

TOSCANINI

FINAL LA SCALA CONCERT

LA SCALA ORCHESTRA

- 1 Part 1 - Introduction (13:27)
 - 2 Die Meistersinger: Prelude to Act I (9:58)
 - 3 Siegfried: Forest Murmurs (8:45)
 - 4 Siegfried Idyll (18:10)
 - 5 Götterdämmerung: Siegfried's Rhine Journey (11:52)
- CD1 - Total duration: 62:12

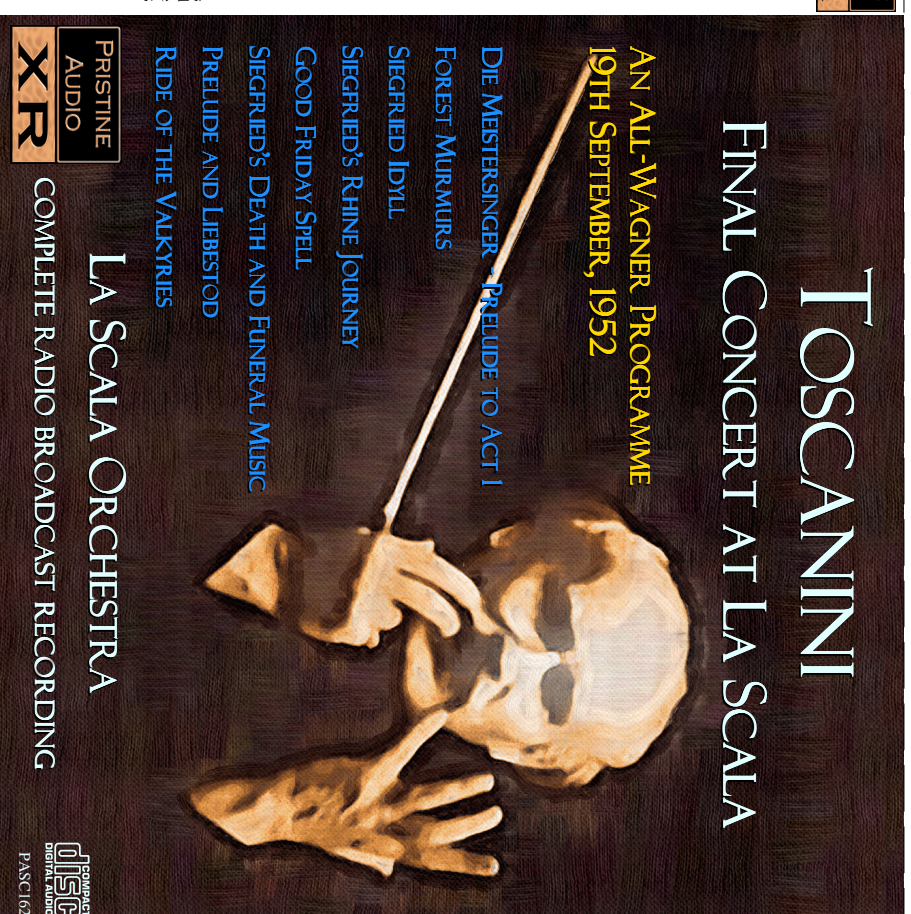
- 1 Part 2 - Introduction (0:36)
 - 2 Parsifal: Good Friday Spell (11:40)
 - 3 Götterdämmerung: Siegfried's Death and Funeral Music (14:33)
 - 4 Tristan und Isolde: Prelude and Liebestod (18:42)
 - 5 Die Walküre: The Ride of the Valkyries (5:36)
- CD2 - Total duration: 51:07

Technical note: This recording was made from a frequency-range-compromised AM radio broadcast onto acetate discs. This transfer was taken from an excellent 1/4" tape transfer of original discs. Note that some applause runs short due to disc side changes - we have preserved as much of the broadcast as survives, including the lengthy Italian spoken introduction, though omitting a minute or so of audience noise when the announcer had presumably run out of things to say. After much agonising it was decided to retain the original introduction in full; we hope our Italian-speaking friends will enjoy it, and suggest that if you cannot follow spoken Italian you begin your listening at track 2.

