

SOMMCD 268-2

PIANO CONCERTOS Nos. 20, K466 & 21, K467
Valerie Tryon *piano*, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Jac van Steen *conductor*

FANTASIA IN C MINOR, K396, Valerie Tryon *piano*

PIANO CONCERTO No. 10 for **TWO PIANOS**, K365
Valerie Tryon, Peter Donohoe *pianos*

PIANO CONCERTO No. 7 for **THREE PIANOS**, K242
Peter Donohoe, Valerie Tryon, Mishka Rushdie Momen *pianos*
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Boris Brott *conductor*

SONATA for **TWO PIANOS**, K448
Valerie Tryon, Peter Donohoe *pianos*

CD 1

Piano Concerto No.20 in D minor, K466 [34:19]

- 1 I. Allegro 15:32
- 2 II. Romance 9:40
- 3 III. Allegro assai 9:07

Piano Concerto No.21 in C, K467 [31:29]

- 4 I. Allegro maestoso 16:55
- 5 II. Andante 6:43
- 6 III. Allegro vivace assai 7:51

7 **Fantasia in C minor**, K396 – Adagio 11:15

Total duration: 77:03

CD2

Piano Concerto No.10 in E flat for Two Pianos, K365 [24:49]

- 1 I. Allegro 10:26
- 2 II. Andante 6:56
- 3 III. Allegro 7:27

Sonata for Two Pianos in D, K448 [23:57]

- 4 I. Allegro con spirito 8:09
- 5 II. Andante 9:13
- 6 III. Allegro molto 6:35

Piano Concerto No.7 in F for Three Pianos, K242 [23:33]

- 7 I. Allegro 9:08
- 8 II. Adagio 8:07
- 9 III. Rondeau – Tempo di Menuetto 6:18

Total duration: 72:21

Design: Andrew Giles **Recorded at** Cadogan Hall, London
CD1: January 30-31, 2017 **Producer:** Siva Oke **Engineer:** Ben Connellan
CD2: June 12-13, 2017 **Producer:** Jeremy Hayes **Engineer:** Ben Connellan
Front cover: Mozart Family (detail), Johann Nepomuk della Croce (1736-1819), Salzburg / De Agostini Picture Library / Bridgeman Images **Booklet Editor:** Michael Quinn

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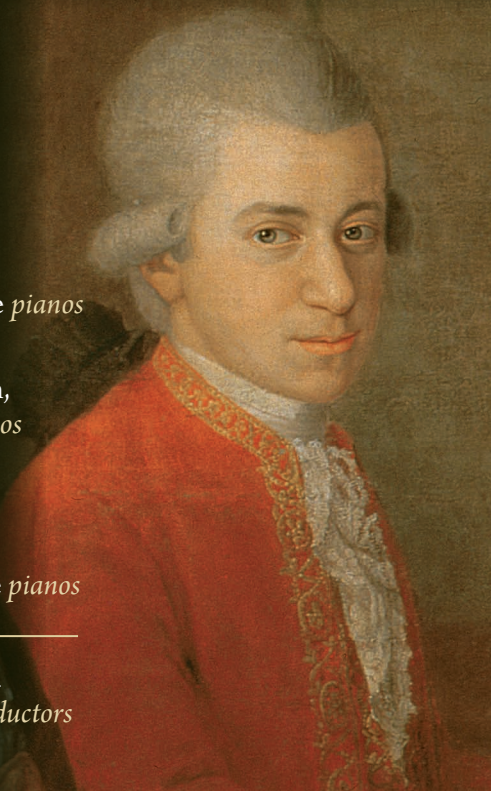
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PIANO SONATA
for **TWO PIANOS**, K448
Valerie Tryon, Peter Donohoe *pianos*

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
Jac van Steen, Boris Brott *conductors*



The half-dozen works for permutations of one, two and three pianos heard on this disc span the decade from 1775 – when Mozart was desperate to leave his poorly paid position in the court of Hieronymous Colloredo, the Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg – to 1785. By then he was well into his creative maturity and enjoying unprecedented (if soon to be diminished) commercial success.

Taken together, they illustrate the evolution of his understanding of the piano's capabilities, his intuitive development of the concerto beyond its classical constraints and into its defining form, and his seemingly inexhaustible capacity for invention.

