

FROM ORIGINAL DXD MASTER



KORNGOLD

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING
(COMPLETE INCIDENTAL MUSIC)

SINFONIETTA

HELSINKI PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
JOHN STORGÅRDS

ONDINE

ERICH WOLFGANG KORNGOLD (1897–1957)

Much Ado About Nothing (Complete Incidental Music) / Sinfonietta

Cd 1

Much ado about Nothing, Op. 11

43:38

- | | | |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 1. | 1. Overture | 5:31 |
| 2. | 2. Don John – Act I, Scene 2 | 0:18 |
| 3. | 3. Masquerade (Hornpipe) – Prelude to Act II | 2:27 |
| 4. | 4. Festive Music – Act II, Scene 1 | 4:43 |
| 5. | 5. Balthasar's Song – Act II, Garden
Soloist: <i>Mati Turi</i> , tenor | 3:58 |
| 6. | 6. Garden Scene – Prelude to Act III | 5:55 |
| 7. | 7. Intermezzo | 2:10 |
| 8. | 8. Dogberry and Verges (March of the Watch)
– Prelude to Act III, Scene 2 | 2:32 |
| 9. | 8a. Arrest – End of Act III | 0:25 |
| 10. | 9. Maiden in the Bridal Chamber – Prelude to Act IV | 3:36 |
| 11. | 10. Church Scene – Act IV, Scene 2 | 1:05 |
| 12. | 11. Dogberry and Verges (March of the Watch) | 1:29 |
| 13. | 12. Funeral Music – Prelude to Act V | 4:43 |
| 14. | 13. Intermezzo | 2:10 |
| 15. | 14. Final Dance | 2:37 |



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Cd 2

Sinfonietta, Op. 5

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|-----------|----------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. | I. Fließend, mit heiterem Schwunge | 43:33 |
| 2. | II. Scherzo. Molto agitato, rasch und feurig | 11:18 |
| 3. | III. Molto andante | 8:57 |
| 4. | IV. Finale. Patetico – Allegro giocoso | 7:43 |
| | | 15:35 |



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ERICH WOLFGANG KORNGOLD

Erich Wolfgang Korngold ranks securely among the principal composer prodigies. Born in Brünn, Moravia (now Brno, Czech Republic) on 29 May 1897, the second son of music critic Julius Korngold, he impressed Mahler with his cantata *Gold* when only nine and went on to consolidate this with a score for the ballet-pantomime *Der Schneeman*, premiered at the Vienna Court opera in 1910. Numerous orchestral, chamber and operatic works followed – including such ambitious pieces such as the *Schauspiel-Ouvertüre* (1911), the *Sinfonietta* (1912), and an operatic double-bill that comprised *Der Ring des Polykrates* (1914) and *Violanta* (1915) – culminating with the dual premiere (in Hamburg and Cologne) of his opera *Die tote Stadt* (1920) which made him world famous at the age of only 23. However, the success of his next opera – the highly ambitious *Das Wunder der Heliane* (1927) was to be blighted by the deteriorating political situation, while his last opera *Die Kathrin* (1938) could not even be heard in Vienna on account of Austria's *Anschluss* with Germany.

Korngold had now settled in Hollywood where, following the invitation by Max Reinhardt to collaborate on his lavish adaptation of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1934), a series of often symphonically conceived film scores written over the next decade – such as those for *Captain Blood* (1935), *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (1938), *The Sea Hawk* (1940) and *King's Row* (1941) – brought his music to an audience of millions. Following the Second World War, Korngold returned to Europe and to the concert hall though his unashamedly late-romantic idiom – epitomized by the *Violin Concerto* (1945) and the *Symphony in F sharp* (1952) [ODE 1182-2] - was to find only limited favour in the austerity of post-war Vienna; while his death, in Hollywood on 19 November 1957, attracted only passing attention. This past quarter-century, however, has seen a considerable revival of interest in his music, with a host of performances and recordings serving to mark the centenary of his birth in 1997 as well as the fiftieth



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anniversary of his death in 2007.

