

## Schumann - Piano Concerto • Violin Concerto (1994)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 54: Allegro affettuoso - Andante espressivo - Allegro*
2. *Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 54: Intermezzo - Andante grazioso*
3. *Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 54: Allegro vivace*
4. *Violin Concerto in D minor, WoO 23: In kraftigem, nich zu schnellen tempo*
5. *Violin Concerto in D minor, WoO 23: Langsam*
6. *Violin Concerto in D minor, WoO 23: Moderato*

Martha Argerich – piano

Gidon Kremer – violin

Chamber Orchestra Of Europe

Nikolaus Harnoncourt – conductor

Though many amusing anecdotes and curious stories surround many of Robert Schumann's compositions, perhaps none is so entertaining as the mystical version of events surrounding his violin concerto. Schumann completed the concerto in 1853, the year before his suicide attempt and eventual commitment to a sanatorium. Still, the concerto's dedicatee, Joseph Joachim, thought the music to have been inspired by a mad mind and stashed the concerto away unpublished and unplayed. Not until after a séance almost a century later was the emotionally sophisticated and fulfilling concerto finally brought to the public. No such whimsy is associated with the Op. 54 Piano Concerto, which has endured as a cornerstone of the repertoire since its 1846 debut. This Apex album is a reissue of a live 1992 performance of pianist Martha Argerich and a live 1994 performance of violinist Gidon Kremer, both accompanied by Nikolaus Harnoncourt and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. For both Kremer and Argerich, these are performances that are absolutely deserving of reissue. Argerich's playing is powerful and brilliantly energetic, providing sharp, gripping contrasts between elegant melody and brash chordal sections. Kremer's performance, while perhaps not as revolutionary as some of his interpretations, is every bit as technically pristine and musically insightful. What both artists

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share is sensational ability to grab a listener's attention and hold us rapt. Harnoncourt and the COE provide a sensitive but robust backdrop and Apex's sound is rich and clear. ---Mike D. Brownell, Rovi

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