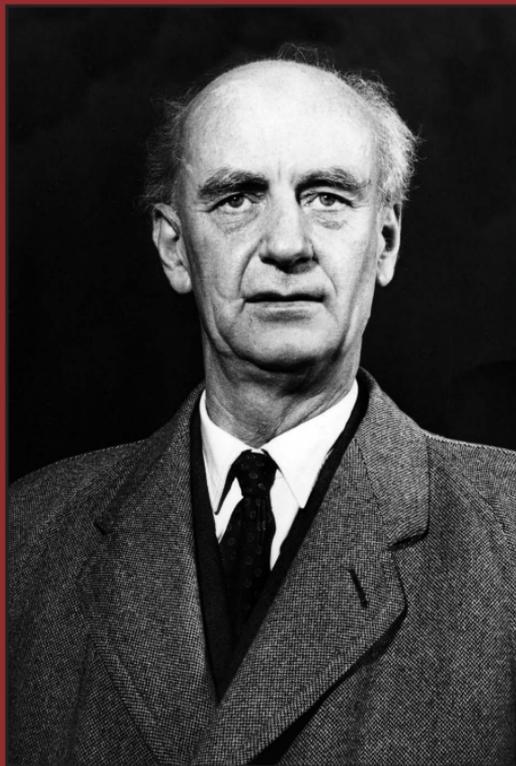




Great Conductors • Furtwängler

8.110994

ADD



MOZART

Serenade No. 10
'Gran Partita'

Eine Kleine
Nachtmusik

Berlin Philharmonic
Orchestra

Vienna Philharmonic
Orchestra

Wilhelm Furtwängler

Commercial Recordings 1940-50

Great Conductors: Wilhelm Furtwängler (1886-1954)

Commercial Recordings 1940-1950, Volume 1

Wilhelm Furtwängler was born into a cultured middle-class German family: his father was an archaeologist and his mother a painter. Music was his dominant interest, and he soon learned to play the piano and was composing when he was seven years old. He was fascinated by Beethoven and is reputed to have memorised most of his works by the time he was twelve. By his late teens he had composed several substantial works including a symphony, a string sextet, and several string quartets. He made his conducting debut in Munich in 1906: the programme included a symphonic movement by himself and Bruckner's *Ninth Symphony*.

Following the death of his father in 1907 Furtwängler decided to devote himself to conducting in order to support himself and his mother. He had already served as a répétiteur at Breslau during the 1905-06 season, and the following season had seen him at Zurich. This was followed by two years at the Munich Court Opera where Felix Mottl, who had been a close associate of Wagner, was chief conductor. Furtwängler then served as third conductor under Hans Pfützer at Strasbourg for the 1910-11 season before being appointed as chief conductor at Lübeck, succeeding Herman Abendroth, and conducting both opera and concerts. He moved to a similar position at Mannheim in 1915, this time succeeding Artur Bodansky, and remained there for five years.

By the end of the First World War, Furtwängler was clearly one of the pre-eminent conductors in Germany. He was engaged to conduct the Vienna Tonkünstler Orchestra for two seasons from 1919, and would henceforth study musical structure while in Vienna with Heinrich Schenker. During 1920 he became conductor of the concerts given by the orchestras of the Frankfurt Opera and the Berlin State Opera, succeeding Wilhelm Mengelberg and Richard Strauss. Following the death of Artur Nikisch in 1922, he was appointed chief conductor of both the Berlin Philharmonic and Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestras. He

appeared in England for the first time in 1924, and in the United States in 1925, with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. He began to make recordings, from 1926 onwards with the Berlin Philharmonic, and in 1928 he succeeded Felix Weingartner as the conductor of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.

The rise of the Nazi party in Germany and its assumption of power in 1933 had a decisive effect upon Furtwängler's career. He quickly ran into trouble when in 1934, following the banning of Hindemith's opera, *Mathis der Maler*, which he was due to conduct at the Berlin State Opera, he resigned all his musical appointments. Despite many offers from abroad, he continued to work in Germany. Having made his début at the Bayreuth Festival in 1931, with *Tristan und Isolde*, he returned to conduct there in 1936 and 1937, when he also shared the conducting of the Coronation Season at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, with Sir Thomas Beecham, who greatly admired his musicianship.

