

J.S. Bach – Violin Concertos (Hilary Hahn)

Written by bluesever

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1. Violin Concerto No.2 in E, BWV 1042 - 1. Allegro 2. Violin Concerto No.2 in E, BWV 1042 - 2. Adagio 3. Violin Concerto No.2 in E, BWV 1042 - 3. Allegro assai 4. Concerto for 2 Violins, Strings, and Continuo in D minor, BWV 1043 - 1. Vivace 5. Concerto for 2 Violins, Strings, and Continuo in D minor, BWV 1043 - 2. Largo ma non tanto 6. Concerto for 2 Violins, Strings, and Continuo in D minor, BWV 1043 - 3. Allegro 7. Violin Concerto No.1 in A minor, BWV 1041 - 1. (Allegro moderato) 8. Violin Concerto No.1 in A minor, BWV 1041 - 2. Andante 9. Violin Concerto No.1 in A minor, BWV 1041 - 3. Allegro assai 10. Concerto for 2 Harpsichords, Strings, and Continuo in C minor, BWV 1060 - Arr. for violin, oboe strings & continuo - 1. Allegro 11. Concerto for 2 Harpsichords, Strings, and Continuo in C minor, BWV 1060 - Arr. for violin, oboe strings & continuo - 2. Adagio 12. Concerto for 2 Harpsichords, Strings, and Continuo in C minor, BWV 1060 - Arr. for violin, oboe strings & continuo - 3. Allegro Hilary Hahn – violin Margaret Batjer – violin Alan Vogel – oboe Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra Jeffrey Kahane – conductor

Hilary Hahn's first recording for DG confirms her growing reputation as one of the finest violinists of our time, irrespective of age. This is Bach playing of truly extraordinary quality, from the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra as much as the soloist(s). Conductor Jeffrey Kahane and Hahn together bring an absolutely toe-tapping abandon to the outer movements of the E major concerto, and the central Adagio emerges as a major slow movement, pure poetry with the continuo harpsichord thankfully not too prominent but perfectly placed to add a touch of definition to the bass lines.

Perhaps what makes this collection so remarkable from the solo point of view is the fact that Hahn doesn't take the spotlight, front and center, but gives the music the chamber-like interplay and "concerto grosso" feel that produces a more "authentic" impression than many performances using period instruments. It goes without saying that her own contribution is extremely well executed, perfect in intonation, and she controls her vibrato in the slow movements in a way that never makes the music sound mushy or overly sentimental--but she

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remains very much "first among equals". In the double concerto, she and Margaret Batjer match their tones with uncanny accuracy, and Hahn's interplay with oboist Allan Vogel in the C minor double concerto is a model of what a gracious musical dialog should be.

In short, you won't find these works better played by anyone, or given more pleasingly listenable interpretations. My only quibble concerns DG's sonics, which turn a touch hard in the violin's upper register and only reluctantly permit a true piano in quieter passages, though given the extrovert nature of the playing there aren't all that many of those. Otherwise, the recording is excellently balanced and clear, and this is in all respects an extremely auspicious debut recording for Hahn on her new label. ---David Hurwitz, ClassicsToday.com

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