



Horenstein in Gothenburg, Volume 4



This is the fourth recording in a series published by Pristine Classical chronicling 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, he 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 given in four attractively constructed programs that also included works by Bach, Handel, Mozart, Liszt and Saint-Saëns, all of which were recorded in-house and have been remastered for publication on this label. The present recording reproduces the first of Horenstein's four Gothenburg programs, an evening that opened with a performance of Mozart's "Haffner" Symphony and ended with Mahler's Fourth. The soprano soloist, Jennifer Vyvyan, also performed selections from Act II of Handel's opera Rinaldo that will be published separately.

Mozart stated that the first movement of his D-major symphony was to be played "with fire", an instruction abundantly evident throughout Horenstein's fleet-footed, sharply defined performance of K.385, played with great gusto and enthusiasm, and no repeats, by a clearly energized Gothenburg Orchestra. The outer movements, urgent and dramatic with crisply defined rhythmic profiles, are complemented by a beguiling grace and elegance in the Andante and a Menuetto of clear contrasts. A little gem.

Mahler's Fourth Symphony entered Horenstein's repertoire during the Weimar era when he gave several performances in Berlin that established his conducting credentials and his early identification with this composer. He continued to perform the Fourth throughout his career with great success, notably in 1970 with the London Philharmonic Orchestra that resulted in his studio recording of the work for EMI. The present publication, taken from nearly three years earlier, is the only other recorded example of his thoughts on this work. It is distinguished from its commercial cousin, and benefits in spontaneity if not always in execution, by being "live".

Horenstein's account of the Fourth is not naive or simple but probing and searching, an empathetic shaping of accent and expression that goes far beyond the facile view of the work as one of the "easy" Mahler symphonies. His phrasing makes both sense and sensibility where other conductors manage only to stress its beauty, and he can contain the musical tension in such a way that the essential logic of the work is realized as much at the beginning as at the end.

The Gothenburg Orchestra, alert and alive, plays with passion and dedication, clearly in sync with the conductor if not always with each other, and manage to negotiate some of Horenstein's tricky demands with great aplomb, including some beautifully sustained *pianissimi* and vividly characterized transition sections.

The soprano Jennifer Vyvyan was one of Horenstein's preferred British soloists. Aside from several performances of Mahler's Fourth, she also performed and recorded Britten's "Les Illuminations" with him in England, and the War Requiem in Belgrade in 1972.

Misha Horenstein

PASC 620

horenstein

in gothenburg, volume 4

mozart
symphony no. 35 'haffner'

mahler
symphony no. 4
jennifer vyvyan, soprano



gothenburg symphony orchestra
conducted by jascha horenstein

live concert recordings, 1968

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MOZART SYMPHONY NO. 35 'HAFFNER' - MAHLER SYMPHONY NO. 4
VYVYAN, GOTHENBURG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, HORENSTEIN

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MOZART SYMPHONY NO. 35 'HAFFNER' - MAHLER SYMPHONY NO. 4
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MOZART Symphony No. 35 in D major, K.385 'Haffner'

1. 1st mvt. - Allegro con spirito (5:28)
2. 2nd mvt. - Andante (4:57)
3. 3rd mvt. - Menuetto (2:58)
4. 4th mvt. - Presto (4:01)

MAHLER Symphony No. 4 in G major

5. 1st mvt. - Bedächtig, nicht eilen (17:41)
6. 2nd mvt. - In gemächlicher Bewegung, ohne Hast (10:31)
7. 3rd mvt. - Ruhevoll, poco adagio (21:06)
8. 4th mvt. - Wir genießen die Himmlischen Freuden. Sehr behaglich (9:45)

Jennifer Vyvyan soprano

Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra
conducted by Jascha Horenstein

XR Remastered by **Andrew Rose**

Live concert recording, Gothenburg Concert Hall, Sweden, 25 January 1968 from the Misha Horenstein Archive.
Cover artwork based on a photograph of Jascha Horenstein from the collection of Misha Horenstein.

Total duration: 76:27

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