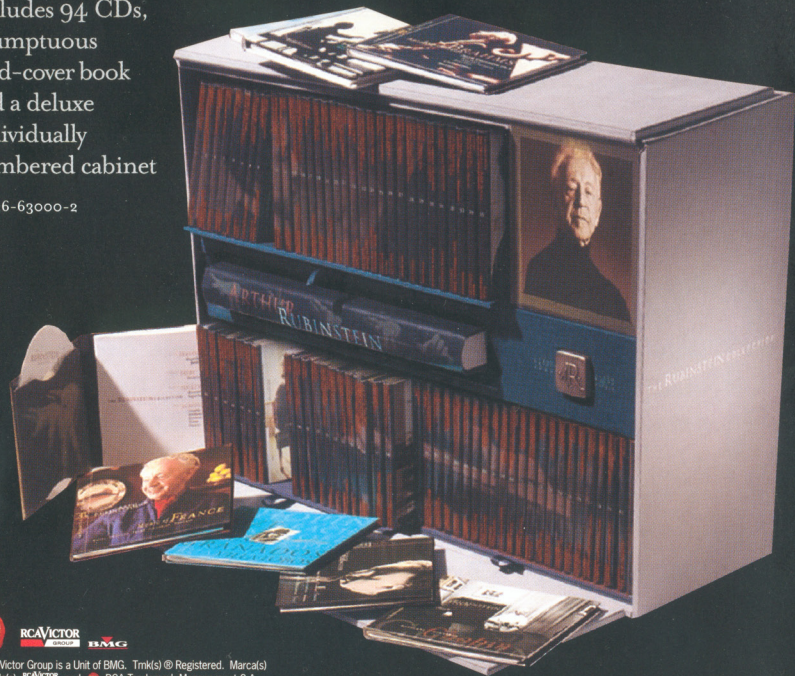


09026-63067-2

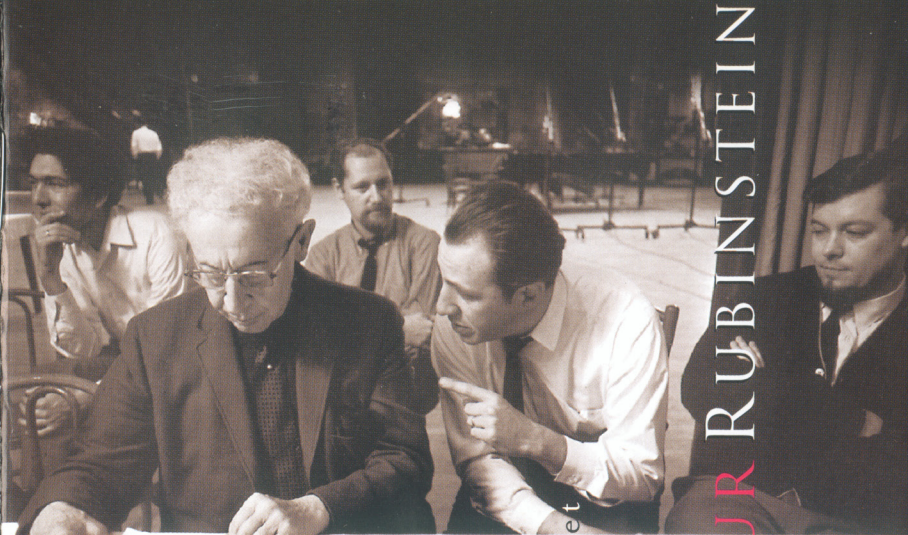
THE ARTHUR RUBINSTEIN COLLECTION A LIFE IN MUSIC

Includes 94 CDs,
a sumptuous
hard-cover book
and a deluxe
individually
numbered cabinet

09026-63000-2



The RCA Victor Group is a Unit of BMG. Tm(k)s (c) Registered. Marcas Registradas. RCA Victor and RCA Trademark Management S.A. BMG is a trademark of BMG Music. © 2003 BMG. Manufactured and Distributed by BMG Distribution, a unit of BMG, 1540 Broadway, New York, NY 10036-4098. Printed in the USA.



