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DIGITAL AUDIO
PASC 577

Toscanini

conducts Beethoven Piano Concertos

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During his long association with the NBC Symphony Orchestra, Toscanini broadcast surprisingly few piano concertos: between 1937 and 1954 just thirteen were performed, five of which featured Vladimir Horowitz in three performances of Brahms' Concerto No. 2 and two of Tchaikovsky's Concerto No. 1.

The highest concentration in a single calendar year came in 1944, largely as a result of a second Beethoven festival to follow that which had taken place in 1939. Where the latter had featured a complete cycle of the nine symphonies, this time the nine broadcast concerts ventured wider, including three piano concerto performances, just five of the symphonies, and a complete performance of Beethoven's only opera, *Fidelio*, which was broadcast over two weekly instalments to conclude the series (issued as PAC0077).

The three piano concerto performances, with soloists Ania Dorfmann, Artur Rubinstein and Rudolf Serkin are joined in this release with the only other performance conducted by Toscanini with the NBC orchestra of a piano concerto by Beethoven – when British pianist Dame Myra Hess joined conductor and orchestra for a broadcast performance of the Concerto No. 3. There were no NBC performances either of the Second or Fifth (Emperor) concertos.

RCA chose to issue two of the 1944 broadcasts, with Serkin and Rubinstein, on disc, whilst Ania Dorfmann went into the studio in 1945 to re-record the first concerto. Opinion seems to favour the live broadcast performance, which is also notable for Dorfmann's use of the relatively unfamiliar cadenza by Reineke rather than the third of Beethoven's which she played for the later studio recording.

These recordings have been, for the most part, remastered from previously unheard source discs. It was noticeable that by 1944 the quality of material available to record into had diminished somewhat from that available to record the previous Beethoven cycle in 1939. Nevertheless fine sound quality has once again been achieved throughout these new XR remasterings. I've opted to retain Ben Grauer's introductions and pay-offs for each of these performances, which add an extra sense of occasion to each concerto.



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BEETHOVEN PIANO CONCERTOS 1, 3 & 4
DORFMANN, RUBINSTEIN, SERKIN, HESS, NBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, TOSCANINI

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disc one

1. RADIO Introduction to Ania Dorfmann (0:35)

BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No. 1 in C major, Op. 15

2. 1st mvt. - Allegro con brio (13:51)
3. 2nd mvt. - Largo (9:14)
4. 3rd mvt. - Rondo. Allegro (8:18)

Ania Dorfmann, piano

5. RADIO Outro to Ania Dorfmann (1:10)
6. RADIO Introduction to Artur Rubinstein (0:37)

BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37

7. 1st mvt. - Allegro con brio (15:39)
8. 2nd mvt. - Largo (8:27)
9. 3rd mvt. - Rondo. Allegro – Presto (8:24)

Artur Rubinstein, piano

10. RADIO Outro to Artur Rubinstein (0:57)

XR remastering by Andrew Rose

Cover artwork based on a photograph of Arturo Toscanini

Recorded: PC1: 12 Nov 1944; PC3: 29 Oct, 1944; PC4: 26 Nov, 1944; PC3: 24 Nov, 1946

Broadcast live from NBC Studio 8H, Radio City, New York

Total duration: 2hr 14:21 CD1: 67:12 CD2: 67:20

disc two

1. RADIO Introduction to Rudolf Serkin (0:23)

BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No. 4 in G major, Op. 58

2. 1st mvt. - Allegro moderato (16:51)
3. 2nd mvt. - Andante con moto (4:53)
4. 3rd mvt. - Rondo. Vivace (9:02)

Rudolf Serkin, piano

5. RADIO Outro to Rudolf Serkin (1:13)
6. RADIO Introduction to Myra Hess (1:17)

BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37

7. 1st mvt. - Allegro con brio (14:40)
8. 2nd mvt. - Largo (9:17)
9. 3rd mvt. - Rondo. Allegro – Presto (8:40)

Dame Myra Hess, piano

10. RADIO Outro to Myra Hess (1:03)

NBC Symphony Orchestra

conducted by Arturo Toscanini

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