

A-Z of CONDUCTORS

— by David Patmore



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David Patmore

Sheffield, 2007

TRACK LIST

The recordings selected for these CDs seek to give no more than a fleeting impression of the work of some of the finest conductors active in the earlier part of the sound recording era. In all cases the selections have been bounded by the need to achieve as wide a conspectus of different conductors as possible within the space available, while recognising commercial constraints. Consequently this should not be seen as a truly representative selection of artists and repertoire, as in these circumstances the selection inevitably concentrates upon earlier conductors, and upon works written predominantly during the nineteenth century. Nonetheless should a specific selection spark an interest in a particular musician, then fuller information about individual careers and recommended recordings may be found in the accompanying book.

A few notes about the discographical information provided may be helpful. In most cases this is drawn from *The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music* by Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming, published in 1952 by Sidgwick and Jackson Ltd in association with the Decca Record Company Ltd, and in the USA and South America by the London Gramophone Corporation, with three supplements published in 1952, 1953 and 1957. This extraordinary work of reference is highly recommended to all with an interest in historical recordings.

Where known the listings include, in addition to conductor, composer and work title, the date, location and city of recording, the recording company, the catalogue number(s) (in the case of excerpts the number(s) for the complete work) for the United Kingdom and the USA, and the matrix number(s) for the complete or excerpted recording featured.

The symbol to the right of each conductor's name acknowledges the work of the three outstanding transfer engineers, David Lennick (*), Ward Marston (^) and Mark Obert-Thorn (+).

CD 1

- 1 **Ernest Ansermet ***
Rossini/Respighi: La Boutique fantasque (Can-Can and Scène) 4:40
London Symphony Orchestra
Recorded 20–22.07.1950 in Kingsway Hall, London by Decca
Decca K 23123/6; LXT 2555; London LLP 274
Matrix ARL 498
- 2 **John Barbirolli ***
Mendelssohn: Overture, The Hebrides 9:07
Hallé Orchestra
Recorded 30.04.1948 in Houldsworth Hall, Manchester by EMI/HMV
HMV C 3770
Matrices 2EA 12957 and 2EA 12958
- 3 **Thomas Beecham ***
Delius: A Village Romeo and Juliet (The Walk to the Paradise Garden) 7:14
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
Recorded 19–20.12. 1927 in the Fyvie Hall, London by Columbia Graphophone
Columbia L 2087
Matrices WAX 3155-3 and WAX 3160-1
- 4 **Eduard van Beinum ***
Rossini: La scala di seta (Overture) 5:55
Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra
Recorded May 1952 by Decca
Decca LXT 2733; London LL 358
Matrix ARL 756

- Leonard Bernstein ***
- 5 Schumann: Symphony No. 2 (4th Mvt, Allegro molto vivace) 8:10
New York Stadium Symphony Orchestra
Recorded 23.06.1953 in New York by American Decca
Decca DL 9715
Matrix MG 3552
- Karl Böhm ***
- 6 Weber: Der Freischütz (Overture) 9:12
Dresden Staatskapelle
Recorded 25.06.1938 in Dresden by EMI/Electrola
HMV DB 4561
Matrices 2RA 3096 and 2RA 3097
- Adrian Boult ***
- 7 Elgar: Imperial March 4:07
BBC Symphony Orchestra
Recorded 16.04.1937 in London by EMI/HMV
HMV DB 3163
Matrix 2EA 1054-1
- Fritz Busch ^**
- 8 Mozart: Don Giovanni (Overture) 6:18
Glyndebourne Festival Orchestra
Recorded 29.06–5.07.1936 by EMI/HMV
HMV DB 2961/83; Victor sets M 423/5
Matrices 2ER 130 and 2ER 137

- Guido Cantelli +**
9 Debussy: La Mer (3rd Mvt, Dialogue du vent et de la mer) 7:56
Philharmonia Orchestra
Recorded 13–14.09.1954 in Kingsway Hall, London by EMI/HMV
HMV ALP 1228; QALP 10093
- Sergiu Celibidache +**
10 Mozart: Symphony No. 25 (4th Mvt, Allegro) 4:17
London Philharmonic Orchestra
Recorded 9.04 and 29.12.1948 in Kingsway Hall, London by Decca
Decca AK 2197/9; LXT 2558; London T 5141/3, set LA 97
Matrix AR 12175-2
- André Cluytens ***
11 Gounod: Faust (Ballet Music, Act V, Nos 6 and 7) 4:19
Paris Opera Orchestra
Recorded April – June 1953 in Paris by EMI/HMV
HMV ALP 1162/5, Victor LM 6400
- Albert Coates +**
12 Wagner: Lohengrin (Prelude, Act III) 2:52
London Symphony Orchestra
Recorded 27.10.1925 in Studio B, Hayes, Middlesex by the Gramophone Company
HMV D 1054
Matrix Cc 7083-2

