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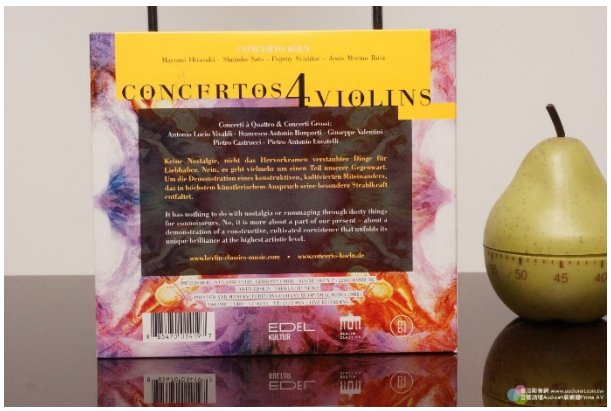
CONCERTOS FOR FOUR VIOLINS, RECORDED BY MBL

Another recording by MBL Chief Engineer Jürgen Reis with the Concerto Koln Chamber Orchestra, "Concertos 4 Violins", the third recording of this type of work that I have listened to, recorded June 6-8, 2019. This recording is once again sponsored by MBL. It was released by Berlin Classics Records and has a dynamic range index of DR13. Four violin concertos or violin concertos by composers such as Vivaldi, Bonporti, Valentini, Castrucci and Locatelli are performed. The music was good and the recording was superb!



I know Jürgen Reis very well, and we used to meet almost every year until the pandemic started. We also manage to reach each other by email and over telephone calls.

Mr Reis started building amplifiers and speakers by buying some second-hand components, dismantled them and used the parts to make electric guitar amplifiers and speakers, and to his great pleasure, he was able to make sound !

Because of his interest in audio, Jürgen Reis studied electrical engineering at Frankfurt university. One day, before he graduated, he went to an audio show in Berlin and heard MBL's 360-degree melo speaker for the first time, a prototype called the 100. Although, in his opinion, the sound he heard was not perfect, üReis thought it was the right design direction and was impressed with MBL brand. At the time of his graduation, he sent his CV to this audio manufacturer he discovered at the Berlin Audio Fair, and they hired him. At that time, MBL's products consisted of the 100 omnidirectional speaker, the 4010 preamp, and the 4020 parametric equalizer, which had only been launched six months earlier.

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A few weeks after he joined the company, Jürgen Reis asked his boss Wolfgang Meletzky if he could bring the preamp he made in college to the company because he didn't have any test equipment when he was a student. But now at MBL, the company had HP test equipment, and he wanted to measure his preamp to see how it performed. The first product Reis designed was the 5010 preamp, followed by the 6010 preamp. Reis said he had been studying OP Amps since he was a student and thought it would be ideal for use as a preamp component, focusing on the design of the peripherals with the wiring and power supply.

After two years in the company, Jürgen Reis started to research and develop horns when his rock band mates, the bassist and trumpeter, started a company producing carbon fiber necks for electric guitars. In 1984, Reis tried out his friend's carbon fiber technology to make 100 tweeter diaphragms (the first units used aluminum. He spent at least a year to work on improvents and fine-tuning the tweeter design. After it ptoved to be successful, he applied his knowledge and experience with this material and transferred the technology over to the midrange drive. The result was the 101 speaker, launched in 1986. An the rest as they say, was history. Reis then went on to successively design the 9010 stereo/mono amplifier, the 1611 DAC and the 1621 CD Transport.

When Jürgen Reis was developing amplifiers, he noticed a problem. He remarked that some amplifiers claim to deliver hundreds of watts, but their ability to drive some speakers was very weak. Yet some amplifiers claimed to only deliver 100 watts, but their driving power was capable to drive the most demanding of speakers. He looked deeper into the subject and found that the problem was the way they were tested. The general amplifier test is the use of resistance, capacitance or inductance with fixed values, and the voltage and current phase being constant. However, when music is being played, the phase in voltage and current will drift due to the change of impedance in the speaker, and then the voltage phase in the amplifier may be positive, but the current phase is negative. For this reason, Reis has developed a test method he calls 4QT (Quadrants), which measures four conditions: voltage and current in positive phase, voltage and current in reverse phase, voltage phase ahead of current, and current phase ahead of voltage. The first amplifier that could satisfy the 4QT test was the 9010.

Jürgen Reis has had his own studio since 2005 and is an Apple Certified Master Engineer, which requires one to record intrue 24/96 high resolution, not interpolated oversampling or upscaling. I don't know if audiophiles have noticed, but MBL's digital sources also sounded great because Jürgen Reis found a problem with CD recordings. He studied 10 of the most popular CDs at the time and found that clipping occurred 50 times per second in the recording. The clipping was caused by improper overloading of the interpolation or oversampling. For this reason, the digital sources designed by Reis have a special margin so that the digital

signal does not produce interpolation or overload from upscaling. No wonder MBL's digital sources sound so good.

Jürgen Reis and MBL started recording Germany's Concerto Koln chamber orchestra in October 2009, and have released three albums to date, the current "Concertos 4 Violins" being the latest one. The recording took place in Stadsgehoorzaal, a 300-year-old concert hall in Leiden, Netherlands, with a capacity of up to 600 people. This CD is a live recording of the Concerto Koln Chamber Orchestra's concert take took place from June 6-8, 2019.

Jürgen Reis still stands his recording principals of no artificial reverb, no compressors. He uses two Sennheiser MKH-8040 cardioid condenser microphones for the stereo recording, with additional auxiliary microphones for spatial recording. So, in Jürgen Reis' recording, we can hear the original performance of the band, with no compression distortion in the contrast between strength and weakness. There is no artificial reverberation applied, meaning all you hear is the natural reverberation and spaciousness of the venue. This way of recording allows audiophiles to come closest at hearing the exact sound of the actual performance. This is what audiophiles are looking for.

I'm not going to talk about the music, it's all very good, so if you are interested in understanding the background of the music, please Google it yourself, but what I want to say is that the recording is really amazing, especially the beauty of the sound quality and timbre of the instruments being almost “poisonous”. The texture of the instruments is definitely realistic, the harmony of the orchestra is simply gorgeous and the resolution is extremely fine. The overall music is well rounded and very alive, thanks to intensity and dynamics of the music. This recording shows no sign of compression at all. I suggest that you take this CD out and make use of it every time you change equipment or cables, and if it sounds better, that means your investment has paid off. If it doesn't sound better, or worse, it doesn’t sound any good on your equipment, then there’s a problem.

These three records by Jürgen Reis are highly recommended for music appreciation or equipment testing.

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