COMPACT disc DIGITAL AUDIO
PACO 092

# Furtwängler

## Wagner Siegfried

PRISTINE AUDIO XR

There are many fine Rings now available, so many that it is difficult for us to remember the groundbreaking, even historic nature of Solti's Decca cycle. In addition to a host of well-known commercial recordings there are many important live performances from Bayreuth (notably the remarkable 1953 cycle led by Clemens Krauss) and even a fascinating English-language set led by Reginald Goodall. Towering above all are the two complete cycles left in recorded form by Furtwängler, who began a commercial recording for EMI in 1954, but lived only to complete Die Walküre. The La Scala performances reproduced here were fully staged at Italy's great opera house in 1950; then, in 1953, he was invited by the Italian Radio in Rome to do a studio broadcast performance without staging. For that cycle, each act of each opera was taped on a different day, with between two and four days of rest between tapings. Clearly, many conditions for a better Ring recording existed in Rome in 1953. No singer was tired out by Wagner's excessive demands, and the orchestra and conductor were also able to rest. In addition, Furtwängler could concern himself exclusively with musical matters, rather than dilute his attention with matters of staging. Also, as heard on EMI's CD edition, the original recorded sound of the 1953 Rome version is far superior to the Scala. The frequency response is extended at both ends of the spectrum so there is a far greater range of vocal and orchestral color, and the balances are better. In short, the recorded sound of the Rome performance is significantly more vivid, and that may be the most crucial point in its favor.

**Henry Fogel, Fanfare**, November/December 1996 *(excerpt - continues in second CD cover)*

**Transfer notes**

After all the various issues of Furtwängler's 1950 *La Scala* Ring cycle over the years - elsewhere in his 1996 review quoted here Henry Fogel remarks: "when it was on the Everest and Murray Hill labels, it was unspeakably bad—including being at the wrong pitch" - the general opinion was that this was the better performance in much the worse sonic condition of the two recordings which exist of Furtwängler conducting the Ring. Thus far the reaction to our XR-remastered issues of this Ring Cycle have been exceptionally positive - particularly from those who've followed those various releases through since those first almost-unlistenable LP issues. When marking up the tracks for this release I used our previous issue of Furtängler's 1953 RAI Ring as a guide - and was repeatedly struck by just how much the better of the two the older recording sounded. By getting the pitching spot on (a clear 50Hz hum indicates the performance took place at A=446Hz) and trimming applause to a minimum, I've been able to fit each act onto a single disc, with the only cut being Furtwängler's own in Act 3. As in previous operas in the cycle, sound quality slips occasionally for a few seconds at a time - that aside it really does sound quite amazing.
**AR**

FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM
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COMPACT disc DIGITAL AUDIO
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CD 1 & 2

# Furtwängler

PRISTINE AUDIO XR

# WAGNER

## Siegfried

**Siegfried** Set Svanholm
**Mime** Peter Markwort
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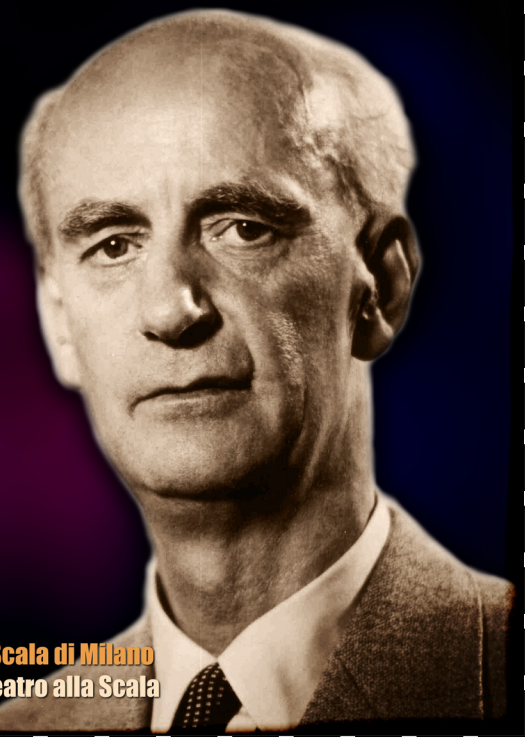

