

COMPACT
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DIGITAL AUDIO
PASC 506

Horenstein

Early Recordings

Pristine
XR

PASC 506

By 1929, the thirty-one year old Jascha Horenstein had already amassed an impressive resumé of conductorial achievements, both on the podium and in the recording studio. After studying under Franz Schrecker, Joseph Marx and Adolf Busch among others, he had become a regular conductor of the Blüthner (later Berliner Symphonie) Orchestra, as well as an assistant to Wilhelm Furtwängler at the Berlin Philharmonic. It was upon Furtwängler's recommendation that Horenstein had been appointed that year chief conductor of the Düsseldorf Opera.

In 1928, Horenstein made his first recordings for Grammophon/Polydor: a Bruckner Seventh (reissued on Pristine PASC 203) that was the première electrical recording of any Bruckner symphony, and Mahler's song cycle, *Kindertotenlieder*, with baritone Heinrich Rehkemper. The following year, he made the recordings featured on the present program.

The repertoire is significant in the conductor's discography, since he never returned to any of these works in the studio later in his career. The Schoenberg transcriptions were recorded at a time when the composer's original works had scant representation on disc. (Indeed, as far as I have been able to research, there had only been two previous published recordings of Schoenberg works issued by this time.) The remainder were staples of the Austro-German repertoire, and included the first-ever recording of the Schubert Fifth.

Some aspects of the original recordings are worth noting. The Bach transcriptions were done in a larger hall than the remaining items, and have a more impressive sonority – at least until the very loudest passages at the end of the second track, which pushed the early microphones to their limits. Many of the sides run much longer than the usual four-and-a-half minute average. The longest – the second half of the Schubert *Andante* – runs nearly five minutes and forty seconds, so close to the label area that the matrix number was duplicated on the outer rim of the record. Finally, nearly all of the sides from the Haydn-Mozart-Schubert sessions have severe pitch drift, which has been corrected here.

These were to be the last recordings Horenstein would make until the LP era. The worldwide Depression cut back recording activity after 1929; and Hitler's rise in the early 'Thirties would force many, including Horenstein, out of Germany. The conductor settled in the USA and continued to guest conduct internationally after the war; but he would not make a commercial recording again until 1952, when he began a series for Vox (along with another "forgotten" prewar German conductor, Otto Klemperer).

The sources for the transfers were laminated Brunswicks pressed by American Columbia in the mid-1930s for the Bach and Haydn, and German Polydors for the remainder.

Mark Obert-Thorn



Obert-Thorn

horenstein

early recordings

bach-schoenberg
two chorale preludes

haydn
symphony no. 94
"surprise"

mozart
overtures
le nozze di figaro
la clemenza di tito

schubert
symphony no. 5

berlin philharmonic orchestra

studio recordings, 1929

horenstein

early recordings

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Producer and Audio Restoration
Engineer: Mark Obert-Thorn

Cover artwork based on a
photograph of Jascha Horenstein

Recorded 1929 in the Hochschule für
Musik, Berlin (Bach) and Schumann-
Saal, Berlin (Haydn, Mozart, Schubert)

Special thanks to Richard A. Kaplan for
providing source material

Total duration: 69:02

BACH-SCHOENBERG Two Chorale Preludes

- 1 Schmücke dich, o liebe Seele, BWV 654* (5:33)
- 2 Komm, Gott, Schöpfer, Heiliger Geist, BWV 631 (3:41)

*Nikolai Graudan *cello*

Matrix nos.: 800 Bi I / 799 Bi I - First issued on Polydor 95295

HAYDN Symphony No. 94 in G, "Surprise"

- 3 1st Mvt. - Adagio cantabile; Vivace assai (7:01)
- 4 2nd Mvt. - Andante (8:13)
- 5 3rd Mvt. - Menuet (5:02)
- 6 4th Mvt. - Allegro di molto (4:24)

Matrix nos.: 132 / 133 / 134 ½ / 135 / 136 / 137 ½ BV VI - First issued on Polydor 66914/6

7 MOZART Le nozze di Figaro - Overture (4:16)

Matrix no.: 138 ½ BV VI - First issued on Polydor 95296

8 MOZART La clemenza di Tito - Overture (4:57)

Matrix no.: 139 BV VI - First issued on Polydor 95296

SCHUBERT Symphony No. 5 in B-flat, D.485

- 9 1st Mvt. - Allegro (5:06)
- 10 2nd Mvt. - Andante con moto (10:42)
- 11 3rd Mvt. - Menuett (4:51)
- 12 4th Mvt. - Allegro vivace (5:16)

Matrix nos.: 140 / 141 / 142 / 150 / 151 BV VI - First issued on Polydor 66932/4

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra
Jascha Horenstein, conductor

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