The earliest work here is the **Piano Concerto No. 7 in F, K242**. One of three piano concertos completed in 1776, it was commissioned by the Countess Antonia Lodron (whose surname often serves as its title) to be played by her and her two daughters. More familiarly known in a later two-piano version,

its original incarnation demonstrates a sympathetic appreciation of the abilities of its intended recipients. While two of the piano lines can claim to be moderately difficult, the third, presumably for the younger child, is discernibly less taxing. Even so, the music makes more demands of its players than it offers concessions, the intricate interlacing of the three piano voices in the opening *Allegro* producing conversational counterpoint of particular richness. Its discretely dazzling complexity simultaneously exploits and validates the use of the three conjoined voices to create effects far beyond the capabilities of a single instrument.

Equally, while an effervescent *galant*-style gloss provides pleasing balletic poise and forward propulsion of refined elegance, there's a bubbling, driving vigour to the writing that cleverly serves to disguise the contrasting demands it makes on each of the individual lines. The middle-movement *Adagio*

is replete with lyrical Mozartian grace, the concluding *Rondo* notable for the mischievous *coup de théâtre* at its end: a faux-coda immediately followed by the actual punctuation mark that has been cheekily signalled in advance.

The exact date of composition of the **Piano Concerto No. 10 in E-flat, K365/316a** for two pianos, is contested. While cadenza scores for the first and third movements suggest they were composed in the period between August 1775 and January 1777 (the evidence resting on an examination of the paper stock used by Mozart), recent research by the scholars Alan Tyson and Stephan D Lindeman point more confidently to 1779.

One (probable) certainty is that it was composed with Mozart's elder sister, Maria Anna ('Nannerl'), in mind as his intended companion at the keyboard. Both siblings – Mozart was 23 at the time, Nannerl five years older – were accomplished pianists, a fact testified

to in the rich contrasts and technical challenges of a work whose difficulty and ambition also serve as auguries of accomplishments still to come.

Conceived as a dialogue between the two solo instruments, its sense of shared bonhomie – marked by a high-spirited egging-on towards greater excess and expressiveness – seems to conjure the sibling rivalry of two capable pianists given permission to out-do the other. In all respects wholly supportive, the orchestral accompaniment participates in the play-making, entering into the exuberant flights of fancy with gameful complicity and utter discretion.

Despite the combative nature of the pianos, the concerto is nothing if not democratic. After an extended *Allegro* in which the orchestra introduces the main theme, the pianos enter together, assert their individuality and then join again to propel the movement forward. A similar relationship defines the more meditative middle *Andante* movement, in effect

a graceful *pas de deux* for the two solo instruments. The finale is a rousing *Rondo* that matches rhythmic energy with athletic lyrical elegance.

Composed in 1781 for a performance by Mozart and his pupil Josepha von Auernhammer, the **Sonata for Two Pianos in D, K448** returned to the *galant* style of the Seventh Piano Concerto five years earlier. Although Auernhammer was besotted with her teacher, it remained a love unrequited, Mozart disparagingly writing to his father, Leopold: "She is as fat as a peasant wench, perspires so much you feel like vomiting, and walks about in such skimpy attire that you can read as clear as day 'Please look here'".

But Auernhammer's musicianship evidently won over the composer's shallow disapproval, a later letter home noting "The young lady plays with charm". That quality is to the fore in a sonata distinguished by the often-blissful intimacies entwining the two piano lines, each locked in the tenderest

of embraces with the other, both pirouetting together in quiet rapture with the utmost delicacy.

When the pair gave the first performance in late 1781 in Auernhammer's home, it's a measure of Mozart's newfound regard for his pupil that he assigned the leading piano role to her. A nominal compliment, perhaps, given the shared, ebullient prominence of both instruments, the opening *Allegro con spirito* setting the tone for much of what is to follow. The movement is marked, too, by a quicksilver wit in which each piano line seems to dare the other to ever-greater flamboyance.

The lyrical, lullaby-accented *Andante* offers, if nothing else, an opportunity for both pianos to catch their breath. Except in its limpid mellifluousness it also provides a filigree-delicate poetic ballast to the earlier exuberance while inking in the ever-encroaching sense of intimacy – as if a shared secret is being whispered aloud – between the two piano lines.

