

Bach - Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin (Szeryng) [1965]

Written by bluesever

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CD1 1. Sonata I in G Minor: (1) Adagio (04:24) 2. Sonata I in G Minor: (2) Fuga. Allegro (05:47) 3. Sonata I in G Minor: (3) Siciliano (03:30) 4. Sonata I in G Minor: (4) Presto (02:49) 5. Partita I in B Minor: (1) Allemande (04:58) 6. Partita I in B Minor: (2) Double (02:13) 7. Partita I in B Minor: (3) Courante (02:20) 8. Partita I in B Minor: (4) Double. Presto (02:58) 9. Partita I in B Minor: (5) Sarabande (02:35) 10. Partita I in B Minor: (6) Double (01:31) 11. Partita I in B Minor: (7) Tempo di Bouree (02:28) 12. Partita I in B Minor: (8) Double (02:15) 13. Sonata II in A Minor: (1) Grave (04:23) 14. Sonata II in A Minor: (2) Fuga (08:12) 15. Sonata II in A Minor: (3) Andante (05:15) 16. Sonata II in A Minor: (4) Allegro (04:26) CD2 1. Partita no. 2 in D minor (BWV 1004) - Allemanda (03:17) 2. Partita no. 2 (BWV 1004) - Corrente (02:22) 3. Partita no. 2 (BWV 1004) - Sarabanda (04:20) 4. Partita no. 2 (BWV 1004) - Gigue (03:31) 5. Partita no. 2 (BWV 1004) - Chaconne (14:33) 6. Sonata no. 3 in C major (BWV 1005) - Adagio (04:45) 7. Sonata no. 3 (BWV 1005) - Fugue: Allabreve (11:29) 8. Sonata no. 3 (BWV 1005) - Largo (04:01) 9. Sonata no. 3 (BWV 1005) - Allegro assai (04:10) 10. Partita no. 3 in E major (BWV 1006) - Prelude (04:05) 11. Partita no. 3 (BWV 1006) - Loure (03:28) 12. Partita no. 3 (BWV 1006) - Gavotte & Rondo (03:11) 13. Partita no. 3 (BWV 1006) - Menuet I & II (02:34) 14. Partita no. 3 (BWV 1006) - Bouree (01:13) 15. Partita no. 3 (BWV 1006) - Gigue (01:30)
Henryk Szeryng - violin

Henryk Szeryng's recording of the Bach Solo Sonatas and Partitas for Violin is perhaps not the greatest of the recordings of these pieces, but they are certainly one of the best. It is his approach to them, one of great respect and love for Bach's music, that makes them so beautiful. Not only is Szeryng a wonderful violinist in his own right, but he is an artist in a class of artists that no longer exists today; at least the majority of what people call artists today are not artists but rather performers, and sometimes sadly nothing more than entertainers.

One of the overlying principles in his disciplined approach -- and it is the great discipline of achieving technical mastery that then makes it possible to transcend to the level of artistry -- is

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his letting of the music speak for itself. Someone once brilliantly pointed out that in approaching and interpreting a piece of music -- and for that matter the text to a play -- one must realize that the piece in its objectivity will always be greater than what the performer will be able to do with it. It is this element in Szeryng's playing of these pieces that make his Bach so wonderful. It is the fact that he regards this truth of a piece's objective greatness in his interpretation that make it possible for someone to say that one or another performance of his was better or worse than another. In other words, quite generally speaking, when we say that a performance was good we should not be so concerned with the technical merits of the performer -- although they are highly and fundamentally important, for true artistry only flourishes when the technique is so masterful that it allows the performer to transcend the technical into the artistic -- but rather with the way in which he deals with the piece's objective beauty; the way in which he puts his own mark on the music, whether it be overbearing or appropriate.

The greatness of Szeryng's Bach lies in that he lets the music speak for itself while still leaving his undeniable mark on the it. That is true artistry! And it is, as I wrote above, only with a great love and respect for the music that this is possible. Mozart said that artistic genius was not intellectual ability or great creativity, not even a combination of both, but rather "love, love, love is the soul of genius." --- John Henry Crosby, jsbach.org

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