



## Henri Vieuxtemps – Violin Concertos Nos.4 & 5 (Heifetz) [2001]

Written by bluesever

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recitative and then with the main march tune. Rapid passagework and harrowing double-stops prevent the movement from falling into pomposity; at one point, the violin plays an ardent, decidedly non-military melody. And later, the soloist even gives the march tune a remarkably lyrical treatment. Midway through this movement, the music kicks into the major mode and the concerto ends in heady victory. ---Rovi

Although the Violin Concerto No. 4 is "the" Vieuxtemps concerto, No. 5 in A minor is also relatively familiar and has been championed by the likes of Leopold Auer, Jascha Heifetz, and Itzhak Perlman. Vieuxtemps wrote it in 1858-1859 as a competition piece for Hubert Léonard at the Brussels Conservatory. The work originally held only two movements, but Vieuxtemps later added a third; they are played without interruption.

The first movement, *Allegro non troppo*, announces its main themes through the orchestra without soloist. The opening motif is suspenseful and tragic; soon the music becomes grander with the orchestra playing at full blast, and eventually the thematic material spreads out with longer note values, and subsides. The violin finally enters with rising, searching phrases, which quickly morph into complex passagework, a preview of coming attractions. Soon the soloist picks up the orchestra's themes, punctuating their lyricism with flurries of virtuosity. Vieuxtemps provided two cadenzas; one is fairly contrapuntal, and the other is full of double stops and other splashy techniques.

A brief *Moderato* passage leads to the *Adagio* movement, an effusion of A minor lyricism. Toward the end, the music modulates to C major to quote a melody from André Grétry's opera *Lucile*, here highly romanticized (hence the concerto's sometime nickname, "Grétry"). After the violin plays the final ornamented measure of this older material, the music swoops back into A minor for the concluding *Allegro con fuoco*, a final burst of virtuosity so brief that it is little more than a coda to the preceding two movements. ---Rovi

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