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VOLUME 2



JOHANNES BRAHMS
CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN AND CELLO, OP.102


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J. BRAHMS - CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN AND CELLO, OP.102

Il *Doppio Concerto* per violino e violoncello trae origine, singolarmente, da una circostanza occasionale; anche se ascrivibile non ai doveri mondani del compositore ma alle vicissitudini della sua vita privata. Nel 1881 - diversi anni prima della creazione del *Concerto* - Brahms giunse a una profonda rottura con Joseph Joachim, il violinista con il quale aveva un antico sodalizio artistico e di amicizia, e al quale aveva dedicato, nel 1878, il *Concerto per violino op. 77*. Testimone delle agitate vicende del matrimonio di Joachim, il compositore si era schierato apertamente a favore della moglie del violinista, suscitando il risentimento di quest'ultimo. Il *Doppio Concerto*, nato nell'estate 1887 sulle rive del lago Thun, fu pensato come omaggio all'amico, e come messaggio di completa riconciliazione; tanto che Brahms convogliò in questa composizione il materiale che aveva concepito, in origine, per una *Quinta Sinfonia*. Una prima esecuzione "privata" avvenne il 23 settembre dello stesso anno a Baden, con la partecipazione, come direttore, dello stesso autore e, come solisti, di Joachim e di Robert Hausmann (violoncellista del celebrato Quartetto Joachim). Neanche un mese più tardi, il 18 ottobre a Colonia, aveva luogo l'autentica *prémère*, accolta non senza perplessità. L'occasionalità della genesi del brano non sembra aver lasciato tracce sul contenuto musicale, che mostra lo stile più maturo dell'autore. Il *Doppio* è infatti non solo l'ultimo Concerto, ma l'ultima opera sinfonica in assoluto composta da Brahms. La scelta della destinazione solistica polistrumentale - desueta per tutto l'Ottocento - appare singolare, e si riflette in soluzioni stilistiche piuttosto differenti rispetto a quelle dei precedenti lavori sinfonici. La tendenza alla severità formale, ispirata a un classicismo stilizzato, viene stemperata dalla complessità della scrittura polifonica, dalle contrapposizioni frontali fra solisti e orchestra, dagli interventi cadenzali, che rimandano piuttosto a un modello "aggiornato"

di Concerto grosso. Eppure proprio l'essenzialità di tratto, la sobrietà riconducibile agli schemi classici, hanno attirato forti critiche sul *Doppio Concerto*, a partire da quelle di un sincero ammiratore di Brahms come Eduard Hanslick, secondo il quale il lavoro sarebbe «più scritto che ispirato». Del tutto anomalo è l'attacco del drammatico *Allegro* iniziale, che vede rigidamente alternati gli interventi orchestrali (con l'intonazione dei due contrastanti temi principali) e due sezioni cadenzali dei solisti (prima violoncello solo, poi entrambi); è solo dopo questo avvio che troviamo un grande "tutti" orchestrale, e l'inizio della vera e propria sezione dell'esposizione. Il prosieguo del movimento (con un ampio e complesso sviluppo, una riesposizione piuttosto testuale e una densa coda) mostra la stessa logica di contrasti: ai massicci interventi orchestrali si oppongono violino e violoncello, impegnati in solidali intrecci polifonici. L'*Andante* esibisce la vena lirica del compositore; dopo brevi e interrogativi incisi dei fiati, violino e violoncello intonano in ottave una ampia melodia cantabile; la sezione centrale vede l'alternanza di due distinti motivi; una cadenza dei solisti conduce alla ripresa e a una coda in cui le differenti idee vengono sovrapposte. Di impostazione brillante ed umoristica è il *Finale*, in cui, al posto della netta dialettica del movimento iniziale, troviamo un limpido dialogo e uno stretto intreccio fra solisti e orchestra. Si tratta di un Rondò dal *refrain* ritmicamente animato e dagli episodi piuttosto eterogenei; Brahms non manca di farvi apparire i prediletti motivi di ascendenza gitana. E proprio su questo movimento si sono appuntate le perplessità dei commentatori, per una presunta scarsa inventiva tematica. Ma è l'essenza dell'ultimo Brahms che si muove verso un preciso obiettivo, celebrato al massimo in questo finale: trarre il massimo da un materiale di base quanto più essenziale possibile.

Arrigo Quattrocchi

JOSEF SUK



Josef Suk Dopo avere finito le scuole superiori nel 1945 venne ammesso al Conservatorio di Praga, dove i suoi insegnanti furono Jaroslav Kocián, Norbert Kubát and Karel Šnebergr. Il più importante di tutti questi insegnanti fu Jaroslav Kocián, che iniziò ad insegnargli privatamente il violino, quando Josef aveva sette anni. Sotto la sua guida fece impressionanti progressi sia dal punto di vista interpretativo, sia ereditando,

