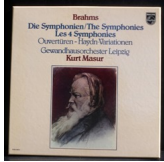


Brahms - Symphony no. 4 (Kurt Masur) [1979]

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Brahms - Symphony no. 4 (Kurt Masur) [1979]



1. Allegro non troppo 2. Andante moderato 3. Allegro giocoso 4. Allegro energico e passionato Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra Kurt Masur - conductor

The sweetness in the string tone, allied with the Leipzig acoustic and glowing woodwind and brass timbres make this an outstanding disc. Masur in his younger days made this orchestra play their hearts out and this was evident in these performances. The problem was that the sound was affected by the variable transfer quality of the original Philips LPs.

In many ways, this fourth symphony of Brahms is his masterpiece among the symphonies. In this performance the first movement, with its extended coda, makes for thrilling listening. The slow movement is warmly played and is unlikely to be anything other than fully enjoyed by anyone coming to it for the first time. As most music lovers know, Brahms put out the boat for this symphony in terms of orchestration, for in addition to the normal symphonic complement he added a triangle. In some recordings this slight brightening of the texture can almost go unnoticed but here it is clearly audible, making its contribution to the symphonic argument.

What is notable is the absolute rightness of the sound of this symphony and of the two overtures. The East German (as it was then) instrumental timbres are extremely attractive, especially the sound of the woodwind, so important in this symphony. The microphones are set somewhat back from the orchestra, so a clear concert perspective of the players is the main audio characteristic. --- John Phillips, musicweb-international.com

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