

Mozart

Symphony No.41 in C major, K.551 'Jupiter'

Symphony No.35 in D major, K.385 'Haffner'

Columbia Symphony Orchestra

Bruno Walter

Speakers Corner 180gm LP: MS 6255

Performance: $\frac{3}{4}$

When these performances were recorded in late 1959 and early 1960 period instruments were virtually unknown, so the first thing you notice in the opening movements of both works is that by modern standards the orchestra is very large, the tempi measured and while exposition repeats weren't always the norm then, Walter observes the one in K.551 (none is marked in K.385). The slow movements are elegantly phrased and relaxed, although the repeat in K.385 is omitted, and while he dances his way through the Minuet of the Jupiter, the Haffner's is slow and rhythmically stodgy. In the finales, the D major's is nowhere near the marked Presto, but does have a certain *joie-de-vivre* and yet there are occasions in the Jupiter's contrapuntal *tour-de-force* where the tension sags

Sound

Balance: 5

Inner balance: 3

Detail and clarity: 3

Dynamic range: 3

Like the performances the sound is also big and solid. CBS within a middle-distance overall balance caught the spacious acoustic of the Legion Hall, Hollywood, which as you would expect this remastering far better preserves than the Walter Edition CD it was compared with. Definition and clarity aren't up to Decca or Mercury standards, but the Speakers Corner disc has more weight than the first label UK LP it was also compared with and being pure analogue the instrumental timbres are retained in a way no CD could hope to equal. On all three the dynamic range is limited, but there is no way at present to increase this, however the Speakers Corner LP is cut at a slightly higher level and is now clearly the first choice.