The breezy, bright *Molto allegro* finale, an almost archly playful dance, carries itself with manicured verve, pulling and pushing the focus between the two pianos in music of delightfully ingenuous resourcefulness.

Although it bears an earlier catalogue number, the **K396/K385f Fantasia in C minor** was begun the year after the two-piano Sonata in 1782, when it was originally conceived (but left unfinished) for piano and violin. Twenty years later it was completed in an extended arrangement for solo piano by Maximilian Stadler, the composer and Benedictine monk who had served as adviser to Mozart's widow, Constanze, since his death in 1791.

In terms of scale, Stadler's completion was ambitious, extending the 27-bar original (in which the violin belatedly entered at Bar 23) into a 70-bar realisation. But its execution manages to be both deferential and imaginative, spinning the single piano line into

altogether idiomatic flights of dark-toned fantasy. If, despite the cornucopia of effects – slicing dissonances, chromatic embellishments and corkscrewed harmonies left unfulfilled among them – it seems more texturally exposed in places (Stadler, after all, was not Mozart) in others it beguiles with flourishes of colouristic agility and telling timbral agitation.

Following his dismissal from his resented and poorly-paid position at the court of Salzburg's Prince-Archbishop in May 1781, Mozart escaped to the more agreeably cosmopolitan Vienna. There, he was to severely test compositional stamina against entrepreneurial ambition. Hoping the fashionable piano concerto was sufficient to attract audiences to a series of subscription concerts he planned, over the next five years he wrote 15 such works, many of them high-watermarks of the repertoire.

The ink was still drying on the score of the **Piano Concerto No. 20 in D minor, K466** when Mozart himself gave the first

performance in Vienna on February 11, 1785. One of only two piano concertos he cast in a minor key (the other, No. 24 in C minor, K491, in 1785-86), audiences that evening may well have been taken aback by its stark, dark-hued drama and boiling emotional turbulence. Those very qualities later prompted Friedrich Blume to assert that it was a transformative moment for the concerto form; a paradigm shift from classical poise into the more robust, questing and, above all, emotional attitude that would define the concerto in the coming century.

No less a figure than Beethoven, newly emerging as the prophet of musical romanticism, was greatly enamoured of the work, playing it at a memorial concert in 1795 for which he composed in the absence of Mozart's own (or more likely improvised and later wrote down) the cadenza heard here.

The shock of the new is felt immediately in the agitated ebbing of unsettlingly low-lying, syncopated strings. The unease is

underlined by their infusing the opening *Allegro* with an increasingly storm-tossed quality. No less provocative is the piano's entrance. Refusing the initial theme, it sets off with wide, leaping intervals in pursuit of a markedly different agenda to establish the testing, confrontational relationship – characterised by episodes of plosive enmity – between the piano's free-spirited bravado and the more conventionally constrained orchestra that will dominate the rest of the movement.

The middle-movement *Romance* begins in more conciliatory fashion, the lyrical piano line almost classically crisp and bright, the orchestra wholly, even submissively, supportive. With each accommodating the other in a delicately tentative dialogue, the fragile rapport is shattered by an excitable *presto* G minor interlude – memorably described by Mozart's father as "the noisy part with the fast triplets". It's merely the most conspicuous element in a movement that ranges imaginatively through the full resources of the piano with the

especially sophisticated and challenging writing for the left hand suggesting Mozart's own prowess at the keyboard must have been formidable.

The opening of the *Rondo* finale implies a meeting of minds has occurred somewhere along the way. Its origin is disguised by a now battling, now brotherly relationship between piano and orchestra that edges ever closer without ever achieving shared intimacy. Increasingly chromatic writing seems to dredge darker, more dangerous undercurrents closer to the unresolved tensions on the surface before the cadenza clears the air and unites the sparring protagonists.

We are left with what Alfred Einstein described as "a coda of enchanting sweetness" in which previous enmities are banished by a sunny, shared melody in the parallel key of D major. A more likely explanation for the sudden *volte face* is Mozart's shrewd recognition that Vienna's audiences expected (and paid)

to be sent home smiling and satisfied rather than shaken and stirred.

The ploy seems to have worked. The day after the performance, an approving Joseph Haydn famously told a gratified Leopold Mozart: "Your son is the greatest composer whom I know in person or by reputation".