**Orchestra e Coro del Teatro alla Scala di Milano**
**Live recording, March 22, 1950, Teatro alla Scala**

PRISTINE AUDIO

PACO 092

WAGNER SIEGFRIED (CDs 1 & 2 - ACTS 1 & 2)
FURTWÄNGLER, LA SCALA

# Wagner Siegfried

**DISC ONE - ACT 1**

1. Vorspiel (4:05)
2. **Scene 1:** *Zwangvolle Plage! Müh ohne Zweck!* (4:15)
3. *Hoiho! Hoiho! Hau ein! Hau ein!* (1:37)
4. *Da hast du die Stücken, schändlicher Stümper* (2:12)
5. *Als zullendes Kind zog ich dich auf* (1:23)
6. *Vieles lehrtest du, Mime* (8:06)
7. *Einst lag wimmernd ein Weib* (5:12)
8. *Und diese Stücken sollst du mir schmieden* (1:25)
9. *Da stürmt er hin!* (1:44)
10. **Scene 2:** *Heil dir, weiser Schmied!* (3:48)
11. *Hier sitz' ich am Herd und setze mein Haupt* (10:30)
12. *Was zu wissen dir frommt, solltest du fragen* (7:12)
13. *Die Stücken! Das Schwert! O weh! Mir schwindelt!* (2:50)
14. **Scene 3:** *Verfluchtes Licht!* (1:00)
15. *Heda! Du Fauler!* (0:28)
16. *Bist du es, Kind!* (2:34)
17. *Fühltest du nie im finstren Wald* (4:33)
18. *Her mit den Stücken, fort mit dem Stümper!* (3:13)
19. *Notung! Notung! Neidliches Schwert!* (7:48)
20. *Hoho! Hoho! Haheil!* (3:11)
21. *Den der Bruder schuf* (2:49)

**DISC TWO - ACT 2**

1. Vorspiel (5:53)
2. **Scene 1:** *In Wald und Nacht* (2:21)
3. *Zur Neidhöhle fuhr ich bei Nacht* (6:15)
4. *Mit mir nicht, hadre mit Mime* (2:30)
5. *Fafner! Fafner! Erwache, Wurm!* (2:58)
6. *Nun, Alberich, das schlug fehl* (3:52)
7. **Scene 2:** *Wir sind zur Stelle!* (5:32)
8. *Daß der mein Vater nicht ist* (1:40)
9. *Aber Wie Sah Meine Mutter Wohl Aus!* (2:25)
10. *Meine Mutter, Ein Menschenweib!* (6:20)
11. *Haha! Da Hätte Mein Lied* (4:57)
12. *Wer Bist Du, Kühner Knabe, Der Das Herz Mir Traf!* (3:59)
13. *Zur Kunde Taugt Kein Toter* (2:06)
14. **Scene 3:** *Wohin Schleichst Du Eilig Und Schlau* (2:33)
15. *Was Ihr Mir Nützt, Weiß Ich Nicht* (2:35)
16. *Willkommen, Siegfried!* (8:03)
17. *Da Lieg Auch Du, Dunkler Wurm!* (9:27)

**Orchestra e Coro del Teatro alla Scala di Milano**
**conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler**

COMPACT disc DIGITAL AUDIO
PACO 092

XR remastering by
**Andrew Rose**

Cover artwork based on a photo of **Wilhelm Furtwängler**

Live recording, 22 March, 1950
Teatro alla Scala, Milan, Italy

Total duration: **3hr 45:11**

For a full catalogue visit
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PRISTINE AUDIO

WAGNER SIEGFRIED (CDs 1 & 2 - ACTS 1 & 2)
FURTWÄNGLER, LA SCALA
PACO 092
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# Furtwängler

## Wagner Siegfried

PRISTINE AUDIO XR

There are those of us who just cannot let this Scala set go, cannot view it as superfluous. First, there is Kirsten Flagstad's glowing, brilliant, intense Brünnhilde. By 1950 her top notes may have been frayed (she omits some important high Cs), but hers was one of the greatest Wagnerian voices of our century, and this document of her Brünnhilde shows why. She pours out a river of glorious, thrilling sound, and she is more specific in her response to text and drama than she could sometimes be. To those who think of Flagstad as a hausfrau with a voice, this offers stunning refutation. Martha Modi, the Rome Brünnhilde, may have also been an important and imaginative artist, but she was not blessed with this kind of vocal equipment, and there is no doubt of Flagstad's superiority in the role. In addition, one must note the superiority of the La Scala orchestra. Even though there are some signs of tiring at the conclusions of some of the operas (particularly in the string playing in Siegfried), the fact is that the Scala players are in another league from the Rome Radio forces. The string sections have an ensemble cohesiveness, a tonal solidity, missing in Rome. Individual Scala woodwind principals (and particularly the solo horn) play with more imagination and accuracy than their Rome RAI counterparts, and they convey an extra level of dramatic intensity when necessary, a level that is not quite there in Rome. Some of this has to do with the different natures of the performances themselves.

