

# Hanson conducts American Music

## Hanson Gould Barber



One had always supposed that Morton Gould must have written something other than the *Pavane*, and here it is. A four-movement Sinfonietta is no novelty, but one based on four Latin-American dances is orchestral arrangements of a *rumba*, *tango*, *guaracha*, and *oanga* by good musicians are no novelty, but ones done with musical rather than commercial ends in view seem, unfortunately, to be so.

Those four dances form the four movements, taking on something like the classical balance. The *rumba* has a first-movement fullness; the *tango*, of the Argentinian variety, is developed into a singularly attractive slow movement, with wisps of sound that are so wholly appropriate, but which could never be written for the audiences to whom Gould, or any other first-class arranger, normally has to direct his music, tango-style or otherwise. A *guaracha* is less familiar, but it forms an effective *scherzo*; the finale is a *oanga* that begins and ends in a blaze, but has sober expanses in the middle, and is not quite the irresistible "orgiastic" affair the sleeve note led my baser instincts to hope for.

The whole work is played in great style the Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra seem completely at home with it. Few symphony orchestras can encompass this sort of music wholly satisfactorily - usually the brass section make it clear that the transition is too much of a strain. But here the style is changed with no apparent strain at all; and the brass and percussion are certainly beautifully caught by the fine recording.

**M.M. - The Gramophone, June 1954** (*review of Mercury MG40002, excerpt*)

### Transfer notes

The Barber and Gould recordings, both made on the same day in the autumn of 1952, displayed a distinct loss of top-end treble. In the case of the Gould this was particularly acute with a very steep drop-off of around 15dB above 10kHz that suggests a quite severe filter was used in mastering the original LP. I've done what I can to try and restore what remains above these frequencies in both recordings, more successfully perhaps in the Barber. The 1955 recordings of Hanson's own works show a more typical "Living Presence" lift of the lower treble, though happily not as severe as on some of their recordings of this era, and it's an anomaly which happily makes for lower hiss levels after XR remastering has corrected the tonal balance.

All of the recordings displayed degrees of pitch instability consistent with the tape recording equipment of the day, allowing the orchestral tuning to wander slowly between about A=440Hz and A=446Hz. Standard concert pitch seemed a reasonable point to re-tune the recordings to, something which appeared to be confirmed by the copious amounts of mains electrical hum (with multiple harmonics) I have removed. Each of these recordings was transferred from original, near-mint 1950s US Mercury pressings. **AR**

FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT [WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM](http://WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM)  
SARL Pristine Audio, Le Bourg, 24610 St. Meard de Gurçon, France - Tel. (00) 33 593 821857  
[www.pristineclassical.com](http://www.pristineclassical.com)

# Hanson

## American Music, Volume 5



**HANSON**  
Symphony No. 5  
The Cherubic Hymn

**GOULD**  
Latin-American Symphonette

The School for Scandal Overture  
Adagio for Strings  
Essay For Orchestra No. 1

Eastman School of Music Chorus  
Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra  
Howard Hanson, conductor

Studio recordings 1952 & 1955

PRISTINE  
AUDIO

PASC 332

HANSON CONDUCTS HANSON, GOULD AND BARBER  
HANSON, EASTMAN-ROCHESTER SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

COMPACT  
disc  
DIGITAL AUDIO  
PASC 332

XR remastering by **Andrew Rose**

Cover artwork based on a  
photograph of **Howard Hanson**

**Hanson**

Recorded May 1953 (Cherubic Hymn)  
& 1954 (some sources suggest 9 May 1955)  
Issued as Mercury MG-40014

**Gould & Barber**

Recorded 20 October 1952  
Issued as Mercury MG-40002

Total duration: **70:49**

For a full catalogue visit  
[www.pristineclassical.com](http://www.pristineclassical.com)  
or call : (00) 33 979 622713

© 2012 **Pristine Audio**

PRISTINE  
AUDIO

HANSON CONDUCTS HANSON, GOULD AND BARBER  
HANSON, EASTMAN-ROCHESTER SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

PASC 332

PRISTINE  
AUDIO

## Hanson American Music Volume 5

- ❶ HANSON Symphony No. 5 (Sinfonia Sacra) (14:39)
- ❷ HANSON The Cherubic Hymn (12:31)

**Eastman School of Music Chorus**

**GOULD Latin-American Symphonette**

- ❸ 1. *Rhumba* (5:12)
- ❹ 2. *Tango* (6:02)
- ❺ 3. *Guaracha* (3:07)
- ❻ 4. *Conga* (5:55)

- ❼ BARBER Overture to "The School for Scandal" (8:06)
- ❽ BARBER Adagio for Strings (7:28)
- ❾ BARBER Essay for Orchestra No. 1 (7:49)

**Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra** **Howard Hanson**