

Jascha Heifetz - Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco Howard Ferguson Karen Khachaturian Françaix (1989)



Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco - Concerto for violin & orchestra No. 2 "I Profeti", Op. 66 1. *Grave E Meditative 'Isaiah'* 2. *Espressivo E Dolente 'Jeremiah'* 3. *Fiero E Impetuoso (Ma Sostenuto E Ben Marcato Il Ritmo) 'Elijah'*

Howard Ferguson - Sonata for violin, No. 1, Op. 2

4. *Molto Moderato* 5. *Allegro Furioso* 6. *Quasi Fant*

Jean Françaix - Trio for violin, viola & cello in C

7. *Allegretto Vivo* 8. *Scherzo: Vivo* 9. *Andante* 10. *Rondo: Vivo*

Karen Khachaturian - Sonata for violin & piano in G minor, Op. 1

11. *Allegro* 12. *Andante* 13. *Presto*

Jascha Heifetz, violin Joseph de Pasquale, viola (3rd work) Gregor Piatigorsky, violoncello (3rd work) Lillian Steuber, piano (2nd, 4th works) Los Angeles Philharmonic Alfred Wallenstein, conductor

We come now to more modern fare, and firstly to a very colourful, immediately enjoyable work in Castelnuovo-Tedesco's Second Violin Concerto, written for Heifetz in 1933. This work is sub-titled *I profeti* ("The Prophets") and the names of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Elijah head its three movements. Heifetz clearly relishes the score's attractive lyricism, and Wallenstein's conducting is full of personality too. The 1954 stereo recording is more than adequate. Howard Ferguson wrote his First Violin Sonata in 1931, when he was 23. This is a gently flowing, somewhat reflective piece, apart from a brief central *Allegro furioso* movement, to which Heifetz responds with alacrity. Elsewhere his rather sharp-toned, virtuoso approach tends to be somewhat at odds with the work's nature, and a rather close 1966 recording does not help. He is more suited to the early Sonata of Karen Khachaturian, who is Aram Khachaturian's nephew. On the evidence of this work, like his uncle, Karen writes in an outgoing, vigorous, uncomplicated style, which Heifetz plays in a cheerful, extrovert fashion. The recording was made at the same sessions as the Ferguson sonata. Françaix's String Trio is a typically brief, slight, but cleverly written piece, and here Heifetz and his two colleagues relax to give a delightfully spry, pithy performance, which is matched with a good 1964 recording. . . .

Written by bluesever

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Heifetz was without doubt a uniquely gifted artist. It has been a very rich experience for me to explore these five discs, and I can do no more than give them the highest possible recommendation. -- Gramophone, arkivmusic.com

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