
Antonio Meneses

Selected Reviews

Schubert Arpeggione Sonata in A minor D821, Brahms 3 Intermezzi Op. 117 (solo piano), Mendelssohn Song without words Op. 109 and Brahms Cello Sonata No. 1 in E minor Op. 38 , Wigmore Hall with Maria João Pires, 3 January 2012

"Every twist in the kaleidoscope was executed with extreme finesse...Meneses exposed the dark glory of his cello's lowest register; dynamics swelled and ebbed like ocean waves; and there was muscle in the finale's contrapuntal argument."

- **Geoff Brown, The Times**

"Meneses' warm sound...a majestically laid-back account of Brahms's first cello sonata, followed by a Bach Pastorale which showcased the mellow amplitude of Meneses' sound." - **Michael Church, The Independent**

"a player of aristocratic reserve, able to turn a melody with lovely grace...[the Arpeggione Sonata] sits perilously high for the cello, but Meneses tiptoed round its awkward corners with fastidious exactness...his warmly eloquent understatement...close to perfection." - **Ivan Hewett, The Telegraph**

"The new year opened in style at Wigmore Hall last night with Brazilian cellist Antonio Meneses...Meneses and Pires admirably captured both the surface beauty and the heartache beneath...deeply expressive."

- **Barry Millington, London Evening Standard**

"Meneses's natural poise...lent [Brahms's Cello Sonata No 1] an elegant sheen." - **Hannah Nepil, Financial Times**

Beethoven Cello Sonatas and JS Bach Cello Suite No.1, Maria João Pires, Wigmore Hall, 13 April 2011

"a performance which brought a real sense of community, of intimately shared music-making. Nobody coughed. I didn't look at my watch once. And, at the end, I didn't even want to go home." - **Hilary Finch, The Times**

"luminous quality enhanced his stylish rendering of Bach's First Cello Suite". - **Barry Millington, London Evening Standard**

Haydn and Pereira, Northern Sinfonia, AVIE AV2176, August 2010

"Antonio Meneses delivers warm and technically flawless accounts of the Haydn C major and D major supported by an enthusiastic and full-blooded contribution from the Northern Sinfonia" - **Erik Levi, BBC Music Magazine**

"Antonio Meneses's naturally lyrical style proves perfect for Haydn's cello concertos, and his technical prowess serves the challenges of the passagework with impressive fluidity. His rather self-effacing virtuosity achieves the ultimate object of allowing the music to speak for itself. (...) Meneses offers a brilliant account of the solo part (Pereira) and again harnesses the orchestral forces with precision in a clear recording." - **Joanne Talbot, The Strad Magazine**

Soirées Internationales (Villa-Lobos, N Boulanger, Camargo Guarnieri and Martinů) Celina Szrvinsk (pf), AVIE 2162, 2009

"Meneses (himself and 'international Brazilian" plays con amore with warm tone (...) Overall, a well-planned and lovingly played recital." - **Phillip Scott, Fanfare Magazine**

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"Meneses and Szrvinsk have no rivals in Mozart Camargo Guarnieri's lyrical and vivid First Sonata (1931) but it is hard to imagine the work done better. Recommended." – **Guy Rickards, Gramophone**

"Meneses's fine tone and classical bearing as he takes over the soprano part contribute to a more Bachian experience than usual." - **Robert Maycock, BBC Music Magazine (Four stars)**

Beethoven Cello Sonatas: No. 1-5, Menahem Pressler(pf), AVIE 2103, 2008

"Between them, Menahem Pressler and Antonio Meneses offer us a rare listening privilege, with playing that is at once intimate, conversational, reposeful, intelligent and, above all, simple in its musical intentions, which are, or seem to be, to present the music without excessive interpretative intervention." - **Rob Cowan, Gramophone Magazine (Editor's Choice)**

"This set (...) grabs you from not one and won't let you go. The performances reveal a gorgeous tone, formidable technique but, most intriguing of all, a sense of occasion that's extremely rare to achieve in the studio. (...) Meneses and Pressler explore subtleties in the music that others either overlook or wouldn't have thought of. One example, among many, is Sonata No.2, here they create an almost hesitant, stumbling motion in the opening movement, emphasizing the music's tragic cast without overdoing heart-on-sleeve drama." – **Lynn René Bayley, Fanfare magazine**

