

**SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 9, in C***  
Cento Soli Orchestra of Paris, Ataúlfo Argenta, cond.

• • OMEGA OSL 12. SD. \$5.95.

Bavarian Radio Orchestra, Eugen Jochum, cond.

• • DECCA DL 79993. SD. \$5.98.

These two performances have far more in common than otherwise. Neither is likely to give you the impression that you are hearing the symphony or any part of it for the first time, but both are considerably better than routine. The tempos in both cases are slow—Jochum's slower than Argenta's in the first movement, Argenta's slower than Jochum's in the scherzo and finale. Argenta's reading is

characterized by gracefulness (the strings are remarkably suave) and understatement, qualities not inherent in the symphony itself. Schubert, in this last essay in large instrumental form, was attempting the mammoth and heroic—even the drunken (*betrunken*) in the trio of the scherzo. The last movement is as surely an apotheosis to joy as the last movement of Beethoven's Ninth, which Schubert quotes. Jochum manages more successfully to suggest these qualities, although not without something of the heavy tread of the inveterate Brucknerite. The opening horn call is alarmingly deliberate, but the music picks up momentum with the *Andante con moto* (taken at just the right clip), and Jochum's approach to the finale

is fairly vigorous, if not so vigorous as Szell's and Toscanini's.

Both versions are excellent examples of recorded sound, but not particularly distinguished examples of stereophonic sound. The Decca engineers appear to imagine that stereo effects can be achieved by making one channel (the right) slightly softer than the other. Omega does a better job with direction and spacing, but much more can be achieved with the hammer-blow interchanges between the orchestral choirs in all four movements. D.J.

**SCHUBERT: *Die Winterreise***

Heinz Rehfuss, bass-baritone; Erik Werba, piano.

• WESTMINSTER XWN 2228. Two LP. \$9.96.

This is a performance difficult to deliver an immediate judgment upon. One needs to know it over a period of months, to grow familiar with its reticences, its understatements. For the first side-and-a-half Rehfuss' refusal, as I thought, to acknowledge the tormented outcry of these songs, his placid insistence upon correct phrasing and handsome voice production (and, except at the very bottom, he has a handsome voice indeed) irritated me. Why did he sing that terrible, lacerating F natural of *Wasserfluth* as though it were no different from any of the other notes, a mere passing tone back to E, when Schubert meant it to represent not the cry but the audible scream of a soul in hell? Why did so many of the songs go at the same pace, stately rather than slow, deliberate instead of halting? But as the cycle continued I began to discover subtleties in this reticence, and furthermore a gradual expansion of emotional resources. Perhaps Rehfuss planned to tread lightly in the early songs in order to give cohesion and a dramatic form to the cycle as a whole. At any rate, *Auf dem Flusse* is sung more beautifully than even Fischer-Dieskau sang it (in a withdrawn Victor set which, on the whole, I did not like), the ravishing pianissimos serving not to mask but to accent the sardonic menacing nature of the music. And when in *Letzte Hoffnung* Rehfuss comes to the tragic utterance of the last bars, one almost wonders if this is the same artist who an hour earlier sang *Gute Nacht* as though it were an étude in legato vocalizing. Still, unless future listening brings reevaluation, I prefer the fine Hotter-Moore *Winterreise*.

Erik Werba's collaboration ranges from sloppy (the triplets of *Erstarrung*) to brilliant (the crisp, solid dotted rhythms of *Muth*). Text and translation included. Sonics: bigger and better on Side 4 than on Side 1. D.J.

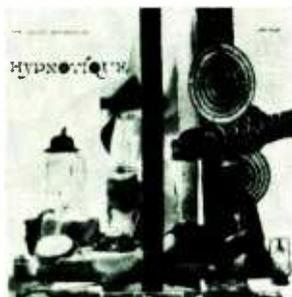
**SCHUMANN: *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 129***  
†Tchaikovsky: *Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op. 33*

Pierre Fournier, cello; Philharmonia Orchestra, Sir Malcolm Sargent, cond.

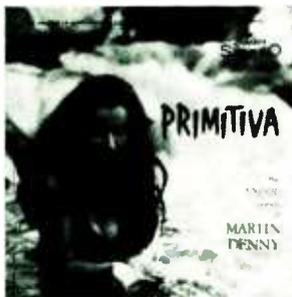
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