

In commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the death of Sir Adrian Boult (1889-1983), Pristine is honoured to present the first release of live broadcasts of Mahler symphonies by the conductor, in his only known recorded performances of the works. Boult's legacy of commercial recordings of Mahler is slim – only a single symphony (the First, for Everest), *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* in three versions (Thebom, Flagstad and Ludwig), and *Kindertotenlieder* (again with Flagstad). A Testament CD release from 2008 added the Third Symphony in a broadcast from the same series as the Fifth, Seventh and Eighth featured here.

Between November, 1947 and February, 1948, the BBC presented an unusual Mahler symphony cycle, combining commercial recordings of the few symphonies which were then available on disc with concert performances of works which had yet to appear on record. Starting with a live First Symphony featuring Bruno Walter conducting the BBC Symphony, issued recordings of the Second (Ormandy/Minneapolis), Fourth and Ninth (Walter in New York and Vienna) were interspersed with live broadcasts of the Third, Fifth, Seventh and Eighth led by Boult (Walter's February, 1947 New York studio recording of the Fifth having not yet been released). Boult might have led the cycle's performance of the Sixth as well, had the BBC not opted to pick up a German broadcast under Schmidt-Isserstedt instead.

Since the BBC did not make archival recordings of these broadcasts, they might have remained the stuff of legend, had it not been for the efforts of an enterprising home recordist. Edward Agate, a musicologist and translator of opera libretti, took down all of the live performances from this series, and much else, using a two-cutter setup to enable continuous recording (although, in practice, occasional small gaps remained). After his death, over 200 78 rpm acetate discs from his collection wound up in a shop in Manchester, where music writer, performer and documentary producer Jon Tolansky happened upon them by chance in 1981. He purchased the lot and ultimately donated them to the organisation that was to become Music Preserved, which currently owns the discs and which has kindly given permission for their release here.

The original recordings ran between four and five minutes per side, sometimes with gaps of up to several seconds between the sides. The frequency range was not wide, with musical information present only up to about 5 kHz; but noise was plentiful, particularly at the ends of sides, with pervasive clicks, pops and swish, along with occasional disc damage. Digital editing using the latest iZotope RX tools, including pitch stabilisation, has ameliorated the problems to some degree, allowing the performances to be heard finally in something which has, hopefully, a degree of body and detail belying their AM radio/home-recorded acetate origins.

Some small patches of missing music were interpolated into the transfers, primarily by using later live performances from other conductors and digitally "ageing" the sound in order to make a seamless fit (e.g. the opening seconds of the fourth movement of the Seventh Symphony). The Eighth has had some limited availability previously, as Music Preserved has offered a download of the unrestored broadcast for several years; but the two other symphonies are being released here for the first time.

Mark Obert-Thorn

PRISTINE AUDIO
PASC 709
discs 1 & 2

boult
conducts mahler

symphony no. 5
symphony no. 7
symphony no. 8

first releases

bbc symphony orchestra
soloists and choruses

live recordings · 1947-1948

bert-Thorn

boult conducts mahler



disc one
(71:16)

MAHLER Symphony No. 5 in C-sharp minor

PART I

1. 1st mvt. - Trauermarsch. In gemessenem Schritt. Streng. Wie ein Kondukt (13:03)
2. 2nd mvt. - Stürmisch bewegt. Mit grösster Vehemenz (14:53)

PART II

3. 3rd mvt. - Scherzo. Kräftig, nicht zu schnell (16:13)

PART III

4. 4th mvt. - Adagietto. Sehr langsam (10:21)
5. 5th mvt. - Rondo - Finale. Allegro (16:46)

Broadcast of 20 December 1947 from BBC Maida Vale Studio No. 1, London

Producer and Audio Restoration
Engineer: Mark Obert-Thorn

Special thanks to Paul Bailly and
Richard Jarman of Music
Preserved, Jon Tolansky and
Edward Clark

Total duration: 3hr 47:48

disc two
(77:43)

MAHLER Symphony No. 7 in E minor

1. 1st mvt. - Langsam (Adagio) (21:21)
2. 2nd mvt. - Nachtmusik I. Allegro moderato (15:18)
3. 3rd mvt. - Scherzo. Schattenhaft (9:54)
4. 4th mvt. - Nachtmusik II. Andante amoroso (12:11)
5. 5th mvt. - Rondo - Finale. Tempo I (Allegro ordinario) (18:43)
6. Closing Radio Announcement (0:16)

Broadcast of 31 January 1948 from BBC Maida Vale Studio No. 1, London

BBC Symphony Orchestra
conducted by Sir Adrian Boult

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MUSIC PRESERVED

Music Preserved is the only registered charity dedicated to conserving high quality, rare, live music performances from the golden age of recording and re-mastering them digitally to save and make them accessible to present audiences and future generations.

