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ANDREW MANZE - CONDUCTOR

NDR Hannover / Last Night of the Proms / Handel, Walton, Vaughan Williams, Holst, Mendelssohn, Strauss

"In concert, the conductor impressed – not only for his exuberant energy – but with a baton which always allowed for more attention than you could hope for, with great feeling for huge emotions and for the colours of individual works."

Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung, September 2014

Recording: Larsson Orchestral Works Vol.1 [Symphony No.1, Four Vignettes from Shakespeare's 'The Winter's Tale', Music for Orchestra, Lyric Fantasy] / Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra [CPO 777671-2]

"*Music for Orchestra*, the *Vignettes* and *Lyric Fantasy* deserve wider currency. They draw splendidly idiomatic playing from the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra under the inspiring direction of departing Chief Conductor Andrew Manze, who has developed into one of the most gifted present-day occupants of the podium. CPO's sound is gorgeous."

Gramophone, September 2014

BBC Proms / BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra / Stephan, Kelly, Butterworth, Vaughan Williams

"In this programme of compositions dedicated to the First World War, it was impossible not to separate music from history. The shadow of hindsight glowered over all four pieces..."

The night opened with German composer Rudi Stephan's *Music for Orchestra* (1912), an ominous comment on the tensions in pre-war Europe. In one single movement, Stephan was able to convey fear and angst and at the Albert Hall conductor Andrew Manze expertly picked out the different textures and subtle shades which, in lesser hands, could have become rather blurred. Quivering strings and baying brass fully expressed the turmoil in the piece before dying down into a slow, sad reflection...

It [Kelly's *Elegy for Strings in Memoriam Rupert Brooke*] is a beautiful piece, achingly sad in its evocation of the Edwardian summer and the tragic inevitability of its passing. The swirling strings edged towards a regretful conclusion, Manze resting pensively as the final note was struck. It was hard to escape the sense of loss here or the knowledge that Kelly would die in the last days of the Somme...

In this centenary year, there has been much music, art, theatre and TV that has taken us back to the conflict. Sometimes we have been pulled right into depths of the trenches, sometimes we have been compelled to look through the long lens of history. This Prom, though, did something different. The freshness of the music made you feel near the atrocities but also helplessly removed from the fallen; you were there, like Vaughan Williams in 1921, trying to make sense of it all."

Daily Telegraph, August 2014

"Andrew Manze's concerts with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra have come to be regarded as special occasions. Their Prom, a thoughtful, haunting examination of the waste and damage of the first world war, was no exception..."

Stephan's *Music for Orchestra* (1912) and Butterworth's *Six Songs from A Shropshire Lad* (completed in 1911 and performed here in Phillip Brookes' 2012 orchestration), can be regarded as embodying prewar unease, though the former must also be seen as a self-conscious experiment in extreme chromaticism after the fashion of Zemlinsky or Schrecker. Butterworth's intimate settings of AE Housman's sad, at times homoerotic verse, beautifully sung by Roderick Williams, hint at the impending loss of male lives. The most striking work in the first half, however, was Kelly's *Elegy for Strings*, In Memoriam Rupert Brooke, a memorial to the war poet, who was among the composer's

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closest friends. Heartbreaking and exquisite, it left you longing for more of Kelly's work...

The performance [Vaughan Williams Symphony No. 3] was inspirational, beautifully judged in its subtle gradations of dynamic and mood, and played with near perfect grace and warmth."

Guardian, August 2014

"This was a Prom when it was impossible to shake off the First World War's death toll and mud...

Andrew Manze, the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra's associate guest conductor, handled Vaughan Williams with the love expected from someone who piled three VW symphonies into a single Prom in 2012... Manze made the right choices. Bugle-like horn and trumpet solos pierced the second movement's night air. We mourned a lost Arcadia and licked our wounds. No pastoral flatulence anywhere.

Before all that, two valuable novelties, spiritedly performed. With its grave opening, Rudi Stephan's tantalising Music for Orchestra from 1912 seemed to prefigure war sorrows to come. But our hearts were touched more by the simplicity of Elegy, In Memoriam Rupert Brooke by Frederick Kelly, who outlived the poet by just a year. First known as a demon baroque fiddler, Manze shaped this lost-generation reliquary with passion and flair, even though there wasn't a dotted semi-quaver in sight."

Times, August 2014

"Many of this year's Promenade concerts have directly or indirectly commemorated the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of war in Europe in 1914, but this programme by the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra conducted by Andrew Manze, entitled 'Lest We Forget', was distinctive in reminding us that in addition to the well-known musical tributes, outpourings and memories of this terrible conflict, there are indeed many past voices of great promise and feeling whom have been seldom heard during the intervening years – and that these voices sing from various sides of the political and geographical divide....

Manze skilfully controlled the tension [in Vaughan Williams Symphony No. 3] between the seemingly predominant tranquillity and the sudden up-wellings of emotion which disturb the cool surface; despite the absence of dramatic contrasts of tempo, dynamics and motivic material, Manze found real drama in this heartfelt music, shaping the undulating motifs articulately, the limited compass of the melodic meanderings conveying a suppressed aching...

Unhurried and spacious, subdued but eloquent, this was a deeply moving performance. Manze and the BBC SSO communicated a poignancy which was honest and direct. At the close, as Allan Clayton's lyrical utterance... faded forlornly, there were many in the RAH whose eyes were clouded with tears of remembrance and sadness."

Seen and Heard International, August 2014

BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra / Beethoven, Vaughan Williams

"The logic in leaving the Sea Symphony, his earliest and longest, till last was justified in a performance with the Edinburgh Festival Chorus and soloists Elizabeth Watts and Mark Stone that was glorious, effusive and rapturously expressive of Walt Whitman's soul-searching, sea-inspired text.

It's a work that requires equal measures of calculated precision and broad gesture. Manze's approach – coupled with the electrifying unanimity in attack and tone of the chorus, its engagement in delivery, the sheer emotive power of both soloists, and the heated expressiveness of the SSO – did exactly that...

In this – as in all his Vaughan Williams interpretations in this series – [Manze's] input was vital, inspirational and judicious. While exerting taut control of the myriad tempo changes, a sense of swirling ocean current pushed the music on with unstoppable force."

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Scotsman, May 2014

BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra / Copland, Beethoven, Schumann

"On Thursday night I was comprehensively blown away by the white-hot performance of Schumann's Second Symphony that the BBC SSO produced for Manze, played with an almost incandescent immediacy.

There is a big picture to this complex symphony, one which not all conductors bring off the page and sustain. Manze had it all: the symphony never teetered. Its first movement was fired by his iron grip on the growing intensity that fuels it throughout, while successfully unleashing its torrential outpouring of energy. The Scherzo was fast, light and racing (almost endangering articulation) while the great slow movement (a love song) pulsed along, not wallowing, but breaking this listener's heart anyway, and the finale, at an astounding speed, with virtuoso orchestral ensemble playing, lashed the ears like a bracing wind."

Herald, March 2014

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra / Schubert, Schumann, Purcell (arr. Manze), Mozart

"The concert was certainly a personal triumph for Manze. Schubert's Third Symphony is the kind of piece that needs to be done with deep affection and understanding or not at all. Under Manze's direction it was all energy and light: the first movement sprightly but still allowing room for genial exchanges, the second deliciously subtle but never self-regarding, the third full of Viennese cosiness but never tasteless, the finale fast but never overdriven. How difficult those "buts" are to achieve, yet how natural Manze and his musicians made everything feel..."

The undoubted glory of the concert was Mozart's 40th Symphony. This was another marvel of transparent balance, airborne phrasing and sure instinct for dramatic highpoints."

