

The Swiss conductor, Ernest Ansermet, came from a musical family; he successively studied the clarinet, violin and brass instruments, which he used in fanfares; later he wrote military marches for the Swiss army which he did not consider important. Besides Music, he studied Mathematics in Lausanne and graduated with a Diploma in 1903; until 1906 he taught at the Lausanne Grammar School, then he decided to continue his studies at the Sorbonne and, at the same time, to attend courses at the Paris Conservatory. After his return to Lausanne, he taught Mathematics for one more year before devoting himself entirely to music.

Ansermet was a particular advocate of the Swiss composers Arthur Honegger and Frank Martin. He conducted the first performances of the following works of A. Honegger: *Horace victorieux* (1921), *Chant de joie* (1923), *Rugby* (1928) and *Pacific 231* (1923), which was dedicated to him, and of the following works of Frank Martin: *Symphonie* (1938), *In terra pax* (1945), *Der Sturm* (1956), *Le mystère de la Nativité* (1959), *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac* (1963) and *Les Quatre Éléments*, which were dedicated to him. Also important were the first performances of Benjamin Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* (1946) and *Cantata*



MASTERING EQUIPMENT

Digital: Antelope Audio Eclipse 384

Antelope Audio Isochrone 10M Rubidium atomic reference generator

Korg MR2000 DSD recorder

Weiss Saracon Sample Rate Conversion Software

Weiss POW-r Dithering Software

Analog: Studer 810 Reel to Reel with
Custom by JRF Magnetics & Siltech wiring
Nagra 4S custom by JRF Magnetics

Aria tape head pre-amp by ATR Services
Retro Instruments 2A3 Dual-channel tube program equalizer
Sontec MEP-250EX Parametric EQs

VPI Classic Turntable w/ Benz Wood Cartridge
Rogue Audio Phone Pre-amp

Power Sources: PS Audio P10 Power Plant
and Power Plant 300

Power Cords: Purist Audio Design, Essential Sound Products,
Speltz Anti-Cables

Vibration Control: Symposium Acoustics Rollerblocks,
Ultra platforms, Svelte shelves

Sonic Studio CD.1 Professional CD Burner
using Mitsui Gold Archival CD's



HIGH DEFINITION TAPE TRANSFERS

Beethoven
SYMPHONIES NOS. 8 AND 1

Ansermet
L'ORCHESTRE DE LA SUISSE ROMANDE



Composers writing symphonies in the wake of Beethoven often found themselves intimidated by his example while they worked and then were subjected to unfavorable critical comparisons once they finished. The Eighth Symphony shows that even Beethoven could find himself in a similar situation: His own compositions sometimes suffered in comparison with more popular earlier works. Robert Schumann remarked that the Fourth Symphony was like a "slender Grecian maiden between two Nordic giants." So, too, the Eighth is a shorter, lighter, and far more good humored work than its imposing neighbors, the relentless Seventh and the towering Ninth. According to his student Carl Czerny, in comparison with the extraordinary enthusiasm that greeted the Seventh Symphony there was initially a puzzled reaction in Vienna to the Eighth: "That's because it is so much better" was Beethoven's alleged response.

Beethoven was given to writing (and performing) symphonies in pairs. He wrote the Fifth and Sixth symphonies—so different in many respects—around the same time, and they were premiered on the same concert (with their numbers and order reversed). The gestation of his next two symphonies, the Seventh and Eighth, was likewise joined, as were some of their early performances. Both these pairs of unidentical twins raise the issue of Beethoven's even and odd numbered symphonies—of the common

perception of advance in the odd-numbered ones and retreat in the even. Certainly the former are the more popular, praised, performed, and recorded. And as with Schumann's observation about the Fourth being overshadowed by its towering neighbors, the Eighth also tends to get lost in the crowd. Beethoven referred to it as "my little Symphony in F," so as to distinguish it from the Seventh, as well as from the longer and more substantial Sixth Symphony, also in F major.

Beethoven's First Symphony, dedicated to Baron Gottfried Van Swieten, came at age 29. Fittingly, it was the dawn of a new century. It appeared late in what scholars define as the first period of Beethoven's career, just a year or two before the crisis brought about by his gradual loss of hearing. By the mid-1790s, Beethoven had tried most of the important instrumental genres, save for symphony and string quartet. Those were the pieces in which his teacher Haydn had made his greatest mark and enjoyed his most significant successes. When Beethoven did come forward with his first symphonies, he built on the achievements of Haydn and Mozart while not hiding his debt to them. Contemporaries reacted to the work by using the word "masterpiece" repeatedly and praising its "originality

BEETHOVEN

SYMPHONIES NO. 8 AND 1

Ernest Ansermet

conducts the L'ORCHESTRE DE LA SUISSE ROMANDE

SYMPHONY NO. 8

- 1-Allegro vivace e con brio
- 2-Allegretto scherzando
- 3-Tempo di Menuetto
- 4-Allegro vivace

SYMPHONY NO. 1

- 5-Adagio molto – Allegro con brio
- 6-Andante cantabile con moto
- 7-Menuetto: Allegro molto e vivace
- 8-Adagio – Allegro molto e vivace

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