TT 74:14

CD 2

- Victor de Sabata ***
- 1 Berlioz: Overture, Carnaval Romain 8:39
London Philharmonic Orchestra
Recorded 30.05.1946 in Walthamstow Assembly Hall, London by Decca
Decca K 1552
Matrices AR 10347-3 and 10348-1
- Roger Désormière ***
- 2 Debussy: Pelléas et Mélisande (Act IV, Interlude between Scenes 2 and 3) 3:42
Orchestre Symphonique
Recorded 24.04.1941 to 26.05.1941 in the Salle du Conservatoire, Paris by EMI/HMV France
Disque Gramophone DB 5161/80
Matrix 2LA 3543-4
- Antal Dorati ***
- 3 Tchaikovsky: Hamlet (Overture) 7:39
London Philharmonic Orchestra
Recorded 17.09.1937 in London by EMI/HMV
HMV C 3176
Matrices 2EA 5347 and 2EA 5348
- Ferenc Fricsay ***
- 4 Borodin: In the Steppes of Central Asia 6:11
Berlin RIAS Symphony Orchestra
Recorded 23.03.1952 in Berlin by Deutsche Grammophon
American Decca DL 4022

- 5 **Wilhelm Furtwängler +**
Wagner: Tristan und Isolde (Liebestod) 7:04
Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra
Recorded 11.02.1938 in Berlin by EMI/Electrola
HMV DB 3420; Victor 14935 in M 653
Matrices 2RA 2659-2 (part) and 2RA 2660-2
- 6 **Jascha Horenstein +**
Bruckner: Symphony No. 7 (1st Mvt, Allegro moderato[beginning]) 4:47
Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra
Recorded 1928 in the High School for Music, Berlin by Polydor
Polydor 66802/8
Matrix 964 bm
- 7 **Eugen Jochum +**
Brahms: Symphony No. 4 (4th Mvt, Allegro energico e passionato) 9:58
Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra
Recorded 7–10.12.1953 in Jesus-Christus-Kirche, Berlin by Deutsche Grammophon
Deutsche Grammophon DGM 18183
- 8 **Herbert von Karajan ***
Beethoven: Overture, Egmont 8:21
Philharmonia Orchestra
Recorded 19.06.1953 in London by EMI/Columbia
Columbia CX 1136, Angel 35097

9

Rudolf Kempe *

Wagner: Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg

(Act III, Prelude, Dance of the Apprentices, Entry of the Mastersingers)

11:07

Dresden Staatskapelle

Recorded 29.04–2.05.1951 in Dresden by Urania

Urania set 206; URLP 7067

10

Erich Kleiber +

Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 (1st Mvt, Allegro con brio)

7:17

Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra

Recorded 26.09.1953 in the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam by Decca

Decca LXT 2851; London LL 912

11

Otto Klemperer +

Mahler: Symphony No. 2 'Resurrection' (4th Mvt, 'Urlicht')

4:18

Vienna Symphony Orchestra (with Hilde Rössl-Majdan, contralto)

Recorded 14–16 and 20–23.05.1951 in the Musikvereinsaal, Vienna by Vox

Vox PL 7012

TT 79:10

CD 3

- | | | |
|---|--|------|
| 1 | Hans Knappertsbusch +
Wagner: Die Walküre (Act III, The Ride of the Valkyries)
Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra
Recorded 6–7.05.1953 in the Musikvereinsaal, Vienna, by Decca
Decca LXT 2822; London LL 800 | 5:53 |
| 2 | Serge Koussevitzky +
Grieg: The Last Spring
Boston Symphony Orchestra
Recorded 29.11.1950 in Symphony Hall, Boston by RCA
Victor ERA 195 | 5:39 |
| 3 | Clemens Krauss *
J. Strauss II: Die Fledermaus (Overture)
Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra
Recorded 22.06 and 16–22.09.1950 in Vienna by Decca
Decca AX 470/81; LXT 2550/1; London LLP 281/2
Matrices VAR 113 and VAR 114 | 8:04 |
| 4 | Josef Krips *
Mozart: Die Entführung aus dem Serail (Overture)
Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra
Recorded 17.12.1951 in Vienna by Decca
Decca KX 28341/53; LXT 2536/8; London set LLPA 3
Matrix ARL 397 | 4:28 |

- 5 **Willem Mengelberg +**
Berlioz: La Damnation de Faust (Hungarian March) 4:22
Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra
Recorded 16.04.42 in the Amsterdam Concertgebouw by Telefunken
Telefunken SK 3244
Matrix 026411
- 6 **Dimitri Mitropoulos ***
Scriabin: The Poem of Ecstasy (conclusion) 7:31
New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra (with William Vacchiano, trumpet)
Recorded 30.04.1953 in New York by American Columbia
American Columbia ML 4731
Matrix XLP 14007-1
- 7 **Pierre Monteux +**
Berlioz: Symphonie Fantastique (2nd Mvt, "Un bal") 5:45
San Francisco Symphony Orchestra
Recorded 27.02.1950 in the War Memorial Opera House, San Francisco by RCA
Victor LM 1131; HMV ALP 1137
- 8 **Evgeny Mravinsky ***
Tchaikovsky: Francesca da Rimini (beginning) 3:50
Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra
Recorded 20.05.1940 in Moscow by the State Music Trust (Russia)
USSR 010273-8

- Charles Munch ***
9 d'Indy: Fervaal (Prelude to Act I) 4:40
Paris Conservatoire Orchestra
Recorded 04.10.1947 in Kingsway Hall, London by Decca
Decca K 1718; London T 5609 in LA 198
Matrix AR 11605
- Arthur Nikisch ***
10 Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 (4th Mvt, Allegro [conclusion]) 4:42
Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra
Recorded 20.11.1913 in Berlin by Grammophon
Grammophon 040790/1
Matrices 1255c and 1256c
- Eugene Ormandy +**
11 Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 'Pathétique' (2nd Mvt, Allegro con grazia) 7:43
Philadelphia Orchestra
Recorded 13.12.1936 in the Academy of Music, Philadelphia by RCA
Victor 14264/8, set M 337; HMV DB 3309/13
Matrices CS 03135-2 and 03136-1
- Fritz Reiner +**
12 Bizet: Carmen (Prelude to Act I) 2:18
RCA Victor Orchestra
Recorded May – June 1951 in the Manhattan Center, New York City by RCA
Victor set LM 6102; HMV ALP 1115-7

