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PASC 221

MENGELBERG

CONDUCTS BEETHOVEN & BRAHMS

PRISTINE
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XR

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BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 1 in C major, Op. 21

- 1 1st mvt. - Adagio molto - Allegro con brio (9:23)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Andante cantabile con moto (6:33)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Menuetto (Allegro molto e vivace) (3:45)
- 4 4th mvt. - Allegro - Allegro molto e vivace (6:06)

Concert of 13th October, 1940

BRAHMS Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68

- 5 1st mvt. - Un poco sostenuto - Allegro (14:46)
- 6 2nd mvt. - Andante sostenuto (10:15)
- 7 3rd mvt. - Un poco allegretto e grazioso (4:32)
- 8 4th mvt. - Adagio - Allegro non troppo, ma con brio (18:08)

Concert of 27th October, 1940

The Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra
conducted by **Willem Mengelberg**

Recorded in October 1940 at the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam by AVRO Radio
Transfers from mint Philips LPs W 09907 L and 6597 009 in the Pristine Audio collection
XR remastering by Andrew Rose at Pristine Audio, April 2010

Cover artwork based on a photograph of Willem Mengelberg at the Concertgebouw
Total duration: 73:28 ©2010 Pristine Audio.

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MENGELBERG

CONCERTGEBOUW ORCHESTRA



BEETHOVEN - SYMPHONY No. 1

LIVE AT CONCERTGEBOUW, AMSTERDAM, 13TH OCTOBER, 1940

BRAHMS - SYMPHONY No. 1

LIVE AT CONCERTGEBOUW, AMSTERDAM, 27TH OCTOBER, 1940

CONDUCTS BEETHOVEN & BRAHMS

Willem Mengelberg and the Concertgebouw Orchestra were recorded on a number of occasions by AVRO using high quality glass acetate discs, which produced significantly better results than those normally obtained by shellac discs of the era, with a much wider dynamic and frequency range than was usual at the time.

Many of Mengelberg's AVRO recordings have long been available on LP and, later, CD, and their sonic advantages have been immediately clear to listeners for decades.

However, using standard flat replay systems to produce those LPs and CDs has only told perhaps half of the story - the recordings gently rolled off both higher and lower frequencies. However, these essential details are often still intact, buried in the recordings as if awaiting a remastering method capable of extracting them and restoring their original levels.

This is, of course, precisely what Pristine's XR remastering system excels at. There are extended sections in both 1940 concert recordings present here where we've been able to present a true full-frequency, 20-20,000 Hz frequency response, coupled with a dynamic range more befitting of a 1960s or 1970s analogue recording - sound quality which is quite astonishing for its age.

Of course these discs were by no means perfect, and trying to go "the extra mile" in restoring it to modern standards is fraught with difficulties. Modulation distortion abounds in the original - basically whenever the music gets louder, so does the hiss and noise levels, especially at the higher frequencies which were previously largely inaudible. The majority of the restoration effort has then been involved in trying to ameliorate this problem, though sharper ears may still hear its effect from time to time. There is at times also very slightly higher general background hiss than one might expect of a more recent recording, and one of course has to deal with the low level click and crackle present in just about any disc recording.

Elsewhere the bottom end has seen considerable improvement, with a much fuller and richer sound than originally heard in the flat transfers. The use of multiple references for the remastering of the recordings has ensured that the tonal balance is as natural and realistic as possible, and that the two recordings resulted in an orchestral sound which was consistent for both recordings. One will rarely get closer to hearing a 1940 concert than this.

NOTES BY ANDREW ROSE - FURTHER NOTES ONLINE AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM