



CHANNEL CLASSICS

CCS SA 16501

TCHAIKOVSKY

VARIATIONS ON A ROCOCO THEME
ANDANTE CANTABILE

SAINT-SAËNS

CELLO CONCERTO NO. I

BRUCH

KOL NIDREI

Pieter
Wispelwey

DIE DEUTSCHE KAMMERPHILHARMONIE BREMEN



Stereo
Multi-ch

Pieter Wispelwey

received his early training from Dicky Boeke and Anner Bylsma in Amsterdam followed by studies with Paul Katz in the USA and William Pleeth in Great Britain. He won the Elisabeth Everts Prize (1985), which is a biennial award endowed upon the most promising musician in the Netherlands.

Wispelwey is one of the first of a generation of general specialists, performing exquisitely on either an authentic or modern cello. His expert stylistic knowledge, original and profound musical thinking, augmented by a phenomenal technique enable him to render individual, yet remarkable interpretations of the cello repertoire from J.S.Bach to Elliot Carter. For years



photo: Camilla van Zuylen

now, he has won the hearts of critics and public alike with his unique performances of the Bach and Britten unaccompanied cello suites, and with his recitals of the Beethoven and Brahms sonatas either on authentic or modern instruments.

Wispelwey is in keen demand as soloist. A tour through the Australian capital cities with the Australian Chamber Orchestra was a triumph. A typical review in Melbourne's 'The Age', ushered in a cellist for the 21st century when it reported: 'To say Pieter Wispelwey's music-making is ravishing is to utter an understatement of huge proportions...the concert did everything to confirm him as one of the world's greatest cellists. As a soloist, he played like a man possessed; his face, his whole body seemed consumed by a musical spirit whose familiar is the cello'.

His recordings by the Dutch quality label Channel Classics have all been highly acclaimed by the international press, and no less than seven have won international awards.

Daniel Sepec was born in Frankfurt am Main in 1965. He first began studying the vio-



lin at the Musik-hochschule Frankfurt am Main with Dieter Vorholz followed by studies at the Universität für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Wien with Gerhard Schulz. Sepec also participated in masterclasses with Sandor Végh and the Alban Berg Quartet. Daniel Sepec was a scholarship holder

of Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes and the Alban Berg Stiftung Wien. At the 5th International Mozart competition in Salzburg in 1991, Sepec was awarded the Förderpreis of the Mozart Society in Wiesbaden.

In 1993 Daniel Sepec took up the position of concertmaster of Die Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, with whom he has also appeared several times as soloist under such conductors as Daniel Harding, Thomas Hengelbrock and Frans Brüggen. He has also directed the orchestra in a Bach CD recorded earlier this year. As guest conductor, Daniel Sepec has appeared with such orchestras as the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, under Claudio Abbado, the Camarata Academica Salzburg and Ensemble Oriol in Berlin to name but a few. His increasing interest in baroque music and its expressive potential has led him to appear regularly on original instruments with the Balthasar Neumann Ensemble under Thomas Hengelbrock.

Later this year Sepec will be appearing as soloist in the Konzerthaus in Vienna, performing several of the Rosenkranz sonatas from Heinrich Biber.

His chamber music commitments take him regularly to such festivals as the Festival St. Gallen in the Steiermark and the Schubertiade in Hohenems, Schloss Achberg. This year he has also been invited by Lars Vogt to perform at his chamber music festival in Heimbach. Other regular chamber music partners include such artists as Gerhard Schulz, Christian Tetzlaff, Alexej Lubimov, Tabea Zimmermann, Thomas Riebl and Jaap ter Linden.

From 1993-1996 Daniel Sepec taught violin at the Musikhochschule in Frankfurt am Main.

The concerts of **Die Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen** are hallmarked by enthusiastic playing, distinctive and exciting interpretations of extraordinary, well thought-out programs.

Since its inception 20 years ago Die Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen has established itself as one of the leading international chamber orchestras. The orchestra's tours include performances in the major European concert venues as well as in Japan, the former Soviet Union, South America and the U.S. where Die Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen was the first German orchestra to perform at the renowned Tanglewood Festival in August 1995. Furthermore Die Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen is a regular guest at international music festivals such as Salzburg, Lucerne, Vienna, Ansbach, the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival, the MDR-Musiksommer.

