

COMPACT  
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PASC 236

# BEETHOVEN

FOURTH SYMPHONY

FIFTH SYMPHONY

PRISTINE  
AUDIO  
XR

COMPACT  
disc  
DIGITAL AUDIO  
PASC 236

PRISTINE  
AUDIO  
XR

# MENDELBERG

CONCERTGEBOUW ORCHESTRA

**BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 4** in B flat major, Opus 60 (1806)

- 1 1st mvt. - Adagio - Allegro vivace (12:24)
  - 2 2nd mvt. - Adagio (10:59)
  - 3 3rd mvt. - Allegro vivace (6:02)
  - 4 4th mvt. - Allegro ma non troppo (7:32)
- Concert of April 25th, 1940

**BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 5** in C major, Opus 67 (1807)

- 5 1st mvt. - Allegro con brio (6:42)
  - 6 2nd mvt. - Andante con moto (10:07)
  - 7 3rd mvt. - Allegro (5:25)
  - 8 4th mvt. - Allegro (9:12)
- Concert of April 18th, 1940

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

Recorded in April 1940 at the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam by AVRO Radio  
Transfers from mint Philips LPs 6597 012 and 6597 016 in the Pristine Audio collection  
XR remastering by Andrew Rose at Pristine Audio, May-July 2010  
Cover artwork based on a photograph of Willem Mengelberg at the Concertgebouw  
Total duration: 68:23 ©2010 Pristine Audio.

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# BEETHOVEN

SYMPHONY No. 4 IN B FLAT MAJOR, Op. 60  
SYMPHONY No. 5 IN C MAJOR, Op. 67

LIVE AT CONCERTGEBOUW, AMSTERDAM, 1940

## BEETHOVEN

SYMPHONY No. 4 IN B FLAT  
SYMPHONY No. 5 IN C

ROYAL CONCERTGEBOUW ORCHESTRA CONDUCTED BY WILLEM MENGELBERG, APRIL 1940

**Introduction**

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.

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.

**These transfers**

Although the *Fourth Symphony* appears to get off to a slightly rough start, thanks to damage to the original acetates, and misses the characteristic clicks of Mengelberg's baton, things soon settle down and once again in this series, excellent sound quality can be heard in both recordings. Opening up the top end frequencies of these recordings has revealed flaws previously buried in the original - distortion and swishing both had to be tamed or eliminated, with many thousands of individual manual restoration interventions required for each symphony. Inevitably the odd shortcoming will remain audible, but ultimately the sonic impact of these restorations has been hugely satisfying and enjoyable.

NOTES BY ANDREW ROSE - FURTHER NOTES ONLINE AT [WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM](http://WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM)