



Monteux

The First NBC SO Concerts, Volume 1

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XR

"The new symphony orchestra which the National Broadcasting Company has developed made its debut last night under the leadership of Pierre Monteux in the Radio City studios. This orchestra had been introduced to the public at a rehearsal conducted earlier in the season by Artur Rodzinski, principally responsible for the choice of the players and the assembling of the band.

The decision of the NBC to develop this orchestra followed its engagement for a special series of concerts of Arturo Toscanini and other distinguished conductors. Mr. Monteux had the distinction of opening officially the series of performances.

The concert served immediate notice of the presence of a new symphony orchestra of very high rank, as it also revealed Mr. Monteux at the height of his powers. With the admirable cooperation of the men under him he added to his international reputation on this occasion and made his listeners realize that it has been too long a time since Mr. Monteux has been heard in this city."

Olin Downes, *The New York Times*, 14 November 1937

This was a rare moment indeed. The emergence in public of a fully fledged, top quality symphony orchestra for the first time is in itself a highly unusual occurrence, but to have it captured in all its glory for future generations to hear is even more remarkable, especially when the debut takes place in the 1930s and it sounds as good as it does here.

The orchestra had been heard before: a short rehearsal broadcast from 2 November 1937 under the baton of Rodzinski had given radio audiences a taste of what might be to come - a Weber overture and Richard Strauss's *Ein Heldenleben* - but this was the official debut concert, broadcast live across the USA, Canada and further afield, the first of six under the batons of first Monteux, then Rodzinski, before the Christmas Day debut with Toscanini, for whom the orchestra had been founded and would go on to create a truly historic body of work.

Already here there is great orchestral music-making to witness - described on the opening night as "a particularly good one, exceptionally accurate and well trained" - and I'm happy to report that it sounds pretty great too. I've been able to retain the full opening and closing announcements within the confines of the length of a single CD - alas the other introductions had to be cut.

Andrew Rose

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bach-respighi
passacaglia and fugue

mozart
symphony no. 35 'haffner'

franck
psyché et eros

debussy
ibéria

r. strauss
till eulenspiegells lustige streiche

nbc symphony broadcast concert no. 1: 13 november 1937

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MONTEUX THE FIRST NBC SO CONCERTS, VOLUME 1
MONTEUX, NBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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MONTEUX THE FIRST NBC SO CONCERTS, VOLUME 1
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1. RADIO Introduction (3:35)
2. BACH-RESPIGHI Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor, BWV.582 (12:25)

MOZART Symphony No. 35 in D major, K.385, 'Haffner'

3. 1st mvt. - Allegro con spirito (4:51)
4. 2nd mvt. - Andante (4:33)
5. 3rd mvt. - Menuetto (3:12)
6. 4th mvt. - Presto (3:50)

7. FRANCK Psyché - IV. Psyché et Eros (9:03)

DEBUSSY Images: 2. Ibéria

8. I. Par les rues et les chemins (6:27)
9. II. Les parfums de la nuit (6:56)
10. III. Le matin d'un jour de fête (4:19)

11. R. STRAUSS Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche, Op.28 (14:01)
12. RADIO Closing announcements (2:59)

NBC Symphony Orchestra
conducted by Pierre Monteux

Live broadcast from Studio 8H, Radio City, New York City: 10pm, 13 November 1937

XR Remastered by Andrew Rose
Cover artwork based on a photograph of Pierre Monteux
Total duration: 76:11

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