



Press Info:

**JOHANNES BRAHMS:
Symphony No. 1**

**HENRI VIEUXTEMPS:
Violin Concerto No. 5**

Karl Böhm
Lola Bobesco, violin
Kölner Rundfunk-Sinfonie-Orchester
(today: WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln)

The concern with fidelity to the work in hand is often identified as Karl Böhm's outstanding characteristic: his mode of conducting is said to embody the art of the conscientious presentation of the work and the subordination of his own personality to what the music itself has to say. In reality he was far from being a "conductor without qualities", and this is illustrated particularly clearly in his interpretation of the *Symphony No. 1* of *Johannes Brahms*. This late work was Brahms's first essay in the symphonic genre; Brahms worked on it spasmodically for fourteen years, not completing it until 1876. It is problematic in a variety of ways, not least in its ambition to be a worthy successor to the symphonies of Beethoven, its massive dimensions, with weighty yet complementary outer movements, and in the great divergences between its monumental scale and the detailed motivic exploration that is a feature throughout.

Partnered by the Kölner Rundfunk-Sinfonie-Orchester, Karl Böhm takes up this challenge with great decisiveness, charging the work with a youthfully zestful expressivity and driving it single-mindedly on towards the finale, not without taking the occasional surprising liberty with the score.

In the same year (1963) he was joined by the Romanian-born violinist Lola Bobesco to perform the *Violin Concerto No. 5* of *Henri Vieuxtemps*, the most important composer of the Franco-Belgian violin school in the mid-19th century. Lola Bobesco, also trained in this tradition after starting out as a child prodigy, unfolds the solo part with warm, glowing tone and captivating spontaneity.

This CD is the latest in our Böhm series, following the release of archive recordings of works by Strauss, Mozart and Stravinsky with Karl Böhm and the Kölner Rundfunk-Sinfonie-Orchester.

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