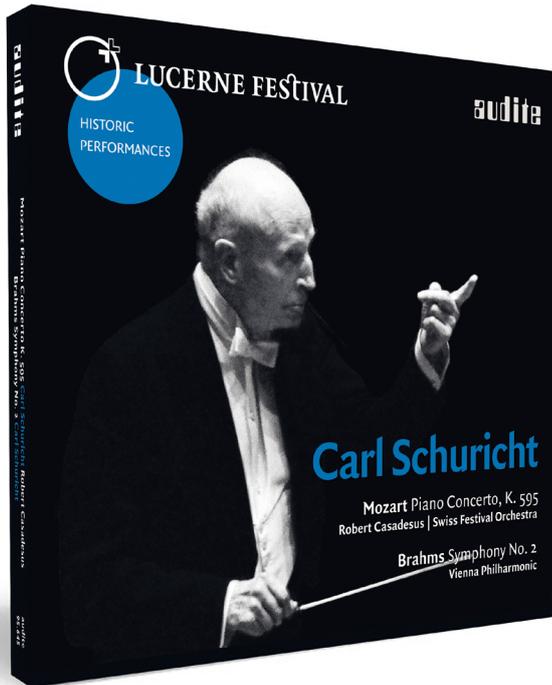


Carl Schuricht performs Brahms and Mozart in Lucerne: compelling persuasiveness through inspired objectivity

Lucerne Festival • Vol. XI



Robert Casadesus, piano
Swiss Festival Orchestra (Mozart)
Vienna Philharmonic (Brahms)
Carl Schuricht, conductor

Mozart: Piano Concerto in B-flat major, K. 595
 Brahms: Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 73

Live recordings: Kunsthaus Luzern, 19. August 1961 • 8. September 1962

Absolute faithfulness to the musical text and youthful vigour right up to old age: Carl Schuricht (1880-1967), one of the last representatives of the generation of old German conductors during the post-war decades, focused on clear structures rather than romantic pathos or personal eccentricity. These two Lucerne live recordings demonstrate the compelling persuasiveness of his inspired objectivity, especially when performing alongside the celebrated Mozart interpreter Robert Casadesus, whose choice of tempi is particularly striking.

January 8th, 2017 marked the 50th anniversary of the death of Carl Schuricht. This release of two live recordings made in 1961 and 1962 pays tribute to a renowned conductor who was only to enjoy great international fame in his old age – as one of the last representatives of the generation of old German conductors, and as a master of the classical and romantic repertoire.

“Neither recreating a façade nor exposing feelings” was how Carl Schuricht once summarised his artistic credo. These two Lucerne live recordings document the compelling persuasiveness and the intensity that Schuricht’s interpretational style – his tremendously inspired objectivity, entirely at the service of the music – could develop: in Mozart’s final Piano Concerto, K595 in B flat major, Schuricht proves to be a sensitive accompanist. Together with the French pianist Robert Casadesus he manages to strike the distinctive tone of this concerto between simplicity and noblesse, innocence and wisdom, buffa and elegy. (A few days later, the two also performed the work at Salzburg; that live recording has been issued as part of the “Salzburg Festival Documents”.) Another interesting comparison is afforded by Schuricht’s Lucerne performance of Johannes Brahms’ Second Symphony with the Vienna Philharmonic, with whom he had also made a studio recording of the same work nearly a decade earlier, in 1953, for Decca. Whilst he remains faithful to the musical text, Schuricht demonstrates a strikingly free approach to the music – in the dynamics and tempi, in the refinement of the instrumental blend – in his Lucerne interpretation: much subjectivity can be detected in his objectivity, and there is no hint of the conductor’s old age.

The 32-page booklet in three languages provides extensive background information on Carl Schuricht and his relationship with the Internationale Musikfestwochen in Lucerne, and also features photos from the festival archive, published here for the first time.

In cooperation with audite, LUCERNE FESTIVAL presents the “Historic Performances” series featuring outstanding concert recordings of artists who have shaped the festival throughout its history. The aim of this CD edition is to rediscover treasures – most of which have not been released previously – from the first six decades of the festival, which was founded in 1938 with a special gala concert conducted by Arturo Toscanini. These recordings have been made available by the archives of SRF Swiss Radio and Television, which has broadcast the Lucerne concerts from the outset. Painstakingly re-mastered and supplemented with photos and materials from the LUCERNE FESTIVAL archive, they represent a sonic history of the festival.

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