- Artur Rodzinski ***
- 13 Beethoven: Symphony No. 1 (4th Mvt, Adagio: Allegro molto e vivace) 5:35
Austrian Symphony Orchestra (Vienna Tonkünstler Orchestra)
Recorded 07 and 09.03.1952 in Vienna by Remington
Remington R-199-156
Matrix RE-33-1203
- Hermann Scherchen +**
- 14 Handel: Messiah (Halleluia Chorus) 3:26
London Symphony Orchestra (with London Philharmonic Choir)
Recorded September 1953 in Walthamstow Assembly Hall, London by Nixa
Nixa NLP 907-1/3; Westminster set WAL 308
- Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt ***
- 15 Mozart: Adagio in E major K.261 4:44
Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra (with Georg Kulenkampff, violin)
Recorded 25.06.1936 in Berlin by Telefunken
Telefunken E 2021
Matrix 021295

TT 78:48

CD 4

- 1 **Carl Schuricht** *
Schumann: Symphony No. 3 'Rhenish' (5th Mvt, Lebhaft) 5:21
Paris Conservatoire Orchestra
Recorded June 1954 in Paris by Decca
Decca LXT 2985; London LL 1037
Matrix ARL 1701
- 2 **Georg Solti** *
Suppé: Leichte Kavallerie (Overture) 5:34
London Philharmonic Orchestra
Recorded 05-06.04.1951 in London by Decca
Decca K 23209; LXT 2589; London LL 352
Matrix ARL 744
- 3 **William Steinberg** *
Liszt: A Faust Symphony (2nd Mvt, 'Gretchen' [conclusion]) 5:12
Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra
Unpublished recording of NBC Radio broadcast, 05.03.1949
- 4 **Leopold Stokowski** +
Wagner: Rienzi (Overture) 11:14
New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra
Recorded 4.04.1949 in the Columbia 30th Street Studios, New York by American Columbia
American Columbia ML 2153

- Richard Strauss ***
- 5 Mozart: Symphony No. 41 'Jupiter' (4th Mvt, Allegro molto) 5:38
Berlin Staatskapelle
Recorded circa 1926 in Berlin by Polydor
Polydor 69845/8
Matrices 185bm and 186bm
- George Szell +**
- 6 Dvořák: Symphony No. 9 'From the New World' (3rd Mvt, Molto vivace) 7:52
Czech Philharmonic Orchestra
Recorded 30.10.1937 in EMI Abbey Road Studio No. 1, London by EMI/HMV
HMV C 2949/53; Victor 12254/58, set M 469
Matrices 2EA 5842-1A and 5843-1
- Václav Talich +**
- 7 Suk: Serenade for String Orchestra (2nd Mvt, Allegro ma non troppo e grazioso) 5:39
Czech Philharmonic Orchestra
Recorded 22-23.11.1938 in EMI Abbey Road Studio No. 1, London by EMI/HMV
HMV DB 3681/4; Victor 13635/8, set M 779
Matrices 2EA 7158-1 and 7159-1
- Arturo Toscanini +**
- 8 Brahms: Tragic Overture 12:39
BBC Symphony Orchestra
Recorded 25.10.1937 in Queen's Hall, London by EMI/HMV
HMV DB 3349/50, coupled with excerpt from Beethoven's Symphony No. 1; Victor set M 507, 15383/7 containing Beethoven's Symphony No. 1 complete
Matrices 2ER 248-2A, 2ER 249-2A and 2ER 250-2A

- 9 **Bruno Walter** +
Mahler: Symphony No. 5 (4th Mvt, Adagietto) 8:14
Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra
Recorded 19.01.1938 in the Musikvereinsaal, Vienna by EMI/HMV
HMV DB 3406; Victor 12319
Matrices 2VH 7049-2A and 2VH 7050-2A
- 10 **Felix Weingartner** *
J. Strauss II: Waltz, Tausend und eine Nacht 8:00
British Symphony Orchestra
Recorded 08.04.1931 in London by Columbia Graphophone
Columbia LX 133
Matrices WAX 6048 and WAX 6049

TT 75:30
TT CDs 1-4 5:07:48

- * Transfers by David Lennick
^ Transfers by Ward Marston
+ Transfers by Mark Obert-Thorn

Artists and repertoire selection: David Lennick, Mark Obert-Thorn, David Patmore
Co-ordination: David Patmore

PREFACE – RECORDING AND CONDUCTING

Orchestras had become familiar participants in recordings during the early years of the new technology, for instance in operatic excerpts; but it was not until 1913, when the great Hungarian conductor Arthur Nikisch led the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra in the first complete recording of Beethoven's Symphony No. 5, that the role of the conductor was accorded the stature in the world of recording already granted to singers and instrumentalists. The reasons for this did not reflect any artistic hierarchy, but simply the fact that up until that time the practical difficulties of recording a symphony orchestra together with a great conductor had seemed to be insurmountable.

