

Mastering Equipment Used In Our Recordings

Digital: Weiss ADC2 Analog to Digital Converter

Mytek ADC192 Modified by Steve Nugent
of Empirical Audio

Lynx AES16 used for digital I/O

Antelope Audio Isochrone OCX Master Clock

Weiss Saracon Sample Rate Conversion Software

Weiss POW-r Dithering Software

Analog: Studer 810 Reel to Reel with
JRF Magnetics Custom Z Heads & Siltech wiring

Aria tape head pre-amp by ATR Services

Manley Tube Tape Pre-amps Modified by
Fred Volz of Emotive Audio

Cables: Purist Audio Design, Pure Note, Siltech

Power Cords: Purist Audio Design,
Essential Sound Products

Vibration Control: Symposium Acoustics Rollerblocks,
Ultra platforms, Svelte shelves

Sonic Studio CD.1 Professional CD Burner using
Mitsui Gold Archival CD's



HIGH DEFINITION TAPE TRANSFERS

Sibelius

Tempest Suites 1&2

Scaramouche (Incidental Music)

Jussi Jalas conducting the
Hungarian State Symphony Orchestra

Facts about this Recording

Recorded by Decca

June 1972 at Budapest

Producer András Székely • Engineer Laszlo Csintalan

The Tempest, Op. 109

Sibelius's late period has puzzling aspects. When the composer approached the age of 60, he found it more and more difficult to work. "Self-criticism is increasing to the point of impossibility," he commented. Yet there is no trace of these problems in the compositions dating from the start of the 1920s. The writing of the sixth and the seventh symphony (1923, 1924), and the music for *The Tempest* (1925-26) and *Tapiola* (1926) seem to have been rather easy for Sibelius compared to the difficult composition process of the fifth symphony (1915-19). Most importantly: in the same way as Sibelius in his last symphony perfected a genre which was vitally important to him, *Tapiola* is a masterly conclusion to his series of symphonic poems and *The Tempest* is his most magnificent work of incidental music.

The immediate impetus for *The Tempest* was an inquiry from Sibelius's Danish publisher Wilhelm Hansen, who asked in May 1925: "Have you composed music for *The Tempest*? Det Kongelige Teater in Copenhagen is going to perform this play and would like to use your music."

Interestingly enough, as early as 1901 Sibelius's friend and patron Axel Carpelan (died 1919) had suggested: "Now look here Mr S., shouldn't you someday direct your interest to the dramas of Shakespeare ... *The Tempest* should be very appropriate for you: Prospero (magician), Miranda, spirits of the earth and air etc." Given that Sibelius would shortly (1926) compose another work that had been suggested by Carpelan, a "Waldsymphonie" (realised as *Tapiola*), one could speculate that the subject-matter of *The Tempest* had been in his mind for a long time. The fate of another aging artist, Prospero, may have been one that he felt he could identify with.

The score of the new stage work began to take shape surprisingly quickly, during the autumn of 1925, and possibly also at the beginning of the following year. The incidental music lasts for over an hour. It is composed for vocalists, mixed-voice choir, harmonium and a large orchestra. The music comprises 36 pieces in all.

The first public performance took place in Copenhagen on 15th March 1926, and the music of the play was considered particularly successful.

"Shakespeare and Sibelius, these two geniuses, have found each other," was one comment.

Immediately after the premiere Sibelius wrote: "The *Tempest* music has many themes which I would like to deal with more thoroughly. Because of the drama I have only been able to outline them." It appears that the climax of *Tapiola* and its whole-tone and chromatic textures do indeed develop from the overture to *The Tempest*. Unfortunately, the composer gave up his intentions in other respects. The two orchestral suites prepared from the incidental music, plus the overture (published as a separate piece) comprise 19 pieces in all. In these Sibelius actually condensed and combined items from the stage music, sometimes in somewhat strange ways which obscured the drama.

Op. 71 Scaramouche

Music for Poul Knudsen's tragic pantomime of the same name. Completed in 1913; first performance in Copenhagen, 12th May 1922 (Det Kongelige Teater, conducted by Georg Høeberg). Arrangement for two pianos of *Danse élegiaque* and *Scène d'amour*, 1914; arrangement for violin and piano of *Scène d'amour*, 1925.

