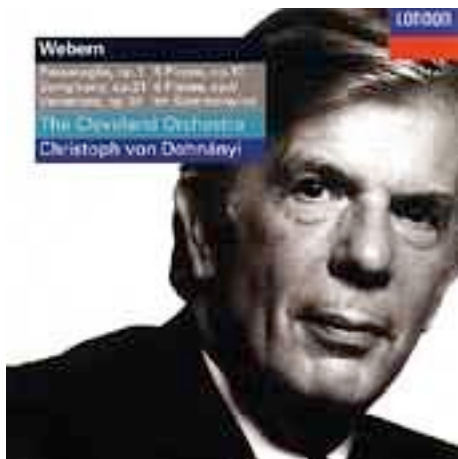


CHRISTOPH von DOHNÁNYI

CONDUCTOR

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ANTON WEBERN

Passacaglia Op. 1; Six Pieces Op. 6; Symphony Op. 21; Five Pieces Op. 10; Variations Op. 30; Im Sommerwind

J.S. BACH

Fuga ricercata from The Musical Offering (orch. Webern)
Cleveland Orchestra

Christoph von Dohnányi

Decca- 444 593 2(CD)
Reference Recording

Artistic Quality **10/10** *Sound Quality*

Webern's complete orchestral output fits comfortably on a single CD, with plenty of room for his orchestration of the six-voice Ricercare from Bach's Musical Offering. That's precisely what we have here, featuring Christoph von Dohnányi and the Cleveland Orchestra in sparkingly engineered, immaculately executed, and lovingly vibrant interpretations that remain points of reference to this day.

As with Boulez and the Berlin Philharmonic, Dohnányi/Cleveland deliver a similarly seamless blending of fragile contrapuntal lines as they assiduously pass from one section to the next, or from soloist to group. However, the Cleveland musicians consistently project a wider and more varied range of timbral inflection and characterization, along with more force and tonal heft in loud tuttis.

Listen, for example, to the massed string writing in the climaxes of Im Sommerwind and the Passacaglia, or by contrast, notice the gorgeous dovetailing between the flute's flutter-tongued passages and the solo violin's wide interval leaps in the first Op. 10 piece. And in no other recording of the Bach/Webern Ricercare do the blended brass and woodwind voicings so vividly evoke the edgy, tart sonorities that characterize many Baroque organs. Thanks to Arkivmusic.com's on-demand reprint program, the best Webern orchestral disc ever compiled returns to its rightful place in the catalog, where it should live forever.

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