



Munch

conducts Sibelius & R. Strauss



"Dr. Charles Munch this week has been able to formulate a Boston Symphony Orchestra program which avoids overly familiar music. The result is a concert of freshness and exceptional interest. As matters turned out yesterday, conductor and orchestra rose magnificently to the occasion and achieved a glowing performance of Richard Strauss' Symphonia Domestica.

For not readily discernible reasons. Dr. Munch had not given us the Domestica since 1949, near the beginning of his first season here. Accordingly both the work itself and his approach to it, after nearly a decade, had whetted one's anticipation.

The Domestica, with its alternately droll and sentimental regard for the principle and the details of family life, including the baby's bath and the not uncommon disputes between Papa and Mama, might not be thought to have exceptional appeal to an interpretive artist.

But the purely musical side is something else again, with its large design, its blend and contrasts of instrumental colors, and the exacting details of Strauss' counterpoint. These are a powerful challenge to a dynamic conductor, and, not unexpectedly, Dr. Munch seemed to have been fired by the challenge.

From a beginning of comparatively low- voltage, this reading took on power and tension, until, midway in the score, the attentive listener was well aware that the orchestra had similarly responded, and that we were hearing a remarkably intense but superbly controlled performance.

The tone was marvelously rich and deep, the moving contrapuntal voices as clear as you could have wanted, and imagination was playing freely between conductor and orchestra.

At the end, consequently, there was a largo and wholly merited ovation. This performance, from a conductor who has never seemed to be deeply sympathetic to Strauss, though on the other hand he has not shunned that composer, was truly by way of being an artistic dividend of the season." - *Boston Globe*, 28 February 1959

"The name of Ruggiero Ricci is a great deal better-known elsewhere than here. San Francisco-born in 1920, Ricci was acclaimed as a prodigy, and grew into an artistic maturity which has proved to have solid foundation. He is a virtuoso of his instrument, and more than that, he is an artist. Only an artist would have elected to play so intimate and prevailingly undisplayful a Concerto as that by Sibelius.

From a superb Guarnerius del Gesu violin of 1784, Ricci draws a luminous warm tone of silky finish. His bowing is a marvel of grace, his feeling for both his instrument and the music at hand unmistakably sensitive.

Ricci's share of the Concerto made the most of its inward but very emotional and rhapsodic nature. The entire performance, however, had its perfunctory aspects, for the orchestral portion, though competent, seemed a little uneasy, as if Dr. Munch were not completely at home in this work, and hesitated to give its feeling free rein. It was good to hear, however, and Ricci may feel satisfied that the Friday subscribers regard him warmly."

- *Boston Globe*, 30 January 1960



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R. STRAUSS SYMPHONIA DOMESTICA
MUNCH, RICCI, BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

munch

conducts sibelius & strauss

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photograph of Charles Munch

Sibelius Violin Concerto
Concert of 29 January 1960

Strauss Symphonia Domestica
Concert of 28 February 1959

Stereo radio broadcasts from
Symphony Hall, Boston, MA

Total duration: 77:19

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1. RADIO Sibelius introduction (0:45)

SIBELIUS Violin Concerto in D minor, Op. 47

- 2. 1st mvt. - Allegro moderato (15:54)
- 3. 2nd mvt. - Adagio di molto (7:57)
- 4. 3rd mvt. - Allegro, ma non tanto (7:23)

Ruggiero Ricci, violin

- 5. RADIO Sibelius applause and outro (1:01)
- 6. RADIO Strauss introduction (0:37)

R. STRAUSS Symphonia Domestica, Op. 53

- 7. Bewegt - Thema I - Thema II - Thema III (5:12)
- 8. Scherzo (Munter) (6:28)
- 9. Wiegenlied - Maessig langsam (6:25)
- 10. Adagio - (Langsam) (12:05)
- 11. Finale (Sehr lebhaft) (12:13)

- 12. RADIO Strauss applause and outro (1:19)

Boston Symphony Orchestra
conducted by Charles Munch

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