Nikisch's lead was haltingly followed during the following decade by such other major figures as Thomas Beecham in London, Karl Muck in Boston and Leopold Stokowski in Philadelphia; but the age of the recording conductor did not effectively start until 1925 and the introduction of electrical recording. The most active recording conductors of the earlier, acoustic, period were the 'house conductors' employed by the major labels. These musicians possessed a technical understanding of the recording process and an ability to work with other musicians under testing conditions. They included, in England, Landon Ronald, Albert Ketèlbey and Joseph Batten; in France, Piero Coppola and Gustav Cloez; in Italy, Carlo Sabajno and Lorenzo Molajoli; and in Germany, Bruno Seidler-Winkler and Frieder Weissmann.

Electrical recording had two main advantages over the previous acoustic recording process. These were the greater fidelity offered through the microphone, and the ability to record an orchestra in the same physical layout as that in which it gave concerts (as opposed to having to cram itself into a necessarily small and acoustically dry recording room, with the conductor often looking at certain players through strategically placed mirrors). These two factors meant that at last both conductors and orchestras had the opportunity to display their musical skills and insights. In addition, the economic buoyancy of the later 1920s and the consequent rapid development of the recording industry resulted in orchestral recordings becoming not only a standard feature of the industry's monthly releases lists, but also often those recordings through which companies chose to display their claimed supremacy.

With American prompting, the centenary of Beethoven's death was marked in 1927 by the release of a significant tranche of his works on record, including a complete cycle of the

symphonies on the Columbia label. So successful was this initiative that in the following year Columbia followed up with celebrations to mark the centenary of Schubert's death. By this time the conductors whose recordings were appearing regularly included the major names of both the European and American musical worlds. Willem Mengelberg was recording with both the Amsterdam Concertgebouw and New York Philharmonic Orchestras, as was Leopold Stokowski with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Albert Coates with the London Symphony Orchestra and Franz Schalk with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.

As the decade drew to a close most of the significant musicians of the future were already active in the recording studio. In the United Kingdom, Hamilton Harty was making recordings at the helm of the Hallé Orchestra and Beecham was conducting faultless accounts of the music of Delius. John Barbirolli graduated from the National Gramophonic Society to His Master's Voice, as did Adrian Boult from Velvet Face, and the young and dapper Malcolm Sargent's name could also be spotted in the catalogues. In France the major conductors of the period, Philippe Gaubert, Pierre Monteux and Gustav Pierné, were active in the studios. In Germany and Austria, where a much higher premium was placed upon musical education and the dissemination of musical culture than elsewhere, the catalogues were quickly brimming with the names of the leading conductors and composers of the period: for instance Fritz Busch, Erich Kleiber, Hans Knappertsbusch, Hans Pfitzner, Richard Strauss, Bruno Walter and Felix Weingartner.

The stock exchange crash of 1929 and the economic depression which followed had the effect of slowing down recording activity and triggering the merger of the two major British labels, His Master's Voice and Columbia. Both of these had significant international holdings, and joined to form Electric and Musical Industries Ltd (EMI). As a result of these organisational changes and the general economic slowdown, orchestral recordings became fewer in Europe. Yet at the same time two figures were emerging who were to dominate the world of recording for many years to come: Arturo Toscanini and Wilhelm Furtwängler.

Toscanini had already made several less than wholly satisfactory recordings under the acoustic process, but it was his early electrical recordings with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra that set new standards of orchestral performance. The formation of the NBC Symphony Orchestra for Toscanini in 1937, and the constant stream of recordings made by this partnership until Toscanini's retirement in 1954, released on the RCA and HMV labels, made this musician appear as the epitome

of the conductor to many music lovers throughout the world. Furtwängler made his first recording with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra in 1927 and continued to record intermittently for the rest of his life. Both musicians were central figures in classical music recordings during the 1930s.

While Europe slid towards war during the 1930s, the American economy gradually picked up and with it recording activity once more gathered pace. By the end of the decade most self-respecting symphony orchestras had secured recording contracts, albeit it was often the orchestral associations themselves that actually paid their musicians the necessary recording fees, in order to secure the public profile that recordings brought with them. Serge Koussevitzky in Boston, Eugene Ormandy and then Dimitri Mitropoulos in Minneapolis, Fritz Reiner in Pittsburgh, and Frederick Stock in Chicago all entered the recording studios, to follow the lead already set by Stokowski in Philadelphia and Toscanini in New York.

Three technological innovations developed during World War II were to provide a spectacular stimulus to the growth of the record industry in the aftermath of war. Firstly, recording on tape, developed by BASF and first used in 1936, was employed by the Germans during the war to record 'Magnetophon concerts': these were straight performance recordings which were distributed around Germany for deferred broadcasting in an attempt to provide daily life with a semblance of normality. When the Americans arrived in Germany the Magnetophon recorders were quickly shipped back to the United States, copied and manufactured in bulk, creating in the process a new and sophisticated audio constituency. However, the essential advantage to recording on tape was that it allowed for mistakes to be excised, and second thoughts to be recorded in their place.

The second innovation was the introduction of plastic, and particularly vinyl, for the manufacture of the discs themselves. War made the import of shellac – the base material for 78rpm discs – from the Far East more difficult, and so more expensive. Vinyl presented a cheap alternative which also had two further advantages: it had a quieter surface than discs pressed with shellac, and it did not break up when played at slower speeds, a characteristic which in turn allowed for longer playing times.

