



# GUIDO CANTELLI

## NBC CONCERT No.26



### VIVALDI Concerto Grosso in A minor, Op.3, No. 8

- 1 1st mvt. - Allegro (4:58)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Larghetto e spiritoso (4:20)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Allegro (4:17)

Daniel Guilet, Remo Bolognini, solo violins

- 4 Introduction to Brahms (Ben Grauer) (1:56)

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

- 5 1st mvt. - Un poco sostenuto - Allegro (12:41)
- 6 2nd mvt. - Andante sostenuto (8:13)
- 7 3rd mvt. - Un poco allegretto e grazioso (4:41)
- 8 4th mvt. - Adagio - Allegro non troppo ma con brio (16:42)

NBC Symphony Orchestra  
conductor Guido Cantelli

Live NBC broadcast from Carnegie Hall, 6th December, 1952  
Transfer tape from the collection of Keith Bennett

Transfer and XR remastering by Andrew Rose at Pristine Audio, August 2010  
Cover artwork based on a photograph of Guido Cantelli

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# CANTELLI



THE COMPLETE CONCERT OF  
CANTELLI'S 26TH APPEARANCE WITH THE  
NBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

VIVALDI Concerto Grosso in A minor, Op.3, No. 8  
BRAHMS Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68

CARNEGIE HALL, 6TH DECEMBER, 1952

The majority of readers seeing the name of Vivaldi in the programme will not see anything remarkable in that. However, the first time the writer heard any of this composer's music was as a 22 year-old: it was in a concert given by Cantelli in the Royal Festival Hall in October 1951 and it was the first time that any Vivaldi had been played in the hall which had been inaugurated the previous May. The NBC Symphony Orchestra came into being at the end of 1937 but, despite the fact that Toscanini included Vivaldi's Concerto Grosso Op.3, No.11 in his very first concert, the conductor who included the works of Vivaldi in his programmes with this orchestra more often than any other was Guido Cantelli. Although Cantelli gave more concerts with this orchestra (40) than any other conductor apart from Toscanini, he still only gave three of the four works in his repertoire with the orchestra and Vivaldi was only played in six concerts.

Cantelli had conducted this concerto for the first time while still a student in 1942 and his only other performances were both with the NBC Symphony Orchestra: on 15 January 1951 the first-desk soloists were Mischa Mischakoff and Max Hollander but for the performance on this CD (which was his last) the violinists were Daniel Guilet (who had become leader after Mischakoff's departure) and Remo Bolognini.

Toscanini's last appearances in London were when he conducted two all-Brahms concerts with the Philharmonia Orchestra on 29 September and 1 October 1952 which included all four symphonies and Cantelli was present at rehearsals and the concerts.

Prior to Toscanini's concerts Cantelli had conducted the Symphony No.1 less than a week earlier just twice (with the Orchestra della Scala on 23 and 24 September). In the following December Cantelli gave his only performance with the NBC Symphony Orchestra and after the concert he and his wife Iris went as usual back to Riverdale (Toscanini's home) for a meal. The Maestro had enjoyed the performance and on the arrival of his young colleague came forward to congratulate him but was dumbfounded when Cantelli announced that his interpretation 'was one of the best around'. The meal took place in silence. Cantelli's outburst was arrogant – after all, this was only his third performance – but to make such a comment to the Maestro who had performed this same symphony in the young conductor's presence just a few weeks earlier showed a total lack of sensitivity. Ignoring Cantelli's shortcoming in this particular instance, the irony is that his performances of this symphony were some of the best around and as a record collector the writer prefers not only his commercial performance of 1953 to the two that Toscanini recorded in 1941 and 1951, but also the majority of the live performances by the Maestro that he has heard, preferences being given to those given on 6 May 1940 and 29 September 1952. The Maestro inserted additional work for the timpanist in the fourth movement which Cantelli followed (in toto for this performances with the NBC Symphony Orchestra but only partially for his commercial recording). The outstanding feature of that commercial recording is that he does nothing which detracts from the music – as the critic (MM) in 'The Gramophone' put it (July 1954) there is "*a studied avoidance of abnormality. The music is presented, both phrase by phrase and in the build-up of the phrases into the shape of a movement, in exactly the way one feels that Brahms wanted, and indeed specified within the limitations that any score has of being specific.*" The author attended the 1954 Edinburgh Festival with the main purpose of hearing the three concerts to be conducted by Cantelli and he also heard Karajan conduct this symphony. Between the author's seat in the Usher Hall and the conductor was a young person who was continually shaking his head during the Brahms (his presence had not been noticed earlier in the programme) – whether from approval or displeasure was difficult to ascertain – that individual turned out to be Guido Cantelli

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