

## Some Recent Eloquence Releases: Summer 2017 by Brian Wilson

The original European Universal Eloquence label replaced budget releases on DG (Privilege or Resonance), Decca (Weekend Classics) and Philips (Classical Favourites). Like them it originally sold for around £5 and offered some splendid bargains such as Telemann's 'Water Music' and excerpts from *Tafelmusik* (Musica Antiqua Köln/Reinhard Goebel 4696642) and Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* (Janet Baker, James King, Concertgebouw/Bernard Haitink 4681822).

Later most of the original batch were deleted – luckily the Mahler remains available – and production switched to Universal Australia but the price remained around the same. More recent changes in the value of the £ mean that single CDs now sell for around £7.75 but the high quality of much of the repertoire means that they remain well worth keeping an eye on.

Many, but not all, of the albums are available to stream or download and I have reviewed some in that form and others on CD. Be aware, however, that the downloads often cost more than the CDs and invariably come without notes – which is a shame because the Eloquence booklets are better than those of many budget labels.

### THE TUDORS Lo, Country Sports

Anonymous Almain

Thomas TOMKINS Adieu, Ye City-Prisoning Towers

Thomas WEELKES Lo, Country Sports that Seldom Fades

Nicholas BRETON Shepherd and Shepherdess

Michael EAST Sweet Muses, Nymphs and Shepherds Sporting

Bar YOUNG The Shepherd, Arsilius's, Reply

John FARMER O Stay, Sweet Love

Giles FARNABY Pearce did love fair Petronel

Michael CAVENDISH Down in a Valley

Thomas NASHE Spring, the Sweet Spring

Michael EAST Thyrsis, sleepest thou?

Thomas RAVENSCROFT Sing after, Fellows

Anonymous The Wych

Thomas WEELKES Whilst youthfull Sports are lasting

Thomas BATESON Come, Follow me, Fair Nymphs

Thomas LODGE Corydon's Song

Thomas VAUTOR Mother I will have a Husband

Thomas CAMPION Jacke and Jone

John BENNET A Hunts up

Thomas RAVENSCROFT Tomorrow the Fox will come to Town

Robert JOHNSON Almain

Giles FARNABY Pearce did dance with Petronella

Thomas WEELKES Our Cuntry Swaines (Morris Dance)

Edmund BOLTON A Canzon Pastoral

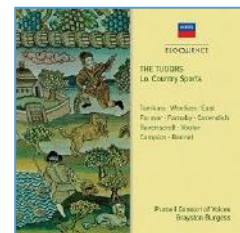
Michael EAST Farewell, Sweet Woods and Mountains

James Tyler (lute); Jon Neville (reader)

Purcell Consort of Voices

Elizabethan Consort of Viols/Grayston Burgess

rec. 1971. ADD.



## DECCA ELOQUENCE 4822562 [44:39]

Reviewed as streamed from [Naxos Music Library](#). CD from [Amazon UK](#) – [Presto](#).

This is very short album but Decca could hardly have added anything to it. It's also been in and out of the catalogue several times, including an even less expensive release on the Belart label, but it's no less enjoyable and recommendable. Thankfully no attempt is made to reproduce Elizabethan pronunciation – an inexact science which usually ends sounding like Mummings – except in Ravenscroft's *Tomorrow the fox*, where Mummings is appropriate.

Four other reissues form part of this Eloquence mini-series:

- Metaphysical Tobacco (**4807740**)
- To Entertain a King: Music for Henry VIII and his court (**4804866** – [review](#) of earlier Argo release, 4758582)
- Courtly Pastimes: Songs and Dances from Henry VIII's Book (**4804865** – [review](#))
- I love, alas (**4822570**)

Several of the composers represented in *Lo, country sports* participated in *The Triumphs of Oriana*, a set of madrigals in honour of Queen Elizabeth I, often known as 'Gloriana', as in *The Faerie Queene* and here thinly disguised as Oriana. There are fine recordings by I Fagiolini (Chandos **CHAN0682**) and The King's Singers (Signum **SIGCD082** – [review](#) – [DL News](#)) but there's still a good case for Eloquence to reissue the DG Archiv recording made by Pro Cantione Antiqua directed by Ian Partridge in 1977.

