



Toscanini

conducts Richard Strauss



Toscanini was an early champion of the music of Richard Strauss and he continued to conduct his works throughout his long career. The two men knew each other and met on more than one occasion. When Toscanini heard Strauss was working on an operatic version of *Salome* he corresponded with the composer about giving the Italian premiere. This eventually became a point of contention between the two men. Toscanini wished to give the Italian premiere at La Scala but Strauss had already signed a contract giving Turin the honour. This episode undoubtedly soured the relationship between them, and when Strauss accepted an offer to conduct at Bayreuth in 1933 after Toscanini had refused to return due to the festival's Nazi ties, Toscanini allegedly said 'To Strauss the composer I lift my hat, to Strauss the man I put it on again.'

In reality, Toscanini's interest in Strauss as a composer was limited. He never conducted anything Strauss composed after *Salome* and when he attended the premiere of *Arabella* in Vienna in 1933 he described it as 'wretched stuff.' His love of Strauss's earlier compositions remained, particularly his tone poems mostly composed in a prolific decade between 1888 and 1898, and demonstrates how Toscanini was able to separate music from composer. For his part, Strauss had a strong admiration for Toscanini as a conductor, once remarking to his assistant, George Szell, that after hearing Toscanini conduct he was inclined never to conduct himself again.

Strauss's tone poems are rightly regarded as masterpieces of late Romantic music. Lushly orchestrated, the pieces are as long as some symphonies but each tells a specific story, using the orchestra in highly imaginative ways. The fluttering brass imitating bleating sheep in *Don Quixote* is just one obvious example of the way that Strauss could conjure a musical image for the listening audience.

This release features recordings of all the Strauss works that Toscanini conducted. *Tod und Verklärung* (Death and Transfiguration) was by far the most frequently performed and recorded, with no less than ten extant recordings, including a commercial one with the Philadelphia Orchestra (1942). The one chosen for this release is the middle one of Toscanini's three NBCSO broadcasts to feature the work (1938, 1946 and 1952). *Don Juan* featured on four of Toscanini's NBCSO broadcasts, as well as in one La Scala concert in 1949. The one included here is the earliest NBCSO performance, from 1939. Toscanini conducted *Don Quixote* three times with the NBCSO and in once with the BBCSO. Again, the one included here is the earliest NBCSO one, from 1938. The cello soloist in *Don Quixote* is Emanuel Feuermann, a Jewish émigré from Europe who had performed the piece with Toscanini in London in May 1938. There are also four examples of Toscanini conducting *Till Eulenspiegel*, all with the NBCSO, and this one is the second, from 1946. There are two extant recordings of Toscanini conducting the *Dance of the Seven Veils* from *Salome*, one with the NY Philharmonic and the second, heard here, with the NBCSO in 1939. Despite *Ein Heldenleben* being one of Toscanini's regular concert pieces, there is only one extant recording of him conducting it, with the NBCSO in 1941.

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don quixote
emanuel feuermann, cello

tod und verklärung

salome
dance of the seven veils

ein heldenleben

don juan

till eulenspiegels lustige streiche

nbc symphony orchestra
live broadcast recordings, 1938 - 1946



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TOSCANINI, NBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

toscanini

conducts richard strauss

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TOSCANINI CONDUCTS RICHARD STRAUSS (CD2)
TOSCANINI, NBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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disc one

Don Quixote, Op. 35

- 1 Introduction (5:24)
- 2 Theme (1:52)
- 3 Sancho Panza (2:20)
- 4 Variation 1 (1:33)
- 5 Variation 2 (3:34)
- 6 Variation 3 (3:53)
- 7 Variation 4 (1:56)
- 8 Variation 5 (4:14)
- 9 Variation 6 (1:10)
- 10 Variation 7 (0:50)
- 11 Variation 8 (1:47)
- 12 Variation 9 (0:57)
- 13 Variation 10 (3:53)
- 14 Finale (5:33)

Emanuel Feuermann *cello*

Tod und Verklärung, Op. 24

- 15 I. Largo (5:07)
- 16 II. Allegro molto agitato (3:55)
- 17 III. Meno mosso, ma sempre alla breve (7:32)
- 18 IV. Moderato (7:25)

- 19 Salome, Op. 54 - Dance of the Seven Veils (10:15)

XR remastering by Andrew Rose

Cover artwork based on a photograph of Toscanini

Don Quixote: 22 October, 1938

Tod und Verklärung: 17 November, 1946

disc two

Ein Heldenleben, Op. 40

- 1 Der Held (3:59)
- 2 Des Helden Widersacher (3:25)
- 3 Des Helden Gefährtin (12:11)
- 4 Des Helden Walstatt (8:15)
- 5 Des Helden Friedenswerke (4:04)
- 6 Des Helden Weltflucht und Vollendung (10:39)

- 7 Don Juan, Op. 20 (17:08)

- 8 Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche, Op. 28 (13:56)

NBC Symphony Orchestra

conducted by Arturo Toscanini

Salome Dance: 14 January, 1939

Ein Heldenleben: 1 February, 1941

Don Juan: 14 October, 1939

Till Eulenspiegel: 17 March, 1946

Total duration: 2hr 26:47

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