del suo maestro, la tecnica, l'intonazione e la qualità del suono. Durante i suoi studi nel 1949 Josef Suk fu inviato a Parigi e Bruxelles dove rappresentò, con grande successo, la nuova generazione di violinisti cechi. Dopo avere lasciato il Conservatorio di Praga egli passò quattro anni presso l'Accademia delle Arti dello Spettacolo in Praga con i professori Marie Hlouňová and Alexandr Plocek. Tuttavia prima di terminare i suoi studi fu sospeso per ragioni politiche. Come lui stesso racconta a quel tempo l'Accademia delle Arti dello Spettacolo era contemporaneamente una scuola politica e militare. Il pretesto furono le sue reiterate proteste perché venivano obbligati ad esercitazioni in trincea. Le sue dita ne soffrivano e poiché voleva essere un musicista e non un soldato, molte volte si oppose a queste esercitazioni. Questo fu il motivo per cui, dopo quattro anni poco prima dell'esame finale, fu inviato alla divisione militare di Košice per punizione. All'ultimo minuto la sua salvezza fu entrare nella Compagnia Militare Artistica, dove passò i due anni di militare suonando il violino. Lo stesso Suk racconta della sua vita artistica: "fino dall'inizio dei miei studi musicali, quando mio padre mi diede il primo violino, grandi aspettative caddero su di me. Io non ero sicuro di potere soddisfare i desideri e le aspettative dei miei genitori e di mio nonno. Il grande peso delle tradizioni musicali di famiglia ha gravato su tutta la mia carriera artistica. Talune volte questo mi ha aperto molte porte e alcune strade, ma dall'altra parte ha rappresentato per me un grandissimo ed in incurabile stress". Tra il 1950 il 1952 è stato primo violino del quartetto di Praga dal 1953 al 1955 primo violino dell'Orchestra dell'Opera Nazionale di Praga e dal 1957 solista della Compagnia Artistica dell'Esercito. Il suo primo significativo successo è stato un recital a Praga il 6 novembre del 1954. Appena poco tempo dopo George Szello lo invita negli Stati Uniti per suonare in veste di solista con la

ANDRÈ NAVARRA

Cleveland Orchestra. Nel 1958 si esibì in Germania, Olanda, Romania e successivamente anche in Belgio e in Francia. Nel 1960 gli fu prestato un violino di Antonio Stradivari chiamato Duc de Camposelice, costruito nel 1710, appartenuto al violinista Váša Příhoda, che lo donò al governo cecoslovacco poco tempo prima di morire. Joseph suonò anche lo Stradivari Libon e il Principe di Orange, violino costruito da Giuseppe Guarneri del Gesù. Nel 1960 fu nominato Violino solista della Filarmonica Ceca, con la quale effettuò numerose tournée e recital. Collaborò e fece molte registrazioni con le migliori orchestre del mondo e i migliori direttori ed interpreti del suo tempo. Ho vinto numerosi premi per queste registrazioni come il Grand Prix du disque per la sonata di Debussy e di Janacek, per il Dumky Trio di Dvořák con Jan Panenka e Miloš Sádlo e per l'integrale dei Concerti per violino e orchestra di Mozart con l'Orchestra da Camera di Praga. La sua arte violinistica era caratterizzata da un suono rotondo e particolarmente ricco, da un'intonazione cristallina e un'interpretazione aderente al testo. Tra il 1979 e il 1986 è stato docente presso l'Accademia Musicale di Vienna. A fianco della sua carriera solistica, si è anche dedicato alla musica da camera. Come studente ha fatto parte del quartetto di Praga, ha fondato il trio Suk, con il quale si è esibito sia in patria che all'estero e con il quale ha effettuato numerose registrazioni. Tra le opere integrali registrate ricordiamo: l'intera collezione delle sonate per violino e pianoforte di Beethoven, Brahms e Shostakovich, con il pianista Jan Panenka. Con la clavicembalista Susanna Růžičková dopo molti concerti hanno effettuato registrazioni delle Sonate di Bach ed Händel. Nel 1974 come commemorazione per i 100 anni della nascita di suo nonno, ha fondato la "Suk Chamber Orchestra" di cui è stato violino solista e che ha diretto fino agli anni 2000.



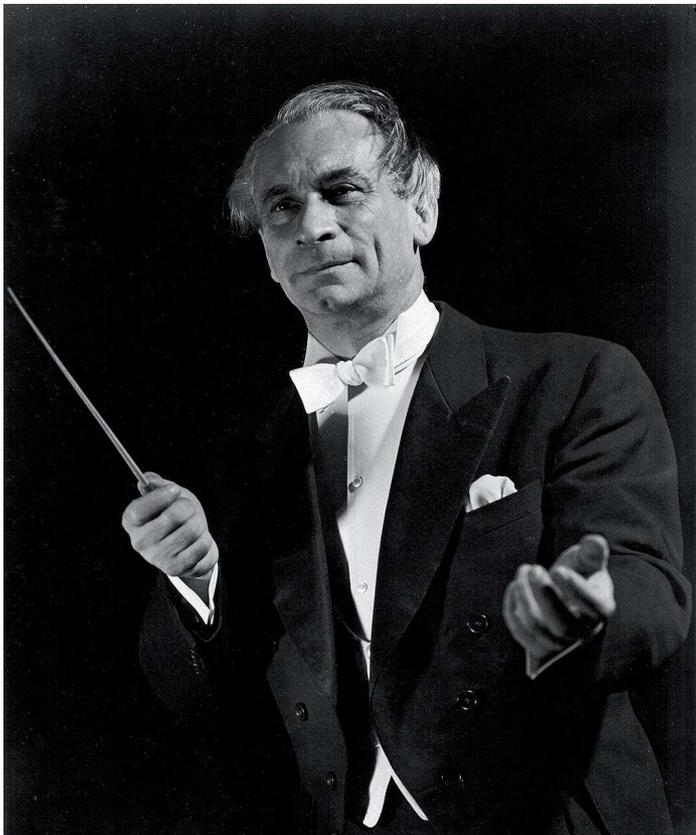
Andrè Navarra nacque in una famiglia di musicisti, il padre era un contrabbassista di origini italiane. I suoi genitori ancor prima di impostarlo su uno strumento, decisero di prepararlo per la musica insegnandogli la teoria musicale e scegliendo come strumento il violoncello intorno alle età di sette anni. Due anni più tardi entra nel Conservatorio di Tolosa come studente della classe di violoncello e si diploma nel 1924 alle età di 13 anni, ottenendo il primo premio di merito. Continua successivamente i suoi studi presso il conservatorio di Parigi,

studiando violoncello con Jules Leopold Loeb e musica da camera con Charles Tournemire. Si diploma due anni più tardi alle età di 15 anni ancora vincendo il primo premio quale miglior allievo. Dopo aver terminato i suoi studi al Conservatorio di Parigi, Navarra smise di prendere lezioni o di frequentare corsi di perfezionamento, cosa piuttosto inusuale per un solista del suo livello. Al contrario egli lavorò da solo, come autodidatta, organizzando un metodo alternativo da lui da lui stesso progettato. Questo nuovo percorso prevedeva molte trascrizioni dei metodi di tecnica violinistica e questo, nel suo progetto, era dato dal fatto che volesse sopperire alla mancanza di appropriati studi per violoncello. Queste trascrizioni prevedevano tra l'altro opere di Carl Flesch e Otakar Ševčík. Navarra durante questo periodo di auto apprendimento rimane a Parigi e in questa città piena di opportunità incontra molti musicisti e li osserva durante le loro esibizioni soprattutto il celebre violoncellista Emanuel Feuermann, il pianista Alfred Cortot e il violinista Jaques Thibaud. André Navarra entrò in contatto e intrattenne rapporti di grande amicizia anche con molti compositori quali Jacques Ibert, Florent Schmitt, Arthur Honeger. Pablo Casals, non molto tempo dopo, diventò suo mentore grazie ai meriti artistici maturati.

Nel 1929, alle età di 18 anni, divenne membro del quartetto Krettly Quartet, con loro rimase nei successivi sette anni. Fece anche parte dell'Ensemble chiamato B.B.N. Trio con il pianista Joseph Benvenuti e il violinista René Benedetti. Due anni più tardi fa il suo debutto come solista con l'orchestra Colonne di Parigi, eseguendo il concerto per violoncello e orchestra di Eduard Lalò. Nel 1933 diventa violoncello solista dell'orchestra dell'Opéra di Parigi, nonostante continuasse a esibirsi come solista con varie orchestre europee. Durante questi anni André Navarra aveva una eccezionale forma fisica. Il suo sport preferito era il nuoto, ma praticò anche la boxe. Egli

mantenne questo fisico particolarmente tarchiato e robusto anche in età matura, sostenendo che questo era l'ideale per un violoncellista poiché permetteva di dominare uno strumento particolarmente faticoso, anche se relativamente grande. André Navarra continua lentamente a stabilizzare la sua carriera fino all'inizio degli anni '30 ricevendo il maggior impulso nel 1937 quando vince il primo premio al concorso internazionale di Vienna. Tuttavia la sua carriera viene bruscamente interrotta dallo scoppio della seconda guerra mondiale. Durante questo periodo abbandona completamente la musica per servire il suo paese, arruolandosi nella fanteria dell'esercito francese. Dopo la fine della guerra e un periodo di rieducazione delle sue abilità strumentali, André Navarra riprende la sua carriera violoncellistica. Nel 1949 diventa professore presso il Conservatorio di Parigi come successore di Pierre Fournier, mentre molto intensamente continua le sue tournée negli Stati Uniti, in Europa, in Asia e nell'Unione Sovietica, suonando con i maggiori direttori d'orchestra della sua epoca. Nel suo vasto repertorio hanno trovato posto prime mondiali di concerti scritti appositamente per lui. Tra questi il concerto di André Jolivet, che fu registrato in prima assoluta per Erato. Egli registrò anche il concerto di Elgar diretto da Sir John Barbirolli, che fu particolarmente ben accolto dalla critica e il Concerto di Antonín Dvořák con la New Symphony Orchestra of London diretta da Rudolph Schwarz. Oltre al Conservatorio di Parigi, André Navarra insegnò per molti anni, dall'estate del 1954, nelle Master Class all'Accademia Chigiana di Siena. Nel 1958 diventò anche professore presso la prestigiosa Hochschule di Detmold. Insegno anche a Londra e a Vienna. André Navarra concluse la sua straordinaria carriera con una serie di acclamate tournée nel 1965 1969 e il 1973.

