
**MAXIM VENGEROV AT THE
ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC**

Violin Concerto No. 3 in G major K216

W.A. Mozart
DVD MMF 005



Maxim Vengerov is recognised as one of the world's most brilliant violinists. Very young when his exceptional talent emerged, he gave his first recital at the tender age of five. As a teacher he has been described as perceptive, entertaining and sensitive to the individual student. Such comments are not wrong. In this masterclass he works on the first movement of Mozart's Third Violin Concerto with student Marta Deak. Vengerov is encouraging, generous with praise, animated and playful, sharing his deep understanding of Mozart with the student. At the same time he never tells her exactly how to interpret and perform the piece; rather he encourages imagination, playfulness and different thinking as new possibilities. As he says himself, "Imagination is how you achieve beautiful music." Vengerov is compelling both to watch and hear and challenges his students to pull out greatness from them. To attend a masterclass conducted by Vengerov must be an astounding experience, although one that sadly many of us may not get. This DVD presentation is however, a wonderful substitute. The setting, direction and camera angles are all designed and manipulated so as to create minimal distraction or annoyance, instead allowing the viewer to lose himself in the class and the music. Even if you are not learning this particular piece there is still so much that you can gain from Vengerov as a performer, teacher and musician.

Annie Resetti

**ANA CHUMACHENKO AT THE VERBIER
FESTIVAL ACADEMY**

Mozart: Violin Concertos Nos 3, 4, 5
MASTERCLASS MEDIA FOUNDATION DVD
MMF 2-027

Ana Chumachenko is a world renowned teacher, soloist and chamber musician. Her gift in teaching students to perform at their very best is evident in this master class DVD filmed at the Verbier Festival. Chumachenko began each session by allowing the student to play through their entire movement. The first student in Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 3 in G Major K216 ended many of her phrases with a very soft piano. Chumachenko suggested that the student play these with such presence that they fill every corner. Her words of wisdom were backed up by inspiring demonstrations. Tempo

was the biggest issue for the next student in the *D major Concerto K218*. Chumachenko recommended that a faster tempo be chosen. The third student, performing Mozart's Violin Concerto in A major K219 showed a lot of facial and body movements and was encouraged to have her activity and voice come from the violin, not her face. All three students in the master class were exceptional yet Chumachenko still found numerous ways to improve their performances. Her gentle and refined manner along with her brilliant demonstrations makes this an inspiring and revelatory experience for both performers and listeners. The sound quality is very good although a few more close ups and better camera angles would have been welcome. Overall this remarkable series gives the opportunity to observe and learn from the very best teachers and performers in an intimate class setting.

Melissa Franks

**RACHMANINOV SONATA FOR CELLO
AND PIANO IN G MINOR**

*Performer: Guy Johnston; former BBC Young
Musician of the Year.*

*Masterclass with Steven Isserlis at the
international Musician's Seminar;
Prussia Cove.
DVD MMF 008*



Renowned cellist Steven Isserlis is a champion of the works of Schumann as well as the sonata undertaken here by Guy Johnston. The Rachmaninov sonata has a history in the Isserlis family; his grandfather, a pianist performed it with Anatoly Brandukhov, the cellist for whom Rachmaninov wrote the sonata. In this masterclass, the attention to detail that Steven portrays benefits Guy Johnston in every aspect. One question asked throughout is; "Where is the music going?" Isserlis explains clearly that music has to have a place and an aim within each phrase or the music will sound dull and unimaginative. Even the most simple and quiet melodies need this sense of direction within the music. Isserlis' generous sharing of his knowledge and wisdom has enriched my understanding of my own playing, encouraging me to find my own feet in music and how to express it.

Megan Crook

**ANTON DVO AK CELLO CONCERTO
IN B MINOR.**

*Masterclass with Frans Helmerson at the
Verbier Festival Academy
DVD MMF 009*

Swedish cellist Frans Helmerson's solo career has taken him around the world, performing with countless orchestras and under the direction of some of today's leading conductors. Not only one of the world's best performers, he is renowned for his teaching. Within this masterclass Helmerson talks about muscles used to play the cello. He explains that while student Sebastian Baverstam is quite strong, strength is not always needed to play. Only certain muscles need to be used to be able to make the perfect sound to project to the back of the hall. Helmerson shows how to create a line in the music. Moving while playing the cello is great but Helmerson explains how we shouldn't overdo movement. Growing with the music should come from inside then grow outwards. Professor Helmerson's teaching in this masterclass has reminded me of the importance of keeping myself and the cello as one.

Megan Crook

**BEETHOVEN VIOLIN SONATA IN
A MINOR OPUS 23**

*Masterclass with Maxim Vengerov
DVD MMF 006*

This one hour masterclass with Maxim Vengerov on the 1st movement of Beethoven's A minor Violin Sonata demonstrates a thorough analysis of the work. Vengerov is most particular about following Beethoven's markings on the score and works on the characterization of the music as if it were an opera. Often he sings or plays to illustrate what he is trying to convey to the performer.

The finer aspects of the work are explored, including the integrated relationship between the accompanist and the soloist. Vengerov doesn't give many explicit directions about how to achieve his suggestions; he leaves it to the performer's knowledge and skill. In this instance the student-performer, Hayley Wolfe is a fine violinist and is able to incorporate his recommendations.

This DVD is an excellent study tool and provides many valuable insights into this work. I found Vengerov's directions on Beethoven's particular dynamic markings helpful for my own study of the work.

Robert van Gend