Several important collections have been donated to the charity, including those of Lord Harewood, Sir Charles Mackerras and tenor Richard Lewis. They are now preserved in the secure environment of the Borthwick Institute archive at the University of York. Once digitally re-mastered, they may be accessed online by music scholars, students and enthusiasts.

A carefully curated selection of rare performances from the late 1930s to the early 1960s has been published on the online label *mplIVE*. These include premières and rarely caught performances from around the world. Many other performances, interviews and talks given by major artists are currently being digitised, so that they can also be available to the general public.

There will also be a series of podcasts, in which experts compare recordings and offer insights into the unique range of recordings in the collection.

These items can be streamed via Music Preserved's website (musicpreserved.org.uk) or via the major streaming services, such as Spotify and Apple Music.

Music Preserved is a treasure trove of great musical performances and it is committed to making it available for all to enjoy.

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boult
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PRISTINE
AUDIO
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disc 3

symphony no. 5
symphony no. 7
symphony no. 8

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disc three (78:47)

MAHLER Symphony No. 8 in E-flat major "Symphony of a Thousand"

Part I: Hymnus: Veni, Creator Spiritus (*sung in Latin*)

1. Veni, Creator Spiritus (1:23)
2. Imple superna gratia (3:25)
3. Infirma nostri corporis (5:18)
4. Accende lumen sensibus (4:47)
5. [Veni, Creator Spiritus] (2:44)
6. Gloria Patri Domino (2:54)

Part II: Final scene from Goethe's *Faust* Part II (*sung in English*)*

7. Introduction (*Poco adagio*) (9:07)
8. Waldung, sie schwankt heran (*Choir and Echo*) (4:24)
9. Ewiger Wonnebrand (*Pater Ecstaticus*) (1:56)
10. Wie Felsenabgrund mir zu Füßen (*Pater Profundus*) (4:28)
11. Gerettet ist das edle Glied (*Angels, Blessed Boys, Younger Angels, More Perfect Angels, Doctor Marianus*) (6:18)
12. Die Himmelskönigin (*Doctor Marianus, Blessed Boys, Choir*) (4:16)
13. Dir, der Unberührbaren (*Choir, Penitent Women*) (3:06)
14. Bei der Liebe, die den Füßen (*Magna Peccatrix*) (1:10)
15. Bei dem Bronn, zu dem schon weiland (*Mulier Samaritana*) (1:51)
16. Bei dem hochgeweihten Orte (*Maria Aegyptiaca, Magna Peccatrix, Mulier Samaritana*) (3:39)
17. Neige, neige (*Una poenitentium and Blessed Boys*) (5:08)
18. Komm! Hebe dich zu höhern Sphären (*Mater Gloriosa and Chorus*) (1:18)
19. Blicket auf zum Retterblick (*Doctor Marianus and Chorus*) (5:36)
20. Alles Vergängliche (*Chorus Mysticus*) (5:59)

Broadcast of 10 February 1948 from the Royal Albert Hall, London

Sir Adrian Boult · BBC Symphony Orchestra

Magna Peccatrix Elena Danieli (*soprano*)
Una Poenitentium Dora van Doorn (*soprano*)
Mater Gloriosa Emelie Hooke (*soprano*)
Mulier Samaritana Mary Jarred (*contralto*)
Maria Aegyptiaca Gladys Ripley (*contralto*)
Doctor Marianus William Herbert (*tenor*)
Pater Ecstaticus George Pizzey (*baritone*)
Pater Profundus Harold Williams (*bass*)

BBC Choral Society (Leslie Woodgate, *chorus master*)
Luton Choral Society (Arthur E. Davies, *chorus master*)
Wallington Choral Society (Robert Noble, *chorus master*)
Watford and District Philharmonic Society
(Leslie Regan, *chorus master*)
Lambeth Schools' Music Association Boys' Choir
(Francis Steptoe, *chorus master*)
Boys of Marylebone Grammar School
(D. H. Hedges, *chorus master*)

*Because not all of the English translation was decipherable,
the original German verses have been cited for the track points

Producer and Audio Restoration Engineer: Mark Obert-Thorn

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