



MARK HAMBOURG

PRISTINE
AUDIO

THE CONCERTO RECORDINGS

BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37

- 1 1st mvt. - *Allegro con brio (Cadenza: Moscheles)* (15:14)
- 2 2nd mvt. - *Largo* (8:02)
- 3 3rd mvt. - *Rondo (Allegro)* (8:22)

Malcolm Sargent · London Symphony Orchestra*

Recorded 13th - 14th November, 1929 in Kingsway Hall, London

Matrix nos.: Cc 17876-2, 17873-1, 17874-2, 17875-2, 17877-2, 17878-2, 17879-1 and 17880-2

First issued on HMV C 1865 through 1868

*Although the orchestra was originally credited simply as "Symphony Orchestra", these sessions are listed in HMV's contractual account with the LSO. To preserve the LSO's "Red Label" status, recordings made in 1929-30 issued on the cheaper Plum Label concealed the orchestra's identity.

TCHAIKOVSKY 1st Piano Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor, Op. 23

- 4 1st mvt. - *Allegro non troppo e molto maestoso* (17:46)
- 5 2nd mvt. - *Andantino semplice* (7:02)
- 6 3rd mvt. - *Allegro con fuoco* (7:02)

Landon Ronald · Royal Albert Hall Orchestra

Recorded 28th September, 1926 in Kingsway Hall, London

Matrix nos.: CR 736-1A, 737-1, 738-1A, 739-1, 732-2A, 733-1A, 734-1A and 735-1A

First issued on HMV D 1130 through 1133

Mark Hambourg (*Blüthner piano*)

Producer and Audio Restoration Engineer: Mark Obert-Thorn

Cover artwork based on a photograph of Mark Hambourg

Total duration: 63:28 ©2010 Pristine Audio.

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BEETHOVEN: PIANO CONCERTO No. 3

LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, COND. SARGENT
RECORDED 1929

TCHAIKOVSKY: PIANO CONCERTO No. 1

ROYAL ALBERT HALL ORCHESTRA, COND. RONALD
RECORDED 1926

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Producer's Note

Mark Hambourg shared several commonalities with his younger friend (and fellow Savage Club member and bridge partner), Benno Moiseiwitsch. Both were pianists in the grand Romantic tradition who came from Russian territory, settled in England, and recorded extensively for HMV from the acoustic period onward (where they were both relegated to the cheaper black – later plum – label releases reserved for popular domestic artists). Their repertoire overlapped a good deal; indeed, both of them recorded the Beethoven C Minor concerto with Sargent (who also set it down on disc with another Leschetizky pupil, Artur Schnabel).

But while Moiseiwitsch has remained familiar to record collectors over the years, Hambourg seems a figure from a distant past. Part of this is certainly due to the fact that while Moiseiwitsch recorded almost up to the time of his death in 1963, even leaving several stereo LP recordings, Hambourg, who predeceased him by only three years, made his last commercial 78 rpm disc in 1935.

The present release couples the only two concerto recordings Hambourg made. The Tchaikovsky is of particular interest in that it has never appeared in an LP or CD transfer. The first electrical recording of the work, it suffers from a too-distant recording perspective and some occasionally slapdash accompaniment (the first side in particular really should have been redone). But it preserves some Romantic-era touches that are simply not heard today, such as the octave-higher echoing Hambourg interpolates in the first movement cadenza (Track 4, 15:02 – 15:18) and the slow, dreamlike tempo in which the second movement waltz episode is taken (starting at 3:35 in Track 5).

As neither recording came out on particularly quiet shellac, the sources used for the present transfers were British HMVs for the Beethoven and American Victor “Orthophonic” pressings for the Tchaikovsky.

Mark Obert-Thorn

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