

Joseph Szigeti (Hungarian: Szigeti József, 5 September 1892 – 19 February 1973) was a Hungarian violinist.

Born into a musical family, he spent his early childhood in a small town in Transylvania. He quickly proved himself to be a child prodigy on the violin, and moved to Budapest with his father to study with the renowned pedagogue Jenő Hubay. After completing his studies with Hubay in his early teens, Szigeti began his international concert career. His performances at that time were primarily limited to salon-style recitals and the more overtly virtuosic repertoire; however, after making the acquaintance of pianist Ferruccio Busoni, he began to develop a much more thoughtful and intellectual approach to music that eventually earned him the nickname "The Scholarly Virtuoso".

Following a bout of tuberculosis that required a stay in a sanatorium in Switzerland, Szigeti settled in Geneva, where he became Professor of Violin at the local conservatory in 1917. It was in Geneva that he met his future wife, Wanda Ostrowska, and at roughly the same time he became friends with the composer Béla Bartók. Both relationships were to be lifelong.

From the 1920s until 1960, Szigeti performed regularly around the world and recorded extensively. He also distinguished himself as a strong advocate of new music, and was the dedicatee of many new works by contemporary composers. Among the more notable pieces written for him are Ernest Bloch's Violin Concerto, Bartók's Rhapsody No. 1, and Eugène Ysaÿe's Solo Sonata No. 1. After retiring from the concert stage in 1960, he worked at teaching and writing until his death in 1973, at the age of 80.



JOSEPH SZIGETI

VIOLIN CONCERTO IN D

BEETHOVEN

LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

ANTAL DORATI

Beethoven's only violin concerto was finished in 1806 and was composed for four violinists. It is one of the most popular violin concertos ever written and through it, Beethoven contributes to the evolution of the genre by eliminating the conventional elements, which dominated the genre in the 18th century. He brought it closer to the symphonic genre, thus widening the sphere of expectations with regard to both the musicians and the listeners.

Part I – Allegro ma non troppo – starts with the rendering of the theme by the orchestra and continues with the solo violin presenting the two themes in a cadence with introductory role. Here are the two themes of the sonata in the first part:

Part II – Larghetto – is based on a lyrical musical theme of great musicality, which, according to some specialists is of Russian origin.

Part III – Rondo – starts abruptly with the musical

theme rendered by the solo violin. The passage from the second part is made without the usual break. An element of novelty in this part is the fact that the composer does not write the cadence for violin, but allows the violinist to improvise, thus showing his technical and interpretational qualities.

After its premiere on December 23rd, 1806, the work was, for the longest of time, not actually recognized for its beauties and neither as one of the most challenging works of this genre. It would take another "Wunderkind" of the 19th century, namely the composer Felix Mendelssohn, to re-introduce this work to the public during the mid-1800's, after which time it continued to remain in the concert repertoires in its rightful place which it, along with its never-diminishing popularity, still holds today.

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LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
ANTAL DORATI

1. Allegro Ma Non Troppo 24:57
 2. Larghetto 10:28
 3. Rondo (Allegro) 9:32
- Total Time 44:57

Transferred from a Mercury 4-track tape

Engineer - Robert Fine

Recorded 1964 Watford Town Hall



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