

WEINGARTNER

CONDUCTS BRAHMS

Felix Weingartner (2 June 1863 – 7 May 1942) was born in Zara, Dalmatia, Austria–Hungary (now Zadar, Croatia), to Austrian parents, and the family moved to Graz in 1868. His father died that same year. He studied with Wilhelm Mayer (who used the pseudonym of W. A. Rémy and also taught Ferruccio Busoni) and in 1881 went to Leipzig to study philosophy, but soon devoted himself entirely to music, entering the Conservatory in 1883 and also studying under Franz Liszt in Weimar: he was among Liszt's later pupils. Liszt helped produce Weingartner's opera *Sakuntala* for its world premiere in 1884 with the Weimar orchestra. According to the Liszt biographer Alan Walker, the Weimar orchestra of the 1880s was far from its peak of a few decades earlier—and the opera performance ended with orchestra going one way and chorus another. Walker sources this to Weingartner's autobiography, published in Zürich and Leipzig in 1928–1929. The same year, 1884, he became the director of the Königsberg Opera. From 1885 to 1887 he was Kapellmeister in Danzig, then until 1889 in Hamburg, and until 1891 in Mannheim. From 1891 he was Kapellmeister of the Royal Opera and conductor of symphony concerts in Berlin; he resigned from the Opera, though continuing to conduct the Symphony concerts, and settled in Munich, where he incurred the enmity of Rudolf Louis and Ludwig Thuille.

In 1902, at the Festival of Mainz, Weingartner conducted the complete symphonies of Beethoven. From 1908 to 1911 he was the principal conductor of the Vienna Hofoper succeeding Gustav Mahler; he retained the conductorship of the Vienna Philharmonic until 1927. From 1912 he was again Kapellmeister in Hamburg, but resigned in 1914 and went to Darmstadt as general music director. He also frequently conducted for the Boston Opera Company between 1912–1914. In 1919–20 he was conductor of the Vienna Volksoper. In 1920 he was Professor of the Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest. From 1927 to 1934 he was music director of the Sinfonieorchester Basel. He gave his last concert in London in 1940 and died in Winterthur, Switzerland two years later.

As a conductor, Weingartner was the first to make commercial recordings of all nine Beethoven symphonies. In 1935 he conducted the world premiere of Georges Bizet's Symphony in C. His style of conducting was unlike those of many of his contemporaries; in contrast to Wilhelm Furtwängler, who conducted music in what is now considered a very "subjective" manner, with severe tempo fluctuations, Weingartner was more like Arturo Toscanini in insisting that his orchestras play the music as written. His 1935 recording of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 sounds much more like Toscanini's later, 1952 recording than like any of Furtwängler's. Among his students as a conductor were Paul Sacher, Charles Houdret, Georg Tintner and Josef Krips.

Notes from Wikipedia. Full scores are available for free download at The International Music Score Library Project: <http://imslp.org>

Recording and restoration notes

These recordings have been particularly tricky to remaster and restore, a process which has taken me, on and off, over three months to complete. They showed great promise from the outset, but time and time again I came up against the unfortunate fact that the very frequency range - the upper treble range above the "standard" 78rpm replay frequencies - which offered so much potential to help open out the sound were also plagued by the greatest and most unpleasantly scratchy surface noise. Despite trying multiple sources I kept coming back to this same problem until finally I was happy with what I'd achieved in being able to largely eliminate this noise whilst retaining as much information as possible.

The ultimate result is a happy one - a greatly extended and far more natural range of frequencies, both at the bass and at the treble end, coupled with a generally very clean background. The constricted and often muffled sound which has plagued previous issues is now mercifully a thing of the past and these marvellous recordings can now be enjoyed in sound much closer to how Weingartner himself must have heard them. **AR**

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

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WEINGARTNER

CONDUCTS BRAHMS



SYMPHONY No. 1 IN C MINOR, Op. 68

LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

STUDIO RECORDING, 1939

SYMPHONY No. 2 IN D MAJOR, Op. 73

LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

STUDIO RECORDING, 1940

Weingartner conducts Brahms

BRAHMS Symphony No. 1 in C minor Op. 68

- 1 1st mvt. - Un poco sostenuto - Allegro (11:46)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Andante sostenuto (9:08)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Un poco allegretto e grazioso (4:24)
- 4 4th mvt. - Adagio - Più andante - Allegro non troppo, ma con brio (14:53)

London Symphony Orchestra

BRAHMS Symphony No. 2 in D major Op. 73

- 5 1st mvt. - Allegro non troppo (14:03)
- 6 2nd mvt. - Adagio non troppo (8:24)
- 7 3rd mvt. - Allegretto grazioso (quasi andantino) (5:08)
- 8 4th mvt. - Allegro con spirito (7:57)

London Philharmonic Orchestra

Conductor Felix Weingartner



PASC 281

XR remastering by **Andrew Rose**

Cover artwork based on a photograph
of **Felix Weingartner**

Symphony No. 1

Producer: Lawrance Collingwood
Recorded 16th & 18th February 1939
Abbey Road Studio 1, London
Matrix Nos: CAX8461-66/73-76
Issued as UK Columbia LX833-37
in September 1939

Symphony No. 2

Producer: Walter Legge
Recorded 26th February 1940
Kingsway Hall, London
Matrix Nos: CAX8717-26
Issued as UK Columbia LX899-903
in October 1940

Total duration: **75:43**

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