



DVOŘÁK

Concerto for Cello
& Orchestra in B minor

TCHAIKOVSKY
ARENISKY
DAVÍDOV

CHANNEL CLASSICS

CCS 8695

violoncello

Pieter
Wispelwey

Netherlands
Philharmonic
Orchestra

Lawrence
RENES conductor

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& Orchestra in B minor*

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**Pieter
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*violoncello
(anonymus french ± 1860)*

**Netherlands
Philharmonic
Orchestra**

**Lawrence
RENES**

conductor

Paolo Giacometti

harmonium
(De Bain, ca. 1870)
piano**
(Blüthner, ca. 1890)*

PYOTR IL'YICH TCHAIKOVSKY (1840-1893)

1. Andante cantabile, opus 11
transcription from string quartet nr. 1 in D* 06.50
(gut strings, con sordino)

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841-1904)

Concerto for Cello & Orchestra in B minor
opus 104 (1894/95)

2. Allegro 14.26
3. Adagio ma non troppo 11.23
4. Finale, Allegro moderato 11.57

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

5. Rondo in G minor, opus 94 (1893)** 07.04
(gut strings)

ANTON ARENSKY (1861-1906)

6. Chant Triste, opus 56 nr. 3 * 04.22
(gut strings)

KARL DAVĪDOV (1838-1889)

7. Am Springbrunnen, opus 20 nr. 2** 03.43
(gut strings)

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

8. Waldesruhe (Klid / Silent Woods), transcription
from the series Ze Šumavy (From the
Bohemian Forests), opus 68 nr. 5 (1883/84)* 05.18
(gut strings)

TOTAL TIME 66.00

*Recording location:
Live: Concertgebouw, Amsterdam
10-14 December 1995
Renswoude, The Netherlands
8-10 November 1995*



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Pieter Wispelwey
photo: Ruud Emmerich

Pieter Wispelwey is one of the first of a generation of generalist specialists, performing equally outstandingly on historical instruments as on modern instruments, based on and inspired by expert stylistical knowledge, highly original and deep musical understanding and superior technique. His repertoire ranges from works by J. S. Bach to Elliott Carter, Kagel, Schnittke and young contemporary composers.

Pieter Wispelwey was awarded the Elisabeth Everts Prize, an award given biennially to the Netherlands most promising musician in 1985. In 1992 Wispelwey received as first cellist the highly prestigious Netherlands Music Prize. For many years he has given complete, widely acclaimed, performances of the suites for cello solo by J. S. Bach and Britten and the sonatas by Beethoven and Brahms, on period as well as on modern instruments.

Pieter Wispelwey is a regularly returning guest in the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, performing the baroque, classical, romantic and modern repertoire. In 1995 he appeared in recital a.o. in Hamburg, Leipzig, Düsseldorf, London, Brussels, Colmar, Saintes, Mulhouse, Sidney, Boston, Washington, Montréal and Québec. In 1996 he is scheduled for concerts in Paris, Nantes, Marseille, Nice, Rome, Florence, Milan, Vienna, Salzburg, Hamburg, Bonn, Bremen, Antwerp, Bruges, Seoul, Hong Kong, Beijing, Shanghai, Jakarta, London, Washington, Chicago, Québec, Montréal a.o.

Pieter Wispelwey received his early training from Dicky Boeke and Anner Bijlsma in Amsterdam and continued his studies with Paul Katz (Rochester, USA) and with William



photo: Marco Borggreve

Pleeth in England. The vast sonata repertoire for cello and piano he performs with several outstanding (forte)pianists: Robert Levin and Paolo Giacometti.

Wispelwey performs regularly as a soloist with orchestra and has recently played concertos by Dvořák, Elgar, Tchaikovski, Shostakovitch (1 & 2), Dutilleux, Ibert, Schnittke, Haydn, Beethoven (triple), Brahms (double), performing a.o. in the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam and with the Dutch and German Radio Chamber and Philharmonic Orchestras, the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra from Amsterdam, the Philharmonic Ungarica, the Netherlands Wind Ensemble, the Moscow Chamber Orchestra, the Westdeutsche Sinfonia, the Stuttgarter Chamber Orchestra and Florilegium (London). In 1995 he made a highly successful tour of Australia with ABC Orchestras.

His CD's with all Bach suites, Beethoven and Brahms Sonatas all received wide acclaim in the international press, several received international and national awards. Coming years he will continue recording the major Sonata and Concerto repertory exclusively for Channel Classics.



The young Dutch conductor **Lawrence Renes** (1970) studied violin at the Sweelinck Conservatory in Amsterdam and conducting with Ed Spanjaard and Jac. van Steen at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague. He graduated with distinction in July 1993. He made his professional debut in January 1992, when he conducted the Philharmonic Orchestra of Gran Canaria. In August 1992 Mr. Renes was one of the finalists at the International Conductor's Masterclass of Dutch Radio. After conducting the Dutch Radio Symphony Orchestra at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, which was broadcasted by television, he was awarded First Prize. This included a guest conductorship with the Symphony Orchestra Kanazawa in Japan.