Prior to the outbreak of the Second World War, Furtwängler recorded extensively for the HMV label. With the commencement of hostilities his commercial recordings became much more intermittent, and initially consisted just of shorter works, such as the *Cavatina* from Beethoven's *String Quartet No. 13, Op. 130* (1940), the *Adagio* from Bruckner's *Seventh Symphony* (1941), and this account of the *Overture* to Gluck's opera *Alceste* (1942), all of which were recorded for the Telefunken label with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Furtwängler did not enter the recording studio after the end of the Second World War until August 1947, when he recorded Beethoven's *Violin Concerto* with Yehudi Menuhin as soloist and the Lucerne Festival Orchestra. The present recording of Mozart's *Serenade in B flat* was recorded shortly afterwards in Vienna on 11th and 26th November and 3rd December with members of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, during a month-long run of concerts in the Austrian capital. Furtwängler did not

make any further discs with this orchestra until December 1948, when he commenced an extensive programme of recording which continued intermittently until April 1949. This account of Mozart's popular Serenade, *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*, was recorded on 1st April, 1949.

The Overture to *Alceste* is one of Gluck's most forceful works and powerfully describes in musical terms the drama that is to ensue. Mozart's *Serenade in B flat, K. 361*, known sometimes as the *Gran Partita*, was probably composed during 1783 and 1784. The first reference to it occurs in an account by Johann Friedrich Schink of a concert given by the clarinetist Anton Stadler on 23rd March, 1784. Schink praised both Stadler's playing and Mozart's composition highly. The *Serenade* is scored for two oboes, two clarinets, two basset-horns, four horns, two bassoons and double-bass and is in eight movements. The most extended as well as most magisterial of Mozart's wind serenades, it takes the basic form and transforms it into a work of epic proportions and considerable profundity. The *Serenade in G, K 525, Eine kleine Nachtmusik*, dates from August, 1787, a few months after the death of Mozart's father, Leopold, in Salzburg, and while he was preparing his new opera, *Don Giovanni*, for performance in Prague. The circumstances surrounding its composition are unknown, but with its straightforward instrumentation for strings the work might have been intended for domestic performance. It originally included a first *Minuet* which is now lost, leaving a simple four movement structure. *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* concludes with great elegance the remarkable series of Serenades and Divertimenti which the young Mozart had begun to compose twenty years earlier, when he was only ten years old. Furtwängler's desire to stay and work in Germany, despite the declining political situation and the onset of hostilities in Europe, necessarily curtailed his activities. He remained active in Berlin and Vienna, and returned to the Bayreuth Festival in 1943 and 1944. Eventually as the Third Reich crumbled and his life became threatened, he fled to Switzerland early in 1945. He was

banned by the allies from conducting until the end of 1946, when he was cleared of all allegations of collaboration with the Nazi government.

From 1947 onwards, until his death at the end of 1954, Furtwängler was active in all the major European musical centres. He resumed the chief conductorship of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra in 1947, and from the same year onwards appeared regularly at the Salzburg Festival. He suffered illness during 1952 and collapsed while conducting in Vienna in 1953. The drugs which were prescribed as treatment are believed to have affected his hearing detrimentally. By the middle of 1954 it was clear that he was becoming deaf to the point that he could not hear all the instruments of the orchestra clearly. Ironically this defect became obvious to him at a rehearsal of his own music. With his life's purpose thus negated, he lost the will to live, and died shortly afterwards in a sanatorium.

Furtwängler was one the very greatest interpretive musicians of the twentieth century. He completely rejected the idea of the conductor as a virtuoso and possessed a highly personal technique. Film of him conducting shows his beat to have been frequently imprecise, and his gestures often appear strangely puppet-like. He favoured a very rich bass line to his performances, with the music seeming to grow out of this. The insistence upon the multiple recreation of a single view of a work was anathema to him. Performances conducted by Furtwängler were frequently quite different, depending upon his immediate reaction to particular circumstances. His studies with Schenker gave him a powerful grasp of musical architecture, and he had an unrivalled capacity to reveal this in performance, as well as to create a sustained sense of mood. He possessed a mastery of tempo, phrasing, dynamics and transitions, all of which were geared to the realisation of his ideal of the moment. The results were frequently outstanding as well as unique, often creating a sense of intensity equalled by few and exceeded by none.

David Patmore

Ward Marston

In 1997 Ward Marston was nominated for the Best Historical Album Grammy Award for his production work on BMG's Fritz Kreisler collection. According to the *Chicago Tribune*, Marston's name is 'synonymous with tender loving care to collectors of historical CDs'. Opera News calls his work 'revelatory', and *Fanfare* deems him 'miraculous'. In 1996 Ward Marston received the Gramophone award for Historical Vocal Recording of the Year, honouring his production and engineering work on Romophone's complete recordings of Lucrezia Bori. He also served as re-recording engineer for the Franklin Mint's Arturo Toscanini issue and BMG's Sergey Rachmaninov recordings, both winners of the Best Historical Album Grammy.