Daily Telegraph, December 2013

"Manze was clearly in his element demonstrating his undoubted prowess with the central Viennese classics. Animated as usual on the podium Manze throughout drew glowing and alert performances from the Liverpool Phil with noticeably vivacious and crisply sprung rhythms..."

Under the assured baton of the energetic Manze, the Liverpool Phil gave a delectable performance, cleanly articulated and highly expressive. The strikingly played opening movement Molto allegro [of Mozart Symphony No. 40] with such lovely control of pace and dynamics was matched only by the Menuetto notable for its full rounded sound together with plenty of bite and ebullience."

Seen and Heard International, December 2013

Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra / Britten, Purcell, Mozart

"You could see and hear the pleasure with which the Gewandhaus orchestra responded to the slightly frenzied beat of the wonderful Andrew Manze, who made sure that this musical guide to the orchestra did not become a dry, academic exercise, instead presenting the audience with music that is rich and luxuriant, witty and ironic, rumbustiously effective and visceral..."

Even in the opening quavers of the Molto Allegro [of Mozart Symphony No.40], Andrew Manze made it clear that he does not see Mozart as an innocuous, elegant classical composer. His interpretation was one of sharp contrasts, of light and shade. And when the repeat came, the character of the exposition changed completely, bringing even more impetus and a greater sense of unease – the same notes from the same musicians sounding more unsettling.

With his ultra-precise, energetic beat the Briton was completely reliant on the orchestra's ability to react quickly, and the musicians, led by Frank-Michael Erben, delivered. This was a very British Mozart – lean and transparent, totally controlled and yet with an airy, diaphanous and delicate quality. The audience was overjoyed with this fantastic orchestra and a conductor and soloist that we would very definitely like to see invited back."

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Leipziger Volkszeitung, November 2013

BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra / Tippett, Mozart, Vaughan Williams

"Andrew Manze's Vaughan Williams cycle with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra has been a powerful journey so far, scaling the vast terrain of these symphonies with lucidity, steel and some mighty orchestral sounds. Here they arrived at the Seventh: the great Sinfonia Antartica, composed by Vaughan Williams in the early 1950s out of his film score for the Ealing Studios epic *Scott of the Antarctic*.

It's brilliantly visual music... the third movement is prefaced with a quotation from Coleridge – "Motionless torrents! Silent cataracts!" – that Vaughan Williams responds to with a deep, brooding energy and the BBCSSO turned into a thrilling rumble. The symphony's whopping sonic scale was there with some ear-blasting orchestral climaxes, but Manze also kept the grandiose in check and made the more interesting human dimension of *Scott* and his painful sacrifice the real meat of this performance."

Guardian, November 2013

"Manze's feel for the entire symphonic edifice, with its filmic pace, its chilled landscape, its loaded imagery and mysterious, exotic colourings, was both epic and beautifully detailed."

Scotsman, November 2013

BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra / Wagner, Vaughan Williams & Beethoven

"Manze sculpted lines of searing intensity through the densely loaded score [of Vaughan Williams' Symphony No. 9]; there's a clarity to the textures he draws from this orchestra that really focused and drove the symphony's wayward energy. As in Wagner's *Prelude to act one of Lohengrin*, which opened the concert, the passages of high, shimmering strings were especially ravishing – it's in these that Manze's alter ego as a violinist particularly shines through... His choice not to overegg the extremes, and the orchestra's bold responses, made this as forthright and coherent a performance of the work as you're likely to hear."

Guardian, May 2013

Scottish Chamber Orchestra / Mendelssohn, Schumann, Martinsson & Beethoven

"Manze is a conductor possessed of a very keen intelligence who has clearly thought very deeply about everything he conducts. He has a sensational ear for detail, and he is a brilliant communicator into the bargain, both with the audience and with the musicians. Take his reading of the Beethoven symphony, for example, which crackled with life. The first movement's introduction was delicate and precise before giving way to a lithe, flexible Allegro. The slow movement encompassed everything from pristine delicacy in the strings to ebullient blustering in the tutti passages, Manze delicately grading the sound to produce a wide range of effects..."

