

compact  
DIGITAL AUDIO  
PASC 3317  
STEREO

# Barbirolli

## Symphony 2 Enigma Variations

PRISTINE  
AUDIO  
XR

The Elgar centenary is celebrated with two magnificent recordings of this Second Symphony where before there was none; the first been available on LP since 1953. It is hard to think of any other conductors who could do as well by this music as Boult and Barbirolli. Boult's interpretation has been maturing for a quarter of a century or more. Barbirolli has come to the work only in the present decade, and his immense care and sympathy are apparent in every bar. He brings more drive and impetus to the music than Boult, and at such points as Fig. 6 in the movement, and the final development in the finale (Fig. 145), the music remains exciting, whereas under Boult interest momentarily sags. On the other hand Boult comes a shade nearer the nobility of the slow movement and the tenderness of the falling tune that comes late in the development of the finale. Of the two orchestras the Hallé perhaps has a little more attack and precision.

**R.F., The Gramophone** July 1957 (*excerpt from review of original issue of the 2nd Symphony*)

These are two very welcome reissues, since they both show Barbirolli at his greatest as an Elgar conductor. As Michael Kennedy, who writes the sleeve-note for the Second Symphony, says in his last years Barbirolli's affection for the music led him to linger unduly over the passages he loved best—as the later of his two recordings of No. 2 shows. The Barbirolli Society is therefore the more to be commended for digging out the earlier recordings, made in 1954 but not released in the UK until 1957, a tremendous performance in every way. The extent of his dallying by the wayside in his 1964 stereo version (HMV ASD2749, 2/72), is shown by the timing Kennedy gives for the first movement. There he takes 19' 10"; here he takes 16' 40", a really marked difference over one movement. The stereo recording is naturally better but I, for one, find the lingering quite intolerable; and I am perfectly prepared to accept this earlier recording, so well does it still sound. Mono it may be but the sound is still brilliant, only the 'plummy' sound of the harps obviously giving its age away.

This present reissue of No. 2 is the real thing, with tremendous drive, very raw, yet with his affection for the music allowed to express itself. A marvellously exciting performance. The Hallé's playing is beyond praise—Barbirolli has them playing as if possessed.

**T.H., Gramophone** November 1978 (*excerpt from review of an LP reissue of the 2nd Symphony*)

### Transfer notes

These two recordings straddle the changeover from mono to stereo in the mid-1950s, and here we present the earlier recording of the *Symphony No. 2* in Ambient Stereo alongside the true stereo of the *Enigma Variations*. The latter was recorded by Mercury's legendary production team of Wilma Cozart and Harold I. Lawrence and is indeed a very good recording - though EMI's engineers also did a very good job. Both have been significantly improved with XR remastering. Pitching has been corrected to A=440Hz from 439.2 (Symphony 2) and 442.3 (Enigma). **AR**

FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT [WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM](http://WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM)  
SARL Pristine Audio, Le Bourg, 24610 St. Meard de Curzon, France - Tel. (00) 33 553 821857  
[www.pristineclassical.com](http://www.pristineclassical.com)

compact  
DIGITAL AUDIO  
PASC 3317  
STEREO

# Barbirolli

PRISTINE  
AUDIO  
XR

conducts  
**Elgar**

**Symphony No. 2**  
in E flat major, Op. 63

**Enigma Variations**  
on an Original Theme  
for orchestra ("Enigma", Op. 36)

**The Hallé Orchestra**  
**Sir John Barbirolli**

**Recorded at Manchester**  
**Free Trade Hall, 1954 and 1956**



## Barbirolli conducts Elgar

### ELGAR Symphony No. 2 in E flat major, Op. 63

- 1 1st mvt. - Allegro vivace e nobilmente (17:00)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Larghetto (13:27)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Rondo (7:47)
- 4 4th mvt. - Moderato e maestoso (13:22)

### ELGAR Variations for Orchestra on an Original Theme, "Enigma", Op. 36

- 5 Theme (1:24)
- 6 Variation I (L'istesso tempo) 'C.A.E.' (1:39)
- 7 Variation II (Allegro) 'H.D.S.-P.' (0:43)
- 8 Variation III (Allegretto) 'R.B.T.' (1:19)
- 9 Variation IV (Allegro di molto) 'W.M.B.' (0:29)
- 10 Variation V (Moderato) 'R.P.A.' (1:58)
- 11 Variation VI (Andantino) 'Ysobel' (1:15)
- 12 Variation VII (Presto) 'Troyte' (0:57)
- 13 Variation VIII (Allegretto) 'W.N.' (1:37)
- 14 Variation IX (Adagio) 'Nimrod' (3:26)
- 15 Variation X (Intermezzo: Allegretto) 'Dorabella' (2:10)
- 16 Variation XI (Allegro di molto) 'G.R.S.' (0:51)
- 17 Variation XII (Andante) 'B.G.N.' (2:41)
- 18 Variation XIII (Romanza: Moderato) <sup>tr</sup> <sup>tr</sup> <sup>tr</sup> (2:37)
- 19 Variation XIV (Finale: Allegro Presto) 'E.D.U.' (4:56)

**The Hallé Orchestra Sir John Barbirolli**

XR remastering by **Andrew Rose**

Cover artwork based on photographs of  
**Sir John Barbirolli and Elgar**

### Symphony No. 2

Recorded 8-9 June, 1954  
Free Trade Hall, Manchester  
Issued as HMV ALP 1242  
Presented in Ambient Stereo

### Enigma Variations

Recorded 21-23 June 1956  
Free Trade Hall, Manchester  
Issued as Mercury MG 50125  
and later in stereo as SR 90125

Total duration: **79:38**

For a full catalogue visit  
[www.pristineclassical.com](http://www.pristineclassical.com)  
or call : (00) 33 979 622713

© 2012 **Pristine Audio**

PRISTINE  
AUDIO