A collection of *Madrigals and Wedding Songs for Diana* includes five items from the *Oriana* collection (**CDA66019**). Sung by Emma Kirkby and David Thomas with The Consort of Musicke directed by Anthony Rooley, it has undeservedly sunk into the limbo of Hyperion's special Archive Service but it can also be downloaded, with pdf booklet, for just £6.99 from [hyperion-records.co.uk](#). Originally released in honour of the marriage of Prince Charles and Lady Diana, if anything it's even more delectable than the Eloquence reissues.



### Thomas Augustine ARNE (1710-1778)

Harpsichord Concerto No.5 in g minor [10:49]

Sonata No.1 in F\* [5:53]

Overture No.1 in e minor [7:44]

### Carl Philipp Emanuel BACH (1714-1788)

Sinfonia in B flat, Wq182/2 (H658)\* [10:36]

Variations on *Les Folies d'Espagne*, Wq118/9 (H263)\* [7:52]

Harpsichord Concerto in c minor, Wq43/4 (H474) [11:55]

### Johann Christian BACH (1735-1782)

Harpsichord Concerto in A, T297/1 [19:31]

George Malcolm (harpsichord)

Academy of St. Martin in the Fields/Sir Neville Marriner  
rec. 1968/1969. ADD

\* first release on CD

DECCA ELOQUENCE 4825117 [74:23]



Subscribers stream from [Naxos Music Library](#) For CD purchase details see [review](#) by Jonathan Woolf.

The initial successes for the ASMF and Neville Marriner were recorded for the Oiseau-Lyre label in the early 1960s. The earliest release that I can trace was an album of Albicastro, Corelli, Handel, Locatelli and Torelli, released in 1962 on SOL60045 to instant acclaim. They soon switched to another Decca offshoot, Argo, for which most of the present reissue was recorded (released in 1968 on ZRG577 and reissued on Ace of Diamonds SDD336). The CPE Bach items, now released for the first time on CD, make a longer and even more enjoyable programme.

Arne and the two Bachs make strange bedfellows but the performances are very enjoyable and the recording has worn very well. That of Wq.43/4 is actually slightly livelier than on Miklós Spányi's recording of all four Wq.43 concertos (**BIS-CD-1787** – [DL Roundup](#)).

George Malcolm plays the Arne concerto on the harpsichord. The complete set of the six Arne concertos on Hyperion varies the theme, with Paul Nicholson performing the solo parts on the harpsichord, organ and fortepiano (Helios **CDH55251** – [review](#) – [DL News](#)) and I recommend following up – but not replacing – this Eloquence recording with the Hyperion. Here and in the other reissues listed below Malcolm plays a Goff harpsichord with stops and other features which were unknown in Arne's day but he plays with a mix of enthusiasm and restraint that makes this reissue still very welcome in these more 'enlightened' times.

Another Hyperion recording, *Dr Arne at Vauxhall Gardens*, featuring Emma Kirkby (soprano) and Richard Morton (tenor) with The Parley of Instruments (**CDA66237** – [DL News 2016/4](#)) has now fallen into undeserved desuetude but can be downloaded in lossless sound or ordered from the Archive Service at [hyperion-records.co.uk](http://hyperion-records.co.uk).