Completed less than four weeks later on March 9, the **Piano Concerto No. 21 in C, K467** offered eloquent testimony to Haydn's accolade. Providing much-needed balm to the tumult and tension that went before, it must have seemed like a burst of warming sun. As lithe and liquid as its sibling was taut and tense, at its heart is an *Andante* of melting lyricism. In more recent years, its liberal use on the soundtrack of a 1967 film by Swedish director Bo Widerberg gave the concerto a new popularity and a belated subtitle, *Elvira Madigan*. Its profile was further raised by American pop star Neil Diamond's borrowing from it for his 1972 chart hit, *Song Sung Blue*.

The concerto's melodic directness, its guileless wit and the balletic interaction between piano and orchestra disguises a technical accomplishment that is daringly symphonic in scale and operatic in density. Certainly, there's a sense of cinematic breadth to the *Allegro maestoso* first movement that is immediately established by a march-like motif in the orchestra. Its subdued brio is picked up by the piano and spun into ravishing trills on the right hand that ripple throughout the remainder of the movement with characteristically mercurial, Mozartian glee. The expressive cadenza included here (and that in the third movement) was composed by the pianist Dinu Lipatti.

The porcelain-delicate melody that haunts (as much as it scents) the introspective poise of the *Andante* middle movement can claim to be one of Mozart's most sublime creations. Masquerading as a recitative without words, it traverses a remarkable range of emotions, from sweet innocence and

suppressed rage to baleful pathos along a gravity-defying arc in which the piano seems suspended above a cossetting orchestral accompaniment.

Cast as a light-hearted sonata-rondo, the *Allegro vivace assai* finale banishes all thoughts of melancholy in a brisk, often rapturous helter-skelter of mutual conviviality between piano and orchestra – each alert to the other, both enthusiastic participants. Fittingly, it calls to mind the forgive-and-forget endings of *Le nozze di Figaro* and *Così fan tutte* a year and five years hence to conjure those most defining of Mozartian traits: forgiveness and joy.

Michael Quinn
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Valerie Tryon CM

Valerie Tryon is a world-renowned concert pianist. Born in England, the youngest student to be admitted to the Royal Academy of Music in London, she still travels to Europe annually to perform, and manages an extraordinary schedule, in North America and abroad, of recitals, master classes and teaching.

Valerie's repertoire is vast and diverse and although her particular reputation is for her interpretation of the Romantics – Chopin, Liszt, Rachmaninov and others, she retains a lifelong and enduring passion for Debussy and Ravel, initiated by her prize-winning scholarship to Paris as a young student, to study with the distinguished French professor, Jacques Fevrier.

Retiring with an honorary doctorate from McMaster University, where she was Artist-in-Residence and Associate Professor for many years, Valerie continues as Artist-in-Residence and teacher at Redeemer University in between her many concerts and recitals worldwide. She is a Fellow of the



Photograph: Bob Hatcher

Royal Academy of Music, Juno Award winner, a Gallery of Distinction Inductee, holds the Harriet Cohen Award for Distinguished Services to Music, and the Franz Liszt Medal, from the Hungarian Ministry of Culture, for her lifelong commitment to and promotion of Liszt's music. In December of 2017 she was awarded Canada's highest honour, The Order of Canada.

Valerie has made innumerable albums for many recording companies over the years, some of which are now regarded as collector's items. The most recent series of discs are from Somm Recordings, and include de Falla's *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*, Cesar Franck's

'Symphonic Variations' released in 2013, the Rachmaninov Piano Concerto No. 1 in 2014 and a Ravel/Debussy disc in 2015, all with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Valerie's Archives to date reside at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, where she has made her home since 1971.

Peter Donohoe

Peter Donohoe was born in Manchester in 1953. He studied at Chetham's School of Music for seven years, graduated in music at Leeds University, and went on to study at the Royal Northern College of Music with Derek Wyndham and then in Paris with Olivier Messiaen and Yvonne Loriod. He is acclaimed as one of the foremost pianists of our time for his musicianship, stylistic versatility and commanding technique.