Since October 1999 the young British conductor Daniel Harding is the Musical Director of Die Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen. At twenty-five, Daniel Harding has already made successful debuts with orchestras such as the Berlin Philharmonic, London Symphony, Rotterdam Philharmonic and the City of Birmingham Symphony.

Invitations to the major European festivals as well as to concert venues all over the world illustrate the promising prospects generated from the enthusiastic relationship between the orchestra and Daniel Harding.

There is a longstanding and productive cooperation with soloists and conductors including Frans Brüggen, Christoph Eschenbach, Heinz Holliger, Gidon Kremer, Olli Mustonen, Murray Perahia, Mikhail Pletnev, András Schiff, Heinrich Schiff and Christian Tetzlaff.

The orchestra's repertoire covers the whole spectrum from baroque to contemporary music. There is a special interest in 'cross-over' projects with for instance the Art Ensemble of Chicago, the Nederlands Dans Theater, the Kronos Quartet and John McLaughlin.

Engagements for the future include projects and tours with such artists as: Heinrich Schiff, Paavo Berglund, Klaus Maria Brandauer, Christian Tetzlaff, Sabine Meyer.

I still find it striking that when we are asked for a typically romantic cello concerto, we think immediately of Dvorák, or even of Elgar, even though these works were composed respectively in 1895 and 1919, while the truly romantic cello concerti are actually those by Schumann (1850), Saint-Saëns (1870), and Tchaikovsky (1876). It would appear, then, that there are considerable misapprehensions about the nature of romanticism and the 19th century. In any case, the latter three works do not present the cello as a primarily autumnal and nostalgic instrument. Singing, yes, expressive, yes, but also agile and flexible. Moreover, the soft spot that I have for these pieces lies in the intriguing counterpoint of passion and ironic elegance, enthusiasm and civilization, a style in which, on one hand, aristocracy and on the other, sensuality and passion, play into each other's hands. Under the surface, feelings of fear, regret, protest, and impossible longing play their roles, but the balance between intoxication and discipline predominates.

A simple example of that balance can be seen in the opening 8 measures of the famous theme from Tchaikovsky's Rococo Variations. A sort of formal decorum alternates every 2 measures with emotionalism, the other supporting pillar of the composition. The symbiosis in a nutshell.

A good example of the deceptiveness of outward appearances is the close of the central movement of the Saint-Saëns. Unexpectedly, diverse elements from the minuet theme take on new and ultimately dark and foreboding forms, and suddenly we are engulfed in psychological quicksand. Quickly the wrinkles are ironed out again, but that moment of magic will remain in the listener's unconscious.

We hope that you will excuse us for adding two unmistakably late-romantic works to Saint-Saëns and the 'Rococo', and invite you to see the combination of styles in the context of counterpoint and polemic contrast. Moreover, a bit of cellistic nostalgia never hurts.

Pieter Wispelwey

SAINT-SAËNS

He has been called an 18th-century philosopher because of his intellectual and somewhat detached mastery of the rules of composition, and because of his historically minded approach. Camille Saint-Saëns, the musical antiquary and chameleon of 19th-century France. He was primarily interested in the musical past, in old fashioned forms, the clear outlines of classicism and an objective attitude toward one's own artistic creations. He was the great musical organizer of France; he admired and investigated the music of the 18th century, of Rameau, Gluck, and Mozart. Influenced by these composers, most of his compositions are characterized by a clearcut, classicistic composition-al style: brilliant, sparkling, effectively orchestrated, typically French, elegant, but a bit cool. It is not surprising that Saint-Saëns was present at the inception of the Groupe des Six, those composers of musical irony, of serious compositions that winked one eye: of Satie, Poulenc, Honegger.