### **Johann Sebastian BACH (1685-1750)**

Keyboard Concerto in d minor, BWV1052 [24:54]

Keyboard Concerto in E, BWV1053 [22:11]

*Die Kunst der Fuge* (The Art of Fugue), BWV1080 (arr. L. Isaacs for chamber ensemble) [87:17]

George Malcolm (harpsichord)

Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra/Karl Münchinger

rec. 1964

Members of the Philomusica of London/George Malcolm

rec. 1965

**DECCA ELOQUENCE 4825187** [74:58 + 59:38]



CD from [Amazon UK](#) – [Presto](#). Subscribers stream from [Naxos Music Library](#)

Like most of my generation I got to know Bach's *Brandenburgs* and Vivaldi's *Seasons* from Karl Münchinger's early 1950s mono LPs when they were reissued on Ace of Clubs. Those early recordings sound rather turgid now but by the time that Münchinger and his team were into their second- and third-generation recordings of Bach and Vivaldi things had improved quite considerably and these two concertos, first released on SXL6101 and again on JB9 are surprisingly lively and very enjoyable, though I suspect that's as much due to George Malcolm's stylish and rhythmic solo contributions. That's all you got in 1977 for mid-price

£2.50, at least £45 in modern terms, so around £10.50 for the 2-CD set is good value even for the concertos alone.

Nowadays it's generally accepted that *The Art of Fugue* was conceived for a solo keyboard but I must confess to enjoying the greater colour of Professor Isaacs' arrangement, so well performed by Malcolm and the Philomusica (from Argo ZRG5421/2) that I'm inclined to think that I shall return to this account, which is new to me, as often as to my overall first choice, from Helmut Walcha on the organ. (DG Archiv **E4776508**, download only).

Another highly enjoyable recording of Bach and Vivaldi, arranged and recorded by George Malcolm and Julian Bream – two trio sonatas by each – is still available as an inexpensive download (RCA/Sony **G010002996125C**). It's almost worth the modest price for the outré cover-shot alone. Subscribers stream from [Naxos Music Library](#).



### **Carl Philipp Emanuel BACH (1714-1788)**

Concerto in F for two claviers and orchestra, Wq.46 (H408) (freely arr. Raymond Leppard for four harpsichords and orchestra) [21:55]

### **Johann Sebastian BACH (1685-1750)**

Concerto in a minor for four harpsichords, strings and continuo, BWV1065 (arr. of Vivaldi 4-Violin Concerto, Op.1/10) [10:03]

Concerto in d minor for three harpsichords, strings and continuo, BWV1063 [15:59]

### **George MALCOLM (1917-1997)**

Variations on a theme by Mozart for four harpsichords [8:41]

George Malcolm, Valda Aveling, Geoffrey Parsons, Simon Preston (harpsichords)

English Chamber Orchestra/Raymond Leppard

rec. 1967. ADD. First release on CD

**DECCA ELOQUENCE 4824745** [56:41]



Reviewed as streamed from [Naxos Music Library](#) CD from [Amazon UK](#) – [Presto](#)

The inspiration for this recording was the annual 'Thomas Goff Harpsichord Jamboree', held at the Royal Festival Hall in the 1950s and 1960s and displaying instruments by that maker.

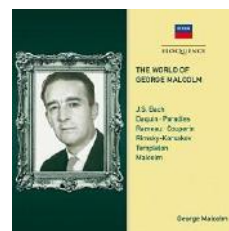
The reissue of the contents of SXL6318 for the first time on CD is most welcome. The past is a foreign country but it's often enjoyable to go there for a visit, in this case to an LP which I first met when it was reissued on Ace of Diamonds SDD451. In 1976 that mid-price LP cost £1.99, equivalent to at least £40 now, which makes the CD reissue for less than £8 first-rate value by that benchmark. We wouldn't do things like this now. Raymond Leppard was known for heavy tinkering and the CPE Bach is almost as much his. Older readers will recall that Boccherini's Cello Concerto in B-flat used to be performed in a similarly reworked version by Grützmacher. We can now listen to the original of the Boccherini and Miklós Spányi has recorded the authentic version of Wq.46 for BIS, with Wq.47 and Wq.109 (BIS-1967 – [DL News](#)).

Even in 1967 Stanley Sadie had cause to issue a caveat about the degree of dynamic variety in some of the concertos, which Bach could not have obtained with the instruments of his time, though it's a moot point if he could have at least envisaged achieving what he could have done on the organ by gradually adding stops. I have to admit that I liked the effect. That's quite



different from the argument, which I don't usually buy except at the hands of Glenn Gould or Angela Hewitt, namely that he would have written for the modern pianoforte if he could have.

