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Benno Moiseiwitsch plays Rachmaninov

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No more sympathetic interpreters could have been found than Moiseiwitsch and Sargent, who give a most fluent reading of the work—actually preferable in interpretation, to my mind, to the Rachmaninov-Ormandy version. Of 1940, which seemed altogether too "bitty" for comfort, and this is no whit less efficient. Sargent's accompaniment in the finale is a model of its kind while an occasional faint sprinkling of wrong notes in the solo part serves as a reminder that even the best pianists are human. The piano is perhaps a shade distant—in the last movement I would have welcomed a more forward, glittering tone—but in general the recording is good, and unlike the earlier version mentioned, the fortissimos do not feel as if someone had hit one round the face with a wet sock.

L.S., The Gramophone, December 1949 - excerpt from review of Concerto No. 1

Next to Rachmaninov himself, I suppose few soloists would come before Moiseiwitsch, in the choice of roost lovers of the work. He has been playing it to me since 1917—perhaps he began when it came out, in the early years of the century... The performers back up the composer splendidly in keeping the ball in the air. How swimmingly it all goes, with those sequences that make us feel that we are travelling in the luxury of the Blue Train: everything provided for, nothing to worry about, and scenery just new enough to engage the eye above all, no foreign language to think of, for all around us speak that which we know... The finale opens in the most engaging way with those mildly tantalizing gambits. There is a touch of the work's first theme in the three-time portion which follows the piano's first turn. The full-flowing energy of the soloist is best to be appreciated in such clear-driving sections as this finale abounds in... I like the plain, sturdy handling of the material by the conductor; and nobody can be ignorant of Moiseiwitsch's particular style and qualities. The music bears its heart on its sleeve, and so does the pianist...

W.R.A., The Gramophone, January 1938 - excerpts from review of Concerto No. 2

Transfer notes

These new transfers bring demonstrate brilliantly the way that the latest technologies can really bring recordings like these back to life. Pitch stabilisation software, available now for a little over a year, is key to firming up the sound of older piano recordings, reducing or eliminating the wobble and flutter that characterises just about all of them. XR remastering, with its carefully tailored re-equalisation, noise reduction and click and crackle elimination sheds years from the sound of both soloists and orchestra as the inadequacies of early recording equipment are ameliorated. Finally, the subtle use of convolution reverb replaces the typically dead studio acoustics of the era - all of these recordings were made in Abbey Road's Studio 1 - with the genuine and musically-sympathetic acoustic of one of the world's finest concert halls, greatly enhancing the sound both of the piano and the orchestra. In each case accurate measurements of residual electrical signals present in the recordings have allowed precise pitching to match that of the original performances. The results, I trust, speak eloquently for themselves. **AR**

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Moiseiwitsch

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RACHMANINOV

Piano Concerto No. 1

Piano Concerto No. 2

Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini

Philharmonia Orchestra • London Philharmonic Orchestra

Sir Malcolm Sargent • Walter Goehr • Basil Guneyun

Studio recordings, 1937 - 1948

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RACHMANINOV PIANO CONCERTOS 1 AND 2, PAGANINI RHAPSODY
BENNO MOISEWITSCH



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XR remastering by Andrew Rose

Cover artwork based on a
photograph of Benno Moiseiwitsch

Piano Concerto No. 1

Recorded 23 December 1948
Issued as HMV C.3932-34
Matrix Nos. 2EA.13511-16

Piano Concerto No. 2

Recorded 24 November
& 13 December 1937
Issued as HMV C.2973-76
Matrix Nos. 2EA.5908-5910

Paganini Rhapsody

Recorded 5 December 1938
Issued as HMV C.3062-64
Matrix Nos. 2EA.7178-83

Recorded at Abbey Road Studio 1, London

Total duration: **78:19**

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Moiseiwitsch plays Rachmaninov

Piano Concerto No. 1 in F sharp minor, Op. 1

- 1 1st mvt - Vivace (11:34)
- 2 2nd mvt - Andante (4:50)
- 3 3rd mvt - Allegro vivace (7:39)

Philharmonia Orchestra Sir Malcolm Sargent

Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 18

- 4 1st mvt - Allegro moderato (10:15)
- 5 2nd mvt - Adagio sostenuto (10:51)
- 6 3rd mvt - Allegro scherzando (11:39)

London Philharmonic Orchestra Walter Goehr

- 7 Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Op. 43 (21:31)

London Philharmonic Orchestra Basil Cameron

Benno Moiseiwitsch piano

RACHMANINOV PIANO CONCERTOS 1 AND 2, PAGANINI RHAPSODY
BENNO MOISEWITSCH

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