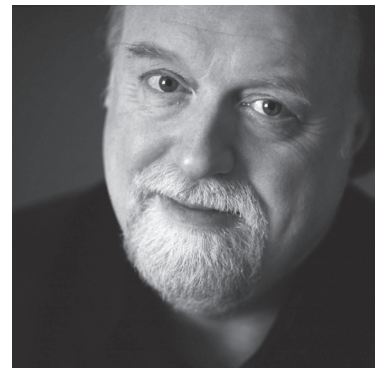
In recent seasons, Donohoe has appeared with Dresden Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic and Concert Orchestra, Cape Town Philharmonic Orchestra, St Petersburg Philharmonia, RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, Belarusian State Symphony Orchestra and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. He has

undertaken a UK tour with the Russian State Philharmonic Orchestra, as well as giving concerts in many South American and European countries, China, Hong Kong, South Korea, Russia and USA. Other engagements include performances of all three MacMillian piano concertos with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, a series of concerts for the *Ravel and Rachmaninov Festival* at Bridgewater Hall, and numerous performances with The Orchestra of the Swan.

Donohoe is also in high demand as a jury member for international competitions. He has recently served on the juries at the International Tchaikovsky Piano Competition in Moscow (2011 and 2015), Busoni International Competition in Bolzano, Italy (2012), the Queen Elisabeth Competition in Brussels (2016), Georges Enescu Competition in Bucharest

(2016), Hong Kong International Piano Competition (2016), and Ricardo Viñes International Competition in Lleida, Spain, along with many national competitions both within the UK and abroad.

Recent discs include a new recording of Shostakovich's Piano Concertos and Sonatas with the Orchestra of the Swan, and a disc of Shostakovich's 24 Preludes and Fugues (both Signum Records), which was described as "thoughtful and poignant" by *The Guardian*; a disc of Scriabin Piano Sonatas (SOMM Records) which was called "magnificent" by *The Sunday Times*; a recording of Witold Maliszewski's Piano Concerto in B flat minor with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra conducted by Martin Yates (Dutton Vocalion); and three discs of Prokofiev piano sonatas for SOMM Records, the third of which was released at the end of April 2016. The first Prokofiev disc was described by *Gramophone* as "devastatingly effective", declaring Donohoe to be "in his element", and a review in *Classical Notes* identified Donohoe's "remarkably sensitive approach to even the most virtuosic of repertoire".



Photograph: Sussie Ahlburg

His second Prokofiev disc was given 5 stars by *BBC Music Magazine*, and the third disc was highly praised by *The Times*, *Birmingham Post* and Jessica Duchon. Other recordings include Cyril Scott's Piano Concerto with the BBC Concert Orchestra and Martin Yates (Dutton Vocalion) and Malcolm Arnold's *Fantasy on a Theme of John Field* with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and Martin Yates (also Dutton), for which *BBC Music Magazine* described him as an "excellent soloist", and *Gramophone* stated that it "compelled from start to finish".

Donohoe has performed with all the major London orchestras, as well as orchestras from across the world: the Royal Concertgebouw, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Munich Philharmonic, Swedish Radio, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Vienna Symphony and Czech Philharmonic Orchestras. He has also played with the Berliner Philharmoniker in Sir Simon Rattle's opening concerts as Music Director. He made his twenty-second appearance at the BBC Proms in 2012 and has appeared at many other festivals including six consecutive visits to the Edinburgh Festival, La Roque d'Anthéron in France, and at the Ruhr and Schleswig Holstein Festivals in Germany. In the United States, his appearances have included the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Boston, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Cleveland and Detroit Symphony Orchestras. Peter Donohoe also performs

numerous recitals internationally and continues working with his long standing duo partner Martin Roscoe, as well as more recent collaborations with artists such as Raphael Wallfisch, Elizabeth Watts and Noriko Ogawa.

Donohoe has worked with many of the world's greatest conductors: Christoph Eschenbach, Neeme Järvi, Lorin Maazel, Kurt Masur, Andrew Davis and Yevgeny Svetlanov. More recently he has appeared as soloist with the next generation of excellent conductors: Gustavo Dudamel, Robin Ticciati and Daniel Harding.

Peter Donohoe is an honorary doctor of music at seven UK universities, and was awarded a CBE for services to classical music in the 2010 New Year's Honours List.