Seen and Heard International, January 2013

BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra / Bacewicz, Beethoven & Vaughan Williams

"Anyone who's listened to Andrew Manze conduct the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra recently, or who's heard pianist Steven Osborne play Beethoven ever, might have guessed at the calibre of this concert. And still, the evening was little short of revelatory. Manze's rapport with the orchestra is a pleasure to witness and draws some of the most concerted orchestral playing you're likely to hear anywhere."

Guardian, five stars, October 2012

Mostly Mozart Festival, New York / Bach, Mendelssohn & Mozart

"The performance was shining and tight, responsive and lively but never exaggerated... In the fourth-movement *Bourrée*, Mr. Manze brought out the dotted rhythm in the winds that lies under the flowing passagework in the upper strings, one of many occasions when he emphasized inner lines without distorting the larger phrases... In Mozart's *Jupiter Symphony* the orchestra was focused and

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bright. In the fourth movement there is an unexpected series of crazily chromatic chords; but in this performance, given the vibrancy of what had preceded it, it seemed utterly natural. The audience was ready for anything under Mr. Manze's exciting direction."

New York Times, August 2012

"He [Manze] impressed on this occasion with his no-nonsense authority, his interpretive warmth and reluctance to dawdle over too familiar impulses."

Financial Times, August 2012

"As a conductor, he [Manze] has risen quickly in the ranks, and one can see why. In addition to his energetic and totally committed conducting style, he brought with him some magic fairy dust that turned a traditional orchestra into an early-music group... Mozart's "Jupiter" Symphony received a vibrant, nearly electrifying interpretation. Manze conducted with his whole body. He brought out some wonderful effects by revealing buried motives normally not heard, such as the whispering strings in the transitions of the first movement or the bright and breezy wind playing in the third movement *Minuetto*. The finale was a non-stop whirlwind of sounds redoubling with intensity at the coda's conclusion."

Seen and Heard International, August 2012

BBC Proms / BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra / Vaughan Williams Symphonies 4, 5 & 6

"Vaughan Williams may have written some of the nation's most requested pop classics, but a concert consisting solely of three of his symphonies is still a gamble, even at the Proms. Just such a braveheart act of audacity, however, paid off absolutely for Andrew Manze and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra in this Prom, with a gratifyingly packed Albert Hall treated to passionately committed conducting and playing and, most important of all, a huge affirmation of Vaughan Williams's enduring symphonic achievement..."

The three symphonies are works of tremendous compositional originality, too, respectively violent, rhapsodic and implacable. Hearing them together was a compelling and concentrated experience of the sort you rarely get in the concert hall.

The credit for much of this belongs to Manze, whose direction never faltered. The fourth had an unflagging energy reminiscent of the composer's own benchmark recorded performance of 1937, but with the hushed moments more ravishingly realised. The fifth showed what an influence Manze is having on the string playing of the BBCSSO, conjuring glowing pianissimos at the start of the third movement *Romanza* and in the resolution into the home key at the close of the finale. The sixth, difficult and enigmatic as ever, was boldly led and fearlessly played, with Manze even finding an unexpected inner tonal glow deep in the famously icy finale."

Martin Kettle, *Guardian*, five stars, August 2012

"Conductor Andrew Manze registered all the changes of mood, but he didn't indulge any of them. He aimed for a fleet, urgent and transparent sound, which the orchestra certainly delivered. The approach paid off, lightening Vaughan Williams's sometimes over-heavy scoring, and mitigating what for me is the music's over-insistent emphasis on film-score tension."

Ivan Hewett, *Daily Telegraph*, August 2012

"If the Fourth Symphony has always seemed anomalous on account of its ferocious aggression, Manze reminded us that there's introspection and lyrical beauty too. The Fifth has always been popular for its serenity, though its very first chord is a discord — a gentle one but a discord nevertheless. Manze's heartfelt, insightful account, wonderfully delivered by the BBCSSO, patiently achieved the work's spiritual resolution. The long, long silence in the hall after the final chord spoke volumes.