The third innovation was the extension of the frequency range of recording equipment. During the war the Decca Record Company of England was asked by the British Ministry of War to develop recording apparatus capable of capturing coded enemy radio transmissions, which were broadcast at high frequencies. Decca speedily produced what came to be known as 'Full Frequency Range

Recording, which eventually allowed for frequencies up to 20,000 kiloHerz to be recorded, whereas previously the standard had been about 8,000 to 10,000 kiloHerz. As a result a far more faithful acoustic picture could be captured.

Together, tape recording, vinyl and FFRR laid the foundations for the long-playing record, introduced into the United States by Columbia Records in 1948. This format had a per-side playing time of approximately twenty-five minutes: enough, it was thought, to enable approximately eighty per cent of the symphonic repertoire to be recorded over one or two sides. In addition Columbia openly agreed to share its pressing facilities for the LP with anyone who wished to commission them. As soon as the 'speed-wars' with RCA had been ended with the introduction of the seven-inch 45rpm single, the market for LPs took off in a big way, firstly in America and then in Europe.

Throughout the 1950s the catalogue for classical music recordings expanded, and in America in particular many small companies entered the market, often to promote specialist niches of either repertoire or performers. As a result many previously unknown conductors began to appear on record labels alongside those who had been active before the war and who had survived it. Recording began to reflect in some depth the state of the musical life in America, Great Britain, France and Germany. Each major label prided itself on a roster of conductors, whose gramophone recordings assisted the development of their international careers.

Just to pick a random selection of some of the most well-known conductors, from the mid-1950s EMI had under contract Sir Thomas Beecham, Carlo Maria Giulini and Otto Klemperer; Decca, Sir Georg Solti; Philips, Eduard van Beinum; and Deutsche Grammophon, Ferenc Fricsay; while in the USA, RCA recorded with Fritz Reiner in Chicago and Charles Munch in Boston, and CBS with Leonard Bernstein in New York, and Bruno Walter in New York and Los Angeles. So great was the demand for his services that the conductor Herbert von Karajan moved from EMI to DG and then to Decca and RCA, before developing a system in which he auctioned his recordings to the highest bidder among the major labels.

This growth was further stimulated by the introduction of stereophonic sound recordings, at first available only on tape, but from 1958 on the long-playing record as well. The strong hold of record companies over the actual manufacture, distribution and sale of discs enabled them to maintain a secure grip upon this flourishing market. Sales and profitability increased, and one result was that many orchestras and conductors appeared on an increasingly bewildering number

of labels across the world.

Following many years of continuous growth, the market for sound recordings began to reach a plateau towards the end of the 1970s. A new format was required, offering benefits beyond those provided by the long-playing record. The answer was the compact disc, introduced into Europe in 1983 and offering through digital sound an apparently enhanced aural picture, a more robust playing surface, and greater ease of usage through its smaller size.

Initially the compact disc enabled the record industry to maintain growth, and to continue to record classical music in a reasonably representative manner. A later generation of conductors, led by musicians of the stature of Claudio Abbado, Carlos Kleiber, Lorin Maazel and Riccardo Muti, saw many of their recordings appear for the first time in this format. However, by the middle of the 1990s, any growth within the recording industry was becoming increasingly less vigorous, and at the same time the nature of the record industry was changing significantly. Whereas during the heyday of the LP recording companies had either been devoted predominantly to the production of records, albeit on an international scale, or had been part of entertainment-related conglomerates, during the 1990s they came to be absorbed into large multi-national media conglomerates in which they were simply one component. As a result they had to abide by corporate financial targets which frequently required a rate of return on capital beyond the potential of classical music recordings to achieve.

Gradually during the 1990s, the services of orchestras and conductors were dispensed with by recording companies; and by the end of that decade the golden age of the conductor on record had quietly drawn to a close. Many conductors, who a few decades earlier could have been confident of making a steady stream of commercial recordings, became invisible to the record-buying public through the absence of any recording presence, and dependent upon radio broadcasts and recordings for the development of their international reputations. In order to maintain some semblance of an international profile some orchestras, such as the London Symphony and London Philharmonic Orchestras, took to publishing their own recordings, often with considerable success.

Thus the period 1925 to 1995 provides a unique opportunity to study one particular aspect of the music profession in action, in this case the conductor and orchestra. The combination of favourable commercial, industrial and technological circumstances resulted in a huge number of

recordings being made of many different musicians tackling both similar and varied repertoires. The historical study of this material is still in its infancy, and it is hoped that the information within this book may be a useful guide to students of this perpetually fascinating field of human endeavour.

The format adopted for the entries in this A-Z directory of those conductors who have left a significant recorded legacy has been kept as simple as possible. Each entry begins with the dates and places of the birth and death of the subject. This is followed by an outline of the subject's life and appointments. In order to maintain simplicity, the term 'chief conductor' has generally been used for all positions in which the subject has been deemed to have control over artistic policy. Some of the typical job titles which have therefore been subsumed in this way are 'musical director' and 'artistic director'. While every effort has been made to be as factually accurate as possible, inevitably in a work as data-intensive as this, there will be errors and alternative interpretations. Just to give one example of how these may arise, often key appointments are listed in biographies from the date on which they were announced rather than the date on which responsibilities were actually assumed. Given that the difference can in many cases be several years there is a considerable margin for error. It may also be useful here to point out the meaning of the idiosyncratic titles given to conductors working within the German opera house system. In this hierarchy, the top position is held by the 'general music director', who usually decides repertoire, reserves the major new productions for himself or herself, and decides who is to conduct the rest of the opera house's repertoire. The second conductor is confusingly called the 'first conductor', while the third conductor has the title of 'second conductor'.