Born blind in 1952, Ward Marston has amassed tens of thousands of opera classical records over the past four decades. Following a stint in radio while a student at Williams College, he became well-known as a reissue producer in 1979, when he restored the earliest known stereo recording made by the Bell Telephone Laboratories in 1932.

In the past, Ward Marston has produced records for a number of major and specialist record companies. Now he is bringing his distinctive sonic vision to bear on works released on the Naxos Historical label. Ultimately his goal is to make the music he remasters sound as natural as possible and true to life by 'lifting the voices' off his old 78 rpm recordings. His aim is to promote the importance of preserving old recordings and make available the works of great musicians who need to be heard.

The Naxos Historical label aims to make available the greatest recordings in the history of recorded music, in the best and truest sound that contemporary technology can provide. To achieve this aim, Naxos has engaged a number of respected restorers who have the dedication, skill and experience to produce restorations that have set new standards in the field of historical recordings.

GREAT CONDUCTORS • WILHELM FURTWÄNGLER

Commercial Recordings 1940-1950 • Volume 1

1 GLUCK: Alceste: Overture 8:28

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra
Recorded on 28th October, 1942
Matrices 026753/4; Cat. Telefunken SK3266

MOZART: Serenade No. 10 in B flat, K.361 49:18

2 I. Largo - Allegro molto 8:29

3 II. Menuetto - Trio I-II 8:29

4 III. Adagio 6:30

5 IV. Menuetto (Allegretto) - Trio I-II 4:36

6 V. Romanze (Adagio-Allegretto-Adagio) 6:57

7 VI. Theme with variations 10:46

8 VII. Finale (Molto allegro) 3:29

Members of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra
Recorded on 11th and 26th November and 3rd December, 1947
Matrices: 2VH 7071-72, 7089-90, 7103-04, 7051, 7062-64; Cats. DB 6707-11

MOZART: Eine kleine Nachtmusik, K.525 14:23

9 I. Allegro 4:26

10 II. Romanza (Andante) 4:44

11 III. Minuet (Allegretto) and Trio 2:13

12 IV. Rondo (Allegro) 2:59

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra
Recorded on 1st April, 1949
Matrices: 2VH 7159-62; Cat. HMV DB 6911-12

Special thanks to Raymond Edwards

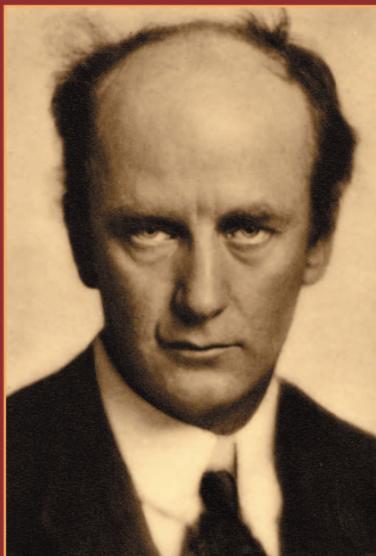
Also available:



Great Conductors • Furtwängler

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TCHAIKOVSKY

Symphony No. 6
'Pathétique'

WAGNER

Tristan und Isolde
Prelude and Liebestod

Berlin Philharmonic
Orchestra

Wilhelm Furtwängler

Historical Recordings 1938

8.110865



8.110994

ADD

W.A. MOZART
 (1756-1791)

 Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra
 Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra
Wilhelm Furtwängler (1886-1954)

 Playing
 Time
72:08

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 Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra • Wilhelm Furtwängler
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MOZART: Serenade No. 10 in B flat, K.361 **49:18**

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 Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra • Wilhelm Furtwängler
 Recorded on 1st April, 1949; Matrices: 2VH 7159-62; Cat. HMV DB 6911-12

 This is Volume One of a projected Naxos cycle of commercial recordings made by the legendary Wilhelm Furtwängler between 1940 and 1950. It includes his first post-war recording with the Vienna Philharmonic and also features the orchestra's 'Golden Age' wind soloists at their peak in Mozart's *Serenade No. 10* 'Gran Partita', Furtwängler's only known recording of the work.

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Producer and Audio Restoration Engineer: Ward Marston

Special thanks to Raymond Edwards

www.naxos.com

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 courtesy of the Tully Potter collection
