



PASC 261

BEETHOVEN

SYMPHONY NO. 9 IN D MINOR, "CHORAL"



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The Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125 "Choral" is the final complete symphony of Ludwig van Beethoven. Completed in 1824, the symphony is one of the best known works of the Western classical repertoire, and has been adapted for use as the European Anthem. It is considered by critics to be one of Beethoven's masterpieces and one of the greatest musical compositions ever written.

The symphony was the first example of a major composer using voices in a symphony. The words are sung during the final movement by four vocal soloists and a chorus. They were taken from the "Ode to Joy", a poem written by Friedrich Schiller in 1785 and revised in 1803, with additions made by the composer. The Philharmonic Society of London originally commissioned the symphony in 1817. Beethoven started the work in 1818 and finished early in 1824. However, both the words and notes of the symphony have sources dating from earlier in Beethoven's career.

These notes and more: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symphony_No._9_\(Beethoven\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symphony_No._9_(Beethoven))

Full scores are available for free download at The International Music Score Library Project: <http://imslp.org>

Recording and restoration notes

We are fortunate indeed to have a recording of this, Furtwängler's last of many, many performances of this monumental work, which took place just three months before his death on 30th November, 1954. Had he lived but two months longer his first planned engagement of 1955 was to have been the same work, this time with the Vienna Philharmonic. Instead he was to take the stand just five more times, in August and September of 1954, concerts which featured Beethoven's 1st, 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th symphonies - his orchestral concerts prior to this featured Beethoven's 3rd and 4th and again the 9th. One can only imagine he felt he still had more to say and more to explore with these works.

The original sound quality of the present recording has proved satisfactory for many over the last 56 years, and it has seen many reissues, and yet it was not without flaws. One had only to listen to the over-dominance of the tympani for over a minute at around 10 minutes into the first movement to appreciate that not all was right with the tonal balance - other flaws were more subtle but just as present.

The recording actually proved much trickier to remaster than I had expected, and it has taken me nearly three months and more than seven incarnations (each of which has been through many 'stages' of development) to realise which I believe to be its full sonic potential. Even right to the very end I felt there was something not quite right - my computer analysis and instruments were telling me everything was fine, but my ears suggested something else - and by trusting the best hearing devices known to man I was able to track down and solve the final piece of the puzzle, a minor equalisation adjustment which finally allowed everything to fall perfectly into place.

The result is one of the most personally satisfying audio remasterings I've ever produced. It has a full extension of both the highest and lowest frequencies. It has lost the over-boominess already mentioned in the tympani and elsewhere. The previously hard upper midrange has been tamed. In short, the orchestra sounds magnificent, and when you reach the final, choral movement, you'll find that the singers do too, with an excellent balance so well captured all those years ago.

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FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM

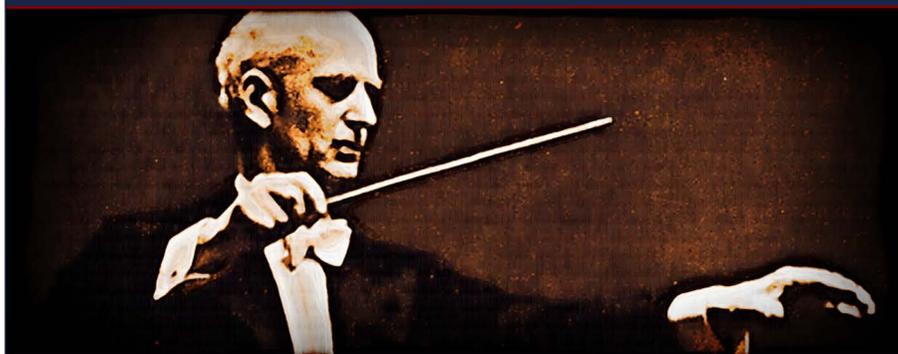
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FURTWÄNGLER

SCHWARZKOPF - CAVELTI - HÄFLIGER, EDELMANN

LUCERNE FESTIVAL CHOIR, PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA



BEETHOVEN

SYMPHONY NO. 9 IN D MINOR

OP. 125 "CHORAL"

FURTWÄNGLER'S LAST PERFORMANCE OF THIS WORK

LUCERNE FESTIVAL, 22ND AUGUST, 1954

Furtwängler's Final Beethoven 9th

BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 9 "Choral" in D minor, OP.125

- 1 1st mvt. - Allegro ma non troppo, un poco maestoso (18:04)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Molto vivace (12:09)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Adagio e cantabile - Andante moderato (19:59)
- 4 4th mvt. - Presto - Allegro assai (26:00)

Recorded live at Lucerne Festival, Switzerland, 22nd August, 1954

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, *soprano*

Elsa Cavelti, *alto*

Ernst Häfliger *tenor*

Otto Edelmann, *bass*

Lucerne Festival Choir

dir. Albert Jenny

Philharmonia Orchestra

conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler



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XR remastering by **Andrew Rose**

From a radio broadcast by Sottens,
Beromünster and Monte Ceneri

Cover artwork based on a
photograph of **Wilhelm
Furtwängler**

Total duration: 76:12

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