Following the biographical section of each entry a listing of selected recordings is given, with the name of the record label on which the recording first appeared following in brackets. A significant exception to this rule is that if the recording label is part of the EMI group, formed in 1931, for instance HMV or Columbia, then the label is given simply as EMI, since large numbers of such recordings have subsequently been re-released on successor labels, including EMI itself. Considerable numbers of live recordings are included within the lists of selected recordings. Unlike commercial studio recordings many of these have no clear provenance and the same performance may have been reissued on several different labels. Therefore to maintain consistency of approach, only the city and year of recording (where known) have been listed. As far as the names of orchestras are concerned, generally the name of the orchestra as listed on the published

recording has been used, whatever the identity of the orchestra might have been at the time of the recording. The actual name of the orchestra, where known, has only been used when this might assist identification of the recording itself, or an understanding of the context of the recording. After the list of selected recordings, there follows a biographical text, which often concludes with a brief discussion of what are felt to be the most representative recordings of the subject.

In a work of this kind it is unfortunately unavoidable that some discographies and biographies of conductors still living may to some extent be superseded by events before publication can take place. However, every effort has been made to include relevant new material up to the point where the demands of the production process make further additions impractical. Inevitably, by its very nature, the subject-matter of this type of book is constantly evolving.

Every writer active in the field of conductors and recordings owes a debt to John Holmes's massive *Conductors on Record* (London: Gollancz, 1982), which remains a work of key reference in this field, as does the monumental *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London: Macmillan, 2001). Also of value is Alain Pâris's *Dictionnaire des Interprètes* (Paris: Laffont, 1995). Invaluable likewise have been the reviews and articles accumulated over the years within the pages of national newspapers and specialist publications such as *The Gramophone* and *Classic Record Collector*, as well as magazines now sadly long gone, such as the American *High Fidelity* and the British *Records and Recording*.

A-Z
of

CONDUCTORS

BIOGRAPHIES

CLAUDIO ABBADO

b. 1933, Milan, Italy

Career

1958 Wins Koussevitzky Conducting Competition, Tanglewood

1960 Debut at La Scala, Milan

1963 Wins Mitropoulos Conducting Competition, New York

1965 Debut at Salzburg Festival conducting Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra

1966 Debut with Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra

1967 Debut in Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra's subscription series in Vienna

1968–1986 Chief conductor, La Scala, Milan

1979–1988 Chief conductor, London Symphony Orchestra

1986–1991 Chief conductor, Vienna State Opera

1989–2001 Chief conductor, Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra



ROY MILES

Selected Recordings

Beethoven: Complete Piano Concertos (with Maurizio Pollini) — Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra (Deutsche Grammophon)

Beethoven: Complete Symphonies — Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra (Deutsche Grammophon)

Berg: *Lulu* Suite; Three Pieces for Orchestra Op. 6; *Altenberg Lieder* (with Margaret Price) — London Symphony Orchestra (Deutsche Grammophon)

Bizet: *Carmen* — London Symphony Orchestra (Deutsche Grammophon)

Brahms: Complete Symphonies — Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra (Deutsche Grammophon)

Bruckner: Symphony No. 1 — Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra (Decca)

Chopin: Piano Concerto No. 1 / Liszt: Piano Concerto No. 1 (with Martha Argerich) — London Symphony Orchestra (Deutsche Grammophon)

Debussy: *La Mer* — Lucerne Festival Orchestra (Deutsche Grammophon)

Mahler: Symphony No. 2 'Resurrection' — Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra (Live, Salzburg Festival, 1965)

Mahler: Symphony No. 6 — Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra (Deutsche Grammophon)
Mendelssohn: Complete Symphonies — London Symphony Orchestra (Deutsche Grammophon)
Mussorgsky: *Khovanshchina* — Vienna State Opera Orchestra (Deutsche Grammophon)
Nono: *Como una ola de fuerza y luz* — Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra (Deutsche Grammophon)
Prokofiev: *Lieutenant Kijé Suite; Scythian Suite* — Chicago Symphony Orchestra (Deutsche Grammophon)
Ravel: *Daphnis et Chloé* — London Symphony Orchestra (Deutsche Grammophon)
Rossini: *Il viaggio a Reims* — Chamber Orchestra of Europe (Deutsche Grammophon)
Schubert: *Fierrabras* — Chamber Orchestra of Europe (Deutsche Grammophon)
R. Strauss: *Tod und Verklärung* — Chicago Symphony Orchestra (Deutsche Grammophon)
Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 2 'Little Russian'; *The Tempest* — Chicago Symphony Orchestra (Columbia/Sony)
Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* — Orchestra of La Scala, Milan (Deutsche Grammophon)

Claudio Abbado studied the piano with his father Michelangelo Abbado at the Milan Conservatory, as well as conducting and composition. After leaving the Conservatory in 1955 he went on to study conducting with Hans Swarowsky at the Vienna Academy of Music. Throughout this period he was active as a singer in choirs, a key experience. In 1958 he won the Koussevitzky Conducting Competition at Tanglewood in the USA. He worked at the Parma Conservatory before making his debut at La Scala, Milan in 1960 as part of the Scarlatti tercentenary celebrations. In 1963 he won the first prize in the Mitropoulos Conducting Competition in New York, an event that proved to be a major turning point in the development of his career. Herbert von Karajan offered him the opportunity to conduct at the Salzburg Festival and in 1965 he made his debut there with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, conducting Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 2 'Resurrection'.

