

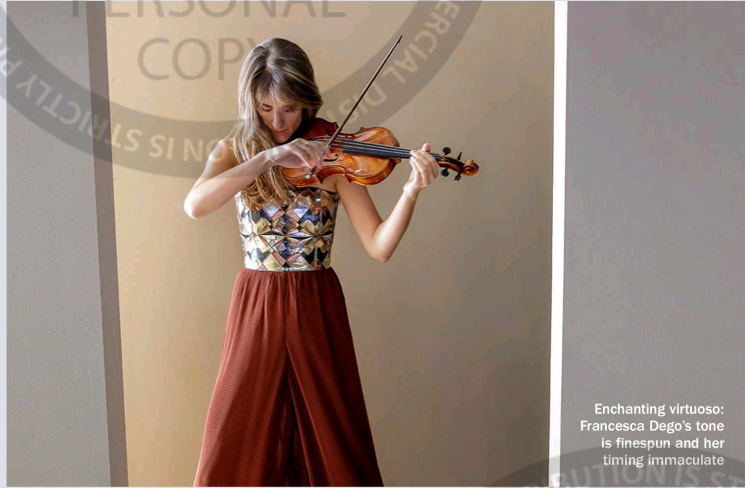
Concerto

CONCERTO CHOICE



Mozart's violin concertos are taken to a new level

Julian Haylock applauds sparkling accounts of three of the best by Francesca Dego and Roger Norrington



Enchanting virtuoso: Francesca Dego's tone is finespun and her timing immaculate

Mozart

Violin Concertos, Vol. 2:

K 207, 211 & 219 'Turkish'

Francesca Dego (violin); Royal Scottish National Orchestra/Roger Norrington

Chandos CHAN 20263 67:55 mins

When considering 'old school' versions of Mozart's violin concertos, Henryk Szeryng's 1960s set for Philips with the National Philharmonic and Alexander Gibson still strikes me as the benchmark recording. Yet listening to Francesca Dego, Roger Norrington and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra responding with microfine nuances of phrasing, articulation and dynamic to Mozart's Salzburg style at its most sparkling and invigorating, takes this music to a whole new level. Dego's finespun tone, exquisite timing and enchanting musical inquisitiveness, not to mention her delightfully spontaneous decorating of musical lines, combine to create an uplifting sense of the music being composed as it goes along.

Once upon a time, violinists were in part defined by their rate of vibrato – even when it occasionally played

havoc with bow contact, they would keep it going to the bitter end (before and after a note had even been sounded). By comparison, Dego uses vibrato sparingly and with absolute precision and finesse. This naturally enhances the range of bow strokes available, and this is where Dego really comes into her own. By deftly varying rates of bow pressure, angle, velocity, points of contact and types of lift, every phrase seems to take on its own unique identity.

Norrington couldn't have wished for a finer recorded swansong

Above all, the solo line interweaves and interacts with the orchestral parts in a way that creates a compelling sense of collegiate music-making. All of

which could have gone for nothing if it wasn't for the RSNO's vibrantly alive, texturally enchanted playing under Norrington's inspired direction, captured in state-of-the-art sound. He could hardly have wished for a finer recorded swansong than this Mozart series.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

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Arnell

Concertino for Piano and Chamber Orchestra; Canzona and Capriccio*; Divertimento No. 1†; Symphony for Strings; Divertimento Concertante**

*Sergey Levitin (violin), **Aleksей Kiseliov (cello), †Victor Sangiorgio (piano); English Chamber Orchestra/Martin Yates

Dutton CDLX 7400 (CD/SACD) 81:46 mins



Richard Arnell (1917-2009) played a useful role in many branches of music and the cinema.

This album of premiere recordings spans his time as a student at the Royal College, as a popular denizen of New York's Greenwich Village and as professor of composition at Trinity College of Music.

Arnell recalled that for his student self in 1939 'symphonies were archaic. Orchestral works should be short, preferably in one movement'. So it's ironic that the most successful piece here is his *Symphony for Strings*, a sinewy, three-movement work written in that self-same year. The opening *Allegro moderato* evokes neo-classical Stravinsky, while the 'Intermezzo' is a lovely exercise in sustained lyrical beauty, and the concluding *Andante maestoso* has compellingly powerful drive.

Everything on this recording has an engaging freshness – particularly the piano writing – and the orchestrations are tightly-woven tapestries of sound and texture; the piano, violin and cello soloists are all outstanding. *Michael Church*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

CPE Bach

Flute Concertos; in D minor, Wq. 22; in A minor, Wq. 166; in G, Wq. 169

Rune Most (flute); Danish Sinfonietta; Randers Chamber Orchestra/David Riddell

Bridge BRIDGE 9565 73:30 mins



Although Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach was employed for 28 years at the court of flautist

Frederick the Great, the King assigned other composers with the task of supplying him with copious

DAVID GERANT