

FROM ORIGINAL ANALOG MASTER

TWO MICROPHONE
AUDIOPHILE RECORDING

2^xHD
FUSION

BARTOK

SONATA FOR TWO PIANOS AND PERCUSSION

GYORGY SANDOR AND ROLF REINHARDT, PIANOS
OTTO SCHAD AND RICHARD SOHM, PERCUSSION

PIANO CONCERTO No. 3 (1945)

GYORGY SANDOR, PIANO
PRO MUSICA ORCHESTRA, VIENNA
MICHAEL GIELEN, CONDUCTOR

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The use of A-B Stereo techniques without support microphones can create an extremely convincing depth in the stereo image and capture a realistic room impression. The sound sources, ie musical instruments and room reflections, are picked up with the correct time alignment relative to the placement of the main stereo pair, which explains why this method is often regarded as the PURIST'S CHOICE.



György Sándor - Biography

György Sándor was an internationally respected pianist and piano teacher, especially known for his recordings of music of **Bartók** and **Prokofiev**. His cousin **Árpád Sándor** (1896-1972) was a noted pianist and music critic who toured widely as accompanist to such leading artists as **Jascha Heifetz** and **Lily Pons**. **György** studied at the Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest as a piano pupil of **Béla Bartók** and composition student of **Zoltán Kodály**. He made his concert debut in Budapest in 1930 and toured widely through Europe until 1939. In that year **Sándor** left for the United States. He became a naturalized citizen of that country in 1943.

In the competitive world of U.S. concert life at that time (when many great European artists escaped war-torn Europe), he began to reestablish his career. By the end of World War II he was positioned to begin a successful international touring career that took him to all the major musical centers of the West. In 1945 he played the first performance of **Bartók's** piano transcription of his orchestra work *Dance Suite* and in 1946 made the premiere the composer's posthumous masterpiece, the *Third Piano Concerto*. In 1956 he joined the faculty of Southern Methodist University in Dallas, TX, remaining there until 1961. In that year he moved to the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, as director of graduate studies in piano. In those years he began making recordings, often for the Vox label. He produced noted Vox Boxes of the complete piano music of **Bartók** (winning the Grand Prix du Disque) and **Prokofiev**. For Vox's sister label Turnabout he produced the complete piano works of **Kodály**. Thirty years later he produced another recording of the complete **Bartók** for Sony Classical. In 1981 he published a book, *On Piano Playing: Motion, Sound, and Expression*. In 1982 he left Ann Arbor to join the piano faculty of the Juilliard School of Music in New York.

He toured widely and frequently served as a juror in major international piano competitions. In addition, he gave master classes at institutions including the Paris Conservatory, Indiana University School of Music, the Jerusalem Music Center, the Assisi Festival, and the Mozarteum in Salzburg. His publications included bravura piano transcriptions of **Dukas' The Sorcerer's Apprentice**, **Bach's Chaconne** and *Fugue*, and selections of **Bartók's** 44 Violin Duos. In 1982 he was presented with Hungary's highest award for artistic achievement. In the 1990s his activities in the recording studios increased, with recordings of **Bartók's** complete piano concertos joining his catalog of the **Rachmaninov** Second, and numerous works by **Bach**, **Chopin**, **Schumann**, **Liszt**, and the complete sets already noted.

Sándor cautioned young pianists that the style of **Bartók** piano playing that arose in the decades after the master's death is inauthentic; that the composer wished a lyrical, elastic tempo with an emphasis on the melodic line. His later **Bartók** recordings are intended to exemplify the music as he learned it from **Bartók** himself.

Béla Bartók

Sonata for 2 pianos & 2 percussion

In 1925, **Béla Bartók** told interviewer Dezso Kosztolanyi that his first instrument was not, as might have been expected, the piano, but a drum he was given at the age of 2. At the age of 4, he was attracted to the piano, picking out Hungarian folk songs with one finger. These twin instrumental influences converged in one of the composer's most remarkable works, the Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion (1937), composed on a commission from the Basle chapter of the International Society for Contemporary Music. **Bartók** had previously explored similar instrumental combinations: the middle movement of the Piano Concerto No. 1, for instance, is a dialogue between the soloist and percussion. In this work, however, **Bartók** decided that, for purposes of balance, the percussion section was better offset by two pianos. The first movement begins with a long introduction over a soft timpani roll, the two pianos alternately presenting a twisting, chromatic theme punctuated by sharp bursts from the cymbal and startling trills and glissandi from the keyboards. A looming accelerando launches the main Allegro, a barbaric but high-spirited affair whose theme is uttered by the pianos in short-breathed phrases. The keyboard parts are characterized by much interplay and cross-counterpoint, while the xylophone and side drum provide vigorous propulsion. A second theme in quick, limping rhythm is presented in an episode framed by brief passages of drifting chords and timbres. A fugitive figuration in the pianos, highlighted by the triangle, leads to a grim, motoric march in 9/8. A climax featuring big, hieratic chords from the keyboards proceeds to a fugato treatment of the second theme, bringing the movement to an emphatic conclusion. The second movement is a characteristic example of **Bartók's** "night music," the dark nocturnal web evoked by pointillistic use of cymbal, triangle and a soft, steady beat from side drum. The pianos present an inward, highly chromatic theme. In the ominous middle section, one piano plays dark, looming octaves while the other presents an urgent six-note motif based on a minor third (a recurrent figure in **Bartók's** music), joined by xylophone. The nocturnal atmosphere returns, this time colored by sharp cries from pianos and percussion and the return of the minor-third motif. The finale, marked by supremely intricate interplay among pianists and percussionists, features some of **Bartók's** wildest music. The harmonies become veritably woozy, reeling up and down chromatically as the pace quickens through a series of dance episodes in the composer's burlesque style. As the rhythmic impulse drives toward a climax, the music begins to fragment. Instead of the expected tutti ending, the movement quietly winds down to a final, limpid arpeggiated chord, a pure C major sonority, and an almost inaudible finger tap on the cymbal.