Following his Salzburg debut Abbado conducted in the same year the world première of Manzoni's opera *Atomtod* at La Scala. In 1966 he conducted the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra for the first time, and a year later he made his debut in the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra's distinguished subscription concert series in Vienna. In 1967 he was also given the honour

of opening the season at La Scala, Milan, conducting a new production of Bellini's *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*. In 1968 his career moved ahead decisively: he returned to the Salzburg Festival to conduct *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and was appointed chief conductor at La Scala, a post he held until 1986.

At La Scala Abbado conducted both the traditional operatic repertoire as well as contemporary works, and founded the Orchestra della Scala for the presentation of a series of orchestral concerts. Working closely with illustrious contemporaries including the composer Luigi Nono, the stage director Giorgio Strehler, and the pianist Maurizio Pollini, he introduced many innovations such as public rehearsals, and factory and educational concerts. In so doing Abbado not only developed the repertoire of La Scala, he also considerably extended the public which it served. In 1975 he conducted the first performance of Nono's opera *Al gran sole carico d'amore*, and in 1988 the première of Wolfgang Rihm's *Die Abreise*.

In 1979 Abbado was appointed chief conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra with whom he made a number of distinguished recordings, including a complete cycle of the symphonies of Mendelssohn. Between 1986 and 1991 he was chief conductor of the Vienna State Opera. As in Milan, so here too he enriched the repertory considerably, with productions of Schubert's *Fierrabras*, Rossini's *Il viaggio a Reims* and Mussorgsky's *Khovanshchina*. In 1987 he was appointed general music director of the City of Vienna, and the following year he founded the music festival Wien Modern, an annual event that expanded to encompass all aspects of contemporary cultural activity.

In 1989 Abbado's career took a further decisive step forward when he succeeded Herbert von Karajan as the music director of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, a post that he held until the end of the 2001–2002 concert season. As with his previous appointments in Milan and Vienna, Abbado brought new ideas to Berlin. In the planning of concert programmes contemporary music assumed a major position alongside the Classical and Romantic repertoire. Annual thematic cycles were developed in which a single theme was examined in depth: for example, the legend of Faust, the influence of Greek antiquity, and Shakespeare in music. With the cellist Natalia Gutman he inaugurated the Berliner Begegnungen ('Berlin Encounters'), as part of the annual Berlin Festival, where experienced musicians worked with young instrumentalists in both classical and contemporary chamber music works.

Abbado has always taken a keen interest in music education. He has been responsible for the foundation of two major youth orchestras, the European Union Youth Orchestra and the Gustav Mahler Youth Orchestra. He has also been closely involved with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, acting as its artistic adviser. Following the creation of an international composers' competition in Vienna, he expanded the Salzburg Easter Festival, of which he became artistic director in 1994, to include prizes for composition as well as for the visual arts and literature. He has been awarded numerous honours including the Bundesverdienstkreuz, Federal Germany's highest civilian honour, the Légion d'honneur from the French Ministry of Culture, and the Gran Croce, Italy's highest honour. In 1973 the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra awarded him its Ring of Honour, followed by the Golden Nicolai Medal in 1980. In 1985 the International Gustav Mahler Society presented him with its Gold Medal in recognition of his service to the music of Gustav Mahler.

Claudio Abbado is without question one of the major conductors to have emerged following the earlier generation of *maestri* epitomised by Karajan and Furtwängler. Like them, he is equally at home in the pit of the opera house and on the podium of the concert hall. His interpretations are notable for their acute fidelity to the score, combined with an animated vitality that gives them a great sense of life. He possesses a keen musical sensibility, and uses this to develop imaginative programme concepts that take account of neglected repertoire as well as the established canon of masterpieces. His recorded repertoire is very large and includes cycles of the symphonic works of Beethoven, Mahler, Mendelssohn, Schubert, Ravel and Tchaikovsky. His operatic recordings include outstanding readings of several of the major Verdi works, including *Don Carlos*, *Macbeth*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Un ballo in maschera* and *Aida*, as well as landmark accounts of Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*, *Khovanshchina*, and Rossini's *Il viaggio a Reims*. Abbado's concern for stylistic fidelity and for instrumental accuracy have occasionally made his interpretations seem less highly-drawn than those of his immediate predecessors and more flamboyant contemporaries, yet his intense musicality and precise musical observation have also resulted in performances of the greatest conviction, especially in the field of opera, where he is undoubtedly one of the finest conductors of the twentieth century.