Written in 1912 and given its first performance in Vienna on 30 november 1913 by Felix Weingartner and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, the *Sinfonietta* earned the praise of no less than Richard Strauss. Scored for large forces, with two harps, piano and celesta, the piece is introduced by a five-note ascending motto – referred to as the ‘motif of the Happy Heart’ – that not only pervades all four movements (rather as the F-A-F motif runs throughout the whole of Brahms’ *Third Symphony*) but whose affirmative tone duly informed Korngold’s output over the next three decades.

The first movement begins with an animated and richly orchestrated melody that at length passes into the more leisurely second theme, a lightly scored transition soon making way for the compact though eventful development that reaches a vivid climax before heading into a modified reprise in which the second theme is heard in notably more restrained terms prior to the raptly expressive coda. The second movement is a scherzo which sets off with an energetic idea in which the Straussian influence is at its most pronounced, but this is succeeded by evocative music with woodwind and trumpets to the fore as it heads into a spirited recall of the opening; in its turn making way for the suave central section which makes the curtailed reprise of the first section the more effective. With its ‘dreamy’ (träumerisch) marking, the third movement is affecting for all its brevity – harps adding their distinctive timbre as the music builds from its initial inwardness to an eloquent apex before returning to its wistful beginning. The fourth movement makes an imposing finale: the initial bars suggest an unease that a slow ascent in lower strings barely calms, but what follows restores the prevailing optimism as the music takes in a more soulful melody on its way to an extensive development then, via a recall of the tense opening pages and a noble transition on brass, an intensified reprise and a coda that sees the work through to a triumphant close.

In 1918, Korngold was commissioned to write incidental music for a production of Shakespeare’s play *Much Ado About Nothing* (Viel Lärm um Nichts) that received its



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first hearing at Vienna's Schönbrunn Castle in may 1920. He arranged excerpts for violin and piano in consultation with Rudolf Kolisch, then a five-movement suite that rendered some of the best music for concert purposes and in which incarnation it quickly found favour. this recording, however, provides the first opportunity on disc to experience the score as Korngold first conceived it for an imaginatively constituted chamber orchestra.

The first piece, *Overture*, a model of sonata form despite its brevity, vividly sets the scene for the action to follow with its alternately animated and suave themes; piano and harmonium allotted notable roles in the scintillating instrumentation.

The second piece, *Don John* (Don Juan), is an entr'acte in which startled woodwind and nonchalant trumpet sound a note of caution.

The third piece, *Masquerade* (Mummenschanz), is an affectionate pastiche on an old english country dance which, replete with a bracing wit and some predictably virtuoso writing for the two horns, makes for an interlude of robust good spirits.

The fourth piece, *Festive Music* (Festmusik), centres on the alternately teasing and playful dialogue between strings and woodwind, between whose appearances come several plaintive episodes on the way to a suitably rousing conclusion.

The fifth piece, *Balthasar's Song* (Lied des Balthasar), features solo tenor in a warning to women over the fickleness of men, its two verses accompanied by strings and prefaced by an eloquent introduction on harp which returns at the close.

The sixth piece, *Garden Scene* (Gartenmusik), is also the most substantial and features one of the composer's typically warm-hearted melodies that unfolds at some length before being interrupted by a brief yet forceful outburst; the whole sequence being framed by atmospheric writing for horns then strings with the role of harp and piano at their most subtle.

The seventh piece, *Intermezzo*, underlines the reluctant but growing love of Beatrice for



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Benedick, encapsulated by the heartfelt melody for cello and piano with which it opens before being joined by the other strings in a tender declaration.

The eighth piece, *Dogberry and Verges* (Holzapfel und Schlehwein), is a humorous interlude for the two drunken night-watchmen, their inebriation denoted by the stuttering march rhythm and some Mahlerian *col legno* playing from strings.

The following passage, *Arrest* (Verhaftung), is in fact a literal reprise of the nonchalant final bars from the previous piece.

