

"The concert was a gala evening at the baroque church of Our Lady of Candelária in downtown Rio. Dinner jackets and long dresses. Prices were sky-high. As a young student I couldn't afford a ticket and accordingly decided to try to "crash" the rehearsal. The idea of taping the concert then came to my mind. My cousin's father-in-law was a lay member of the Order of Our Lady of Candelária (it is a Portuguese tradition that dates back from the Middle Ages to have elder citizens as lay members of an Order they help maintain). Further to that, I knew very well the head of the recording studio of the local radio, who used to broadcast concerts (and also made tape copies for me). Well, I just couldn't miss that unique chance, as Stravinsky was already in his eighties. I and two other music-addicted friends sat quite naturally on the first rows. No one came to ask us who we were and what we were doing there. Robert Craft rehearsed the two pieces. Stravinsky then rose, came to the podium for the Mass, said a few words to the musicians ("Il faut toujours prononcer très nettement les mots") and insisted in imprinting his typical beat/pulsation to the score. He went on to stress again and again the need for a crystal-clear pronunciation. As you may know, the Portuguese (Brazilian) tends to highlight vowels in detriment of consonants - as opposed, say, to German.

Once the rehearsal over, Stravinsky was approached by some onlookers (possibly reporters and music critics). An unknown lady, carried beyond herself, enthusiastically uttered: "Maître, votre Messe est beaucoup plus belle que celles de Mozart..." Stravinsky at once reacted: "Mais non! Pas du tout, madame... Non, non, non!" Someone then took a photo of the whole group around the composer. I happened to be quite close to him. The photo (a quarter of a page) appeared in the culture section of "O Correio da Manhã", then one of the country's top papers. Stravinsky was quite a small man - 1,60 m, I would say - and I stood behind him. I recall that I smiled at that foolish commentary and the photo testified to my reaction..."

The two recordings with which this release starts and finishes were both made at the instigation of Francisco A. M. Joffily B. Mello, who this year sent the original tape reel to Pristine for transfer and remastering – and to be released publicly. Earlier this year he wrote to me: *"I was 20 years old at the time and took myself the initiative of hiring a professional recording team for the job. The mike was practically invisible, hanging from the church's altar together with lamps. The recorder - a Nagra, if memory serves me well - was operated by a professional from a small cubicle behind the altar. The only copy made was presented to Claudio Abbado when I met him in 1973 in Milan. The sound is quite acceptable and the performance - particularly the Mass - had that unique Stravinsky "irregular", inimitable beat so characteristic of his conducting..."*

The two recordings from that concert of 8 September 1963 are presented here with two recordings Stravinsky conducted in 1946 in New York – his newly-written *Symphony in Three Movements*, a work he regarded as his "war symphony", made with the New York Philharmonic some four days after its world première, and his 1930 work, *Symphony of Psalms*, with the CBS Symphony and a mixed chorus – both recordings I felt could particularly benefit from a revival with XR remastering.

Of the two Rio works, the *Mass* presents the composer's most recent work in this set. Written between 1944 and 1948, it "exhibits the austere, Neoclassic, anti-Romantic aesthetic that characterizes his work from about 1923 to 1951. The Mass also represents one of only a handful of extant pieces by Stravinsky that was not commissioned. Part of the motivation behind its composition has been cited by Robert Craft and others as the product of a spiritual necessity, as Stravinsky intended the work to be used functionally." (*Wikipedia*)

Finally the "bonus" recording here (in the we have Craft at the podium rather than Stravinsky), is the *Symphonies d'instruments à vent*, first performed in 1921 and written in tribute to Debussy. The composer revised the work in 1947.

Andrew Rose



PASC 679

stravinsky

conducts stravinsky

mass
symphonies of wind instruments*
orquestra sinfônica nacional
associação de canto coral
*cond. robert craft

previously unissued live recordings
rio de janeiro, 1963

symphony in three movements
philharmonic-symphony orchestra
of new york

symphony of psalms
columbia broadcasting symphony orchestra
and mixed chorus

studio recordings, new york, 1946

xr remastered in ambient stereo

Pristine
XR

stravinsky

conducts stravinsky

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PASC 679

XR Remastered by Andrew Rose

Cover artwork based on a
photograph of Stravinsky

Special thanks to
Francisco A. M. Joffily B. Mello

Total duration: 74:04

STRAVINSKY Mass, K077 (1948)

1. 1. Kyrie (3:21)
2. 2. Gloria (4:30)
3. 3. Credo (5:47)
4. 4. Sanctus (4:05)
5. 5. Agnus dei (3:55)

Orquestra Sinfônica Nacional

Associação de Canto Coral (dir. Cleophe Pearson de Mattos)

conducted by Igor Stravinsky

rec. live: 8 September 1963, Igreja de Nossa Senhora da Candelária, Rio de Janeiro

STRAVINSKY Symphony in Three Movements, K073 (1946)

6. 1st mvt. - Overture: Allegro (9:51)
7. 2nd mvt. - Andante; Interlude: L'istesso tempo (5:32)
8. 3rd mvt. - Con moto (6:08)

Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York

conducted by Igor Stravinsky

rec. 28 January 1946, Carnegie Hall, New York City

STRAVINSKY Symphony of Psalms, K052 (1930)

9. I. Exaudi orationem meam Domine (3:18)
10. II. Expectans expectavi Dominum (6:06)
11. III. Alleluia Laudate Dominum (12:08)

Columbia Broadcasting Symphony Orchestra

with mixed chorus

conducted by Igor Stravinsky

rec. 19 December 1946, Liederkranz Hall, New York City

12. STRAVINSKY Symphonies of Wind Instruments, K036 (1921) (9:23)

Orquestra Sinfônica Nacional

conducted by Robert Craft

rec. live: 8 September 1963, Igreja de Nossa Senhora da Candelária, Rio de Janeiro

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