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disc
DIGITAL AUDIO
PASC 632

Fritz Busch in Copenhagen, 1950-1951

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Of Fritz Busch's numerous concert performances, sadly only very few have survived complete. With broadcasting time restricted to a particular slot, the importance of rehearsal sequences for posterity has grown stronger. Still, there are plenty recordings with the Danish Statsradiofonien, some of them virtually unknown. The collaboration of Busch with the orchestra goes well back into the 1930s - in 1937 he was appointed Principal Conductor - and it is striking when in the concert review of 18 January 1951 the *Nationaltidende* at length reports: "Fritz Busch is back, and last night he bestowed the Thursday concert again with his distinctive imprint. How he is jumping around with the orchestra! He knows each and every one of the excellent musicians, and they know him and what each of his gestures means, from the very small movements to the big explosions - and the orchestra obeys his word."

The present disc offers three recordings from Busch's last season with the Statsradiofoniens Symfoniorkester, 1950/51, when he received a remuneration of 3400 Danish Crowns per concert including all rehearsals (cf. also PASC 570 and PASC 604, including Brahms's *Tragic Overture* and *Nänie* as well as Beethoven's Ninth and *Leonore II*, all from the same season, *Leonore II* from the same concert as the Mendelssohn).

The Overture to the opera *Semiramide* is a singularity in Fritz Busch's discography as it is his only surviving Rossini, never before released. Busch's diary mentions rehearsals on 16 and 17 January 1951, totalling to not much more than an hour of time, plus the public dress rehearsal at 10 a.m. on 18 January, ten hours previous to the actual "Torsdagskonsert". The newspaper *Politiken* describes the work "played with a roguishness, an inciting rhythm and a beautiful sound that was immediately enchanting."

In contrast, Schubert's *Great C major Symphony*, was rehearsed on 23 and 24 January prior to dress rehearsal and concert on 25 January 1951, the other major work in the programme being Nielsen's Violin Concerto, performed by soloist Emil Telmányi (this recording is available on Danacord). In the concert reviews the Nielsen work largely overshadowed the rendering of the Schubert, a work which Busch and the orchestra had performed together in the past twenty years to high acclaim. The symphony (the finale is missing from all surviving sources) had been released both on LP and CD, most recently as long back as 1988. It may be noted that on 26 and 27 January 1951 Haydn's Sinfonia Concertante in B flat major Hob. I:105 were recorded by the Statsradiofoniens Symfoniorkester under Fritz Busch for commercial release by H.M.V. (PASC 622) - a work, in fact, which was also programmed in the concert of 14 September 1950.

Much better known than the broadcasts of the Schubert and the Rossini is Busch's performance of Mendelssohn Bartholdy's "*Italian*" Symphony, yet largely forgotten over the past fifteen years. The symphony is here programmed as a kind of a replacement for the missing finale movement of the Schubert. The concert review in the *Social-Demokraten* stated: "We award the prize to the Mendelssohn, the sunny tones of which the radio orchestra reproduced absolutely enchantingly." And in the *Börsen* one could read: "The audience's [...] reaction was stormy and manifested itself in a completely Italian-like enthusiasm."

For a considerable period Busch had made Denmark his home, and even after he had to flee from Europe in 1940 he did not claim all his scores and performing materials, which remained safe and secure in the Copenhagen Statsradiofoniens archives until after his death.

Jürgen Schaarwächter
Max-Reger-Institut with BuschBrothersArchive, Karlsruhe

PASC 632

busch
in copenhagen

schubert
symphony no. 9 'great'

mendelssohn
symphony no. 4 'italian'

rossini
overture to semiramide

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statsradiofoniens symfoniorkester
live recordings, 1950 & 1951

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FRITZ BUSCH IN COPENHAGEN: SCHUBERT, MENDELSSOHN, ROSSINI
BUSCH, STATSRADIOFONIENS SYMFONIORKESTER

busch

in copenhagen

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SCHUBERT Symphony No. 9 in C major 'Great', D.944 [without finale]

1. 1st mvt. - Andante - Allegro, ma non troppo (12:30)
2. 2nd mvt. - Andante con moto (14:27)
3. 3rd mvt. - Scherzo. Allegro vivace (9:19)

Live concert performance, Statsradiofonien, Koncertsalen, Copenhagen, 25 January 1951

MENDELSSOHN Symphony No. 4 in A major, 'Italian', Op. 90

4. 1st mvt. - Allegro vivace (8:39)
5. 2nd mvt. - Andante con moto (6:30)
6. 3rd mvt. - Con moto moderato (6:24)
7. 4th mvt. - Saltarello. Presto (6:09)

Live concert performance, Statsradiofonien, Koncertsalen, Copenhagen, 14 September 1950

8. ROSSINI Overture to *Semiramide* (12:04)

Rehearsal for concert performance, Statsradiofonien, Koncertsalen, Copenhagen 18 January 1951
[Rarissima 15 = original acetate disc from the collection of Gert Schäfer and Klaus Schöler]

Statsradiofoniens Symfoniorkester
conducted by Fritz Busch

XR Remastered by **Andrew Rose**

Cover artwork based on a photograph of Fritz Busch taken in 1950

Special thanks to **Dr. Jürgen Schaarwächter**

Produced in co-operation with the **Max-Reger-Institut/BuschBrothersArchive**, Karlsruhe, Germany

Total duration: 76:02

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