**The World of George Malcolm** offers a survey of the wide range which he covered. His account of Bach's *Italian Concerto* is the highlight but the arrangement of *The Flight of the Bumble Bee* and the two final items, *Bach goes to Town* and Malcolm's own *Bach before the Mast* are the most enjoyable pieces. I don't think he ever recorded Percy Grainger's *Handel in the Strand* but this is music in that vein. The Goff harpsichord used here and on the other releases may not be the last word in authenticity but for once I don't object. **(DECCA ELOQUENCE 4825181)**.



Full details and purchase links in [review by Jonathan Woolf](#).

### Ludwig van BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

Piano Concerto No.1 in C, Op.15<sup>1</sup> [36:45]

Piano Concerto No.5 in E flat, Op.73<sup>2</sup> (*Emperor*) [39:16]

Andor Foldes (piano)

Bamberg Symphony Orchestra<sup>1</sup>; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra<sup>2</sup>/Ferdinand Leitner

rec. 1959<sup>2</sup>, 1960<sup>1</sup>. ADD. (First release on CD but already available as Hungaroton download, CLD4044 – available from [eclassical.com](#))

**DG ELOQUENCE 4827048** [76:09]

Reviewed as streamed from [Naxos Music Library](#). CD from [Amazon UK](#) – [Presto](#).



Piano Sonata No.8 in c minor, Op.13 (*Pathétique*) [16:09]

Piano Sonata No.15 in D, Op.28 (*Pastorale*) [20:57]

Piano Sonata No.17 in d minor, Op. 31/2 (*Tempest*) [20:11]

Piano Sonata No.21 in C, Op.53 (*Waldstein*) [21:48]

Piano Sonata No.23 in f minor, Op.57 (*Appassionata*) [21:28]

Piano Sonata No 26 in E flat, Op.81a (*Les Adieux*) [14:06]

Piano Sonata No.28 in A, Op.101 [19:25]

Piano Sonata No.30 in E, Op.109 [18:49]

Andor Foldes (piano)

rec. 1959-1963 ADD. (First release on CD)

**DG ELOQUENCE 4825854** [79:26 + 74:09] CD from [Amazon UK](#) – [Presto](#).



Piano Sonata No.4 in E flat, Op.7 [24:33]

Piano Sonata No.6 in F, Op.10/2 [10:37]

Piano Sonata No.9 in E, Op.14/1 [11:22]

Piano Sonata No.19 in g minor, Op.49/1 [7:59]

Piano Sonata No.31 in A flat, Op.110 [18:16]

Piano Sonata No.24 in F sharp, Op.78 '*À Thérèse*' [7:57]

Bagatelle in a minor, WoO 59 '*Für Elise*' [3:36]

Six Bagatelles, Op.126 [18:21]

*Ecossaise* in E flat, WoO 86 [2:15]

*Andante Favori* in F, WoO 57 [8:30]

32 Variations in c minor on an original theme, WoO 80 [10:40]

Two Rondos, Op.51 [5:38 + 8:51]

Piano Sonata No.25 in G, Op.79 [8:13]



Andor Foldes (piano)  
rec. 1957-1963. ADD.

**DG ELOQUENCE 4827053** [73:19 + 69:43] CD from [Amazon UK](#) – [Presto](#).

Born in Hungary and later living in America, Andor Foldes (né Földes) never quite got into the top rank of recording artists, though his (1950s mono) Kodály and Bartók (both now available from Eloquence, with selections from Hungaroton) were generally well received.

His Beethoven was a somewhat different matter: the general feeling was that, though technically excellent and with detailed attention to detail, there was not enough engagement with the spirit of the music. Jonathan Woolf thought much the same in reviewing Foldes' 1950-51 mono (78s) recordings for Danish Tono of three Beethoven sonatas, Op.12 (*Pathétique*), Op.78 and Op.79 on an APR reissue – [review](#).

