

Cantelli

29th NBC Symphony Concert



Have there been more than half a dozen recordings of Cherubini's symphony? Possibly not and for many, the name Cherubini is merely that of an historical figure, a conservative revolutionary as The New Grove put it; probably his most well-known work is the overture *Anacreon, ou L'amour fugitif* recorded by both Furtwängler and Toscanini (and was scheduled for Cantelli's concert with the Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of New York in December 1956). However, it is well to bear in mind that Beethoven thought highly of his contemporary although, with the passing of the years, we know that Beethoven was ahead of his time whereas Cherubini was of it.

Toscanini's insatiable curiosity often led him to the byways away from the generally accepted repertoire of the period and for those who do not know this symphony his performance will refute any suggestion that Cherubini was a dull old stick. The symphony has a vigorous first movement, with a melody in the second movement that lingers in the memory, a bucolic Haydn-esque minuet followed by a cheeky trio as near to Rossini as one could hope to find (surely one cannot hear it without smiling, at least inwardly) and ends with a vigorous finale.

No doubt the Maestro's enthusiasm sparked Cantelli's interest. It is quite possible that after Cantelli's final concert with the NBC Symphony Orchestra in the Fifteenth Season on 1 March 1952 he stayed on in New York to hear both Toscanini's concert the following week — which included this work — and the Maestro's recording two days later. Whether or not that speculation is misplaced, he must have spoken of the symphony with the Maestro which made such deep impression that he included the symphony in his very next concert in June with the Orchestra della Scala as well as giving a performance with the Philharmonia Orchestra during his next visit to London in October. Even more interesting is that he included it in his next series of concerts with the NBC Symphony Orchestra.

Both of his performances are delightful with just a touch more poise than Toscanini in the first, third and fourth movements but yielding to the older conductor's restraint in the second.

Keith Bennett - from "**Guido Cantelli - Just Eight Years of Fame**" (*GC Publishers*)

Transfer notes

All three of these recordings were restored from recordings in the private collection of Keith Bennett, to whom we're very grateful. The Cherubini and Strauss, from later BBC rebroadcasts, were in better condition than the Bach, but all suffered considerable sonic deficiencies which I've been able to largely alleviate. I noticed some considerable variation in hiss, which tended to be at its highest at the beginning of the recordings. I've dealt to a degree with this, as well as removing or reducing a considerable number of audience coughs, though some do remain. **AR**

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Cantelli



The Complete Concert of Cantelli's
29th Appearance with the
NBC Symphony Orchestra

27 December, 1952



J.S. Bach
Sinfonia
from *Christmas Oratorio*

Cherubini
Symphony in D

R. Strauss
Tod und Verklärung

