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disc
DIGITAL AUDIO
PASC 417

Munch: Boston Rarities Volume 2

PRISTINE
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Producer's Note

This second volume is a follow-up to an earlier Pristine release (PASC 403), and similarly features Munch/Boston recordings which, with the exceptions noted below, have never seen an "official" CD reissue, not even in the 40-CD (plus one bonus CD) Japanese RCA series, "The Art of Charles Munch".

The Beethoven minuet (Munch's only recording of the work) was issued as the filler side to the composer's Seventh Symphony when it was first released on 78- and 45-rpm discs. Like many such fillers, it was omitted from the LP edition, and disappeared from view after the early 1950s until it was resurrected on a Tahra CD set. It has been transferred here from an original "45". Unlike the Beethoven, the Schubert symphony, recorded at the same session, was remade in stereo in 1960, at which time the present version went out of print. It is transferred here from a "Shaded Dog" pressing of its 12-inch LP reissue (LM-9032), which was coupled with Koussevitzky's Schubert *Unfinished*.

Although Munch's 1956 recording of Debussy's *Faun* remained available on budget reissue labels until the end of the LP era, his 1962 remake has been the one consistently chosen for reissue in the CD era. Part of the reason may be the earlier version's gimmicky "ping-pong stereo" miking, placing the harpists on two different sides of the stage. (Listen to their first appearances early into the piece for a sort of call-and-response effect.) It finally saw CD publication in the Japanese RCA series; but for those like me who missed that volume, it has been transferred here from a tape source.

Munch's recording of Bloch's *Schelomo* has been the odd man out of his three stereo concerto collaborations with Piatigorsky on CD (there was an earlier, mono *Don Quixote*, as well), as its original coupling, the Walton concerto, has been chosen as the discmate for the Dvorak concerto on RCA and, more recently, Pristine (PASC 398). It did see an officially-sanctioned CD reissue on Testament; however, even though it was readily available in stereo during the LP era, the Testament disc inexplicably presents it in mono. It appears here from a stereo British RCA LP edition.

Finally, Russian-American composer Alexei Haieff's Symphony No. 2, a transcription of an earlier piano sonata, comes from what is perhaps the rarest Munch/Boston disc. It was originally coupled with Easley Blackwood's Symphony No. 1 as part of a project to guarantee recordings of works by contemporary composers which had been auditioned and recommended by a panel of judges, which in this case was comprised of Nadia Boulanger, Carlos Chavez and Alfred Frankenstein. While the Blackwood work saw an approved CD release on the Cedille label, the Haieff remained in limbo, leading to the original "Living Stereo" LP's becoming a sought-after collector's item. It is now restored to availability from its first and only "1S/1S" pressing.

Mark Obert-Thorn

FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM
SARL Pristine Audio, 144 Rue de l'Eglise, 24610 St. Méard de Gurçon, France

Charles Munch: Boston Rarities

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PASC 417
STEREO

Volume Two

BEETHOVEN *Gratulations-Minuet*

SCHUBERT *Symphony No. 2 in B-Flat*

DEBUSSY *Prelude to the
Afternoon of a Faun*

BLOCH *Schelomo*
with Gregor Piatigorsky, cello

HAIEFF *Symphony No. 2*

Charles Munch
Boston Symphony Orchestra

RCA Victor Mono & Stereo Studio Recordings · 1949-58

Obert-Thorn



MUNCH *Boston Rarities Volume Two*

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1 **BEETHOVEN** Gratulations-Menuet in E-Flat Major, WoO 3 (3:31)
Recorded 20 December 1949 in Symphony Hall, Boston
First issued on RCA Victor DM/WDM-1360 (78 rpm/45 rpm)

SCHUBERT *Symphony No. 2 in B-Flat Major, D.125*

2 1st mvt. - Largo; Allegro vivace (10:16)
3 2nd mvt. - Andante (6:52)
4 3rd mvt. - Menuetto: Allegro vivace (2:46)
5 4th mvt. - Allegro vivace (6:24)
Recorded 20 December 1949 in Symphony Hall, Boston
First issued on RCA Victor LM-41

6 **DEBUSSY** *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun* (9:05)
Recorded 23 January and 27 February 1956 in Symphony Hall, Boston
First issued on RCA Victor LSC-1984 [stereo]

7 **BLOCH** *Schelomo* (22:02)
Gregor Piatigorsky, cello
Recorded 30 January 1957 in Symphony Hall, Boston
First issued on RCA Victor LSC-2109 [stereo]

HAIEFF *Symphony No. 2*

8 1st mvt. - Maestoso; Doppio movimento (6:07)
9 2nd mvt. - Andante (6:35)
10 3rd mvt. - Maestoso (6:07)
Recorded 30 November 1958 in Symphony Hall, Boston
First issued on RCA Victor LSC-2352 [stereo]

Producer and Audio Restoration
Engineer: Mark Obert-Thorn

Additional pitch stabilisation and
audio restoration: Andrew Rose

Cover artwork based on a
photograph of Charles Munch

Total duration: 79:45

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Boston Symphony Orchestra *Charles Munch*

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