The concertos in particular suffered from comparison with the DG series which remain in many ways my benchmarks for that period, from Wilhelm Kempff, falling between his mono recordings with Paul van Kempen and his stereo remakes with Ferdinand Leitner. I liked the recording of the first concerto, which makes me wish that Foldes had recorded some of the Mozart concertos, but the *Emperor* really needs greater engagement.

Again in the sonatas it's the earlier ones and the shorter pieces that come out best. Over half a century ago I used to think that I could play the *Bagatelles* and *Ecossaises* until I heard what they should sound like. I'd happily have settled for what Foldes makes of them. Listen to his accounts of the great late sonatas, Op.101, Op.109 and Op.110, however, alongside another budget-price Decca 2-CD set, from Alfred Brendel and there's no contest between the good and the great. (Sonatas 27-32: Decca Duo **4383742**). Alternatively there's Wilhelm Kempff, also in Nos. 27-32, on an inexpensive DG twofer (**E4530102**, download only – [DL Roundup](#)). And that's just to mention inexpensive recordings from within the same Universal stable as Eloquence. For a little more, at mid-price, but still within the Universal fold, there's Emil Gilels in Op.101 and Op.106 (DG Originals **4636392**).

It's a nice touch that the original LP sleeves are depicted in the booklets. Unfortunately I'm old enough to remember borrowing some of them from the university record library.

**Martha Argerich** recorded **BEETHOVEN's Piano Concertos Nos.1 and 2** with the Philharmonia and **Giuseppe Sinopoli** in 1985. These recordings have been available before at full- and mid-price but are now re-released on Eloquence **4828145** [65:16].



I've had time only to sample as streamed from [Naxos Music Library](#) but I predict that I shall be returning to these powerful performances which nevertheless don't overdo two works from Beethoven's early period. I still have a very soft spot for Stephen Kovacevich with the LSO and Colin Davis in these two concertos (Decca Virtuoso **4784225**, even less expensive than the Eloquence) or in all five (Eloquence **4805946**, 4 budget-price CDs with Violin Concerto, Triple Concerto, etc.)

## Pyotr Ily'ich TCHAIKOVSKY (1840-1893)

Symphony No.1 in g minor, Op.13 (Winter Reveries)<sup>1</sup> [44:12]

*The Nutcracker: Suite*, Op.71a<sup>2</sup> [22:54]

Symphony No.2 in c minor, Op.17 (Little Russian)<sup>3</sup> [33:40]

Symphony No.4 in f minor, Op.36<sup>4</sup> [41:36]

Boston Symphony Orchestra/Michael Tilson Thomas<sup>1</sup>

rec. 1970 ADD

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra/Ferdinand Leitner<sup>2</sup>

rec. 1960 ADD

New Philharmonia Orchestra/Claudio Abbado<sup>3</sup>

rec. 1968 ADD

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra/Claudio Abbado<sup>4</sup>

rec. 1976 ADD

**DG ELOQUENCE 4826168** [67:13 + 75:21]

Reviewed as streamed from [Naxos Music Library](#). CD from [Amazon UK](#) – [Presto](#).



Symphony No.3 in D, Op.29 (Polish)<sup>1</sup> [45:39]

*Marche Slave*, Op.31<sup>2</sup> [9:46]

*The Sleeping Beauty: Suite*, Op.66a<sup>3</sup> [19:54]

Symphony No.5 in e minor, Op.64<sup>4</sup> [45:50]

*Swan Lake*, Op.20: Suite<sup>5</sup> [28:25]

Vienna Symphony Orchestra/Moshe Atzmon<sup>1</sup>

rec. 1974 (first release on CD) ADD

Berlin Philharmonic/Ferdinand Leitner<sup>2</sup>

rec. 1960 ADD

Warsaw National Philharmonic Orchestra/Witold Rowicki<sup>3/5</sup>

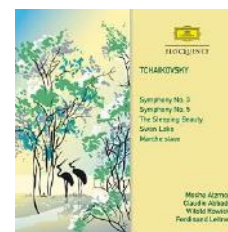
rec. 1960 ADD

London Symphony Orchestra/Claudio Abbado<sup>4</sup>

rec. 1972 ADD

**DG ELOQUENCE 4826176** [75:36 + 74:24]

Reviewed as streamed from [Naxos Music Library](#). CD from [Amazon UK](#) – [Presto](#).



