

In celebration of the 150th anniversary of the birth of Willem Mengelberg (28 March 1871), Pristine continues its series of releases surveying the conductor's recordings with the Concertgebouw Orchestra for Telefunken, the label for which he made the bulk of his commercial discs. They are being presented in roughly chronological order, with this fourth volume featuring recordings Mengelberg made in 1940 and 1941.

After the April, 1940 recordings featured in our previous volume (PASC 686), Mengelberg's next Telefunken sessions were held in Berlin that July, and featured Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 (with Conrad Hansen as soloist) and his Fifth Symphony, both with the Berlin Philharmonic (PASC 348). Back in Amsterdam for his next sessions in November, Mengelberg returned to a work he had previously recorded ten years earlier with the New York Philharmonic, Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony.

While that earlier recording had been notable for including the repeats for both the first and third movements, the remake omitted them (following the usual practice of recordings of the time, thereby saving a disc). In two contemporaneous live recordings of the work (one from 1940, which is missing the first movement, and another dated as 1942), Mengelberg included the repeat in the Scherzo in both performances, but omitted the first movement's repeat in the single complete extant live broadcast. The remake benefits from the warmer acoustic of the Concertgebouw's Grote Saal, as well as from the alert, characterful playing of the ensemble and Mengelberg's more involved interpretation than in his earlier New York version (PASC 412).

Immediately following the Beethoven at the same session, Mengelberg set down the last of his studio recordings of Dutch repertoire with Julius Röntgen's arrangement of two traditional Netherlands dances from the composer's 1904 suite, originally issued as the filler side to Doppler's *Ciaconna Gotica*. The long session concluded with a recording of Mozart's Flute Concerto No. 2 with the Concertgebouw's principal flutist, Herbert Barwahser, as soloist, but this studio version remained unissued and is presumed lost.

The next two days were given over to recording the Franck Symphony, which had been broadcast the previous month (a live performance later released by Philips) and Wagner's Overture to *Die Meistersinger*. (The Wagner, though recorded at the tail end of the Franck, has been placed before it due to timing limitations on our CD version.) Another unissued recording would follow the Wagner: Franck's Symphonic Variations with Theo van der Pas as soloist, whose matrices are also presumed lost.

Mengelberg would next perform for Telefunken's microphones five months later, in April, 1941, for a remake of what is perhaps the conductor's most celebrated New York recording, Strauss' *Ein Heldenleben*. The composer had dedicated the score to Mengelberg and the Concertgebouw Orchestra together, so it was appropriate that the combination should leave a lasting document of the score. The solo violinist was the Concertgebouw's newly-appointed concertmaster, Ferdinand Helman, who had just succeeded Louis Zimmermann at the start of the season. If the somewhat broader tempos of this performance have led many to prefer the 1928 New York recording (PASC 104), it still scores in its superior sonics and in the equal commitment and dedication of both conductor and orchestra.

The sources for the transfers were German, Swiss and Swedish "Telestar" Telefunken 78 rpm shellac pressings from the original masters.

Mark Obert-Thorn



mengelberg
concertgebouw orchestra

PRISTINE AUDIO
PASC 719

the telefunken recordings volume 4

beethoven
symphony no. 3, 'eroica'

franck
symphony in d minor

r. strauss
ein heldenleben

music by:
röntgen & wagner

studio recordings, 1940-41

Obert-Thorn

mengelberg

concertgebouw telefunken recordings vol. 4



disc one (59:20)

BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 3 in E-flat major, Op. 55, "Eroica"

1. 1st mvt. - Allegro con brio (14:27)
2. 2nd mvt. - Marcia funebre: Adagio assai (15:58)
3. 3rd mvt. - Scherzo: Allegro vivace (3:58)
4. 4th mvt. - Allegro molto (11:07)

Recorded 11 November 1940 · Matrices: 025350/61 · First issued on Telefunken SK 3117/22

RÖNTGEN Old Netherlands Dances, Op. 46

5. No. 5 - Bergerette - Les grands douleurs (2:11)
6. No. 6 - Pavane - Les quercarde (2:26)

Recorded 11 November 1940 · Matrix: 025362 · First issued on Telefunken SK 3157

7. WAGNER Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg - Overture (9:14)

Recorded 13 November 1940 · Matrices: 025377/8 · First issued on Telefunken SK 3137

Producer and Audio Restoration Engineer: **Mark Obert-Thorn**

Cover Artwork based on a photograph of Willem Mengelberg.
All recordings made in the Grote Zaal, Concertgebouw, Amsterdam.

Special thanks to Nathan Brown and Charles Niss for providing source material.

Total duration: **2hr 16:56**

disc two (77:36)

FRANCK Symphony in D minor

1. 1st mvt. - Lento - Allegro non troppo (16:17)
2. 2nd mvt. - Allegretto (9:35)
3. 3rd mvt. - Allegro non troppo (9:23)

Recorded 12-13 November 1940 · Matrices: 025367/73
First issued on Telefunken SK 3145/9

R. STRAUSS Ein Heldenleben, Op. 40

4. The Hero (4:18)
5. The Hero's Adversaries (3:18)
6. The Hero's Companion (11:09)
7. The Hero's Battlefield (8:41)
8. The Hero's Works of Peace (4:14)
9. The Hero's Retreat from the World and Fulfilment (10:41)

Ferdinand Helman, solo violin

Recorded 21 April 1941 · Matrices: 025639/48 · First issued on Telefunken SK 3181/5

Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam

conducted by **Willem Mengelberg**

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