



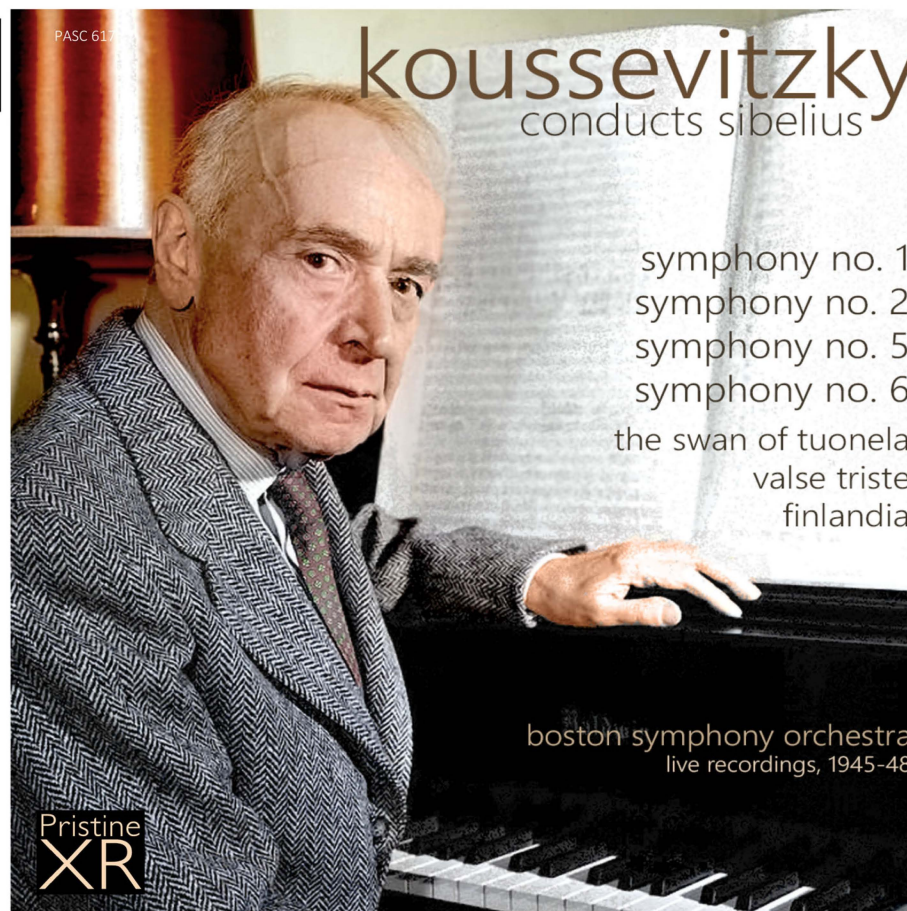
Koussevitzky conducts Sibelius



Koussevitzky was an undoubted champion of 20th Century music. American composers have already featured in several Pristine releases (PASC 458, 463, 484, 573), but the contemporary European composer particularly associated with Koussevitzky was Jean Sibelius. Koussevitzky programmed Sibelius's music regularly, including entire concerts solely devoted to his music, and the weekly broadcasts of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, together with regular tours around the north-eastern United States (including Detroit, Milwaukee, Pittsburgh and New York) completely justified critic Olin Downes' remark that 'No conductor in America as done as much for the music of Sibelius as Mr Koussevitzky'.

The obvious empathy between the conductor and the composer (the two corresponded regularly) shines through these broadcasts. The orchestra is superbly well-versed in the music, indeed Sibelius wrote to Koussevitzky to congratulate him on the 'supreme mastery' displayed by his commercial recording of the 2nd symphony. Each composition merges from Sibelius's deep affinity with his native Finland. The tone poem Finlandia is an evocation of the spirit of the Finnish people, written in 1899 as Finland chafed under Russian control, while the Swan of Tuonela is part of the Lemminkäinen Suite of four legends from the Kalevala. The four symphonies each depict an aspect of the composer's closeness to nature. Symphony No.1 evokes the forests and lakes of his homeland; Symphony No.2 goes further, placing man at the heart of this untamed land, and projecting a bright and optimistic future. Written shortly after World War I, Symphonies No. 5 and No. 6 are more pastoral, joyous even, telling of a time when man and his environment work in harmony. It is perhaps significant that Koussevitzky often placed the Sibelius works at the end of his concerts, so that the audience would leave the auditorium with a lasting impression of this glorious music.

Koussevitzky recorded a significant amount of Sibelius' music commercially with the BSO in the 1930s, including the 2nd and 5th symphonies, and there is a splendid recording of the 7th symphony made in 1933 when Koussevitzky was in London guest-conducting the BBC Symphony Orchestra. This release provides us with broadcast recordings of the 2nd and 5th symphonies so we can hear Koussevitzky in the thrill of live performance, but it also importantly adds the 1st and 6th symphonies plus a number of shorter works none of which Koussevitzky recorded commercially.



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SIBELIUS SYMPHONIES 1, 2, 5 & 6, VALSE TRISTE, THE SWAN OF TUONELA, FINLANDIA
KOUSSEVITZKY, BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

koussevitzky

conducts sibelius

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO
PASC 617

SIBELIUS SYMPHONIES 1, 2, 5 & 6, VALSE TRISTE, THE SWAN OF TUONELA, FINLANDIA
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disc one

SIBELIUS Symphony No. 1 in E minor, Op. 39

1. 1st mvt. - Andante, ma non troppo - Allegro energico (11:20)
2. 2nd mvt. - Andante (ma non troppo lento) (9:12)
3. 3rd mvt. - Scherzo: Allegro (4:49)
4. 4th mvt. - Finale: Andante (13:19)

Live broadcast concert, Boston Symphony Hall, 13 October 1945

SIBELIUS Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 43

5. 1st mvt. - Allegretto (9:24)
6. 2nd mvt. - Tempo andante, ma rubato (11:52)
7. 3rd mvt. - Vivacissimo (5:41)
8. 4th mvt. - Finale: Allegro moderato (13:59)

Live broadcast concert, Boston Symphony Hall, 8 December 1945

Boston Symphony Orchestra
conducted by **Serge Koussevitzky**

XR Remastered by **Andrew Rose**

Cover artwork based on a photograph of Serge Koussevitzky

Total duration: **2hr 37:22**
CD1: 79:35 CD2: 77:47

disc two

SIBELIUS Symphony No. 5 in E-flat major, Op. 82

1. 1st mvt. - Tempo molto moderato (12:37)
2. 2nd mvt. - Andante mosso, quasi allegretto (8:49)
3. 3rd mvt. - Allegro molto (9:02)

Live broadcast concert, Boston Symphony Hall, 5 January 1946

SIBELIUS Symphony No. 6 in D minor, Op. 104

4. 1st mvt. - Allegro molto moderato - Poco tranquillo (7:33)
5. 2nd mvt. - Allegretto moderato (4:17)
6. 3rd mvt. - Poco vivace (3:34)
7. 4th mvt. - Allegro molto - Allegro assai - Doppio più lento (9:10)

Live broadcast concert, Boston Symphony Hall, 9 March 1946

8. SIBELIUS Valse Triste, Op. 44 (5:30)

Live broadcast concert, Boston Symphony Hall, 13 October 1945

9. SIBELIUS The Swan Of Tuonela, Op.22, No.2 (9:02)

Live broadcast concert, Boston Symphony Hall, 8 December 1945

10. SIBELIUS Finlandia, Op. 26 (8:14)

Live broadcast concert, Boston Symphony Hall, 3 August 1948

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