

COMPACT  
disc  
DIGITAL AUDIO  
PASC 250

# BEETHOVEN

## SYMPHONY No. 9 'CHORAL' IN D MINOR Op. 125

PRISTINE  
AUDIO  
XR

COMPACT  
disc  
DIGITAL AUDIO  
PASC 250

- 1 1st mvt. - *Allegro ma non troppo, un poco maestoso* (17:20)
- 2 2nd mvt. - *Molto vivace* (11:28)
- 3 3rd mvt. - *Adagio e cantabile - Andante moderato* (19:49)
- 4 4th mvt. - *Presto - Allegro assai* (24:25)

Tilla Briem, soprano  
Elisabeth Höngen, alto  
Peter Anders, tenor  
Rudolf Watzke, bass

Bruno Kittel Choir

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra  
conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler

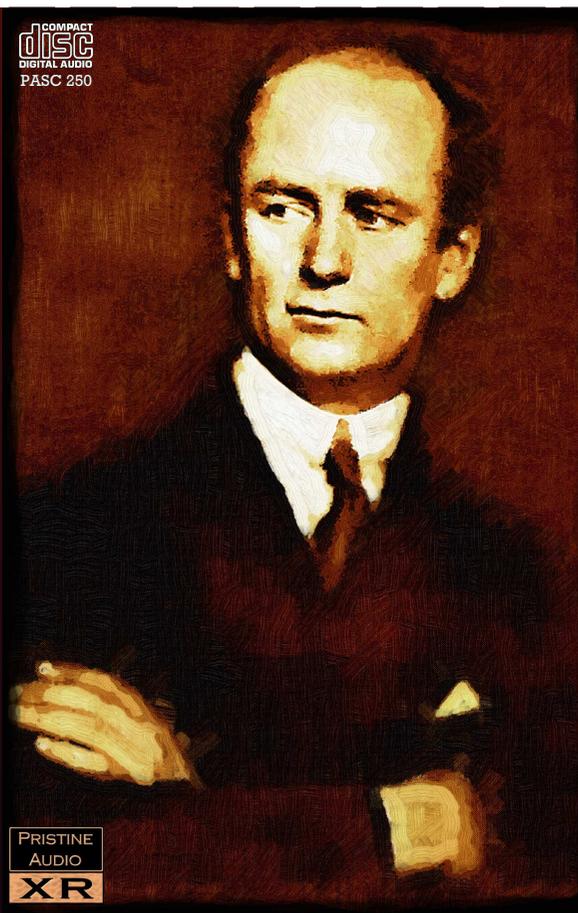
Live performances, Berlin, 22-24 March 1942

XR remastering by Andrew Rose at Pristine Audio, September-October 2010

Cover artwork based on a photograph of Wilhelm Furtwängler

Total duration: 73:02 ©2010 Pristine Audio.

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



# BEETHOVEN

## SYMPHONY NO. 9 'CHORAL' IN D MINOR Op. 125

### WILHELM FURTWÄNGLER

CONDUCTING THE  
BERLIN PHILHARMONIC  
ORCHESTRA

WITH  
TILLA BRIEM  
ELISABETH HÖNGEN  
PETER ANDERS  
RUDOLF WATZKE  
BRUNO KITTEL CHOIR

RECORDED IN 1942

# BEETHOVEN

## SYMPHONY NO. 9 'CHORAL' IN D MINOR, OP. 125

**Wilhelm Furtwängler's** (January 25, 1886 – November 30, 1954) relationship with — and attitude towards — Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party was a matter of much controversy. Because of his international renown, he was appointed as the first vice-president of the Reichsmusikkammer. In 1934 he was banned from conducting the premiere of Hindemith's opera *Mathis der Maler*, and subsequently resigned from the RMK and the Berlin Opera. Some sources maintain that Furtwängler resigned from his posts at the Berlin Opera and Reichsmusikkammer in protest; Frederic Spotts states that he was forced to either resign all his positions or be dismissed. In 1936 it seemed possible that he might follow Erich Kleiber's footsteps into exile when he was offered the principal conductor's post at the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, where he would have succeeded Arturo Toscanini. Toscanini's biographer Harvey Sachs wrote that Toscanini recommended Furtwängler for the position, one of the few times Toscanini expressed admiration for a fellow conductor. There is every possibility that Furtwängler would have accepted the post, but a report from the Berlin branch of the Associated Press, possibly ordered by Hermann Göring, said that he was willing to take up his post at the Berlin Opera once more. This caused the mood in New York to turn against him; from their point of view, it seemed that Furtwängler was now a full supporter of the Nazi Party.

However, Furtwängler never joined the Nazi Party nor did he really approve of them, much like the composer Richard Strauss, who made no secret of his dislike of the Nazis. Furtwängler always refused to give the Nazi salute, and there is even film footage of him turning away and wiping his hand with a handkerchief after shaking the hand of Nazi propaganda chief Joseph Goebbels.

Furtwängler was treated relatively well by the Nazis; he had a high profile, and was an important cultural figure, as evidenced by his inclusion in the Gottbegnadeten list ("God-gifted List") of September 1944. Furtwängler in turn conducted several concerts for the direct benefit of the Nazis: in February 1938 he conducted the Berlin Philharmonic at a concert held for the Hitler Youth, and that same year conducted a performance of Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* in celebration of Hitler's birthday. Further, contrary to the claims of some writers that he refused to conduct in occupied countries during the war, he conducted in Prague in May and November 1940, and again in March 1944 in a concert marking the fifth anniversary of the German occupation. His concerts were often broadcast to German troops to raise morale, though he was limited in what he was allowed to perform by the authorities. He later said he tried to protect German culture from the Nazis; it is now known that he used his influence to help Jewish musicians and non musicians escape the Third Reich. He managed, for example, to have Max Zweig, a nephew of conductor Fritz Zweig, released from Dachau concentration camp. Others, from an extensive list of Jews he helped, included Carl Flesch, Joseph Krips and the composer Arnold Schönberg.

At his denazification trial, Furtwängler was charged with supporting Nazism by remaining in Germany, performing at Nazi party functions and with making an anti-semitic remark against the part-Jewish conductor Victor de Sabata. However, he was eventually cleared on all these counts. As part of his closing remarks at his denazification trial, Furtwängler said,

"I knew Germany was in a terrible crisis; I felt responsible for German music, and it was my task to survive this crisis, as much as I could. The concern that my art was misused for propaganda had to yield to the greater concern that German music be preserved, that music be given to the German people by its own musicians. These people, the compatriots of Bach and Beethoven, of Mozart and Schubert, still had to go on living under the control of a regime obsessed with total war. No one who did not live here himself in those days can possibly judge what it was like.

"Does Thomas Mann [who was critical of Furtwängler's actions] really believe that in 'the Germany of Himmler' one should not be permitted to play Beethoven? Could he not realize that people never needed more, never yearned more to hear Beethoven and his message of freedom and human love, than precisely these Germans, who had to live under Himmler's terror? I do not regret having stayed with them."

The violinist Yehudi Menuhin was among the few musicians in the Jewish community and the United States who had a positive view of Furtwängler. In 1933 he had refused to play with him, but in the late 1940s after a personal investigation of Furtwängler, he became supportive of him, and performed and recorded alongside him.

EXCERPT OF NOTES FROM WIKIPEDIA - FULL NOTES ONLINE AT [WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM](http://WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM)