



NIELSEN

Symphony No. 3
“Espansiva”

Symphony No. 6
“Semplice”

JASCHA
HORENSTEIN

NIELSEN, Symphony No. 3, Symphony No. 6, Horenstein.

INCD 7381

CARL NIELSEN

(1865-1931)

Symphony No. 3 "Sinfonia Espansiva", Op. 27

1	I. Allegro espansiva	12.06
2	II. Andante pastorale	10.00
3	III. Allegretto un poco	7.34
4	IV. Finale. Allegro	9.22

Alexandra Browning, soprano
 Colin Wheatley, baritone
BBC Northern Symphony Orchestra
Jascha Horenstein, conductor

Symphony No. 6 "Sinfonia Semplice"

5	I. Tempo giusto	13.15
6	II. Humoresque. Allegretto	4.40
7	III. Preposta seria. Adagio	4.40
8	IV. Thema con variazioni. Allegro	10.40

Hallé Orchestra
Jascha Horenstein, conductor

a d d Total Time: 72.42. Historical Recordings. © 1992 Made in Italy



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Carl Nielsen, the son of a Danish housepainter, spent much of his childhood as a shepherd boy who played the violin for village dances. He attended the Royal Conservatory in Copenhagen, where he studied conducting and composition.

His *Third Symphony* was written in 1910-11 and first performed in Copenhagen in 1912. The work is vigorous and powerful, and the title 'Espansiva', given by Nielsen, signifies not only the music's rhythmic and thematic growth, but also the expansion of Nielsen's own mind and life.

The first movement is dissonant, with a disregard for tonal unity. The tension is maintained with rigorous rhythms and complicated chord structures. The second movement, an idyllic interlude, uses soprano and baritone soloists vocalising on the vowel 'a'. The scherzo is cheerfully whimsical, and the last movement emphasizes its rugged grandeur with a strong march-like rhythm.

Nielsen's last symphony was completed in 1925 and first performed in Copenhagen that year. In 1924 he wrote to his daughter that he was writing a symphony "of a completely idyllic nature" but although he may have conceived of the work as 'Semplice' it is in fact emotional, sometimes disturbing and often bizarre, full of cynical humour.

The last movement, a complex theme with variations, is alternately flippant and vulgar, with a threatening waltz and a flamboyant finale that could have been the inspirations for Copland's *Rodeo*.

According to Harold C. Schoenberg, for many years music critic of *The New York Times*, Jascha Horenstein was one of four Russian-born conductors that "scarcely made much of an international impact, although they are respected figures." During the last decade of his life, however, Horenstein attained vast artistic success in England, where he was admired as a foremost interpreter of Bruckner and Mahler.

Born in Kiev in 1899, Horenstein studied philosophy, music theory and composition in Vienna. He became Furtwangler's assistant in Berlin, making his orchestral debut in Vienna in 1923. Until 1923 when he fled the Nazi regime, he was director of music at the Dusseldorf Opera where he conducted *Wozzeck* under Berg's supervision. Working with various orchestras throughout Europe for several years, he moved to the United States in 1940, taking American citizenship. Unfortunately, his stringent demands for absolute musical perfection in performance did not meet with the approval of most orchestral musicians or managers, and his career did not flourish, although he was known for introducing new works of composers such as Berg, Janacek and Busoni. Invited to London by Ernest Fleischmann, the manager of the London Symphony Orchestra, he conducted a thrilling Mahler *Eighth Symphony* at the Royal Albert Hall in 1959, which was to be a turning point in his life. Many unforgettable concerts and his superb recordings with a small English label presented his versatility with a wide repertoire marked with intensity and clarity. A clever, sensitive man with aristocratic bearing, Horenstein in his last years took great pleasure in exercising artistic control over his recordings and finally received the musical recognition that had eluded him for so long. He died in London in 1975, shortly after conducting *Parsifal* at Covent Garden.

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