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The Sixth Symphony evokes the horrors of war but Manze skilfully guided us too into that Whitmanesque Unknown Region — terrain that betokens Vaughan Williams at his most searching. Performances as fine as these demonstrate that taken together, the three symphonies embrace existential anxiety as well as sublimity: turbulent modernity as well as reassuring traditionalism. Readings, then, that decisively scotched the charge of parochialism. Mission accomplished.”

Barry Millington, *Evening Standard*, August 2012

Recording: Brahms Symphonies 1-4, Variations on a theme of Haydn, Tragic Overture, Academic Overture / Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra [CPO 777720-02]

“You don't often find freshness and innovation in performances of the Brahms symphonies, but Manze's take is wholly individual: they burst with life, by turns wistful, yearning, sharp-edged and blisteringly incisive... Transparency and contrast are stressed, rather than the homogeneity and blend usually favoured, which makes the fierce argument of No 1, throwing fragments across the orchestra, almost cinematic in its intensity. The antiphonal writing in No 4 is similarly vivid and strongly characterised, and the pent-up tension reaches an electrifying release in the brittle chords of the final pages of the great passacaglia. Manze's vision provides more than an "early music" approach to Brahms: this is the composer reinvented for the 21st century.”

Guardian, May 2012

“This is a remarkable new Brahms cycle: one of the most fiery, original and thought-provoking sets of the symphonies to have appeared in the digital era... Listening to these discs, I have found myself genuinely excited by performances that bring so many fresh insights to Brahms's music, while remaining utterly faithful to the text. It is music-making like this that justifies so much of the research into performance practice in the late nineteenth century... Hearing Andrew Manze's set of these masterpieces, I feel as if I have been on a fascinating and stirring journey of rediscovery.”

International Record Review, April 2012

“Brimming with enthusiasm and knowledge, ... [Manze] has found a new way of listening to Brahms ... [This is] full of wonderfully radiant playing ... I've never heard [the second symphony] played as lovingly as this ... Chamber music[-making] to an extraordinary degree.”

BBC CD Review, April 2012

“Having played the first disc, I was so captivated that I had to hear the whole set at one session. There wasn't a moment when I lost concentration or had wandering attention, as the playing is excellent. Although Manze's implementation of Brahms's extra markings and concentration on bow-speed in the strings rather than volume do not lead to radical differences, the overall effect of these symphonies is powerfully conveyed. This is a cycle which excels in clarity of structure, conveyance of emotion and fertility of invention.”

SA-CD.net, May 2012

Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra / Prokofiev & Rachmaninov

“Has the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra ever been better? I do not think so and I know what I'm talking about after 43 years as a reviewer. The joy of playing, precision and balance the orchestra now has is incomparable. Under its chief conductor Andrew Manze, the orchestra seems to react as a body, an instrument, refined in each section, as in each individual member.”

Helsingborg Dagbladet, May 2012

Scottish Chamber Orchestra / Cherubini & Beethoven

“I have rarely sensed an audience so comprehensively pinned to their seats. It was a very big audience. And what a tour de force of performance we witnessed...”

Manze and the SCO, totally locked together, and with the band playing like the virtuoso outfit it is, tore through a revelatory account of the Eroica that, without overcooking the music, underlined, in

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its big structure and its every pristine detail, just what an unprecedented and revolutionary work the Eroica is, even to this day.

For the record, the colossal, long-range performance of the slow movement, assembling like a huge edifice in sound, was a masterpiece of music-making.”

The Herald, February 2012

“The gleaming, transparent readings delivered by period-performance expert Andrew Manze, making a welcome visit as conductor, ensured a lightness and a sparkling drama to the performances that held the audience rapt...

Manze's reading of the 'Eroica' Symphony was high on drama right from its resounding opening chords.