Saint-Saëns stood alone in France as a composer of traditional solo concerti. Berlioz, Chausson, and D'Indy took newer, experimental pathways; in Germany and Austria, countries which, it should be emphasized, were the true mecca of the concerto genre, Saint-Saëns's marmoreal beauty was strangely unsuccessful. In his best-known Cello concerto no. 1 in a, op. 33, Saint-Saëns daringly tried an experimental approach to form: the work consists of three movements which follow each other without interruption. The restless and darkly meditative themes of the first movement return in the third movement, giving the impression of a cyclically coherent whole. The middle panel, with muted strings, is so archaic, 'galant', and stylized that it seems like an escaped minuet from the 18th century. The finale is a varied and expanded repetition of the first movement. A new, mournful solo melody takes the cello here into its highest register. The cello seems almost to be quoting an aria from Tchaikovsky's opera, 'The Queen of Spades'. But Saint-Saëns does not give his music the time to come to a boil as his Russian colleague would have done. Faultlessly he turns the ship into calmer seas, after the somewhat stormy chain of triplets taken from the first movement. But this movement does not end in a passionate or reckless adventure story. Saint-Saëns gently closes the book of romantic tales, just in time.

TCHAIKOVSKY

Tchaikovsky also liked to take a backward glance at his colleagues from earlier days; most of all at his beloved Mozart. Around the time of his Fourth Symphony, he composed his Variations on a rococo theme, op. 33 (1876) in homage to Mozart. It is a colorfully orchestrated work, alternating between repose and romantic virtuosity, based on a pseudo-classical melody. After an introductory dialogue between strings and winds, the orchestra subsides into a romantic horn melody and the cello takes over the narrative. The theme expands into seven variations, separated by brief orchestral interludes. Tchaikovsky reveals himself here as a wizard of timing and contrast. At one moment one is in the midst of a wild race between cello and orchestra, and in the next variation it seems as though the music has strayed into a lyrical scene from 'Eugene Onegin'. One would almost think that here, the composer had imagined deeply felt words under his melancholy notes.

BRUCH

Some five years later, melancholy was once again the prevailing tone of a work by the German composer Max Bruch: the 'Kol Nidrei' for cello, harp, and orchestra. It is Bruch's best-known work, written during the happiest period of his life, when he was conductor of the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and married to the singer Clara Tucek. Although he himself was not Jewish, Bruch had a particular interest in the best-known Jewish melodies, which had also become familiar in Germany outside the environment of the synagogues. The Kol Nidrei (All vows) is sung by Jews on Yom Kippur (The day of Atonement). This glorious melody is believed to have originated in the 9th century. In his romantic arrangement, Bruch has given the cello the role of the cantor. The accompanying orchestral chords alternate between lighter and darker shadings.

*Clemens Romijn,
translation David Shapero*

COLOPHON

Production
Producers
Recording engineer, editing
Assistant engineer
Photo cover
Cover design
Liner notes

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C. Jared Sacks
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David Louf, Utrecht
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Technical information

Microphones
Digital converter
Recording location
Recording dates
Cello

Bruel & Kjaer 4003, Schoeps
24 Bit Prism / Genex Recorder
Guttscheune Stuhr-Varrel, Bremen, Germany
June 2000
Anonymous, French (1860)

Super Audio CD technical team

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With special thanks to Paul Reynolds, Hein Dekker, Petra Smits, Fred Jacobs and Hermine Sterringa from Philips S&L Eindhoven, Holland for their support in the making of this recording.

Pieter Wispelwey **cello**

Die Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen

Daniel Sepec | leader

CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS (1835-1921)

CELLO CONCERTO NO.1 IN A MINOR OP.33 (1872)

1	Allegro non troppo	5.24
2	Allegro con moto	4.29
3	Allegro non troppo	8.31

PYOTR IL'YICH TCHAIKOVSKY (1840 -1893)

4	ANDANTE CANTABILE OP.11 (1886?)	6.56
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VARIATIONS ON A ROCOCO THEME OP.33 (1876)

5	Theme	2.23
6	Variation 1	2.34
7	Variation 2	0.53
8	Variation 3	3.41
9	Variation 4	1.56
10	Variation 5	3.32
11	Variation 6	2.31
12	Variation 7	2.11

MAX BRUCH (1838-1920)

13	KNOL NIDREI OP.47 (1881)	10.47
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Total time	55.31
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Cello | Anonymous, French (1860)



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