Transfer and XR remastering by Andrew Rose at Pristine Audio, May 2009
Cover artwork based on a photograph of Arturo Toscanini

©2009 Pristine Audio.

SAHL Pristine Audio, Le Bourg, 24610 St. Méard de Gurçon, France - Tel +33 (0)5 53 82 18 57 - Internet: www.pristineclassical.com



PRISTINE
AUDIO

PRISTINE
AUDIO

TOSCANINI

FINAL LA SCALA CONCERT

LA SCALA ORCHESTRA

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO

PASC 162

FINAL LA SCALA CONCERT - ALL-WAGNER
TOSCANINI, LA SCALA ORCHESTRA

PASC 162

Toscanini was born in Parma, Emilia-Romagna, and won a scholarship to the local music conservatory, where he studied the cello. He joined the orchestra of an opera company, with which he toured South America in 1886. While presenting *Aida* in Rio de Janeiro, the orchestra's conductor was booed by the audience and forced to leave the podium. Although he had no conducting experience, Toscanini was persuaded to take up the baton, and led a highly acclaimed performance of the two-and-a-half hour opera completely from memory. Thus began his career as a conductor at age 19.

Upon returning to Italy, Toscanini returned to his chair in the cello section, and participated as cellist in the world premiere of Verdi's *Otello* (La Scala, Milan, 1887) under the composer's supervision. Verdi, who habitually complained that conductors never seemed interested in directing his scores the way he had written them, was impressed by reports from Arrigo Boito about Toscanini's ability to interpret his scores. The composer was also impressed when Toscanini consulted him personally, indicating an *allargando* where it was not set out in the score; Verdi said that he had left it out for fear that "*certain interpreters would have exaggerated the marking*". Gradually the young musician's reputation as an operatic conductor of unusual authority and skill supplanted his cello career. In the following decade he consolidated his career in Italy, entrusted with the world premieres of Puccini's *La bohème* and Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci*. In 1896, Toscanini conducted his first symphonic concert (in Turin, with works by Schubert, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, and Wagner). By 1898 he was resident conductor at La Scala, and he remained there until 1908, returning during the 1920s. He took the Scala Orchestra to the United States on a concert tour in 1920-21; it was during that tour that Toscanini made his first recordings (for the Victor Talking Machine Company).

Toscanini served as principle conductor at La Scala between 1898 and 1908, and again between 1921 and 1929, his final pre-war concert taking place on 22 October, 1928, an all-Schubert programme. He would not return to conduct the orchestra until May 11th 1946, conducting the orchestra in eight concerts that year. A handful of concerts took place in the years which followed - this all-Wagner programme being the final one and his only conducting visit during 1952. It is interesting to note that there is a significant overlap in repertoire between his final La Scala concert, and his final NBC Symphony Orchestra concert in April 1954, another all-Wagner programme.

Producer's Note

We are aware of two previous commercial releases of this recording; the better of the two could be described as a reasonably faithful transfer of a source which, at worst, was only slightly inferior to the one used here. However, in analysing the frequency response of the recording I found a significant reduction throughout the treble range above 2000Hz, something I've endeavoured to correct. This brings out a much more convincing and pleasurable tonal quality, though inevitably required additional noise reduction. It has also been possible to address significant level variations at the start of the programme, as well as hundreds of other minor flaws throughout.

NOTES FROM WIKIPEDIA - FULL NOTES ON THIS RECORDING CAN BE FOUND AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM

FINAL LA SCALA CONCERT - ALL-WAGNER
TOSCANINI, LA SCALA ORCHESTRA

PASC 162

PRISTINE
AUDIO