KAREL ANČERL

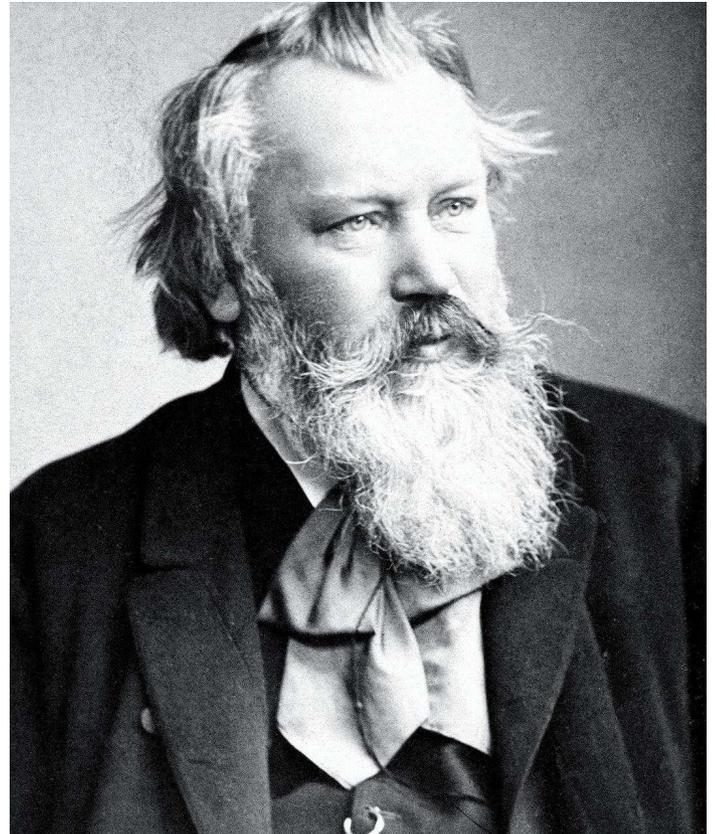


(Tučapy (Boemia meridionale), 11 aprile 1908 - Toronto, 3 luglio 1973) è stato un direttore d'orchestra ceco. È famoso soprattutto per le sue interpretazioni di musiche di autori del XX secolo, come Igor' Fëdorovič Stravinskij, Arnold Schönberg, Béla Bartók e Sergej Sergeevič Prokof'ev; e di compositori cechi come Antonín Dvořák e Bohuslav Martinů. Con le registrazioni di opere di questi autori Karel Ančerl ha ottenuto numerosi riconoscimenti e premi discografici. Nel 1926 si iscrive al Conservatorio di Praga dove ha studiato violino, composizione e direzione d'orchestra fino al 1929 con Václav Talich. Nel 1931 a Monaco di Baviera dirige la prima assoluta dell'opera di Alois Hába Madre al Staatstheater am

Gärtnerplatz. E' stato assistente di Hermann Scherchen a Strasburgo, dal 1929-1931 a Berlino e successivamente a Monaco di Baviera. Ritornò in Cecoslovacchia tra il 1930 e il 1933 dove acquisì grande fama con la direzione dell'orchestra jazz del Libero Teatro. Dal 1933 al 1939 (fino alla Seconda guerra mondiale) diresse l'Orchestra della radio Cecoslovacca. Dopo l'invasione nazista della Cecoslovacchia fu mandato con la sua famiglia nel campo di concentramento di Theresienstadt (Terezín) era il 12 novembre 1942. Là, egli divenne il leader della Terezín String Orchestra e iniziò a organizzare la vita culturale e musicale del campo. La sua performance finale è stata per il film di propaganda Der Führer schenkt den Juden eine Stadt (Il Führer dà gli ebrei una città), diretto, sotto la coercizione del comandante del campo Karl Rahm, da Kurt Geron, per ingannare la Croce Rossa. Il film mostra il M° Ancerl mentre girige un lavoro di Pavel Haas su un padiglione in legno, con vasi di fiori per nascondere l'evidenza che molti orchestrali erano a piedi nudi. Il film inoltre ha documentato la big band di Martin Roman e i Swingers Ghetto. Non appena il film fu terminato, Geron, Ancerl, Haas, Roman e tutti coloro che avevano partecipato alle riprese furono ammassati in carri bestiame per il trasporto finale ad Auschwitz il 15 ottobre 1944. Il M° Ancerl riuscì a sopravvivere ad Auschwitz, ma sua moglie Valy e il figlio Jan (nato a Terezín) perirono nelle camere a gas. Dopo la guerra fino al 1950 ha diretto L'Orchestra di Radio Praga, dal 1950 al 1968 è stato il Direttore Principale dell'Orchestra Filarmonica Ceca e dopo l'invasione della Repubblica Socialista Cecoslovacca emigrò in America diventando dal 1969 al 1973 il Direttore Musicale della Toronto Symphony Orchestra. La sua arte direttoriale è ampiamente documentata dalle numerose registrazioni con la Supraphon, per le quali è stato più volte premiato con il Grand Prix du Disque. Fra i suoi allievi si ricorda Libor Pesek.

J. BRAHMS - CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN AND CELLO, OP.102

Johannes Brahms was born in the Free City of Hamburg on May 7, 1833, and died in Vienna on April 3, 1897. He wrote his Double Concerto in the summer of 1887 at Thun, Switzerland. On September 21 and 22 that year at Baden-Baden, the violinist Joseph Joachim and the cellist Robert Hausmann tried the work with Brahms at the piano, and two days later there was a reading with the Baden-Baden Spa Orchestra, Brahms conducting. The official premiere took place on October 18, 1887, with the Gürzenich Orchestra, Cologne, again with Joachim and Hausmann, and with Brahms on the podium. The orchestra consists of two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings. If you have ever argued with an old and cherished friend - argued past the point of no return - and then wondered how to build a bridge back to what was, you know what Johannes Brahms was feeling when he conceived his Double Concerto. Brahms and the violinist Joseph Joachim had been inseparable since 1853, when they met in Hanover while Johannes was on the first concert tour of his career. Actually, he did not yet have a career. Joachim, at twenty-two, was already a man of the world, a musician who, among other accomplishments, had almost single-handedly helped establish the Beethoven Violin Concerto in the repertory when, as a boy of twelve, he played it with Mendelssohn conducting. Brahms was two years the violinist's junior and had been outside his native Hamburg only for a summer when he was fourteen, spending several weeks in the country to get fresh air and exercise - the kind of thing a city boy with a delicate constitution would do to build up his health and keep from being a target for the characters in Hamburg's back streets. Hamburg was a rough town. One of the many odd facts of Brahms's life is that his own rough edges seem to have appeared only after he left home, almost as though he were paying homage to his birthplace.



He adopted a gruff and occasionally insulting manner, ignored good grooming, and gained more weight than would have been normal even in a society that valued masculine portliness as a sign of prosperity.

In the years after his meeting with Joachim, Brahms had transformed himself from an unknown provincial pianist into one of Europe's foremost composers, a position he would never relinquish. His career had been set in motion with Joachim's letter of introduction to Robert Schumann, who used not only his prestige as an artist but his position as editor of Europe's most widely read music journal to announce that this young man, Brahms, was someone whose work would

change the world. Through the years, the Brahms-Joachim chemistry grew richer and more complex. Brahms sought Joachim's advice on works-in-progress, especially his great Violin Concerto of 1878, for which Joachim wrote a first-movement cadenza that has become virtually an integral part of the composition. Joachim took part in the premieres of many of Brahms's chamber works and also conducted his orchestral music. Their friendship was personal and professional, and no doubt they both believed it was unshakeable. Then, in 1883, it ended.

