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PASC 428

HORENSTEIN CONDUCTS STRAUSS

Metamorphosen • Sinfonia Domestica

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STRAUSS'S *Metamorphosen* is a "study for 23 solo string instruments" in a single movement lasting approximately 25 minutes. The instruments for which it is scored are ten violins, five violas, five cellos and three basses. Sometimes in performance the parts are doubled or tripled, in order to employ the full string complement of the modern orchestra. In this recorded performance, however, the players are the twenty-three soloists specified by the composer. The group was carefully selected by Mr. Horenstein from the personnel of the French National Orchestra and is the same which had played *Metamorphosen* under his direction in an earlier concert performance.

Strauss composed *Metamorphosen* in a month, between March 13 and April 12, 1945. Other, longer, and doubtless greater works, have been written in less time, but under the circumstances this was for Strauss a remarkable achievement. The Thousand Year Reich, which had stretched from the Ukrainian plains to the Atlantic, from the Arctic Ocean to the Mediterranean, had contracted to a land corridor barely a hundred miles wide at its greatest extent; Germany's cities lay in ruins; her armies had disintegrated into guerrilla bands; in the deep bunkers of the Chancellery gardens in Berlin her megalomaniac ruler was acting out the last irresponsible act of the tragedy in which he had involved nearly the whole of the world. Strauss, within sound and range of cannon and bomb, with catastrophe and chaos only miles and minutes away, sat down in Garmisch and wrote the *Metamorphosen*.

Edward Cushing, *Metamorphosen* sleeve notes, Angel LP 35101 - (excerpts)

Producer's Note

Jascha Horenstein made three records for EMI and its affiliates; his 1953 *Metamorphosen*, coupled with Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms* (PASC 418) was one. This is its first reissue in any format - despite it winning a prestigious *Grand Prix du Disque* in 1954. That original recording was reasonably well-made but a lack of depth meant the lower instruments tended to get somewhat lost amidst the denser textures of the piece. XR remastering has helped here in clarifying the multiple voices of the 23 strings, adding body to the recording as well as a sense of dimension. The 1961 BBC broadcast of *Sinfonia Domestica* originated in an off-air tape recording of a BBC Home Service broadcast. It is the first time a recording of Horenstein conducting this work has been made available, and once more we are grateful to the conductor's cousin, Misha Horenstein, for access to his extensive archives. The fidelity of the recording is lower than that of the earlier EMI LP, and in addition there was a degree of tape dropout to battle against during the first ten minutes or so of this 45-minute performance. The sound quality throughout is, in this remastered version, a significant step up from the original source, as Mr. Horenstein acknowledged on first hearing it: "I agree that the first section is sonically more subdued than the later parts, but taken as a whole what you've managed to do with it is pretty impressive, bravo!" **Andrew Rose**

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

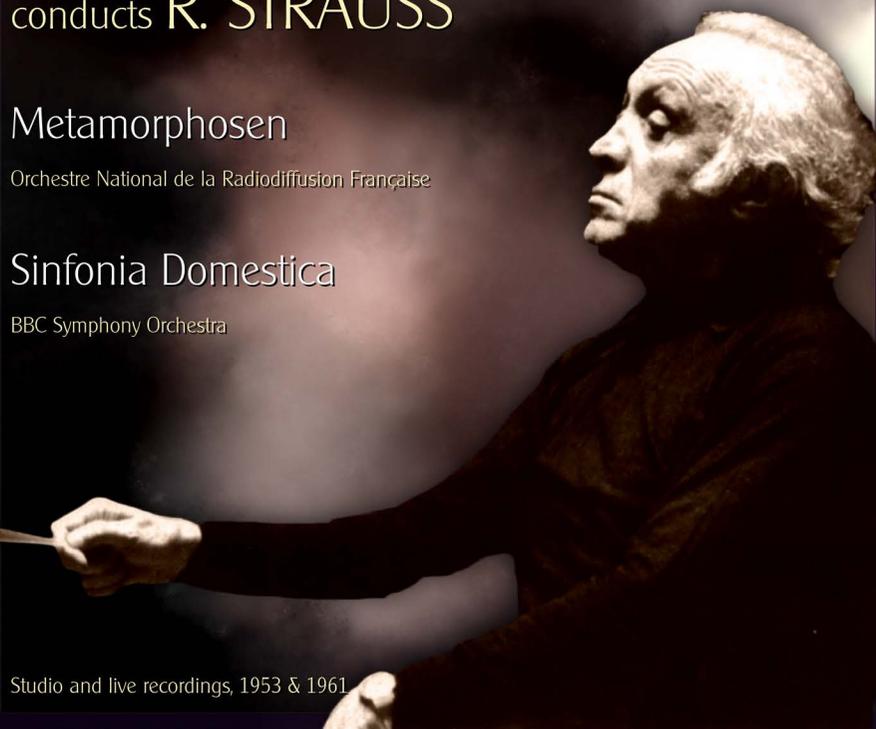
conducts R. STRAUSS

Metamorphosen

Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française

Sinfonia Domestica

BBC Symphony Orchestra



Studio and live recordings, 1953 & 1961

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RICHARD STRAUSS METAMORPHOSEN - SINFONIA DOMESTICA
HORENSTEIN, FRENCH NATIONAL RADIO ORCHESTRA, BBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

HORENSTEIN *conducts* Richard Strauss

Metamorphosen (26:28)

Orchestre de la Radiodiffusion Française

Sinfonia Domestica op. 53

1. Bewegt - Thema I - Thema II - Thema III (5:08)

2. Scherzo (Munter) (6:30)

3. Wiegenlied - Maessig langsam (5:02)

4. Adagio - (Langsam) (12:35)

5. Finale (Sehr lebhaft) (15:37)

BBC Symphony Orchestra

Jascha Horenstein, conductor

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XR remastering by Andrew Rose

Cover artwork based on a
photograph of
Jascha Horenstein

Metamorphosen
Recorded 30 June, 1953
Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris
Issued as Pathé DTX.138
and Angel 35101
Special thanks to Donald Clarke
for the loan of source recording

Sinfonia Domestica
Live broadcast recording
19th February 1961
"Sunday Symphony Concert"
BBC Home Service
BBC Maida Vale Studio 1, London
From the Misha Horenstein collection

Total duration: 71:20

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HORENSTEIN, FRENCH NATIONAL RADIO ORCHESTRA, BBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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