Mishka Rushdie Momen

Mishka Rushdie Momen, born in London 1992, studied with Joan Havill and Imogen Cooper at the Guildhall School of Music

and Drama and has also periodically studied with Richard Goode. She was invited by Sir Andrés Schiff to give recitals in Zurich Tonhalle, New York's 92Y,

Antwerp deSingel and several cities in Germany and Italy for his 2016-17 'Building Bridges' Series. A committed chamber musician whose partners have included Steven Isserlis, Midori, Krzysztof Chorzelski, and members of the Endellion and Orion String Quartets, she played in the 2016 Marlboro and Krzyzowa Music Festivals and participates in Open Chamber Music at the International Musicians Seminar in Prussia Cove, Cornwall. She has been invited to play in the 'Chamber Music Connects the World' Festival in Kronberg this year in May.

In November 2014 Mishka Rushdie Momen was unanimously voted the First Prize-winner of the Dudley International Piano Competition and performed Bartók's Third Concerto with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra conducted by Michael Seal at Symphony Hall, Birmingham. In September the same year she won Second Prize at the Cologne International Piano Competition. She was awarded the Prix Maurice Ravel at the 2013 Académie Ravel in St. Jean-de-Luz, France and gave three concerts at the Ravel Festival the following Spring. At the age



Photograph: Benjamin Ealovega

of 13, she won First Prize in the Leschetizky Concerto Competition, New York.

Mishka has given solo recitals at the Barbican Hall, the Bridgewater Hall, The Venue, Leeds, St. David's Hall, Cardiff and in the Harrogate, Cambridge Summer Music and Chipping Campden Festivals. Her concert experience includes most major London venues including the QEH, RFH, Purcell Room, Wigmore Hall, and abroad in New York, France, Germany, Prague and Mumbai.

Jac van Steen

Jac van Steen was born in The Netherlands and studied orchestral and choral conducting at the Brabants Conservatory of Music. Since participating, in 1985, in the BBC Conductors' Seminar led by Sir Edward Downes, he has enjoyed a very busy career as conductor of the best orchestras in The Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Switzerland and Germany. These have included the posts of Music Director and Chief Conductor of the National Ballet of The Netherlands, the orchestras of Bochum and Nürnberg, the Staatskapelle, Weimar, the Opera and Philharmonic Orchestra of Dortmund (Germany), Musikkollegium Winterthur (Switzerland) and the post of Principal Guest Conductor for several years at the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and from 2013-14, the Prague Symphony Orchestra. In 2014-15 he assumed the position of Principal Guest Conductor of the Ulster Orchestra, Belfast.

Jac van Steen has participated in many recordings for the BBC, as well as live broadcasts of his concerts. There are a substantial number of CD recordings



Photograph: Simon Weir

of his work with various orchestras (on Dabringhaus & Grimm, SOMM, Bridge Records, NMC).

In addition to conducting the finest Dutch, German and UK orchestras, he is dedicated to teaching and is Professor of Conducting at the Royal Conservatory of Music in The Hague, where he has recently developed his brainchild: the National Masters for Orchestral Conducting (NMO) which will give young Master student conductors the chance to work with the best Dutch Orchestras. He also works regularly with the Royal Northern College of Music and Chetham's School of Music (Manchester) as well as the Royal Academy and Royal College of Music (London) and the City of Birmingham Youth Orchestra.

Boris Brott

Boris Brott is one of the most internationally recognized Canadian conductors. He enjoys a world-wide career as guest conductor, educator, motivational speaker and cultural ambassador. He has served as Assistant Conductor of the New York Philharmonic under Leonard Bernstein and as Music Director of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Northern Sinfonia, Royal Ballet Covent Garden, seven Canadian Orchestras and Principal Guest Conductor of Teatro Petruzzelli in Bari, Italy.

Currently, Maestro Brott is Artistic Director of the McGill Chamber Orchestra in Montreal, Quebec and The Brott Music Festival in Hamilton, Ontario, as well as Founding Music Director and Conductor Laureate of the New West Symphony in Los Angeles, California. His lifetime commitment to the education of young musicians led in 1988 to his founding of the National Academy Orchestra of Canada. The NAO is a unique mentor-apprentice program for brilliant, graduated



Photograph: Bob Hatcher

professional musicians and orchestra-in-residence of the Brott Festival, the largest music festival in Canada.

Highly decorated, Boris Brott holds, among other awards, Honorary Doctorates from both McMaster and McGill Universities. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts of Great Britain and has received the Order of Canada, Order of Ontario and Order of Quebec.

His many recordings include those for Sony (with the late Glenn Gould), CBC and Mace USA.