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DIGITAL AUDIO
PASC 421

BRONISLAW HUBERMAN

Beethoven & Brahms Violin Concertos

Pristine
XR

Virtuoso violinist Bronislaw Huberman was an idealist, an ardent Pan-European and co-founder (with William Steinberg) of the Israel Philharmonic. He was, in a sense, the prototype for such present-day fiddling mavericks as Kiemer, Zehetmair, Tetzlaff and Kennedy. Whether or not he supported Kennedy's beloved Aston Villa I cannot say, though he would certainly have applauded Villa's refusal, during a 1938 German tour, to give the 'Hitler salute'. Huberman's open letter to the conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler, in which he pledged support of the persecuted and refused to perform in Nazi Germany, has become famous, and his astringent though frequently dazzling playing translates that steely resolve into musical terms ...

The Beethoven Concerto (George Szell's only commercial recording of the work, by the way) is no less striking, being more in line with, say, Zehetmair and Brügggen than with the stately readings of Kreisler, Szigeti, Menuhin or David Oistrakh. Huberman's lively speeds and darting inflections spin silver beams where others opt for (in my view misplaced) 'Olympian' heights. The sheer luminosity of the reading, its radiance and refusal to dawdle, run counter to the languid sweetness favoured by various of Huberman's peers and successors.

You simply have to hear Huberman's ... There are no greater violin recordings in existence, and I urge you to hear - no, to buy them.

Rob Cowan, Gramophone, October 2000 - *review of Beethoven Violin Concerto - Naxos CD issue (excerpts)*

Producer's Note

It was Mark Obert-Thorn who introduced me to the violinist Bronislaw Huberman with his transfers for Pristine of the complete Mozart and Bach recordings (PASC397) that we issued in 2013. So when I was browsing through a large collection of LPs donated to Pristine and discovered a couple of discs dedicated to Huberman I resolved to see what I might be able to do with them. Not for the first time I've found that working from EMI's excellent analogue LP transfers has produced excellent results I would struggle to match from their shellac discs, and here the Beethoven has come up magnificently - bar the occasional intrusion of slight peak distortion at the very top end you might easily think this a recording from the 1950s rather than the first half of the 1930s. Huberman's playing and tone truly shines, and the Vienna Philharmonic's playing is fully rounded and truly magnificent. This is one of the great recordings of the Beethoven Concerto, and in this XR remastered version has surely never sounded this fabulous before. The Brahms hails from a live recording made in 1944, some 48 years after Huberman's playing of the work had won praise and tears from its composer. Once again I've been able to make major and significant improvements to the sound quality - again battling against high end peak distortion whilst trying to preserve and highlight as much of Huberman's tone as possible. This is a masterful performance indeed - and here once again it is available in unprecedented sound quality that does full justice to the playing. **Andrew Rose**

FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM
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Huberman

Beethoven & Brahms

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Beethoven Violin Concerto

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Szell

Brahms Violin Concerto

Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York, Rodzinski

Live and studio recordings, 1934 & 1944

HUBERMAN *plays Violin Concertos*

BEETHOVEN Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 61

- 1 1st mvt. - Allegro ma non troppo (21:34)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Larghetto (9:20)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Rondo (8:46)

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra *George Szell*

BRAHMS Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 77

- 1 1st mvt. - Allegro non troppo (19:50)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Adagio (9:26)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Allegro giocoso, ma non troppo vivace (7:27)

Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York *Artur Rodzinski*

Bronislaw Huberman *violin*

XR remastering by Andrew Rose

Cover artwork based on a photograph of Huberman

Beethoven Violin Concerto
Recorded 18-20 June, 1934
Columbia 78s LX.509-512
Matrix Nos. WHAX.30-38

Brahms Violin Concerto
Recorded 23 January 1944
Live at Carnegie Hall, New York
Broadcast recording

Total duration: 76:23

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