In the autumn of 1912 Sibelius was commissioned by the Danish publisher Wilhelm Hansen to compose the music for Poul Knudsen's tragic pantomime. Around the beginning of 1913 he received a new libretto, which to the astonishment of the composer also included dialogue. Sibelius was not happy about this, but he decided to fulfil the contract, although the work was more extensive than he had imagined: music for a complete pantomime instead of just a few dance pieces. The work was completed in December 1913, but no one knew when it would be performed.

Consequently, Sibelius also made a piano arrangement of a couple of scenes at the beginning of 1914. After that he forgot about the score for years, but in 1921 he had the idea of preparing an orchestral suite from the best parts of the music. This in its turn was forgotten when the Royal Theatre of Copenhagen finally gave the pantomime its premiere in May 1922. The critics praised the music as "sweet and strange". According to the *Berlingske Tidende* critic, "The most elevating and dignified part was the music of the performance." The critic of *Politiken* admired "the stamp of genius", commenting also on the composer's resourcefulness, his devilry and the strange perversity of the music. "Scaramouche great success in Copenhagen" was Sibelius's own comment in his diary. The following year (1923) Sibelius saw the work performed at the Finnish National Theatre. The critics liked the "expressionist" realisation, but they too were annoyed by the spoken lines, which were felt to be out of keeping with the idea of a pantomime. The plot involves a wandering hunchbacked dwarf, Scaramouche, whose viola has magical powers. With his music he sends the beautiful Blondelaine into a trance, during which she leaves her husband, Leilon, in the middle of a great feast. Sibelius writes decadent dance rhythms into the festive music, and Scaramouche's viola plays slow chromatic figures that have a demonic flavour. Leilon's longing is depicted by music of real beauty; from this Sibelius later prepared the melancholy *Scène d'amour* for violin and piano. The drama reaches its culmination when the remorseful Blondelaine kills Scaramouche. The husband and wife are together again, and the wife dances to the music of her husband, until she is frightened by the sight of blood flowing from behind the curtain. Scaramouche's viola melody is heard, literally, from beyond the grave, Blondelaine dies of shock, falling on Scaramouche's body, and Leilon goes mad at the sight.

Scaramouche was written for a small orchestra. The music does not use an entire complement of brass instruments, and it includes a part for piano. In addition, the composer ingeniously divides the orchestra into three elements: we have the musicians who are on the stage, the principal character who at times plays from behind the stage, and the orchestra itself. The music is translucent, refined, dreamlike and at times demonic in tone.

Scaramouche had many performances in the 1920s. The pianist Wilhelm Kempff saw it in Christiania (now Oslo) and expressed his admiration for it. In 1927 the Danish company performed the work in Paris. The music received very good reviews there as well.

The composer accepted Jussi Jalas's version of the orchestral suite, which preserves the original orchestration and condenses the drama of the pantomime into about twenty minutes.



Sibelius

Tempest Suites 1&2

Scaramouche (Incidental Music)

Jussi Jalas conducting the Hungarian State Symphony Orchestra

Tracks 1-10 Suite No. 1 (21:15)

Track 11-13 Suite No. 2 (14:48)

Track No. 14 Scaramouche suite (21:02)

Transferred from a London 4-track tape recorded in 1971

Please Note: In the interest of preserving the superb sound quality of these historic recordings, they have been preserved in their original, pristine state for maximum fidelity. Transferred from commercially released, analog reel-to-reel tapes (some of which are more than 50 years old), the recordings themselves can be subject to certain "artifacts" which are an inseparable part of the original analog recording process, such as tape "hiss" or other defects, and these may be audible on certain music tracks.

Because your CD or DVD-A was individually "burned" in order to realize superior sound quality to stamped, mass-produced versions, microscopic cosmetic blemishes may be visible. Please regard these tiny marks as evidence of the "human touch" in the care and individual attention that each and every HDTT disc receives during its very demanding manufacturing process.



For more info e-mail us:
admin@highdeftapetransfers.com
or visit our website:
www.highdeftapetransfers.com