Bartók: *Piano Concerto No. 3*

Premiered Today in 1946

Béla Bartók did not see the premiere of his 3rd Piano Concerto. After completing the score—he wrote the Hungarian words “the end” after the last measures of this concerto—Bartók was transferred to a West Side hospital where he died four days later. On his last night at home, his friend and student Tibor Serly found Bartók in bed surrounded by medicine bottles and manuscript paper. He was feverishly trying to finish the orchestral score, but he already knew that time was running out. According to Serly, Bartók made it within seventeen measures from the end before he collapsed. Serly, in turn, deciphered the composer’s shorthand for the final measures and completed the score. Realizing the severity of his illness, Bartók had been hyperactive throughout his last year. He simultaneously worked on two major pieces, the Third Piano Concerto and the Viola Concerto, at once. Shortly before being transferred to the hospital he was drafting a seventh string quartet and even considered a commission for a double concerto for two-pianos. Apparently, Bartók told a hospital doctor, “I am only sorry that I have to leave with my baggage full.”

Bartók died at age 64 on 26 September 1945. A funeral service was held at Universal Chapel, and the burial took place at Ferncliff Cemetery in Hartsdale, New York. The funeral was a small family affair, and it included his wife Ditta Pasztory, their son Péter, and his pianist friend György Sándor. Bartók had been stimulated to write his 3rd piano concerto as a surprise birthday present for his wife Ditta. But remembering that he had arrived almost penniless in New York four years earlier, Bartók decided to leave his wife a composition that she might perform to help support herself as a concert artist after he was gone. In the event, it was György Sándor who first performed the work on 8 February 1946 in Philadelphia, with Eugene Ormandy conducting. It turned out to be Bartók’s most popular piano concerto.

Georg Predota

TWO MICROPHONE AUDIOPHILE RECORDING

BARTÓK

SONATA FOR TWO PIANOS AND PERCUSSION

Gyorgy Sandor and Rolf Reinhardt, pianos

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-------|
| 1 | Assai Lento - Allegro | 13:13 |
| 2 | Lento, Ma Non troppo | 6:22 |
| 3 | Allegro Non troppo | 6:31 |

PIANO CONCERTO No. 3

Gyorgy Sandor, piano

Pro Musica Orchestra, Vienna

MICHAEL GIELEN, Conductor

- | | | |
|---|------------------|------|
| 4 | Allegretto | 5:52 |
| 5 | Adagio Religioso | 9:48 |
| 6 | Allegro Vivace | 6:24 |

2XHD MASTERING: RENÉ LAFLAMME

2XHD EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: ANDRÉ PERRY



THE 2xHD MASTERING PROCESS



The 2xHD logo on an album cover indicates that the recording was carefully selected and that the high resolution mastering was done using the 2xHD process. Created by producer/studio owner André Perry and prize-winning audiophile sound engineer René Laflamme in collaboration with several high-end audio equipment manufacturers, the 2xHD music mastering system combines the best of vintage analog with state-of-the-art DSD and DXD digital technology – a ‘*Back to the Future*’ approach. Each musical project is treated with individual attention to the selection of equipment.

In the constant evolution of its proprietary mastering process, 2xHD has progressed to a new phase called 2xHD FUSION integrating a selection of high-end vacuum tube equipment in the mastering chain. For this album, the original ¼" 15 ips CCIR master tapes were played using a Nagra-T tape recorder which was modified with such tube playback electronics and connected from the playback head directly to a Nick Doshi tube head preamplifier using OCC silver cables. The Nagra-T, with its four direct drive motors, two pinch rollers and a tape tension head, has one of the best transports ever made. A custom-built carbon fiber head block and a head damping electronic system permit 2xHD FUSION to obtain a better resolution and 3D imaging. The resulting signal is then transferred into high resolution formats by recording it in DSD 11.2 MHz using a Merging Technologies’ Horus A to D converter. All analog and digital cables that are used are state of the art. The 2xHD FUSION mastering system is powered by a super capacitor power supply, using a new technology that lowers the digital noise found in the lowest level of the spectrum. A vacuum tube NAGRA HDdac (DSD) is used as a reference digital playback converter in order to A and B with the original analog master tape, permitting the fusion of the warmth of analog with the refinement of digital. 2xHD was created by producer/studio owner André Perry and prize-winning audiophile sound engineer René Laflamme.