The ninth piece, *Maiden in the Bridal Chamber* (Mädchen im Brautgemach) finds Hero preparing for her wedding with uncertain though intense emotion in music whose charm is offset by a hint of regret – not least in the magical postlude for flute and strings.

The tenth piece, *Church Scene* (Kirchenszene), creates an atmospheric scene-setting with harmonium and bells to the fore.

The eleventh piece is a further partial reprise of the eighth, though this time taking in rather more of its deadpan humour.

The twelfth piece, *Funeral Music* (Trauermusik), brings with it the most tragically intense (albeit in context) music, its measured tread underpinning some notably fateful writing for strings that builds to an anguished climax featuring the horns, then moving away in a muted recessional which yet suggests a measure of acceptance prior to the closing bars.

The thirteenth piece is a direct reprise of the seventh, its heartfelt expression providing the perfect foil for what follows.

The fourteenth piece, *Final Dance* (Schlusstanz), is for the most part an elaboration of the third piece, though in the final bars Korngold abandons any pretence at historical accuracy for a waltz-driven surge to the exhilarating conclusion.



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Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra

The oldest professional symphony orchestra in the nordic countries was founded as the Helsinki Orchestral society by the young Robert Kajanus, its first Chief Conductor, in 1882. Well known today for its tradition of performing Sibelius, the **Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra** gave the first performances of many of Sibelius's major works, often with the composer himself conducting. The orchestra undertook its first foreign tour to the Universal Exposition in paris in 1900 and since then has visited most european countries, in addition to visiting the USA, South America, Japan, and China.

Since 2008, John Storgårds has been the orchestra's Chief Conductor, succeeding Leif Segerstam who received the title of Emeritus Chief Conductor. The list of previous chief conductors also includes Paavo Berglund and Okko Kamu. a new era started in august 2011, when the orchestra moved its permanent residency from the Finlandia Hall to the new Helsinki Music Centre.

The Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra and Ondine have maintained a long-standing exclusive partnership involving for example an edition of the complete Sibelius symphonies under the direction of Leif Segerstam, as well as numerous recordings of works by Einojuhani Rautavaara.

www.helsinkiphilharmonicorchestra.fi



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John Storgårds

John Storgårds is one of Finland's exceptional artists who have taken the classical music world by storm in recent decades. He has a dual career as a conductor and violin virtuoso and is widely recognised for his creative flair for programming and his commitment to contemporary music. Since 2008, Storgårds has been Chief Conductor of the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra. He additionally holds the titles of Artistic Director of the Chamber Orchestra of Lapland since 1996 and principal guest Conductor of BBC Philharmonic Orchestra since 2012.



Storgårds appears with such orchestras as BBC symphony, City of Birmingham Symphony, Swedish Radio Symphony, Oslo Philharmonic, Danish National Symphony, Bamberger Symphoniker, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Netherlands Radio, and Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale Della RAI Torino. Further afield, Storgårds has conducted the Sydney, Melbourne, and Australian Chamber Orchestras, and the Boston Symphony at Tanglewood Festival. Soloists with whom he regularly collaborates include Gil Shaham, Christian Tetzlaff, Frank Peter Zimmermann, Truls Mørk, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Colin Currie, Håkan Hardenberger, Sabine Meyer, Kari Kriikku, Karita Mattila, and Matti Salminen.

After starting a career as a world-class violinist, John Storgårds returned to the Sibelius Academy from 1993–97 to study conducting with Jorma Panula and Eri Klas. His recordings for Ondine include works by John Corigliano, Hafliði Hallgrímsson, Uuno



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Klami, Pehr Henrik Nordgren, Andrzej Panufnik, Kaija Saariaho, Jean Sibelius, Jukka Tiensuu, and Peteris Vasks (Cannes Classical disc of the Year award 2004 for the Violin Concerto 'Distant Light'). In 2002, he received the Finnish State Prize for Music.

www.johnstorgards.com



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2xHD Mastering: René Laflamme
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