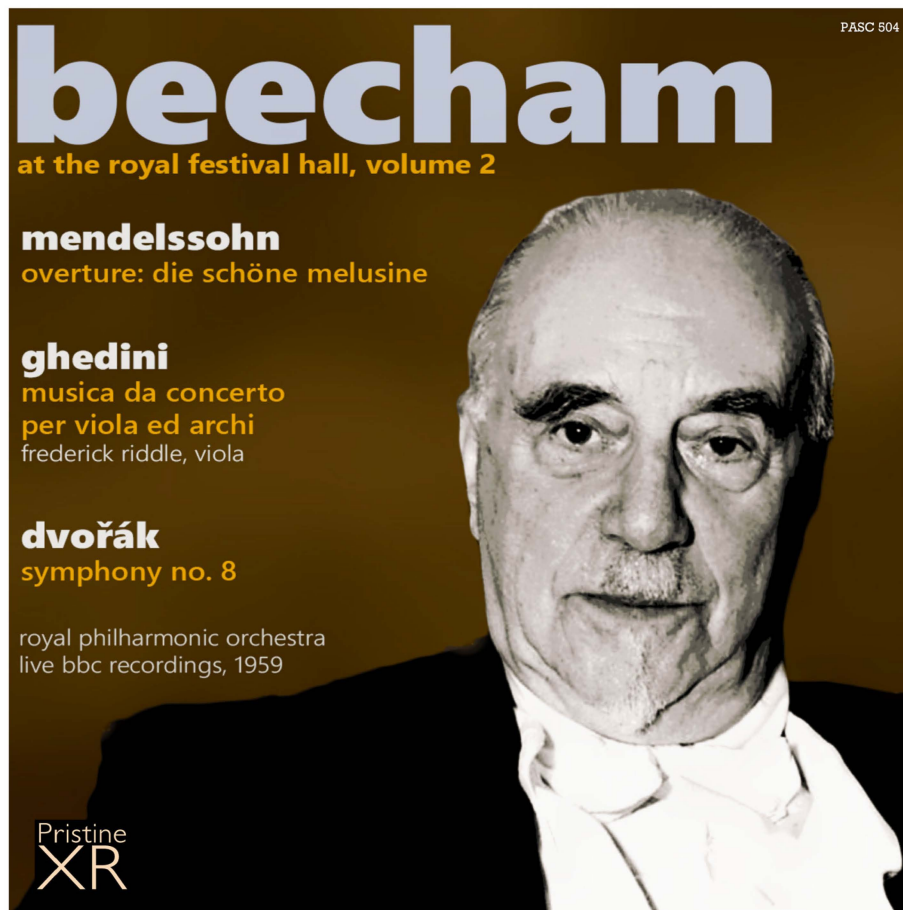
The Dvorak symphony was unfolded in all its charming variety; pastoral poetry mingled with tones evoking legend and history, the wood-wind bubbled with the joy of playing. Here, perhaps, lies the essential Beecham secret—his baton calls up the spirit of delight and it is answered freely and generously. It is a fascinating prospect that within the next twenty-four hours or so, the Festival Hall will have heard music conducted by Sir Thomas and by Klemperer—two artists worlds apart. Compared with the difference, and temperamental distances between them, the North and South Poles are next door neighbours. But what a proof we have in Sir Thomas and Klemperer of the rich musical climate which nurtured them. As an encore Sir Thomas conducted an unfamiliar piece by Delius—"Sleigh Bells." Why does he not give us much more of Delius nowadays?

Neville Cardus, The Guardian, 27 October 1959 (*excerpt*)

Producer's Note

This is the second of three volumes dedicated to the two concerts given on 25 October and 8 November 1959 by Sir Thomas Beecham and his Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at London's Royal Festival Hall and captured in excellent mono by the BBC Transcription Service. Whilst these recordings preserved the main body of both concerts, it would appear that only the encores from the second concert have survived, which alas deprives us of the opportunity to hear Beecham's Delius one more time. Whilst some of these recordings have been previously issued on the BBC Legends label, the sound quality heard on the present releases is considerably improved thanks in no small part to XR remastering. Here the orchestral timbre is much more realistic, the hard, harsh edges of the original recordings have been softened, and a rich body of sound restored. Our series also includes recordings never previously issued. I have elected to remove the announcements dubbed on by the BBC for later rebroadcast. The length of both concerts has required a certain amount of juggling in order to fit three single-CD volumes.

Andrew Rose



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BEECHAM AT THE ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL, VOL. 2: MENDELSSOHN, GHEDINI, DVORAK
BEECHAM, ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

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royal festival hall, volume 2

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XR remastering by Andrew Rose

Cover artwork based on a
photograph of
Sir Thomas Beecham

Dvořák
Recorded 25 October 1959

Mendelssohn & Ghedini
Recorded 8 November 1959

Recorded at the Royal Festival Hall
London by BBC Transcription Services

1 MENDELSSOHN Ouvertüre zum Märchen von der schönen Melusine, Op. 32 (10:50)

2 GHEDINI Musica da Concerto per Viola ed Archi (1953) (23:37)

Frederick Riddle *viola*

DVOŘÁK Symphony No. 8 in G major, Op. 88

3 1st mvt. - Allegro con brio (9:59)

4 2nd mvt. - Adagio (10:42)

5 3rd mvt. - Allegretto grazioso - Molto vivace (6:55)

6 4th mvt. - Allegro ma non troppo (8:40)

Total duration: 70:43

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham

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