



Furtwängler

conducts Schumann & Tchaikovsky



Producer's note

"I wonder whether you've considered releasing his live 1951 Tchaikovsky 6th recorded in Cairo with the Berlin Phil. It's one of Furtwängler's greatest performances far more intense than the 1938 studio version. I've been on at the Furtwängler Society to do it for ages. It has had only one CD issue around 15 years ago and that on a box set. DG issued it on LP around 1976. The sound is a bit boxy which is why I think it would benefit from an XR remastering. If anyone could do this titanic performance proud it is you!" - e-mail to Pristine, October 2018

It was this message, received as part of an e-mail in early October 2018, that served as the catalyst for the present release. I had more than one copy of the Cairo *Pathétique* in my collection and began work straight away to see what I might be able to do with them. The results were startling.

As our correspondent notes, the sound from the original recording, one of several made in concerts given by Furtwängler and the Berlin Philharmonic in Cairo in 1951, wasn't ideal, but at the same time it wasn't disastrous, and XR remastering has transformed the "boxy" sound into something far more alive and vivid. Some aspects were trickier than others - a deep bass rumble proved hard to separate from the lower register instruments, while a slight tendency to overload in the very loudest passages made the brass and percussion a little splashy at times.

Elsewhere, however, the resultant sound was immediately splendid, and I hope that this somewhat neglected performance can now reach a wider audience than previously. Certainly it's a *Pathétique* to savour.

It took a while to decide what to pair with the Tchaikovsky. Other recordings from the same concerts were too long to fit a single disc, so I began to look elsewhere, and to the taped wartime recordings I'd had so much success with previously. The Schumann *Cello Concerto* with Tibor de Machula, then the principal cellist of the Berlin Philharmonic, was one of these I hadn't tackled, and proved an ideal companion both in terms of duration and sound quality, which after XR remastering offers exceptional tone and clarity for a recording of this era - and for the only complete recording of Furtwängler conducting this work.

Andrew Rose



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TCHAIKOVSKY SYMPHONY No. 6 'PATHÉTIQUE'
FURTWÄNGLER, MACHULA, BERLIN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

furtwängler

schumann & tchaikovsky

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XR remastering by Andrew Rose

Cover artwork based on a
photograph of Furtwängler

Schumann Cello Concerto
Recorded 28 October, 1942
Alte Philharmonie, Berlin

Tchaikovsky Symphony 6
Recorded 19-22 April 1951
Cairo, Egypt

Total duration: 71:33

SCHUMANN Cello Concerto, Op. 129

- 1 1st mvt. - Nicht zu schnell (10:48)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Langsam (4:24)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Sehr lebhaft (7:32)

Tibor de Machula *cello*

TCHAIKOVSKY Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74, 'Pathétique'

- 1 1st mvt. - Adagio - Allegro non troppo (19:49)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Allegro con grazia (9:22)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Allegro molto vivace (9:54)
- 4 4th mvt. - Adagio lamentoso (9:44)

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra
Wilhelm Furtwängler, conductor

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