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LEOPOLD STOKOWSKI

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A Renaissance & Baroque Concert

Stokowski was celebrated as a transcriber of music originally written in other forms. His catalogue includes about 200 orchestral arrangements, nearly 40 of which are transcriptions of the works of J. S. Bach. During the 1920s and '30s, Stokowski arranged many of Bach's keyboard and instrumental works, as well as songs and cantata movements, for very large forces as well as just for strings alone. The most famous of them, the Toccata and Fugue in D minor, originally for organ, served as the opening item in Walt Disney's *Fantasia* and brought this music to a wide audience. Much admired in their day, these transcriptions are again being played now, and conductors such as Wolfgang Sawallisch, Matthias Bamert, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Seiji Ozawa, Erich Kunzel and Jose Serebrier are among many who have performed and recorded Stokowski's Bach transcriptions. These arrangements have been considered by some purists to be bastardizations of the original works, though as Stokowski pointed out, Bach himself was an inveterate transcriber of the music of others, notably Antonio Vivaldi. Today the organ works of Bach are widely heard in their original form via recordings and concerts, much more so than during Stokowski's time. Whether his transcriptions encouraged this resurgence of interest in Bach's organ music is a matter of debate. In general, modern CD recordings of these and of Stokowski's versions have been given a very warm welcome by today's critics. For example, as Raymond Tuttle wrote in *Fanfare*: "It is worth remembering that many people would never have found a doorway into the world of Bach had Stokowski not put one there for them. Let's not be snobs about it: Stokowski's Bach is musical sorcery of the best sort."

Stokowski Biography, *Wikipedia, excerpt*

Producer's Note

This collection brings together three "orphaned" Bach transcription recordings and one entire album (LM-1721, *Early Italian Music*) which have so far eluded commercial CD reissue. They show Stokowski at a stylistic crossroads between the big-orchestra arrangements through which he brought Baroque works to the masses in the 1920s and '30s and the burgeoning postwar interest in early music in its original (if not yet "HIP") form, a direction the conductor would increasingly take in the 1960s.

The final Gabrieli track posed particular transfer difficulties. On the original LP, it appears to have been pieced together from several takes, perhaps from more than just the one session listed, with differing levels of tape hiss, volume levels and even pitch. I have tried to straighten out all of the disparate elements in the present restoration. The sources for the transfers were "plain dog" first edition copies of the Bach and mid-'50s plum "shaded dog" label copies of the Italian music album.

Mark Obert-Thorn

FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM
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A Renaissance and Baroque Concert



Music by

Bach

Vivaldi

Cesti

Lully

Frescobaldi

Palestrina

Gabrieli

Leopold Stokowski

& His Symphony Orchestra

and

Brass Choir

A Capella Chorus

Charles Courboin, organ

RCA VICTOR STUDIO RECORDINGS, 1950-52

Obert-Thorn

STOKOWSKI *A Renaissance & Baroque Concert*

1 **J. S. BACH** - Siciliano
(from Sonata No. 4 for Violin and Clavier in C minor, BWV 1017) (4:02)
Transcribed by Stokowski

2 **J. S. BACH** - Mein Jesu, BWV 487 (5:05)
Transcribed by Stokowski

3 **J. S. BACH** - Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor, BWV 582 (13:48)
Orchestrated by Stokowski

VIVALDI *Concerto Grosso in D minor, Op. 3, No. 11 ("L'Estro Armonico")*

4 1st mvt. - Allegro (5:21)

5 2nd mvt. - Largo (4:25)

6 3rd mvt. - Allegro (3:29)
Orchestrated by Stokowski

7 **CESTI** - Tu mancavi a tormentarmi, crudelissima speranza (6:23)
Transcribed by Stokowski

8 **LULLY** - Nocturne (from *Le Triomphe de l'Amour*) (5:34)

9 **LULLY** - March (from *Thésée*) (1:04)

10 **FRESCOBALDI** - Gagliarda (3:32)
Transcribed by Stokowski

11 **PALESTRINA** - Adoramus Te (2:58)

12 **PALESTRINA** - O Bone Jesu (2:14)

13 **GABRIELI** - Canzon Quarti Toni a 15 (7:17)

14 **GABRIELI** - In Ecclesiis Benedicite Domino (10:28)

Leopold Stokowski and

His Symphony Orchestra (Tracks 1 – 10)

Brass Choir (Tracks 13 – 14)

A Capella Chorus (Tracks 11, 12 and 14)

Charles Courboin (organ) (Track 14)



Producer and Audio Restoration Engineer:
Mark Obert-Thorn

Cover artwork based on a photograph of
Leopold Stokowski

Recorded in Manhattan Center, New York on:
15 March 1950 (Tracks 1 – 2)
24 March 1950 (Track 3)
28 – 29 February 1952 (Tracks 4 – 6)
28 February 1952 (Track 7)
4 April 1952 (Tracks 8 – 10)
26 March 1952 (Tracks 11 – 12)
6 March 1952 (Tracks 13 – 14)

First issued on RCA Victor LM-1133
(Tracks 1 – 3) and LM-1721 (remainder)

Special thanks to **Don Tait** for
providing source material

Total duration: **75:40**

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