"(..)immediately one hears a richness and a depth to Meneses's tone, and a technique so assured and secure that the instrument – a 1730 Alessandro Gagliano – seems to take wing on its own. (...)Meneses and Pressler offer an alternative approach to that of Perényi and Schiff that I find quite compelling. I would be hard-pressed to choose between the two, but if I had to, I think I'd give the edge to this newcomer for its true chamber-ensemble perspective and for its sumptuous recorded sound." – **Jerry Dubins**

Mendelssohn, Gérard Wyss (pf), AVIE AV2140, December 2007

"The songs are the icing on the cake in this cello-and-piano treat. (...)The playing is immaculate, with a clean balance between the nicely separated instruments." – **Edward Greenfield, Gramophone Magazine**

"Meneses is a refined and passionate player." – **Warwick Thompson, Metro Magazine**

"Antonio Meneses relishes the charm of the simple **Andante** but also the sweeping melodies which provide the main interest in the two rather similarly designed **Allegro** movements (...) Meneses is elegant and polished."

– **John Warrack, International Record Review**

Schumann & Schubert Works for Cello and Piano, Gérard Wyss(pf), AVIE AV2112, February 2007

"He's a true virtuoso, as the fast passages in the **Arpeggione** and the third of the **Märchenbilder** amply demonstrate, but one never feels that he's presenting himself. The impression is rather that he's inviting us into Schumann's or Schubert's inner world, urbanely drawing attention, by means of subtle emphasis or change of colour, to all the music's incidental beauties."

– **Duncan Druce, Gramophone Magazine (Editor's Choice)**

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"Benchmark aside, I should first declare that this recording boasts some of the most beautiful cello playing I have heard in years. Antonio Meneses (...) is an aristocrat of the instrument. His sound has the translucent radiance of liquid amber. Double-stopped chords fall with bell-like purity, his legato is seamless, his bow seemingly endless."

– **Helen Wallace, BBC Music Magazine (Benchmark Recording, 5 stars)**

"Restrained but profound, the pair did the deep reflections on pain, on love, on life in these works.(...) So persuasive are these musicians, so perfect the relationship between the instruments, that it is easy to forget that,(...) only Schumann's Fünf Stücke im Volkston was originally composed for cello. However, any worries about coherence or authenticity immediately fade in an album that is coherent, stylish and deeply satisfying. – **James Inverne, Gramophone Magazine (Classical CD of the month)**

Sao Paulo Symphony / John Neschling, January 2007

"While the orchestra was a bit imprecise in the introduction to Tchaikovsky's **Rococo Variations**, once Brazilian-born Antonio Meneses, principal cellist of the Beaux Arts Trio, entered, the rest was chamber-like serenity. In the Andante variations, Meneses made the music speak, cry, even weep as only Russians can. Neschling matched Meneses's depth of expression and subtle rubatos. Articulation and clarity were encased in long, seamless heavenly stretches, linking one variation to the next, creating one integral structure. The performance was a masterpiece of partnership and the next best thing to ecstasy"

– **Gil French, Music in Concert**

Buffalo Chamber Music Society, Kleinhans Music Hall, New York, Menahem Pressler(pf), March 2006

"Meneses and Pressler brought each of the composer's phrases into focus without rushing or lingering the moment. They were darn close to perfect. (...) a series of standing ovations by the nearly packed hall brought the duo out for a tasteful rendition of the first movement from Debussy's cello sonata." – **Geraud MacTaggart, Buffalo News**

JS Bach Suites for Cello (complete), AVIE AV 0052, January 2005

"While some of the 50-odd recordings of these suites test technique to destruction, and others suggest cellists striving to impose their own distinctive mark, Antonio Meneses is master of his instrument and defers modestly to Bach. (...) His rhythmic instinct is exemplary. (...)Meneses communicates the joy of the music rather than the challenge to the cellist. His straightforward, no-nonsense interpretation allows Bach to speak for himself. (...) this unassuming, 'non-period' recording finally topples Jaap ter Linden, my long-standing previous benchmark." – **George Pratt, BBC Music Magazine**

Beethoven five sonatas for cello and piano, Vermont Mozart Festival, Menahem Pressler (pf), July 2004

"To perform all five sonatas in a single concert is a feat, but to perform them with the intimacy and intensity that these two masters achieved was a joy. (...)Pressler and Meneses' performance was deep, passionate and sublime. (...)Meneses plays with a quiet expressiveness, always with musically introspective nuance and a feeling of movement." – **Jim Lowe, Times Argus Staff**