In November 1992 he was awarded the prestigious 'Elisabeth Everts Prize'. That same month he had to step in on short notice conducting the Zagreb Philharmonic on its tour in Holland. Immediately after his second appearance with the orchestra in Zagreb, he was appointed regular guest conductor.

Recently, Lawrence Renes has been appointed assistant to Edo de Waart at the Dutch Broadcasting Corporation.

March 1995, Lawrence Renes had great success with the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra, unexpectedly followed by 2 concerts with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra at one days' notice: Bartók's concerto for orchestra and Strauss' Ein Heldenleben, which were fantastically well received by both press and Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra.

The **Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra** is a resident company of four important music centres in the Netherlands: the Concertgebouw, Muziektheater and Beurs van Berlage in Amsterdam, and Muziekcentrum Vredenburg in Utrecht. The foundation Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra consists of two basic permanent ensembles, symphony orchestra and chamber orchestra, that together perform about 120 concerts per season, of which 55 in the Amsterdam Concertgebouw.

Furthermore the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra accompanies most of the performances of De Nederlandse Opera (the Netherlands Opera) in the Muziektheater in Amsterdam.

Because of its wide and varied tasks the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra is the most versatile orchestra in Holland, performing for over 250.000 visitors per season.

The Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra consists of 145 musicians, divided over symphony orchestra and chamber orchestra, and is therefore the largest orchestral organisation in Holland, fully subsidized by the Ministry of Culture. The Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra evolved in 1985 out of the merger of three orchestras: Amsterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Utrecht Symphony Orchestra and Netherlands Chamber Orchestra. Each of these three orchestras had a glorious past.

With the objective of reaching the highest possible level, the new Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra took a new course as of 1st September 1985, both organizational and artistic. After Harmut Haenchen, born in Dresden (Germany), was appointed principal conductor as of 1st October 1986, the development of the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra gained momentum. The orchestra made several concerttours to different European countries and received invitations for tours in and outside Europe for the coming seasons. In March 1994 the orchestra made a concerttour to Japan.

The Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra is established in Amsterdam, in the famous Beurs van Berlage. In this monumental building in the heart of the capital the orchestra disposes of its own halls, the Yakult Hall and the AGA Hall (completely made of glass) where the orchestra rehearses and performs regularly, although most of the symphonic concerts take place in the large hall of the Amsterdam Concertgebouw.

The orchestra's main sponsor is Yakult.

Paolo Giacometti, born in Milan (1970), studied with Jan Wijn at the Amsterdam Sweelinck Conservatory, where he was awarded his solo performer's diploma with honors in 1995.

In 1987 he received the First Prize at the Dutch National Steinway Competition, in 1990 the German Parke-Davis-Förderpreis, in 1992 the Second Prize at the 5th International Brahms Competition in Hamburg and in 1995 he got the First Prize at the Postbank Sweelinck Competition in Amsterdam.

He participated in masterclasses of famous teachers and performers such as Sandor, Kämmerling, Bucquet, Berman and Sebök and gave recitals in Holland, Germany, France and Italy.



photo: Foto Kustermins

Within the realm of instrumental music, the romantic solo concerto is the little brother of its big sister, the opera. It is a genre unmistakably more theatrical than the symphony or any type of chamber music. Its name implies spectacle, conflict, and strong contrasts. The world of opera is much the same: dying heroes speak their farewells in the language of bel canto, and emotions are magnified to such vast proportions that they cannot be misunderstood by anyone in the furthest reaches of the theatre, in the back rows of the balcony and the most remote galleries. At the same time, both the solo concerto and opera are more concrete and human than the abstracter genres. Magic is sometimes achieved in the greatest operas when the explicitly stated still allows the suggestion of an additional dimension. Measured by that criterion, Dvořák's cello concerto is a successful solo concerto.

I find it intriguing and particularly sympathetic that the concerto's most important extra dimensions are its warm humanity and unpretentious simplicity. The lyrical passages give us moments of visionary intensity, but above all they are characterised by great purity. The heroic moments are not aggressive, but rather sparkling, lively, and filled with vigor. Intimacy blossoms in the numerous pastoral and picturesque passages, and the festive scenes are enlivened with the sound of the triangle.

In the five additional pieces I wanted to maintain the Slavic atmosphere, but above all, I wanted to emphasize the quality of musicianly craftsmanship. The most evocative piece of the five, the Tchaikovsky, seemed to me most suitable as a kind of anticipatory upbeat to the concerto.