Yet Manze's striking interpretation, while agile and nimble, drew a glowing richness from the SCO players, the strings in particular producing a radiantly lustrous sound. There was an appealing fluidity to the funeral march, and a touching sense of inevitability to its imposing fugato. The concert's opener, the overture to Cherubini's little-known opera *Démophon*, again showed off the SCO's gleaming tones and Manze's long, beautiful lines.”

Edinburgh Reporter, February 2012

BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra / Butterworth, Nielsen & Beethoven

“Andrew Manze seemed to appreciate that it is from this nostalgic familiarity that the work [Butterworth's *Two English Idylls*] gains its power; accompanied by a string sound that had both depth and delicacy, the richness of the woodwind in its lower registers bathed the work in a sunset hue.

The same goes for his direction in the Beethoven, which is pastoral by name but rarely so bucolic as under Manze. The straight-edged elegance of the phrasing, the unanimity of the dynamic colouring, the care taken over each solo – all articulated the aching pleasure of nostalgia.”

Scotsman, five stars, October 2011

Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra / Mozart, Larsson, Mendelssohn & Haydn

“Andrew Manze's sense of more modernist music is exquisite. He does not unnecessarily complicate it, but lets it find its own way to the listener. He was especially successful with the completion of the last Larsson piece, which was utterly compelling.”

Hd.se, September 2011

BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra Prom / Brahms, Schumann & Brahms arr. Schoenberg

“[There was] real visceral excitement... with Manze's gripping account of Schoenberg's whacky arrangement of Brahms's Piano Quartet. There was a Lisztian grandeur and headiness to Manze's evocation of the patchwork quilt of gypsy tunes and rhythms. He shaped the BBCSSO very stylishly and they responded in kind with some impressive contributions.”

Arts Desk, August 2011

“There was plenty of passion, the BBC Scottish Symphony responding robustly to its Associate Guest Conductor in the fast music, a silvery sheen applied to the Intermezzo by way of muted violins, their melody attractively shaped. With boundless vigour Manze persuaded us to warm to Schoenberg's arrangement, so much so that we could forgive the outlandish flourishes of the finale, for they crowned a most enjoyable performance.”

Classical Source, August 2011

Swedish Chamber Orchestra / Bach, Pärt & Stravinsky

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“Andrew Manze is childishly enthusiastic; his charm and joy rubs off on both the orchestra and the audience... Manze’s enthusiasm was at its best in Stravinsky's "Concerto - Dumbarton Oaks" for fifteen musicians, and in tonight's opening symphony of J.S.Bach's son Carl Philip Emanuel. With effective gestures, Manze understood Stravinsky's rhythmically complex music and made it swing. “
Meny.nu, May 2011

Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra / Bach *St Matthew Passion*

“Andrew Manze had complete control over the performance, demonstrating precision and accuracy all the way down to his fingertips. He does not direct with heavy arms, but he follows and melts into the music. Living in Bach’s wonderful world, he kept in touch with the performers with unobtrusive glances... Overall it was a great experience. It was like a journey into a world of ethereal beauty.”
Kultur Speilet, April 2011

Scottish Chamber Orchestra / Prokofiev, Mozart, Lottim & Shostakovich

“But in the perfect acoustics of the City Halls, Andrew Manze and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra took an altogether deconstructive (and reconstructive) approach to the unfussy neo-classical music, drawing attention to the charismatic eccentricities of Prokofiev's scoring. Manze picked out seemingly arbitrary elements – a minuscule horn motif here, a linking viola phrase there – and exposed them in a way that transformed this normally innocent jewel into an explosion of textural surprises. Would Prokofiev have approved of moments that laced the opening movement with snatches of terror, or injected the Gavotte with a sinister undercurrent? All that matters is that Manze made a convincing job of persuading us ...

