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BEETHOVEN SYMPHONIES 4 AND 7

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Beethoven's **Symphony No. 4 in B Flat Major** (Op. 60) was written in the summer of 1806. It was premiered in March of 1807 at a private concert of the home of Prince Franz Joseph von Lobkowitz. The Coriolan Overture and the fourth piano concerto were premiered in that same concert. The work was dedicated to Count Franz von Oppersdorff, a relative of Beethoven's patron, Prince Lichnowsky. The Count met Beethoven when he traveled to Lichnowsky's summer home where Beethoven was staying. Von Oppersdorff listened to Beethoven's Symphony No. 2 in D Major, and liked it so much that he offered a great amount of money for Beethoven to compose a new symphony for him. The dedication was made to "the Silesian nobleman Count Franz von Oppersdorf".

Beethoven began to work on his **Symphony No. 7 in A major**, Op. 92, in 1811, while he was staying in the Bohemian spa town of Teplice in the hope of improving his health. It was completed in 1812, and was dedicated to Count Moritz von Fries. The work was premiered in Vienna on December 8, 1813 at a charity concert for soldiers wounded in the Battle of Hanau, with Beethoven himself conducting and double featured with the patriotic piece *Wellington's Victory*, Op. 91. The orchestra was led by Beethoven's friend, Ignaz Schuppanzigh, and included some of the finest musicians of the day: violinist Louis Spohr, Johann Nepomuk Hummel, Giacomo Meyerbeer, Antonio Salieri, Anton Romberg, and the Italian double bass virtuoso, Domenico Dragonetti, whom Beethoven himself described as playing "with great fire and expressive power". It is also said that the Italian guitar virtuoso Mauro Giuliani played cello at the premiere. The piece was very well received, and the second movement, the *Allegretto*, had to be encores immediately. Spohr made particular mention of Beethoven's antics on the rostrum ("as a sforzando occurred, he tore his arms with a great vehemence asunder ... at the entrance of a forte he jumped in the air"), and the concert was repeated due to its immense success.

These notes from Wikipedia.org. Full scores are available at The International Music Score Library Project: <http://imslp.org>

Recording and restoration notes

Furtwängler's live wartime recordings were made on iron oxide tape by Radio Berlin, which took a relayed feed of four microphones placed in the Alte Philharmonie concert hall and preserved them on 14-inch reels of tape running at 30 inches per second, each tape lasting up to 20 minutes. (Fifty years later the same basic technology, albeit somewhat refined, was still in use by broadcasters around the world - the tape was by now running at 15 inches per second, the reels were 10.5 inches in diameter, most recorded two tracks to accommodate stereo, and they managed 32 minutes per reel, but the system would have been quickly recognisable by any Radio Berlin radio engineer of the 1940s.)

The principle microphone, placed in front of the stage was, like all of the microphones used there, omnidirectional. Whilst probably delivering the best sound quality available at the time, these microphones had the obvious downside of picking up sound equally from all directions, including of course the coughs and other assorted noises emanating from the audience. Removing or reducing audience noise has been one of a number of key priorities here, and special attention was paid to the quiet introduction of the Fourth Symphony, which had been particularly badly afflicted.

Although the tapes, which spent many years in Soviet Russia after the war (during which time a number were lost), had done a remarkably good job of capturing the sound of the orchestra and preserving it the direct sound from them was harsh, and lacked in both bass depth and treble expansion. Re-equalisation during XR remastering has done much to improve this, and to reveal far more sonic detail in the recordings than might previously have been apparent. **AR**

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

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BEETHOVEN SYMPHONY NO. 4

IN B FLAT MAJOR
Op. 60

SYMPHONY NO. 7

IN A MAJOR
Op. 92

WILHELM FURTWÄNGLER

CONDUCTING THE
BERLIN PHILHARMONIC
ORCHESTRA

RECORDED IN 1943

Furtwängler's Wartime Beethoven

BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 4 in B flat major, Op. 60

- 1 1st mvt. - Adagio - Allegro vivace (11:20)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Adagio (12:14)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Allegro vivace (5:36)
- 4 4th mvt. - Allegro ma non troppo (7:09)

Recorded at Alte Philharmonie, Berlin, 30th June, 1943

BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 7 in A major, Op. 92

- 5 1st mvt. - Poco sostenuto - Vivace (12:51)
- 6 2nd mvt. - Allegretto (9:54)
- 7 3rd mvt. - Presto (8:30)
- 8 4th mvt. - Allegro con brio (6:38)

Recorded at Alte Philharmonie, Berlin, 31st October - 3rd November, 1943

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra
conducted by **Wilhelm Furtwängler**



XR remastering by **Andrew Rose**

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

Total duration: **74:12**

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