This Scala Ring is a staged performance, a true theatrical event. The Rome Ring is a conceit, actually a series of concerts. That difference affects everyone—Furtwängler, the singers, and the players. In this Scala performance, there is just that much more menace in the Fasolt and Fafner music, more fury in Wotan's outbursts, more passion in the love music between Siegfried and Brünnhilde and between Siegmund and Sieglinde, and more tenderness in the orchestral and vocal expressions of Wotan's feelings for Brünnhilde. The singing and the conducting all interact with the drama unfolding onstage, whereas in the Rome version, the performance is more considered, more thoughtful. "Considered" and "thoughtful"are qualities to be admired but they can also inhibit a full, emotional communication of a music drama. While on balance one has to recommend the Rome Ring, mostly because of its superior recorded sound, it is a difficult choice, and 1 guess I would say that if you think you can "hear through" the more constricted sound of the Scala version, if you can live with the inferior tenors, and if the opportunity to have access to Flagstad's Brünnhilde is important to you, this might well be the edition to choose.

**Henry Fogel, Fanfare**, November/December 1996 *(excerpt - continued from first CD cover)*

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COMPACT disc DIGITAL AUDIO
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CD 3

# Furtwängler

PRISTINE AUDIO XR

## WAGNER
## Siegfried

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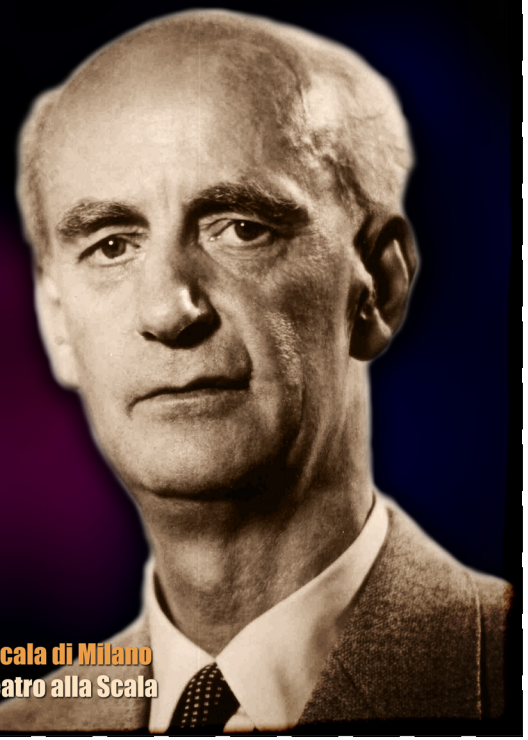

**Orchestra e Coro del Teatro alla Scala di Milano**
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WAGNER SIEGFRIED (CD3 - ACT 3)
FURTWÄNGLER, LA SCALA

# Wagner Siegfried

**DISC THREE - ACT 3**

1. Vorspiel (2:07)
2. **Scene 1:** *Wache, Wala! Wala! Erwach!* (2:01)
3. *Stark Ruft Das Lied* (10:49)
4. *Dir Unweisen ruf' ich ins Ohr* (4:58)
5. **Scene 2:** *Wohin, Knabe, heißt dich dein Weg!* (3:45)
6. *Mit zerfochtner Waffe wich mir der Feige!* (3:26)
7. **Scene 3:** *Selige Öde auf sonniger Höh'!* (6:26)
8. *Das ist kein Mann!* (6:43)
9. *Heil dir, Sonne! Heil dir, Licht!* (5:34)
10. *O Siegfried! Siegfried! Seliger Held!* (6:28)
11. *Dort seh' ich Grane* (8:12)
12. *Ewig war ich, ewig bin ich* (11:23)

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