More eccentricity in the second half as Manze prefaced Shostakovich's Chamber Symphony No 1 (Rudolf Barshai's scoring of the Eighth String Quartet) with his own string arrangement of a vocal work by Baroque composer Antonio Lotti... The impact was utterly haunting.”
Scotsman, March 2011

Seattle Symphony Orchestra / Tallis, Corelli, Vaughan Williams & Elgar

“Who would have expected a program built around 20th-century English music for strings to rouse a Seattle audience to a standing ovation? There were several reasons for the vociferous cheers that greeted Andrew Manze's debut conducting the Seattle Symphony, and they were all good ones.

... Manze introduced the various works with a wit that had the audience eating out of his hand before he even started to conduct. And then, quite aside from the quality of the music itself, there is Manze's own musical gift to consider. Formerly known mainly as a violinist with a specialty in period-instrument performance, he now seems likely to become a conductor of high distinction. He has hands, as orchestra players say. He has charisma, and he has patience. Trusting the music and the audience, he never rushes sustained passages for fear that the former may lose its hold on the latter. ...

Especially rewarding was the performance of the Tallis Fantasia. ... Keeping the melodic line smooth, he evoked in this wonderful music the inward ecstasy that is peculiarly and authentically English.

No wonder the audience cheered.”

Seattle Times, May 2010

BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra / Brahms & Schumann

“After what transpired in the City Hall yesterday afternoon, there is one thing we can say about Andrew Manze, the BBC SSO’s new associate guest conductor, who takes up his post later this year: with Manze around musical life is not going to be dull.

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The man is spring-loaded. He doesn't conduct conventionally (whatever that might be). It's a whole-body exercise, from his arms to his hips and beyond. He is so animated that at one point, quite irreverently, the thought flashed through my brain: I hope his boots are nailed to the podium or he might take off and bang his head on the roof.

The man is a total energiser. He launched the SSO into the introduction of Brahms's First Symphony with such force and velocity that I inadvertently yelped and sat bolt upright, giving the chap next to me a bit of a start (sorry, sir).

There were rough edges to the ensemble, but it was electrifying, edge of the seat stuff. That said, attack is not Manze's only mode. He gave the music of the slow movement, pacy though it was, acres of space, outstandingly in the glorious duet passages between leader Peter Thomas and first horn David Flack.

And, as exemplified in the elegance of third movement, he does grace and poise too. But there's something raw and vital about Manze's energy, and it was back in the blazing, closing pages of the finale."

The Herald, March 2010

Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin / Bach & Mendelssohn

"[Andrew Manze] proved once again beyond any doubt that he has thoroughly penetrated the language of the Baroque. It was astonishing to hear how he shaped the architecture of Bach's suite for orchestra no.3; and how he dissected the polyphony without removing even the tiniest breath of life. And the DSO followed his interpretation with the greatest of rigour, not once losing their composure, even in the festive Bourrée movement. After the interval, the academic charm of the final counterpoint from "The art of fugue" did not work against the pleasure of the music-making, but rather complemented it. The famous BACH theme was performed as a free-spirited study; a theory of harmony and counterpoint in the liveliest of forms."

Der Tagesspiegel, April 2009

Scottish Chamber Orchestra / Mendelssohn, Mozart & Schubert

"Performers become conductors with mixed results. Andrew Manze, who first came to prominence as a violinist specialising in early music, is one who has made the transition quite brilliantly. In this opening concert of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra's Mendelssohn 200 series, his dynamic authority over the players elicited playing of the very highest distinction."

Scotsman, January 2009

"The conducting career of violinist Andrew Manze is rocketing, and in every bar of each piece he directed on Friday with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra you could see and hear why. Everything he touches emerges fresh and newly minted; everything has a new perspective; and, with the SCO at its most responsive, homogeneous in ensemble, and pristine in its balance and articulation, the level of sophistication that characterised a marvellous concert was truly a thing of wonder."

The Herald, January 2009

Scottish Chamber Orchestra / Beethoven

"The spotlight was back on Manze for Beethoven's Seventh Symphony. And once again he had something unique to say. Forget the broad outline, which was intelligent and proportionally paced. But within the detail, such nuggets as the vibrato-less string opening of the second movement made you sit up and listen intently. Manze is one conductor worth watching."