It ended because Joseph Joachim was a jealous man and Brahms was constitutionally incapable of dishonesty. Joachim suspected his wife, Amalie, of being involved romantically with Fritz Simrock, Brahms's publisher. Brahms realized that his friend had become crazed by the unfortunate confluence of suspicion, passion, and hurt feelings. Convinced of Amalie's faithfulness, he supported her and told her so in a letter. (" . . . With no thought have I ever acknowledged that your husband might be in the right," he wrote in a letter that Jan Swafford quotes in his 1997 biography Johannes Brahms. "At this point I perhaps hardly need to say that, even earlier than you did, I became aware of the unfortunate character-trait with which Joachim so inexcusably tortures himself and others. . . . The simplest matter is so exaggerated, so complicated, that one scarcely knows where to begin with it and how to bring it to an end.") Several years later, when Joachim sued Amalie for divorce, Brahms's letter was offered at the trial as a character reference and helped the court decide in her favor. Joachim, until then unaware of the letter, was devastated. He broke off relations with Brahms—although, committed artist that he was, he continued to champion his music.

Whether any grudge is worth nursing is an open question. Certainly, Brahms felt a hole in his life. By 1887, four years

had passed since he and Joachim had spoken. Brahms was fifty-four. That may not seem so old to us, but this was long before the inflation in human longevity. He had amassed enough wisdom to know that life is preciously short, and to leave it before making peace with someone you loved was not a good way to repay a generous universe. Joachim must have felt the same way. He interpreted Brahms's offer to join in the premiere of the Double Concerto as the peace offering it was meant to be, and he accepted.

This music, Brahms's last work for orchestra, has never been among his most popular compositions, yet those who cherish Brahms love it. We love the weight of the orchestral textures, the almost tragic gravity of the opening movement and the delicate musing that intrudes into the rough-hewn conclusion. We love the dialogue between the soloists, who trade phrases, each elaborating on the other's ideas, borrowing gestures from the orchestra and suggesting others.

A few words about the music: The orchestra opens with a storm of sound and almost immediately falls silent, stopping short as the cello takes sudden command of the stage. As he completes his impassioned statement, the winds enter with a phrase that is the work's first genuine tune. As it is introduced now, that phrase is gentle and consoling. The violin enters by echoing it. In the course of the movement, the phrase will recur in a form that is sometimes reflective, sometimes assertive. At its reappearances, it acts as a marker that helps us orient ourselves, as does the orchestra's frequently recurring opening gesture. These are elements of the structural glue that, to our ears, holds things together. The soloists finish their presentations, becoming ever more impassioned, setting the stage for the orchestra's re-entrance. It starts from where it had begun initially. This time it plunges ahead without interruption. After the opening gestures the music begins

to sway broadly and ominously. This shifts abruptly into a deliberate step-like motion that leads to a swirl of noise, and finally to a fountain of triplets that fall, rise, and at their height explode in a shower of notes, leading into a rediscovery of the great tune—proclaimed confidently now—that the winds had sung so gently after the cello’s first solo, and which the violin had echoed. The way Brahms works all this out is breathtaking, and when the orchestra calms down and ends the exposition of ideas, the soloists re-enter with a variant of the work’s very first phrase. This is the sort of logical structure that gave Brahms a reputation as “academic,” but if he labors within rigorously thought-out forms, it is to harness passion, to compress it and make it more explosive as it’s released. This tightly argued movement ends in the kind of straightforward grandeur that Brahms’s audience had first heard from him three years earlier, at the end of the corresponding movement in his Fourth Symphony.

The slow movement opens with a brief announcement, first by horn and then with the winds joining in. The soloists begin what sounds like a lullaby and are accompanied by the orchestral violins and cellos, mirroring what the soloists play. It is almost a little too sweet, so Brahms tempers it. By the song’s second bar, violas and basses enter and, with the other orchestral strings, join in a contrasting figure to what the soloists offer, creating one of those Brahmsian jabs of harmony that makes poignant what might have been cloying. The movement is in three parts: broad song, a contrasting section introduced by a

hymn-like passage in the winds, and a return to the song, the orchestra’s strings accompanying, pizzicato. Throughout, the soloists are in the foreground.

Just as Brahms had shown his fondness for Gypsy melodies in the finale of the Violin Concerto he had written for Joachim a decade earlier, his concluding movement here is inspired by folk music from the plains east of Budapest. It is rollicking, in a fierce way. Halfway through, the mood changes abruptly as the orchestral texture thins and the dynamic level drops. The winds exchange questioning ideas that introduce a searching passage for gently glowing orchestral strings, all background to the musing of the soloists. It is over almost as soon as it starts, this slightly absentminded meditation. Forward motion resumes. Brahms indulges in one more quietly reflective passage before it is all over, then shrugs off that mood and pushes through to the end.

Much of Brahms’s late music failed to capture the hearts of its first listeners. Today, our ears are more receptive to Brahms’s sometimes disconcerting fusion of sternness and delicacy. Joseph Joachim himself was not very taken with the Double Concerto, although he eventually came to embrace it. And while he and Brahms resumed contact, each of them protected himself from new hurt by maintaining an emotional distance that had not characterized their friendship in earlier years. Mutual trust would have to remain a memory.