My use of the harmonium was an intuitive choice; in the 19th century it was a beloved substitute at parties and celebrations for orchestra, dulcimer, or piano, and used in combination with them as well. It was also taken seriously in its own right by composers such as Liszt and Dvořák (and they probably appreciated its presence at those same parties). When we were making the recording, the instrument exceeded my expectations with its evocative powers in 'Walderruhe' and the Russian orthodox dimension which it

lent to the Tchaikovsky. In conclusion, these pieces, as well as the 'Chant Triste' and 'Am Springbrunnen', in all their simplicity, are for me part of the same ground in which the cello concerto is rooted. I am sure that Dvořák himself would never have looked down on their undisguised 'Spiefreude'.

Pieter Wispelwey

On 8 November 1894, far from home in the United States, the Czech composer **Antonín Dvořák** (1841-1904) set down the first notes of his *Cello concerto in b minor*, opus 104. He completed the work on 9 February 1895. Meanwhile he had already been in America for well over two years as the director of the New York Conservatory. During this overseas adventure, Dvořák produced a number of his masterpieces, including his Ninth 'New World' Symphony. A deep longing for his native land can be heard in many of these works, including the Cello concerto, which contains allusions to several Bohemian folk melodies. Dvořák himself complained that composing in America was more difficult for him than in his beloved Vysoká.

The choice of violoncello as the solo instrument was not really an obvious one for Dvořák. He had considerable reservations about the 'nasal sound of the high notes' and the 'rather droning dark sound of the bass'. He was also concerned about the balance between cello and orchestra, a problem which he certainly did not underestimate. Except for a relatively uninteresting youthful composition and two smaller works, he had not previously used the cello as a solo instrument, although it was given a grateful role in his chamber music. With these precedents it is no cause for surprise that Dvořák 'interwove' the solo cello part with the orchestra, in the same way that instrumental solos in chamber music can melt into and combine with the accompanying voices. In the same context, it is equally unsurprising that some listeners have referred to the Cello concerto as 'Dvořák's Tenth Symphony' because of the perfect unity of solo part and orchestra. Dvořák is reported to have heard Victor Herbert's 'Second Cello Concerto' (opus 30) with the New York Philharmonic in the

spring of 1894, and this performance is supposed to have won him over to the idea of the cello as a solo instrument.

In the spring of 1895, not long after his return to Prague, Dvořák heard of the death of his beloved sister-in-law, Josefina Kounicová. Her favorite composition was Dvořák's song, 'Leave me alone', opus 82 nr. 1. He had already made use of this theme in the slow movement of the Cello concerto. Now he decided to extend the coda of the closing movement with a reminiscence of the same theme, as a last gesture of respect to Josefina, to whom he was deeply attached.

Dvořák's frequent choice of the cello's highest register for melodic lines makes the concerto a perilous undertaking for the soloist. The part demands an unusually reliable technique as well as great expressivity. But this last quality is not confined to the solo part, for Dvořák has also endowed the orchestral parts with unusual expressivity. Even more than in his concerti for violin (opus 53) and piano (opus 33), he has given an important role to the winds, particularly the clarinet and horn.

In Bohemia, Dvořák had occasionally collaborated in chamber music performances with his friend, the cellist Hanuš Wihan. Wihan is also supposed to have been one of the people who encouraged Dvořák to compose a cello concerto. The composer dedicated the concerto to his friend Wihan, giving him permission to supervise the publication of the solo part. Wihan, however, wanted to introduce a considerable number of changes into the score, and wrote a cadenza (which Dvořák did not appreciate at all) for the last movement, at which point the composer notified his publisher, Simrock, that no one, including his esteemed friend Wihan, was to alter anything in the score.

The Cello concerto had its premiere in London on 19 March 1896. The soloist was not Wihan, but Leo Stern; Dvořák himself conducted the Royal Philharmonic Society. This changing of the guard was not in any way due to a dispute between the composer and the dedicatee, but merely to Wihan's unavailability on the date of the concert. After its premiere, the Cello concerto would go from one triumph to the next all over the world.

In 1891, Dvořák offered Wihan two short pieces with piano accompaniment. He orchestrated both of them two years later. One was a *Rondo in g minor* and the other was entitled *Klid (Silent Woods/ Waldesruhe)*, a transcription from the series 'Ze Šumavy' (From the Bohemian Forests), opus 68, 1883-1884. The latter piece evokes the mysterious atmosphere of the untouched Bohemian forest at twilight.

Cellist Peter Wispelwey's choice of the harmonium for the accompaniment instead of the piano is based on the frequent replacement of the piano by the harmonium in the late 19th century.

Annemiek IJsselmuiden
Translation: David Shapero

PIETER WISPELWEY, violoncello
NETHERLANDS PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
LAWRENCE RENES, conductor

Paolo Giacometti, harmonium*/ piano**

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