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Horenstein

in Gothenburg, Volume 1

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This compilation is the first in a series to be published by Pristine Classical that will chronicle the concerts conducted by Jascha Horenstein during his visits to the Swedish city of Gothenburg in the late 1960s. On all three occasions, first in January 1968, then in December of that year and finally in October 1969, Horenstein was asked to conduct works that would challenge the recently expanded Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra and its newly engaged personnel, particularly in the brass section. It was for this reason that his program choices settled on Mahler's 4th, followed by Bruckner's 6th, Schubert's 9th and finally Mahler's 5th symphonies, good tests of the orchestra's mettle and its ability to handle large-scale romantic music. These were performed in four carefully and attractively constructed programs that also included works by Bach, Handel, Mozart, Liszt and Saint-Saëns, all of which were recorded in-house and will be remastered for publication on this label.

The first volume in the series reproduces the complete concert of 9th October 1969 during Horenstein's third and last visit to Gothenburg. The program, a typical example of his preference for variety and substance, opened with a large-scale reading of the overture from *Idomeneo*, here performed with solemn reverence and in a style now considered out of fashion, followed by a scintillating rendition of Saint-Saëns' popular Second Piano Concerto with Philippe Entremont. No stranger to this piece, Entremont launches into the opening cadenza with theatrical flourish and leads the concerto, from its solemn opening to its light-hearted conclusion, with great freedom of expression, flowing lyricism and delicacy of touch. His exquisite tone and beauty of phrasing combine splendidly with Horenstein's watchful accompaniment to take the listener on a wildly exhilarating and witty ride, in which the cooperative and attentive orchestra deserves much of the credit.

Like the other items in this collection, the recording of Schubert's Ninth Symphony, heard in Gothenburg after the break, is the only example of this work in Horenstein's extended discography. Constancy of tempo, essential in Schubert's Ninth whose unity can be imperiled by frequent shifts in pacing, is the defining feature of Horenstein's muscular, tightly controlled and carefully measured reading. Extraordinarily clear in detail and shapely in outline with a marked emphasis on the vertical and rhythmic elements so fundamental to this work, Horenstein's performance seethes with an explosive, almost demonic energy that rarely relaxes, yet is sufficiently flexible to give ample space to the lyrical sections when they arrive. Repeats are kept to a minimum so as not to compromise the work's "heavenly length", while Schubert's bold and imaginative treatment of the brass, and especially the trombones that initiate and carry much of the action forward, is exploited to the full with style, swagger and tremendous sweep by Horenstein and an alert, highly engaged Gothenburg orchestra.

Misha Horenstein

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horenstein

in gothenburg, volume 1

schubert
symphony no. 9 'great'

saint-saëns
piano concerto no. 2
philippe entremont, piano

mozart
idomeneo - overture

gothenburg symphony orchestra
conducted by jascha horenstein

live concert recording, 1969

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SCHUBERT SYMPHONY No. 9 - SAINT-SAËNS PIANO CONCERTO No. 2 - MOZART Idomeneo Overture
HORENSTEIN, GOTHENBURG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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1. MOZART Idomeneo - Overture (5:48)

SAINT-SAËNS Piano Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 22

2. 1st mvt. - Andante sostenuto (11:17)

3. 2nd mvt. - Allegro scherzando (5:36)

4. 3rd mvt. - Presto (6:20)

Philippe Entremont, piano

SCHUBERT Symphony No. 9 in C major, D.944, 'Great'

5. 1st mvt. - Andante - Allegro, ma non troppo - Più moto (13:24)

6. 2nd mvt. - Andante con moto (13:56)

7. 3rd mvt. - Scherzo. Allegro vivace - Trio (10:31)

8. 4th mvt. - Allegro vivace (12:32)

Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra

conducted by Jascha Horenstein

XR Remastered by **Andrew Rose**

Live concert recording, Gothenburg Concert Hall, Sweden, 9 October 1969 from the Misha Horenstein Archive.
Cover artwork based on a photograph of Jascha Horenstein from the collection of Misha Horenstein

Total duration: 79:24

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