Larry Rothe

JOSEF SUK



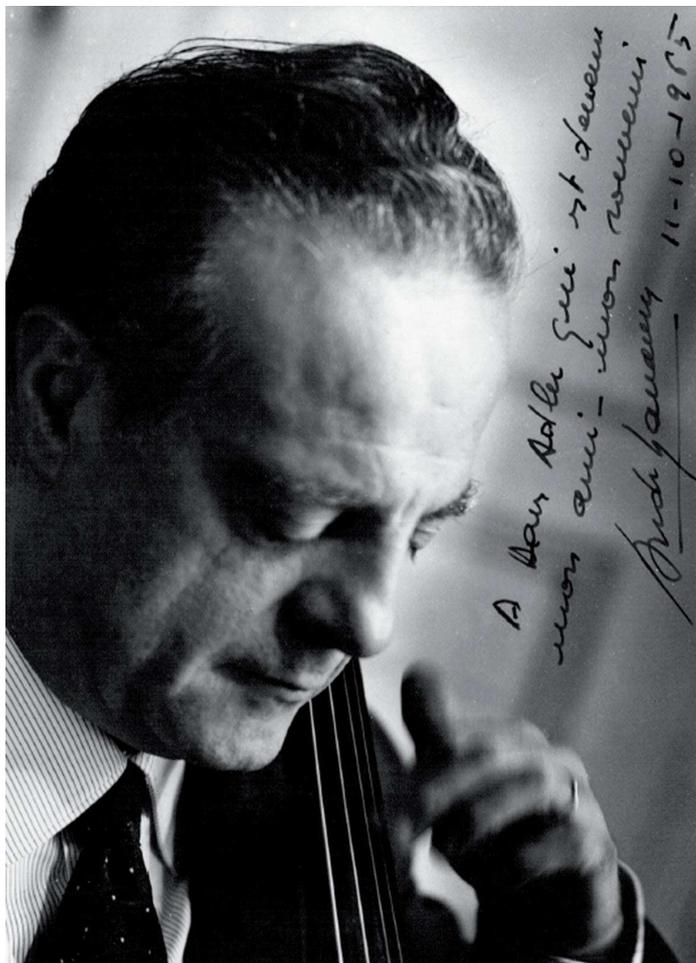
Josef Suk (8 August 1929 – 6 July 2011) was a Czech violinist, violist, chamber musician and conductor, the grandson of Josef Suk, the composer and violinist, and great-grandson of Antonín Dvořák. In his home country he carried the title of National Artist. After finishing high school in 1945 he entered the Prague Conservatory (1945-1951), where his teachers were Jaroslav Kocián, Norbert Kubát and Karel Šneberger.

The most important of all his teachers was Jaroslav Kocián, who started teaching him privately when Suk was 7 years old. Led by him, Suk mastered the violin art drawing from the spectacular interpretative art of his teacher, who was specific with his noble technique of tone formation. During his studies, in 1949, Suk was sent to Paris and Brussels where he represented successfully the young generation of Czech violinists. After leaving the Prague Conservatory, he spent four terms at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (AMU) with the professors Marie Hlouňová and Alexandr Plocek. However, before finishing his studies he was suspended for political reasons. “AMU was rather a military and political school at that time. For example, I protested against being obliged to trench. That was because our fingers suffered – and I wanted to be a musician, not a soldier. That was the reason why I was suspended after four terms and detached to the military division of Košice for punishment. In the last minute I was saved when I got to the Army artist company, where I spent the two years of military service playing the violin.” “Since the very beginning, when I got my first violin from my father, a binding feeling of big expectations bore on me. I wasn’t sure whether I was able to be up to the wishes and hopes of my parents and my grandfather. The great commitment of filling my family tradition attached all my artist career. Sometimes it might have opened some gates and routes, but on the other hand it meant also an indispensable stress.” 1950-1952 he was the primarius of the Prague quartet, 1953-1955 concert master of the dramatic orchestra of the National theatre in Prague, then till 1957 a soloist of the Army artist company. His first significant success was a recital in Prague on 6 November 1954. Shortly after that George Szell invited him to the USA to play with the Cleveland Orchestra. In 1958 he performed in Germany, Netherlands and Romania,

then also in France and Belgium. In 1960 he was lent the violin by Antonio Stradivari called Duc de Camposelice made in 1710. Its former owner was Váša Příhoda, who donated it to the Czechoslovak state shortly before his death. Suk also played the Libon Stradivari and The Prince of Orange violin by Giuseppe Guarneri del Gesu. He also used an instrument by Přemysl Špidlen for a long time. In 1961 he was named the soloist of Czech Philharmonic to go through many its tours and recitals. He cooperated and made many recordings with the world's best orchestras, conductors and interpreters. He won many prizes for his recordings - Grand Prix du disque for Debussy's and Janáček's sonatas, for the Dumky Trio by Dvořák with Jan Panenka and Miloš Sádlo, for the complete collection of Mozart's violin concerts with the Prague Chamber Orchestra conducted by Libor Hlaváček, for the Berg concert and for the concertos of Martinů. He was also a violist and he recorded the Sinfonia Concertante by Mozart, playing both parts of violin and viola. With the Czech philharmonic, conducted by Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, he recorded Harold en Italie by Hector Berlioz. His violin art was characterized by a rotund and rich tone, glass-clear intonation and an idiomatic interpretation. Suk was one of the world's best interpreters of Bach, Mozart and Beethoven. His recordings of Dvořák's Violin Concerto are exemplary. From 1979 to 1986 he was a teacher

at the Music College in Vienna. Aside from his solo career he focused on chamber music. As a student (1950-1952) he was the primarius of the Prague quartet and in 1951 he founded the Suk Trio, named after his grandfather Josef Suk, together with his friends Jiří Hubička (piano) and Saša Večtomov (cello). Suk Trio played many concerts both home and abroad and recorded many compositions. With the trio's later cellist Jan Panenka Suk recorded the entire collection of Beethoven's sonatas and their recording of Shostakovich's sonata for viola and piano was the very first. As a violist he often cooperated with the Smetana Quartet. Another remarkable partnership was with the harpsichordist prof. Zuzana Růžičková. They were close friends and within many concerts they made many recordings, for example Bach's and Händel's sonatas. They were also dedicated a sonata by Růžičková's husband, Viktor Kalabis. Josef Suk also collaborated with Julius Katchen and János Starker when recording Brahms's trios and sonatas. In 1974, as a commemoration of the 100th anniversary of birth of his grandfather Josef Suk, he founded the Suk Chamber Orchestra. Suk acted as its leader and conductor till 2000. He held the title of Meritorious Artist and since 1977 the title of National Artist. In 2002 he was awarded the National Order of the Legion of Honour.