Symphony No.6 in b minor, Op.74 (*Pathétique*)<sup>1</sup> [45:01]

*Romeo and Juliet* – Fantasy-Overture (Third version, 1880)<sup>2</sup> [20:22]

*Capriccio Italien*, Op.45<sup>3</sup> [15:16]

Manfred Symphony, Op.58<sup>4</sup> [65:26]

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra/Claudio Abbado<sup>1</sup>

rec. 1974 ADD

Boston Symphony Orchestra/Claudio Abbado<sup>2</sup>

rec. 1971 ADD

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra/Ferdinand Leitner<sup>3</sup>

rec. 1960 ADD

London Symphony Orchestra, Yuri Ahronovitch<sup>4</sup>

rec. 1970 ADD

**DG ELOQUENCE 4826184** [65:31 + 80:53]

Reviewed as streamed from [Naxos Music Library](#). CD from [Amazon UK](#) – [Presto](#).



Those collecting the Tchaikovsky symphonies could do much worse than to do so from these three 2-CD sets, yours for around £11 each. Claudio Abbado's recordings of symphonies Nos.

2, 4, 5 and 6, which form the backbone of the collection, are still among the finest available at any price, as is his account of *Romeo and Juliet*.

Abbado's recording of No.2 was first released on 139381 and quickly established itself as one of the front-runners. It resurfaced with No.4 on a budget-price DG Privilege/Resonus CD (**4295272**, download only), still my version of choice for No.2, though there are more powerful accounts of No.4, such as the Mravinsky (1960, below).

Michael Tilson Thomas's recording of No.1 is also well worth considering, as are the vintage Ferdinand Leitner tit-bits scattered across the six CDs. The recordings still sound well, too – sample, if you can, the rich-sounding Leitner *Capriccio Italien* to hear how well good analogue originals can be made to sound.

Yuri Ahronovich pulls *Manfred* around somewhat but you may feel that the music can stand it; the LSO play superbly and the recording is one of the best of these reissues. Despite the exaggerations, overall the work comes out so as to make you wonder why it's so neglected, though you will find better on offer from the likes of Jansons (Chandos) and Petrenko (Naxos) – see below.

All three twofers are well worth considering. Best of all is the first set with fine accounts of Nos. 1, 2 and 4, recommendable even if you have other versions of No.4. You may well be expecting a 'but' – and there is one, I fear. Some may find Abbado's accounts of Nos. 4 -6 a little under-powered and the wonderful playing and recording doesn't completely rescue the rather wayward *Manfred*.

There is greater consistency to be found in two other budget-price DG collections: Mikhail Pletnev's recordings of all the symphonies, including *Manfred*, and tone poems on **4778699** (7 CDs, often to be found on special offer for around £20) and Herbert von Karajan's set of the six numbered symphonies, concertos, etc. (**4667742**, 8 CDs, around £35). Also well worth considering, even if you already own some of the symphonies, is the Chandos set of symphonies 1-6, *Manfred* and *Capriccio Italien* from Mariss Jansons and the Oslo Philharmonic (**CHAN10392**, around £28).

Among more recent recordings of the symphonies I am not alone among my colleagues and other reviewers in recommending Vasily Petrenko with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic (Nos. 3, 4 and 6 Onyx **ONYX4162** – [review](#) – [review](#) – Nos. 1, 2 and 5 **ONYX4150: Recording of the Month** – [review](#) – [review](#) – [review](#)). His earlier account of *Manfred* is also well worth having (Naxos **8.570658**, with *Voyevoda*).