Dvořák Brahms Piano Quintets

Guarneri Quartet

ARTHUR RUBINSTEIN



Henri Dauman / BMG Classics

Piano Quintet, Op. 34

Johannes **Brahms**
(1833-1897)

THE RUBINSTEIN COLLECTION

Antonín **Dvořák**
(1841-1904)

Piano Quintet, Op. 81

Guarneri Quartet

Arnold Steinhardt, *violin*

John Dalley, *violin*

Michael Tree, *viola*

David Soyer, *cello*



Produced by Max Wilcox

Recording Engineer: Richard Gardner
Recorded at Webster Hall (*Brahms*) and
in RCA Studio A (*Dvořák*), New York City

Reissue produced by Nathaniel S. Johnson
Engineer: Thomas MacCluskey
Remix engineer (*Dvořák*): James Nichols

Digitally remastered in BMG / RCA Studios, New York City

Compilation Producer and
Production Supervisor: Nathaniel S. Johnson

Executive Producer: Daniel Guss

Project and Editorial Supervisor: Lynne S. Mazza

Editorial Coordinator: Kathleen Finnegan

Documentation Research: Nancy Swift

Übersetzung/Traduction: Byword, London

Art Direction: Albert Lee

Design: I:I

Cover photograph: Arnold Steinhardt, Arthur Rubinstein,

Michael Tree, David Soyer, John Dalley

by Henri Dauman

BRAHMS

PIANO QUINTET, OP. 34

in F minor / f-moll / fa mineur (38:54)

- 1 Allegro non troppo (11:16)
- 2 Andante, un poco adagio (9:14)
- 3 Scherzo (7:47)
- 4 Finale (10:21)

Recorded December 28 & 29, 1966

DVOŘÁK

PIANO QUINTET, OP. 81

in A / A-dur / la majeur (38:37)

- 5 Allegro ma non tanto (10:58)
- 6 Dumka: Andante con moto (14:43)
- 7 Scherzo (Furiant): Molto vivace (4:31)
- 8 Finale: Allegro (8:09)

Recorded April 5 & 8, 1971

DISC TIME: 77:41



THERE IS NO DEARTH OF EVIDENCE TO CONFIRM THAT ARTHUR RUBINSTEIN HAD, SOMEHOW DURING HIS WORLD-WIDE TRAVELS, VISITED THE PROVERBIAL FOUNTAIN OF ETERNAL YOUTH. Although the pianist, whose birth date is reliably given as January 28, 1887, remained in glorious form—both musically and technically—as he approached his ninth decade, this almost-unprecedented Indian Summer was yet to yield still unharvested bounty, particularly for lovers of chamber music.

Rubinstein had a lifelong passion for that genre. As a burgeoning *Wunderkind*, he had played the three Brahms Violin and Piano Sonatas with Joseph Joachim, the composer's life-long friend, and both volumes of the Rubinstein memoirs are copiously sprinkled with recollections of ensemble performances, privately and in the concert hall, with many distinguished masters. But insofar as recordings, the great pianist's discography was, in the year 1965, severely skewed in favor of concertos and solo repertoire. During his years as an HMV (now EMI) artist, Rubinstein had recorded three compositions by Brahms—the D Minor Violin and Piano Sonata (with Paul Kochanski); the E Minor one for Cello and Piano (with Gregor Piatigorsky); the G Minor Piano Quartet (with Mssrs. Onnou, Prévost and Maas of the Pro Arte Quartet)—and the Franck

A Major Sonata (with Jascha Heifetz). And for RCA Victor, in addition to the celebrated trio recordings with Heifetz and Emanuel Feuermann in 1941, and after the latter's tragic death, with Piatigorsky a decade later, a brief collaboration with the Pro Arte's stylistic heir, the Paganini Quartet, yielded albums of the Schumann and first Fauré piano quintets late in the 78 rpm era (both in Volume 59). Rubinstein wanted, in his remaining years, to enrich that legacy (and, in fact, had just started to do so with his newly issued performances of Beethoven's *Kreutzer* and *Spring* sonatas, and all three of the Brahms with Henryk Szeryng, a fine young Polish-born, naturalized-Mexican violinist who had become the venerable pianist's protégé). Finding a suitable string quartet to work with was, however, more problematic; the Paganini Quartet's personnel had changed incessantly and their career had lost momentum; the Budapest was under exclusive contract to the rival Columbia Masterworks label (and, in any case, a Rubinstein/Budapest performance at the Library of Congress circa 1961 had, according to very reliable informants, proved more than a little acrimonious).