ANDRÉ NAVARRA



Born: October 13, 1911 - Biarritz, France

Died: July 31, 1988 - Siena, Italy

The noted French cellist and music pedagogue, André (-Nicolas) Navarra, was born into a musical family. At the age of seven he began studying singing as well as cello. When he was only nine years old, he was accepted as a student at the Toulouse Conservatory, from where he graduated with first

prize in 1924. He then studied for two more years with Jules Leopold-Loeb (cello) and Toumemire (chamber music) at the Paris Conservatory, where at the age of fifteen he took first prize. In his youth, Navarra was an athlete as well as a cellist, being an expert middle-weight boxer and swimmer.

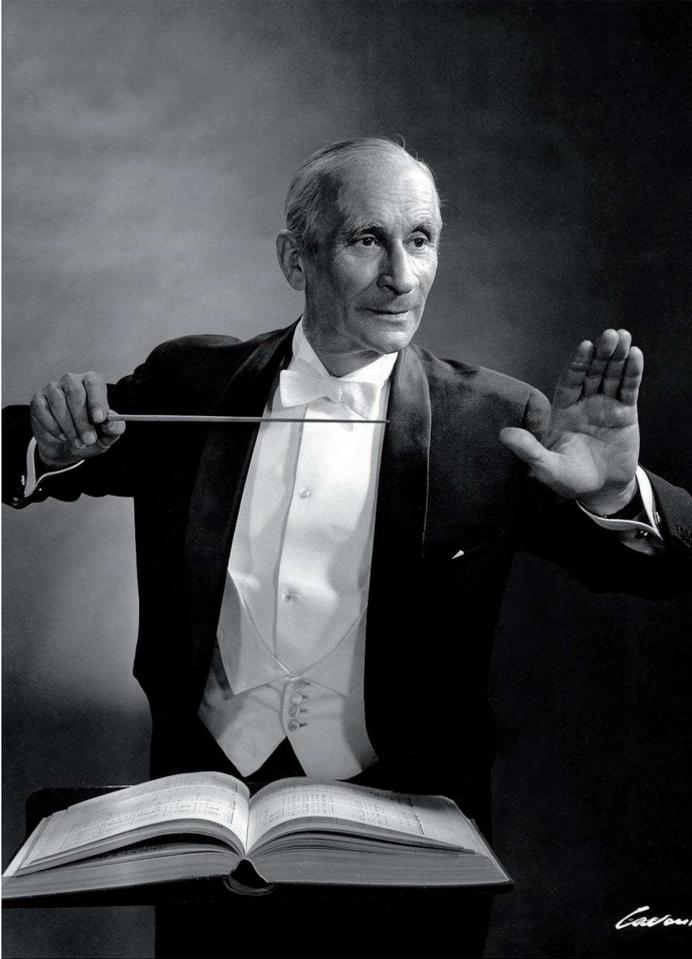
In 1929, at the age of eighteen, André Navarra joined the Kretly String Quartet, and performed with them for the next seven years. His solo debut was with the Colonne Orchestra in Paris in 1931, when he performed the Lalo Concerto. In 1933 he became principal cellist of the Grand Opera Orchestra. He appeared as a soloist with various European orchestras.

World War II halted his career from 1939 to 1945, when André Navarra left his cello in its case, and served in the French infantry. After the war he continued concertizing, and toured the world, playing with the great conductors of the era. His recording of the Edward Elgar Concerto with John Barbirolli and the Hallé Orchestra is considered a classic. He gave premiere performances of cello concertos by Jolivet (1962) and Tomasi. (1970).

André Navarra was professor of cello at the Paris Conservatory from 1949 and at the North West German Music Academy from 1958. He also taught in Siena (1954-1988), London and Vienna. Many of his students have become well-known cellists, for example, Heinrich Schiff, Johannes Goritsky and Susan Sheppard.

A series of recordings from the French label Calliope has been published and there is some good playing on these disc's (Bach Suites, Camille Saint-Saëns, Schubert, etc.) He also produced LP's for the Capitol label in the 1950's (not yet re-issued on CD). The French label Dante has brought out four very excellent disc's from the 1940's.

KAREL ANČERL



Karel Ančerl (11 April 1908 - 3 July 1973) was a Czechoslovak conductor, renowned especially for his performances of contemporary music and for his interpretations of music by Czech composers. Ančerl was born into a prosperous Jewish family in the village of Tučapy in southern Bohemia. After graduating from the Prague Conservatory, he pursued his conducting studies under Hermann Scherchen and Václav Talich. He was the assistant conductor at the Munich premiere of Alois Hába's quarter-tone opera *Mother* (1931) and conducted