Best of all, however, are the recordings of symphonies nos. 4-6 on another DG 2-CD set, from Evgeny Mravinsky with the Leningrad Philharmonic (Originals **4775911**).

### **Doráti in Holland**

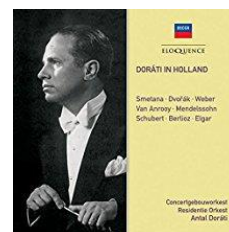
**Bedřich SMETANA (1824-1884)** *Vltava (Má Vlast)* [12:03]

**Antonín DVORÁK (1841-1904)** Slavonic Rhapsody in D, Op.45/1 [14:00]

Slavonic Rhapsody in g minor, Op.45/2 [14:15]

Slavonic Rhapsody in A flat, Op.45/3 [12:24]

**Peter Van ANROOY (1879-1974)** *Piet Hein Rapsodie* [9:14]





**Felix MENDELSSOHN (1809-1847)** *Ouvertüre Meeresstille und Glückliche Fahrt*, Op.27\* [13:20]

**Franz SCHUBERT (1797-1828)** *Ouvertüre im Italienischen Stil* in C, D.591\* [8:15]

**Carl Maria Von WEBER (1786-1826)** *Der Freischütz*: Overture, Op.77 [9:14]

*Oberon*: Overture, Op.67 [8:42]

*Euryanthe*: Overture, Op.81 [8:37]

*Preciosa*: Overture, Op.78\* [8:20]

**Hector BERLIOZ (1803-1869)** *Scène d'amour (Roméo et Juliette)*, Op.17) [17:23]

*La Damnation De Faust*, Op.24: *Menuet des follets* [6:06]

*Ballet des sylphes* [3:02]

*Marche hongroise* [4:23]

**Sir Edward ELGAR (1857-1934)** *Pomp and Circumstance March* in D, Op.39/1 [6:42]

Concertgebouworkest; Residentie Orkest/Antal Dorati

rec. February 1952, October 1952, September 1956, October 1957, September 1959,

First international release on Decca CD (\*First release in stereo)

**DECCA ELOQUENCE 4825659** [2 CDs: 156:00]

CD from [Amazon UK](#) – [Presto](#).

This is one for Doráti completists only.

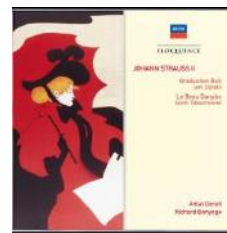
The rather effete *Vltava* which opens the first CD is not at all typical of Doráti's usual manner. In fact he seems not to have been at his best in this work: his later Mercury remake with the LSO suffers from much the same fault, but on Eloquence the very thin 1952 recording doesn't help at all. The same reservations apply to the Slavonic Rhapsody No.3, originally released on the 'flip' side of the same 10-inch LP (NBR6010), albeit with the Hague Orchestra rather than the Concertgebouw who recorded *Vltava*, though both perk up somewhat towards the end.

Doráti recorded the complete *Má Vlast*, again with the Concertgebouw, in 1956 and this has already been reissued by Eloquence. This time he took *Vltava* a little more expeditiously but it still drags; though there are some good things in the opening *Vyšehrad*, overall I agree with Ateş Orga – [detailed review](#) – that this is a far from ideal *Má Vlast* as performance or recording.

Van Anrooy's *Piet Hein* Rhapsody was also recorded in 1952. Based on a Dutch folksong about Spanish treasure, it deserves to be heard at least as often as *Svanda the Bagpiper* and it's perky without getting under the skin as that piece does. There's only one other current recording and that's download only. For once the 1952 mono doesn't sound too bad.