HERMANN ABENDROTH

b. 1883, Frankfurt am Main, Germany

d. 1956, Jena, Germany

Career

1905–1911 Conductor, Lübeck Musikverein and, from 1907, chief conductor, Lübeck City Theatre

1911–1914 Chief conductor, Essen

1914–1934 Conductor of Gürzenich Concerts and Conservatory in Cologne (chief conductor from 1918)

1934–1945 Chief conductor, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra

1945–1956 Chief conductor, Weimar Staatskapelle

1949–1956 Chief conductor, Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra

1953–1956 Chief conductor, Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra

OLGOWITZ CHAMBER ORCHESTRA



Selected Recordings

Amirov: *Caucasian Dances* — Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra (Urania)

Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 'Eroica' — Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra (Music & Arts)

Beethoven: Symphony No. 9 'Choral' — Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra (Eterna)

Brahms: Symphony No. 1 — Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra (Eterna)

Brahms: Symphony No. 3 — Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra (Supraphon)

Bruckner: Symphony No. 4 — Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra (Urania)

Bruckner: Symphony No. 8 — Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra (Music & Arts)

Bruckner: Symphony No. 9 — Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra (Eterna)

Dvořák: Cello Concerto (with Ludwig Hoelscher) — Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra (Eterna)

Humperdinck: *Moorish Rhapsody* — Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra (Urania)

Kalinnikov: Symphony No. 1 — Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra (Tahra)

Schumann: Symphony No. 4 — Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra (Eterna)

Sibelius: Symphony No. 2 — Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra (Urania)

R. Strauss: *Don Juan; Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche; Tod und Verklärung* — Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra (Tahra)
Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 4 — Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra (Urania)
Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 'Pathétique' — Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra (Eterna)
Wagner: *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (Live, Bayreuth, 1943)
Wagner: *Eine Faust Overture* — Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra (Music & Arts)

Hermann Abendroth received his basic education at his birthplace, Frankfurt am Main, and went on to study music at Munich. Here he learnt composition with Thuille, piano with Wirzel-Langenhain, and conducting with Mottl, who at this time was one of Europe's leading conductors of Wagner. Initially Abendroth turned to bookselling as a career, but soon abandoned this in favour of conducting. His first appointment was as conductor of the Munich Orchestral Society, during 1903 and 1904. From 1905 to 1911 he directed the Music Lovers' Society in Lübeck, and from 1907 the Lübeck City Theatre. This was followed by the post of music director at Essen, where he worked from 1911 to 1914.

Abendroth's first major musical position came in 1914 when he was appointed as director of Cologne's Gürzenich Concerts in succession to Fritz Steinbach. Steinbach was steeped in the North German tradition of music-making, having succeeded von Bülow at Meiningen, and later Franz Wüllner at Cologne. Cologne was to be the centre of Abendroth's activities until 1934. He became general music director of the city in 1918, and director of the Lower Rhine Music Festival in 1922, as well as director of the Cologne Conservatory. From this base he guest-conducted extensively throughout Europe, including the symphony concerts of the Berlin Opera during the 1922–1923 season. He made his first recordings, of Brahms's Symphonies Nos 1 and 4, in London for HMV with the London Symphony Orchestra in 1928 and 1927 respectively. In 1933, having taken on responsibility for the Cologne Chamber Orchestra, he recorded with it a series of works by Handel, Mozart and Vivaldi. Although now recognised as one of the foremost conductors in Germany, he nevertheless gradually lost favour with the dominant National Socialist Party and in 1934 was dismissed from his posts by the mayor of Cologne, who cited his conducting in Moscow and his friendships with members of Cologne's Jewish community as reasons for this action.

The same forces had simultaneously driven Bruno Walter out of Leipzig and ironically Abendroth was asked to take over the conductorship of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra from him, as well

as to become director of the Leipzig Conservatory. He took control in 1934 of the orchestra that he had first conducted in 1922, and some of the musicians preferred him even to Furtwängler. He managed to steer clear of political complications until 1937, when the mayor of Leipzig forced him to join the National Socialist Party in order to maintain his musical positions. Abendroth was later to assert that he never changed his opposition to the philosophy of the Party, and never attended a Party meeting.

During World War II Abendroth conducted memorable performances of Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* at the Bayreuth Festival in 1943 and 1944. As the Allied bombing of Germany gathered pace, Abendroth and the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra gave some extraordinarily intense performances, several of which were captured for posterity on early tape recordings made by the Reichs Rundfunk Gesellschaft. The Gewandhaus itself was destroyed in February 1944, but concerts continued in the basement of the Capitol Theatre. During this time Abendroth also conducted the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, with which he had first appeared in 1909. His final radio recording with the Gewandhaus Orchestra was made at the end of March 1945, just a month before the final collapse of the Third Reich.

The Red Army proceeded to occupy Leipzig and Abendroth gave his first post-war concert there in July 1945, to be followed by many more, often featuring the works of composers such as Mendelssohn, Mahler and Hindemith who had been banned under the former regime. His final concert with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra during this period took place at the end of November 1945, after which, as a former National Socialist Party member, he was banned from conducting by the occupying forces. Nonetheless he continued to be active. In August 1945 he had conducted for the first time in Weimar, a small town in comparison to Leipzig. Following his dismissal from the Gewandhaus Orchestra he directed the opera at the Weimar Theatre, concerts with the opera orchestra as the Weimar Staatskapelle, and directed the Weimar High School for Music. The East German authorities were aware of Abendroth's stature as a conductor, and in 1949 he was invited to conduct the Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra. The public reception was enthusiastic and he was offered the conductorship of the orchestra, which he accepted. This appointment was fortuitous in that Leipzig radio was in a position to record and so to preserve much of Abendroth's work with the orchestra. Several of these recordings were licensed for commercial release in the USA on the Urania label.

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