the orchestra of the avant-garde theatre *Osvobozené divadlo* in Prague (1931–1933). Conducting work for Czechoslovak radio was interrupted by World War II which resulted in his being imprisoned with his family in the Theresienstadt concentration camp in 1942 and then sent to Auschwitz in 1944. Unlike his wife and young son, Ančerl came out of Auschwitz alive. After the war, Ančerl conducted for Radio Prague until 1950, when he became artistic director of the Czech Philharmonic, a post he held successfully for eighteen years. Following the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, Ančerl emigrated to Toronto, Canada, where he worked as music director of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra until his death in 1973. As a conductor, Ančerl helped foster a distinctly Czech orchestral sound, both with the Czech Philharmonic and elsewhere. Highly regarded also as a studio artist, Ančerl made a wide range of recordings on the Supraphon label, including repertoire by various Czech composers (remastered in the Karel Ančerl Gold Edition). He was born into a prosperous Jewish family in the village of Tučapy in southern Bohemia, where his father Leopold was a large-scale producer of liquors and spirits. After graduating from the gymnasium in Prague (1918–24) he studied composition and conducting at the Prague Conservatory between 1925 and 1929, along with chamber music, violin and percussion. In 1931 he participated as assistant conductor at the Munich premiere of Alois Hába's quarter-tone opera *Mother*. Ančerl also studied conducting under Hermann Scherchen in Strasbourg and with Václav Talich in Prague. Between 1931 and 1933, he conducted the orchestra of the avant-garde theatre *Osvobozené divadlo* in Prague, where he brought about a marked improvement in playing standards. From 1933 to 1939, he conducted for the Czechoslovak radio, but his career as a conductor was interrupted by World War II. He was sent with his family to the Theresienstadt concentration

camp (Terezín) on 12 November 1942. There, he became the leader of the Terezín String Orchestra and started to organize cultural and music life in the ghetto. His final performance was for the propaganda film *Der Führer schenkt den Juden eine Stadt* (The Führer Gives the Jews a City), directed, under coercion of the camp commandant Karl Rahm, by Kurt Gerron to fool the Red Cross. The film showed Ančerl conducting a work by Pavel Haas on a wooden pavilion, with flowerpots hiding the fact that many of the orchestra were barefoot. The film also featured Martin Roman's big band, the Ghetto Swingers. As soon as the film was over, Gerron, Ančerl, Haas, Roman and all those who had participated in the film were herded into cattle trucks for the final transport to Auschwitz on 15 October 1944. Ančerl managed to survive Auschwitz, but his wife Valy and son Jan (born in Terezín) perished in the gas chambers. After the war, he conducted for Radio Prague until 1950, and rose to fame when appointed (on 20 October 1950) artistic director of the Czech Philharmonic. His eighteen-year tenure with this orchestra is often regarded as its greatest period, which brought it much international recognition. In August 1968, after the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia, he decided to emigrate to Toronto, Canada. He conducted his last two concerts with the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra at the Prague Spring Festival in 1969. He conducted the Toronto Symphony Orchestra from 1968 until his death in Toronto in 1973. His tomb is located in Vyšehrad cemetery in Prague. Some of his notable pupils include Brian Jackson, Štěpán Koniček, Libor Pešek, Jan Tausinger, and Martin Turnovský. As a conductor, Ančerl followed a recognizably Czech tradition. Along with Václav Talich, Karel Šejna, Václav Neumann and others, he helped foster a distinctly Czech orchestral sound. Rhythmic sharpness, vibrant dynamics, and a keenly etched sound were hallmarks of his conducting style. While these

characteristics were especially evident when he conducted his home orchestra, the Czech Philharmonic, he also persuaded orchestras as diverse as the Toronto Symphony, the Vienna Symphony and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra to play with a distinctive Czech sound. In addition to both the indigenous characteristics of Ančerl's work on the podium, especially in repertoire to which that would apply, and an always flexibly molded incredibly minute attention to, ear for detail, there was a grace, a spiritually infused lyricism absorbed by a love of life, of nature to Ančerl's music-making - sample his discs of Martinu Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, Mahler Ninth on Supraphon - that was a clear stand-out. He himself, certainly a few others have, may have attributed some of this to the horrors he witnessed, experienced during the war. An innate classical sense to his work in Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms was fully remarkable as well. Ančerl remains highly regarded as a recording artist. His broad range of recordings for the Czech Supraphon label have been carefully remastered for the Karel Ančerl Gold Edition, which was awarded the Grand Prix du Disque by l'Académie Charles Cros. In addition to performances of Czech composers, including Antonín Dvořák, Bedřich Smetana, Leoš Janáček, Bohuslav Martinů and Miloslav Kabeláč, Ančerl is also admired for his interpretations of 20th-century composers, such as Gustav Mahler, Igor Stravinsky, Béla Bartók, Sergei Prokofiev and Dmitri Shostakovich, as well as the Toronto-based organist/composer Healey Willan. He also championed less widely known Czech composers, such as Jan Hanuš, Iša Krejčí, Otmar Mácha and Ladislav Vycpálek. Performances with several orchestras have appeared on labels such as Tahra, CBC Records and EMI. Line Classics has issued some radio recordings made during the late 1940s, when Ančerl returned to Prague.

Allegro *Concert.* Johannes Brahms Op. 102

Flute
Oboe
Clarinet
Bassoon
Horn I
Horn II
Trumpet I
Trumpet II
Trombone I
Trombone II
Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Cello
Bass

Allegro 8964

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Cello
Bass

Recorded at The House of Artists on 30th Sept. And on 3th Oct. 1963

Recording director:

Miroslav Kuba

Recording engineer:

Miroslav Kuba

Technical data

Noise reduction of the Original Master:

Dolby Model 361 A - Type Noise Reduction Module CAT. 22

Original Master Tape:

Agfa PEM 468

JOHANNES BRAHMS

CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN AND CELLO, OP.102

| Position | Lenght | J. Brahms: Concerto in A minor for violin, cello e orch. op.102 |
|---------------|--------|---|
| 00:00 | 16:40 | <i>Allegro</i> |
| 16:44 | 07:09 | <i>Andante</i> |
| 23:58 | 08:45 | <i>Vivace non troppo</i> |
| Total length: | 32:43 | |

Violin: Josef Suk
Violoncello: André Navarra
Conductor: Karel Ančerl
Czech Philharmonic Orchestra



Recorded at The House of Artists on 30th Sept. And on 3th Oct. 1963

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