



Toscanini

Beethoven Symphonies, Volume 2



N.B. Due to the limited space available these notes by necessity are reproduced across the three CD inserts that make up the set. They can also be read in full on our website at the page dedicated to each volume's release:

[continued from Volume 1]

The series has now been reissued, complete but with each disc separately available, by R.C.A. In general, substantial improvement in sound has proved possible. Each sleeve, indeed, is labelled "A New Orthophonic High Fidelity Recording"; but this description (if it means anything at all) is surely over-optimistic. Certainly the new surfaces are everywhere first-class; yet many of the tapes have a heavy background, not helped by an emphasis of the bass in reproduction usually made necessary by a lightness here in the original sound. And the fidelity of this sound in itself still varies substantially from one symphony to another. At its best, it offers what is probably the richest and most compelling version of Toscanini's Beethoven we have ever been able to hear on disc. At its worst, it is distinctly less happy.

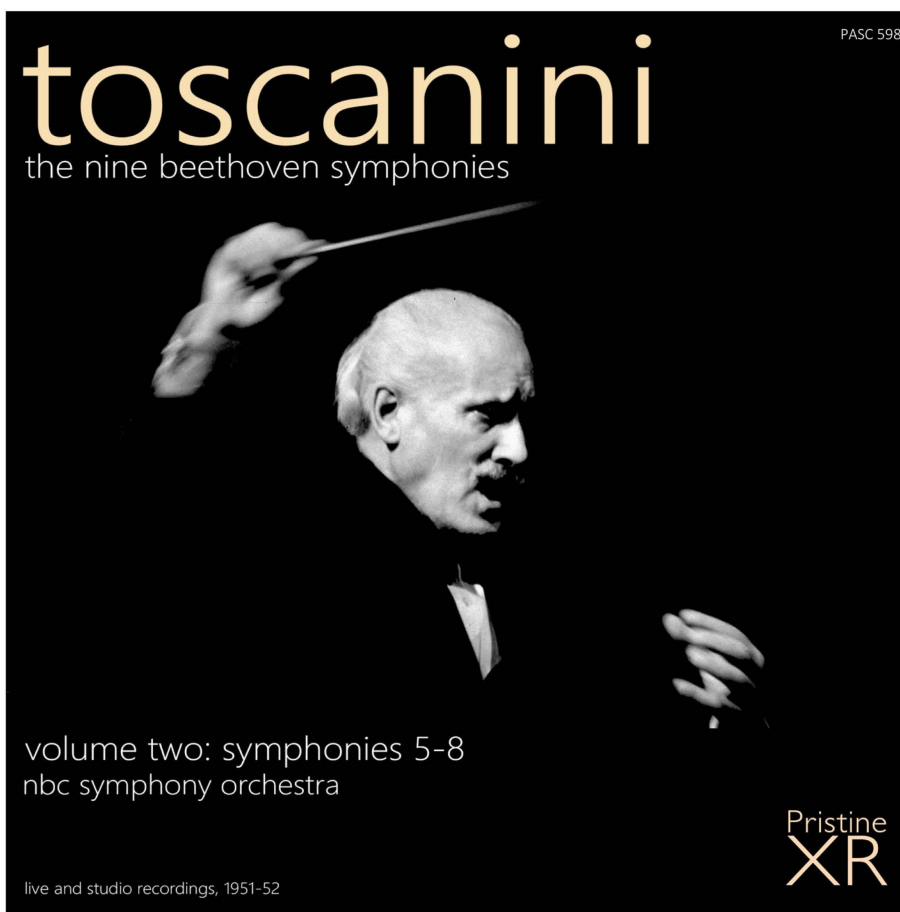
The couplings of symphonies not occupying a complete disc have been changed from those of the previous H.M.V. pressings in order to provide a chronological sequence.

Thus R.C.A. RB16101 now couples Symphonies Nos. 1 and 2; both of them, as recordings, among the best of the set. The performance of the First, too, has every virtue - unless perhaps to anyone who, insisting on some degree of relief to the tension, thought it imperative to ease up a little for at least the trio of the minuet. The Second Symphony goes equally well; the performance is a model expression of a forceful view of the work.

The Eroica is on RB16102. Here Toscanini follows Beethoven in his more lyrical moments perhaps rather more readily, and gives a most moving performance, marred only by an uncertain sound to the horn-playing in the scherzo's trio. But the recording is not the equal of the performance; it is boxy - though not, happily, throughout in a degree you might well fear from hearing only the opening two chords, if that is the word for such confined explosions.

RB16103 couples the Fourth and Fifth symphonies. The Fourth offers another completely convincing performance, with a beautifully lyrical reading of the slow movement; and the recording is acceptable, with less surface trouble than previously. On the whole, the Fifth, I think, is not quite so successful. The fierce music, it need hardly be said, receives a fierce performance, and the effect is certainly impressive; but the recording is sometimes unduly thin. (At the beginning of the slow movement the bass of the music is simply missing.)

The Pastoral comes on RB16104. Here the recording is rather good, save only perhaps at the climax of the storm; and the performance has many virtues indeed. The brook may seem to some listeners to be flowing rather fast in the second movement; but if this is so it is surely preferable to stagnation. There are, of course, already many outstandingly good Pastorals in the catalogues; this one comes very close to joining them. *[continues in Volume 3]*



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BEETHOVEN SYMPHONIES, NOS 5-8
TOSCANINI, NBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

toscanini

the nine beethoven symphonies - volume 2

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BEETHOVEN SYMPHONIES, NOS 5-8
TOSCANINI, NBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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disc one

BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67

1. 1st mvt. - Allegro con brio (7:18)
2. 2nd mvt. - Andante con moto (9:00)
3. 3rd mvt. - Scherzo. Allegro (4:38)
4. 4th mvt. - Allegro (8:40)

Concert of 22 March, 1952

BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 6 in F, Op. 68, 'Pastoral'

5. 1st mvt. - Erwachen heiterer Empfindungen bei der Ankunft auf dem Lande. Allegro ma non troppo (11:57)
6. 2nd mvt. - Scene am Bach. Andante molto moto (11:38)
7. 3rd mvt. - Lustiges Zusammensein der Landleute. Allegro (5:02)
8. 4th mvt. - Gewitter. Sturm. Allegro (3:36)
9. 5th mvt. - Hirtengesang. Frohe und dankbare Gefühle nach dem Sturm. Allegretto (8:58)

Recorded 14 January 1952

disc two

BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 7 in A, Op. 92

1. 1st mvt. - Poco sostenuto - Vivace (11:14)
2. 2nd mvt. - Allegretto (8:02)
3. 3rd mvt. - Presto (6:59)
4. 4th mvt. - Allegro con brio (6:56)

Recorded 9 November 1951 & Concert of 10 November 1951

BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 8 in F, Op. 93

5. 1st mvt. - Allegro vivace e con brio (9:35)
6. 2nd mvt. - Allegretto scherzando (3:45)
7. 3rd mvt. - Tempo di Menuetto (4:45)
8. 4th mvt. - Allegro vivace (7:27)

Recorded 10 November 1952

NBC Symphony Orchestra

conducted by **Arturo Toscanini**

XR Remastered by **Andrew Rose**
Recorded at Carnegie Hall, New York City
Cover artwork based on a photograph of **Arturo Toscanini**

Total duration: **2hr 09:30**

CD1: 70:47 CD2: 58:43

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