

One of the greatest cellists of the eighteenth century, Boccherini was also a prolific composer, who masterfully incorporated the cello into works representing genres which has traditionally used the cello for harmonic support. While some of Boccherini's cello concertos remained within the technical confines of the late Baroque idiom, several works fully exploit the instrument's technical and sonic capabilities, featuring double stops, the thumb position, and brilliant runs in the highest register. This work is Boccherini's most famous concerto, and it is easy to understand why this work is so popular when one thinks of the sheer beauty of the music. Opening with a concisely effective orchestral introduction, the first movement, with its richly expressive themes, rewards the soloist with a score in which virtuosity is clearly sublimated to create a musical narrative of exceptional elegance and charm. Boccherini allows the soloist to display a rich variety of sonorities, including the cello's entrance chord, as well as the mellifluous legato arpeggiation figure centered on a ostinato open A string. A certain melancholy aura that haunts the first movement blossoms into a poetically phrased lament in the extraordinary second movement. Dispelling the sadness of the second movement, the final movement celebrates the spirit of play, inviting the soloist to delight in a manifestation of lightness and pure energy.

Interestingly, however, this concerto owes much to the nineteenth century German cellist Friedrich Grützmacher, who used the original manuscript to create what some scholars regard as a profoundly altered work in 1895. The first and third movements of this concerto as we know it are, in fact, Grützmacher's amalgamation of Boccherini's original version and the Cello Sonata in B flat major, G. 565. Significantly, the second movement of Grützmacher's version comes from the second movement, without the ritornello, of Boccherini's Cello Concerto in G major, G. 480. The ritornello that Grützmacher includes in this movement is of mysterious origin, possibly his own work. While the musical ideas in this work are undoubtedly Boccherini's, the work may owe much of its popularity to Grützmacher's creative orchestration and phrasing.



CONCERTOS FOR CELLO

Boccherini Concerto For Cello In B-Flat

Vivaldi Concerto For Cello In D

Vivaldi-Bach Concerto For Cello In G

ANTONIO JANIGRO

AND THE SOLISTI DI ZAGREB

Antonio Janigro, the great Italian/Yugoslavian cellist, was born on January 21, 1918, in the via Guido d'Arezzo in Milan. His mother Maria was a professional violinist. Janigro said of himself in a 1988 interview with Oreste Bossini: "I was born into a musical, yet tragic, atmosphere. My father had wanted to be a concert pianist, but had lost his left arm to a sharpshooter in the war."

Janigro studied piano first, starting at the age of six, and then began playing the cello in 1926, when he was eight years old. His father told him, "Either you will be a dedicated artist, worthy of the name, or you will be a mere amateur musician, playing for your own amusement, in which case you will become a barrister like both your grandfathers. You must decide now before it is too late." He was given a cello at that time by Giovanni Berti, who also gave him his first lessons. He fell in love with the cello immediately. In less than a year he had progressed enough to be admitted to the Verdi Conservatory in Milan, where he studied cello with Gilberto Crepax, principal cellist of the La Scala Orchestra.

When he was eleven years old, through the efforts of his mother Nicola, he found the opportunity to play for Pablo Casals (1929). The result was that Casals gave him a recommendation to Alexanian in Paris, who was teaching Casals' classes at the Ecole Normale from 1921 to 1937. Casals wrote: "A brilliant instrumentalist with a fine sense of style, and, I hope, sufficiently determined, he should become a shining exponent of our chosen instrument."

Janigro waited until 1934, when he was sixteen years old, and then moved to study at the Ecole Normale. He lived at the YMCA, and practiced continually for two years. Along with Casals and Alexanian, he came into contact with other great cellists and musicians: Cortot, Thibaud, Paul Dukas, Nadia Boulanger, Stravinsky and others. Dinu Lipatti and Genette Neveu were his fellow students. Janigro fused the best features of the Italian and French schools of cello playing. He was offered a scholarship by the Italian government, but because he was an anti-Fascist, he decided to remain in Paris.

He began a solo career immediately upon graduation (1937), playing in recitals with Dinu Lipatti and Paul Badura-Skoda, the gifted pianist. He often traveled back and forth between Milan and Paris on the railway, and would search for an empty compartment in which to practice his cello. Once while practicing on the train, the door to his compartment opened, and a music agent appeared, and later organized concerts for the gifted young cellist in France. Janigro was an elegant dresser, and constant cigarette smoker.

Janigro's father died in 1939. When World War 2 broke out Janigro was on holiday in Croatia,

and was forced to remain there. Zagreb Conservatory offered him a job as professor of cello and chamber music. This turned out to be providential, in that he founded the school of modern cello playing in Yugoslavia, and also found opportunities for personal development. It was in Zagreb that he met another famous cellist, Rudolf Matz, and together they founded a cello club, and organized two cello "congresses."

After the war he resumed his international career as a soloist, and traveled extensively in South America and the far East. He also formed a successful trio with pianist Paul Badura-Skoda and violinist Jean Fournier. In 1953 he married Neda Nehajev, daughter of a Croatian author, and had two children. In addition to being a great cellist, he was something of a dare-devil, and loved to ski. One year he showed up at a recording session limping, and with one arm in a cast!

Janigro also became well-known as a conductor. In 1954 Radio Zagreb asked him to take charge of its orchestra, and he was soon conducting leading orchestras all over Europe. From the core of the Radio Zagreb Orchestra, he formed the leading chamber orchestra of his nearly 70 recordings were done by Westminster, and Vanguard. The best-known is said to be his performance of Don Quixote in 1959 with Fritz Reiner and the Chicago Symphony, on the RCA Victor label.

Janigro conducted the major symphonies of the world, including Chicago, Boston, Vienna, etc. In 1967, when Janigro was guest conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, he suffered a heart attack, and his health was weakened. He cut back on conducting larger orchestras, and gave up conducting the Angelicum Orchestra in Milan, which he had headed since 1965. However, he continued working with the orchestra of the Saar, and I Solisti, as well as teaching at the Schumann Conservatory in Dusseldorf and at the Stuttgart Hochschule, and Salzburg Mozarteum. Antonio Janigro died on May 1, 1989, in his hometown of Milan, Italy.



CONCERTOS FOR CELLO

ANTONIO JANIGRO

AND THE SOLISTI DI ZAGREB

Concerto For Cello In B-Flat

Luigi Boccherini

- 1 I - Allegro Moderato 9:17
- 2 II - Adagio Non Troppo 5:58
- 3 III - Rondo - Allegro 5:59

Concerto For Cello In D

Antonio Vivaldi

- 4 I - Allegro 2:46
- 5 II - Larghetto 5:07
- 6 III - Allegro 2:31

Concerto For Cello In G

Antonio Vivaldi, Johann Sebastian Bach

- 7 I - Allegro 4:12
- 8 II - Grave 3:14
- 9 III - Presto 2:43

Released by RCA 1960 recorded in England
Transferred from a 15ips 2-track tape