



WAGNER *Das Rheingold*

Orchestra Sinfonica di Roma della RAI Wilhelm Furtwängler



"In some circles there exists a strong opposition to Wagner that is far more than a reaction to the exaggerated Wagner cults of earlier times. Not only do "pure" musicians and "pure" poets oppose the debasement of their own art as expressed in Wagner's "synthesis of the arts". No, he is denied the slightest artistic recognition on the grounds that heroes not rely upon the organically whole, the pure and simple—as all great art does—but composes his music out of heterogeneous parts, flirting with the most varied effects (artistic and otherwise) and counting on the most individual tastes of the listener. These criticisms are aimed principally at the Ring.

This reaction derives from the new function of his music, its intimate relation to gestures and dramatic action, and its own reduced importance.

But in all this, his critics overlook the fact that Wagner had a different goal in mind for the Ring. To be sure, the whole is more a surface than a centre. But how sensuously that surface is shaped! What amazingly descriptive power these visions have—Valhalla, the Ride of the Valkyries, the Magic Fire Music! The lack of organic unity and of poetic intuition is more than balanced by the heightened effect of the moment. Would the monumental greatness, the enormous thrust of *Die Walküre*, the freedom of *Siegfried*, the colossal dimensions of *Götterdämmerung* have been possible without the decorative and musical foundation of a mythical world sustaining and exalting all these gods?"

Wilhelm Furtwängler, 1919

Restoration notes

There are two full recordings of Wagner's *Ring* cycle conducted by Furtwängler, but neither is the full studio recording planned by EMI to begin in 1954 and left incomplete by the conductor's death at the age of 68 on 30th November of that year. There is a 1950 recording of his La Scala cycle, and this, a series of recordings made for broadcast on Italian radio (RAI) across ten sessions in October and November 1953 in front of a very quiet invited audience.

The final broadcasts were cut from both these recordings and taped rehearsal sessions, as chosen by Furtwängler and the RAI engineers the day after recording. The recordings were broadcast a short time after but were not commercially issued until the early 1970s on LP by EMI. Generally the sound quality I've been able to achieve from these recordings - after some considerable difficulties - has been remarkably fine. However the first Scene is of a dimmer sound quality than the rest of the opera, for reasons which are probably now lost to time. Thereafter, despite some variable and occasionally noticeable (but not intrusive) hiss, the sound is generally excellent. **AR**

FULL PROGRAMME NOTES, SCORES ETC. CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM

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FURTWÄNGLER



CONDUCTS
WAGNER *Der Ring des Nibelungen*
1. Das Rheingold



THE ROME SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA OF RAI

RECORDED IN ROME, 26TH OCTOBER, 1953

WOTAN FERDINAND FRANTZ
DONNER ALFRED POELL
FROH LORENZ FEHENBERGER
LOGE WOLFGANG WINDGASSEN
FRICKA IRA MALANIUK
FREIA ELISABETH GRÜMMER
ERDA RUTH SIEWERT

ALBERICH GUSTAV NEIDLINGER
MIME JULIUS PATZAK
FASOLT JOSEF GREINDL
FAFNER GOTTLÖB FRICK
WOLGİNDE SENA JURINAC
WELLGUNDE MAGDA GABORY
FLOSSHILDE HILDE RÖSSL-MAJDAN

WAGNER Das Rheingold

Disc One

- [1] **Scene 1** - Prelude (4:42)
- [2] Weia! Waga! Woge, Du Welle! (*Woglinde, Wellgunde, Flosshilde*) (3:06)
- [3] Garstig Glatter Glitschriger Glimmer! (*Alberich*) (5:54)
- [4] Wallala! Lalaleia! (*Rhinemaidens*) (2:46)
- [5] Lugt, Schwestern! (*Woglinde, her sisters*) (6:40)
- [6] Der Welt Erbe Gewänn! Ich Zu Eigen Durch Dich! (*Alberich, Rhinemaidens*) (4:54)

- [7] **Scene 2** - Wotan! Gemah! Erwache! (*Fricka, Wotan*) (10:23)
- [8] Sanft Schloss Schlaf Dein Aug' (*Fasolt, Wotan*) (7:32)
- [9] Zu Mir, Freia! Meide Sie, Frecher! (*Froh, Donner, Fafner, Fasolt*) (2:14)
- [10] Endlich Loge! (*Wotan, Loge*) (4:09)
- [11] Immer Ist Undank Loges Lohn! (*Loge, Wotan*) (8:08)
- [12] Ein Runenzauber Zwingt Das Gold Zum Reif (*Loge, Donner, Wotan, Froh, Fricka, Fafner*) (3:40)
- [13] Hör', Wotan, Der Harrenden Wort! (*Fafner, Wotan*) (3:13)
- [14] Was Sinnt Nun Wotan So Wild! (*Loge, Fricka, Donner, Froh*) (5:12)
- [15] Auf, Loge, Hinab Mit Mir! (*Wotan, Loge, Fricka, Donner, Froh*) (4:34)

- [16] **Scene 3** - Hehe! Hehe! Hieher (*Alberich*) (0:46)

Disc Two

- [1] Schau, du Schelm! (*Alberich*) (2:04)
- [2] Nibelheim hier - durch bleiche Nebel was blitzen dort (*Loge*) (5:32)
- [3] Nehmt euch in acht! Alberich naht - Sein harren wir hier (*Mime, Wotan*) (8:59)
- [4] Vergeh, frevelnder Gauch! - Was sagt der! - Sei doch bei Sinnen! (*Wotan, Alberich, Loge*) (4:34)
- [5] Oh! Hahaha! Oh! Hahaha! Schreckliche Schlange (*Loge, Wotan*) (7:08)
- [6] **Scene 4** - Da, Vetter, sitze du fest! (*Loge*) (5:53)
- [7] Gezahlt hab' ich; nun laßt mich zieh'n! (*Alberich*) (6:05)
- [8] Bin ich nun frei! Wirklich Frei! (*Alberich*) (4:12)
- [9] Fasolt und Fafner nahen von fern (*Loge*) (5:20)
- [10] Gepflanzt sind die Pfahle (*Fafner*) (5:59)
- [11] Weiche, Wotan, weiche! (*Erda*) (5:24)
- [12] Hort, ihr Riesen! Zurück, und harret! - Halt, du Gieriger! (*Donner, Fasolt*) (6:31)
- [13] Schwules Gedunst - Zur Burg fuhr die Brücke (*Donner, Froh*) (3:28)
- [14] Abendlich strahlt der Sonne Auge (*Wotan*) (4:58)
- [15] Rheingold! Rheingold! Reines Gold! Wie lauter und hell (*Woglinde, Wellgunde, Flosshilde*) (3:51)

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taken 26 October, 1953

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