I've been pretty negative about many of these performances and the recorded sound: indeed none of the recordings are any great shakes by comparison with those which Mercury made with Doráti in London and Minneapolis at around this time and slightly later. The final track, Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance* No.1, recorded in 1959, is one of the most recommendable in every respect. It was released on a Philips EP, with Berlioz's *Racoczy March* on the reverse (SBF275) and it makes me wish that Doráti had recorded the other *Pomp and Circumstance* marches too. The overtures, too, and the Berlioz snippets are OK but overall this is not a recording by which I wish to remember Doráti.

Doráti's 1976 recording of his own arrangement of the music of the **STRAUSS Family**, *Graduation Ball*, with the Vienna Philharmonic is a much happier affair. It's coupled with Roger Désormière's confection *Le Beau Danube* (NPO/Richard Bonyngé, 1974) on **4767522** [71:18]. John Phillips gave it a strong recommendation and although Eloquence CDs have risen in price in the UK since that [review](#), in 2006, in every other respect I agree. An earlier (1953, mono) of the *Graduation Ball* on Beulah is also well worth having – [review](#). Bargain lovers will find Willi Boskovsky's 1961 VPO recording of *Graduation Ball* to download for as little as £0.84.



We return to 1956 for Doráti's recording of **TCHAIKOVSKY Symphony No.4 in f minor, Op.36**, and to 1952 for **MUSSORGSKY (arr. RAVEL) Pictures from an Exhibition**, both with the Concertgebouw Orchestra, both receiving their first outing on a Decca CD. (**4825553** [69:29]). Reviewed as streamed from [Naxos Music Library](#). CD from [Amazon UK](#) – [Presto](#).



The publicity quotes a 1954 review on the 'extreme clarity' of the Mussorgsky but, alas, time and recording quality have moved on since then. The Tchaikovsky receives a fine if not outstanding performance but the sound in both works is of the same *sub fusc* quality as on *Doráti in Holland*, muddy in Tchaikovsky and pinched in *Pictures*. Doráti recorded both works in later, better sound for Mercury. Decca recorded Ernest Ansermet in a powerful version of *Pictures* at around the same time, later reissued on Ace of Clubs with *La Valse*, the LP from which I got to know *Pictures* and decided that I didn't like *La Valse*. It's not entirely equalled as a performance by his stereo remake, now on Eloquence – [review](#) – so a reissue of the earlier mono would be welcome.

A word of warning: I've seen this and several other recent Eloquence releases offered as downloads, without notes, for considerably more than the £7.75 or so that the CDs cost – sometimes by the same dealers! Beware, too, of the fact that the price of the discs varies widely: £7.75 or £10.75 for 2-CD sets should be your target price.

My final Eloquence review provides a case in point. **Nicolai RIMSKY KORSAKOV (1844-1908) Scheherazade**, Op.35 [41:16] and **Alexander BORODIN (1833-1837) Polovtsian Dances** (from *Prince Igor*) [12:48], recorded by the Concertgebouw Orchestra (April 1956) and London Philharmonic Orchestra (April 1950) with Eduard van Beinum can be downloaded in mp3 for as little as £4.95 from [7digital.com](#) but choose lossless sound and the price rises to £11.15. More expensive still is the Qobuz download at £12.47, yet the CD can be yours from [Presto](#) for £7.75, with the booklet which doesn't accompany any of these downloads – including Presto's own, which costs £9.58 (mp3) or £11.97 (lossless). (**4825511** [54:04]). The logic of these prices escapes me.



The performance of *Scheherazade* is both energetic and tender and the violin solo among the best. It's well worth streaming from [Naxos Music Library](#) but the sound, though better than on the Doráti releases, is somewhat thin even by the best standards of the time. Matters improve in the final movement – or the performance is so overpoweringly good that I didn't notice – but Pierre Monteux's Decca recording with the LSO from only a little later, if not quite so exciting, sounds much better – that's on another Eloquence release, with Sir Adrian Boult's *Russian Easter Festival Overture* (**4808889**). Best of all from this vintage is Ernest Ansermet

with the OSR, reissued by Beulah on **1PDR15**, with *Russian Easter Festival Overture* and some short pieces – [DL News 2015/7](#).