Early in 1965, at a New School concert, the Guarneri Quartet, a foursome that had formed itself at the Marlboro Music Festival in Vermont, performed for an appreciative audience of New York music lovers. RCA sent one of its talent scouts to the performance and, on his recommendation,

signed the outstanding young players to an ambitious, long-term recording contract. Max Wilcox, Rubinstein's longtime recording producer, relates:

In June 1965 I was playing back the completed tapes of his new recording of the Beethoven Concerto No. 3 for Arthur Rubinstein. The playback was over and we were smoking our post-listening cigars (a sign that all was well with Beethoven) when I asked Mr. Rubinstein if I could play him something quite extraordinary. In a moment we were listening to tapes of the first movement of Mozart's Quartet in F, K. 590, by the Guarneri Quartet. As the music progressed, Rubinstein's wonderfully expressive face was rapt in attention and when the movement ended he began to exclaim about the freedom and power of the performance. He asked to meet with the Quartet and said that now perhaps he could make the recordings of piano quintets and quartets of which he had so long dreamed. It proved to be more than a year before concert schedules made it possible, but finally on December 26, 1966, the Quartet met with Mr. Rubinstein in his New York apartment. Within five minutes chairs were converted to music stands, Mr. Rubinstein was seated at the piano, and the opening measures of the Brahms Quintet in F Minor filled the room. I found myself unable to stop smiling as I surveyed my good friends together for the first time, obviously enjoying themselves immensely. The rehearsal continued for over two hours, with much detailed discussion of tempos and balances and phrasing. Everyone left in high spirits, impatiently awaiting December 28 at 10 a.m. when we would all meet at Webster Hall to begin recording. Everything went exceptionally well, and by noon on December 29, the Brahms quintet recording was completed.

Harvey Sachs, in his biography *Rubinstein: A Life* (Grove Press, 1995), discussing the Rubinstein/Guarneri partnership writes that: "the finest of their whole series of collaborative efforts may well be the Quintet in F Minor, Op. 34—the recording that renowned pianist Glenn Gould described as 'the greatest chamber-music performance that I've heard in my life' and that had changed his 'notion of what Brahms represents.' " The interpretation has handsomely passed the test of time. Rehearing it after several years, this annotator, indeed, even found reason to think more highly of it than he once did. Somewhat tauter and leaner-sounding than the equally magnificent Rudolf Serkin/Budapest Quartet Columbia version of 1963, and more emotionally committed than a fine earlier recording by the Budapest with Clifford Curzon, it combines many of the best facets of those splendid interpretations with some of the keen-edged analytical and technical precision of another edition favored by record collectors, the one played by Leon Fleisher and the Juilliard Quartet, early 1960s vintage.

Of likewise excellence is the same protagonists' account of the Dvořák Quintet, Op. 81, recorded five years after their Brahms. The Rubinstein/Guarneri Quartet collaboration is a graciously expansive rendition, with considerably more warmth and charm than the brusquely analytical Artur Schnabel had brought to the lovable music in his celebrated mid-1930s

reading with the Pro Arte—and with comparable tonal purity, and much greater virility, to the two lovely Curzon records (1953, with the Budapest; ten years later with a foursome of Vienna Philharmonic musicians headed by Willi Boskovsky).

—Harris Goldsmith

Harris Goldsmith—musicologist, critic, pianist and author—writes extensively on music. His articles appear in many respected periodicals, including The Strad, The Musical Times, Musical America, High Fidelity, Keynote and The New York Times. His byline has appeared on many recordings, in both a literary and pianistic capacity. Mr. Goldsmith currently teaches piano and piano literature courses at the Mannes College of Music in New York City.



THE ARTHUR RUBINSTEIN COLLECTION

brings together all of his approved, commercially released recordings made between 1928 and 1976. They progress in approximate chronological order, with the earliest recordings appearing in volumes 1-9, and the last in volume 81. All of the albums in The Arthur Rubinstein Collection were compiled from original sources. Disc-to-digital transfers were made, whenever possible, directly from metal stampers. Tape sources were transferred through CELLO playback electronics and remastered in 20-bit technology using universally compatible UV22™ Super CD Encoding.

