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## BEECHAM IN SEATTLE VOLUME 3

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**Sir Thomas Beecham, 2nd Baronet, CH** (29 April 1879 – 8 March 1961) was a British conductor and impresario. From the early twentieth century until his death, Beecham was a major influence on the musical life of Britain and, according to Neville Cardus, was the first British conductor to have a regular international career.

In the concert hall, London still has two orchestras founded by Beecham: the London Philharmonic and the Royal Philharmonic. He also maintained close links with the Liverpool Philharmonic and Hallé Orchestras in his native county of Lancashire. His repertoire was eclectic, sometimes favouring lesser-known composers over famous ones. His specialities included composers whose works were rarely played in Britain before Beecham became their advocate, such as Frederick Delius and Hector Berlioz.

**Beecham left Britain in the spring of 1940**, later explaining, "*I was informed there was an emergency, so I emerged.*" Beecham went to Australia and then to North America. He became music director of the Seattle Symphony Orchestra in 1941. In 1942 he joined the Metropolitan Opera as joint senior conductor with his former assistant Bruno Walter. He began with his own adaptation of Bach's comic cantata, *Phoebus and Pan*, followed by *Le Coq d'Or*. His main repertoire was French: *Carmen*, *Louise* (with Grace Moore), *Manon*, *Faust*, *Mignon*, and *The Tales of Hoffmann*. In addition to the Seattle and Met orchestras, Beecham was guest conductor with eighteen American orchestras.

"*From its first performance on December 29, 1903, Seattle Symphony has held a unique place in the world of symphonic music. During its formative years, it was the charismatic Sir Thomas Beecham who most developed the Orchestra's skill and reputation...*" - from the Seattle Symphony's website history of the orchestra.

### Technical Note

We are lucky to have any recordings whatsoever of Beecham in Seattle - union disputes precluded any commercial recordings during Beecham's time with the orchestra. To the best of our knowledge there remain three CDs-worth of live material, captured at the start of the 1943 season and preserved first on acetate discs (since melted down), then open-reel tape (since lost), backed up onto more open reel tape (now almost unplayable) and cassette tape. Thus the humble cassette proves the best remaining source of these historic recordings, and it is from excellent transfers of these, supplied by a collector who wishes to remain anonymous, that I have worked. Since our first volume was issued, and the recording credited to a local radio station, further information has come to light which suggests that it was Beecham himself who commissioned the recordings in order to silence his critics locally. This probably accounts for a short section missing from the beginning of the third movement of the Beethoven, where a disc side change was apparently not achieved in good enough time. Other than that, and thanks largely to the preponderance of shorter works in this volume, the other works here are complete.

I have overall been particularly pleased with the sound quality achieved on this volume, with the *Karelia Suite* movement being a particularly good example of what was achieved in these recordings. It's also noticeable that, by comparison to the two previous issues in this series, the orchestra appears to be on much firmer ground and plays with considerably more style and accomplishment. If Sir Thomas Beecham had needed a compilation to demonstrate the abilities of his Seattle Symphony, then of the three volumes we have assembled this would surely be the one he would have chosen.

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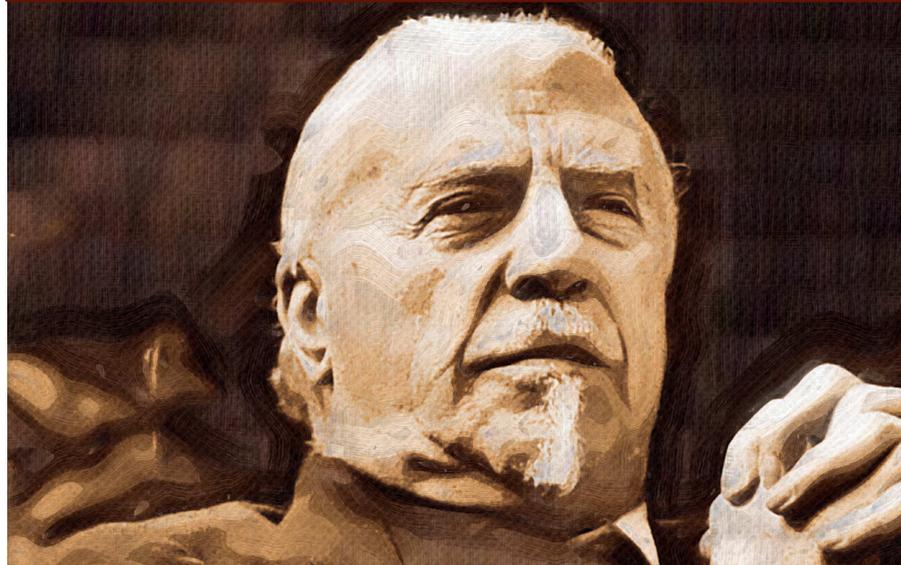
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**BEETHOVEN SYMPHONY No. 8**  
**SIBELIUS - MASSENET - SAINT-SAËNS - BIZET - ROSSINI**  
RARE LIVE RECORDINGS, 1943

## Beecham at Seattle, Volume 3

1 SIBELIUS *Karelia Suite, Op. 11 - 3. Alla marcia* (4:14)

### BEETHOVEN *Symphony No. 8 in F major OP. 93*

2 1st mvt. - *Allegro vivace e con brio* (9:21)

3 2nd mvt. - *Allegretto scherzando* (3:46)

4 3rd mvt. - *Tempo di Menuetto* (4:32)

5 4th mvt. - *Allegro vivace* (7:42)

6 MASSENET *La Vierge - Le dernier sommeil de la vierge* (5:37)

7 SAINT-SAËNS *Le Rouet d'Omphale, Op. 31* (9:14)

8 BIZET *Patrie Overture, Op. 19* (13:20)

9 SIBELIUS *Valse Triste, Op. 44 No. 1* (5:11)

10 ROSSINI *William Tell Overture* (11:35)

Recorded at 2.30pm concert, October 10, 1943, Moore Hall, Seattle  
Except *Saint-Saëns & Bizet*: 8.30pm, October 18, 1943, Music Hall Theater

**Seattle Symphony**  
conducted by **Sir Thomas Beecham**



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XR remastering by **Andrew Rose**Transcribed from tape copies of  
Beecham's own original acetatesCover artwork based on a  
photograph of **Sir Thomas Beecham**Total duration: **74:32**For a full catalogue visit  
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