Scotsman, January 2008

Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra / Beethoven Symphony No.3 *Eroica* (Harmonia Mundi)

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"Andrew Manze has had the ingenious idea of coupling the Eroica with the set of contredanses in which the theme of the symphony's finale first appeared, and with the finale of Beethoven's ballet score *The Creatures of Prometheus*, the melody's second appearance. What makes the disc exceptional, however, is the superb clarity and incisiveness of the performances. The splendid Swedish orchestra plays the Eroica as if discovering and revelling in its beauty and audacity for the first time. Manze sets a spanking tempo for the opening movement, but always gives the music room to breathe, and the rest is equally inspiring."

Sunday Times, June 2008

"A robust Beethoven 'Eroica' that motors relentlessly onwards, powered by the intellectual might of British conductor Andrew Manze. The opening movement, with its richness of harmonic ambiguity, is persuasively argued as Manze finds common cause between Beethoven's vivid harmonic turnarounds and the hard-hitting transparency of his orchestration. The second movement funeral march is imposing and lingers in the imagination, while the final two movements are filled with deeply authentic, coolly controlled mania. The Twelve Contretänze contain material that Beethoven re-worked into his *Creatures of Prometheus* Ballet, which in turn found its way into the 'Eroica'. Skeletons from Beethoven's cupboard - Manze's got the key."

Classic FM Magazine, May 2008

"Manze takes a surprisingly Romantic view of the Eroica, with a lingering account of its funeral march second movement that allows the trumpets to ring out to overwhelming effect in the C major blaze of sound immediately preceding the first reprise of the initial funeral march theme. The remainder of the Symphony is no less impressive, with accomplished playing from the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra. This is an Eroica to set alongside recent recommendations from Paavo Järvi and the Bremen Kammerphilharmonie (RCA), and Osmo Vänskä and the Minnesota Orchestra. Manze's disc shouldn't be missed."

BBC Music Magazine, April 2008

"Andrew Manze possesses a lightness of touch in his conducting that never loses contact with the depth of a musical work, even one so enigmatic and potentially hazardous as Beethoven's Eroica Symphony. The mud-free opening of this fresh new version of the symphony with the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra exhibits that very quality, its exuberant energy establishing a momentum that seems natural and organic, without losing the essential profundity of the work. The funeral march is solemn, but with an inbuilt optimism; the scherzo is unstoppably effervescent; the finale has a petulant quality that says something about the defiant Beethoven that is way above the mundane. Manze rounds off this exceptional disc with the 12 Contretänze and the finalé from *The Creatures of Prometheus*."

Scotsman, April 2008

"Radical rubato, violent coups d'archets, beautiful woodwind detailing, and a strikingly slow 'Marche funèbre' contribute to a sense of freshness and dynamism, while the '12 Contretänze' and the finale of 'Die Geschöpfe des Prometheus' illustrate how one modest melody ignited a music revolution."

Independent, March 2008

"It seems almost an anomaly to suggest that a new recording of the Eroica might be fresh, perceptive, distinctive and exciting. Yet the handsomely packaged release from Harmonia Mundi of the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra under the direction of British violinist-conductor Andrew Manze is all these things... This Eroica may confidently take its place with some of the finest available – those of Weingartner, Furtwängler and Abbado, for example – and bears a comparison with other historically informed readings, such as those of Harnoncourt and Gardiner. Very highly recommended."

International Record Review, March 2008

pressquotes

Scottish Chamber Orchestra / Mozart *Requiem*

"[Manze] lovingly shaped the individual movements into a dramatically satisfying whole... it was the sensitivity to detail - the sudden celestial quiet of the *Voca Me* after the opening fury of the *Confutatis*, the increasing magnitude of each successive declamation of *Sanctus* - that made the performance stand out."

Guardian, May 2006