



PASC 286

Sir William Walton

Troilus & Cressida Partita for Orchestra



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"...Walton wrote the part of Cressida for Elizabeth Schwarzkopf, who did indeed record extracts from it in 1955. When asked to open with the opera she demurred pleading another engagement, although Neil Tierney, in his biography of Walton, quotes Walter Legge as saying that she disliked singing in English and neither liked the story nor the character of Cressida. Covent Garden suggested the Hungarian soprano, Magda Laszlo; Walton agreed that she had the looks but she could not speak any English. She was expected to learn the part parrot-fashion and to sing without a trace of a foreign accent. If you listen to the Schwarzkopf recording you can hear how impossible that was going to be. In the event, her English was so poor that she had to be coached by Susana Walton, who was herself Argentinian! Opposite her Peter Pears played Pandarus. The producer was George Devine and the designer Hugh Casson. It became known that the opera was to be a sumptuous affair, very romantic in style and destined to become very popular.

Sargent proved a problem. He was a rather vain and self-opinionated conductor. He had not conducted an opera at Covent Garden since 1936 - nor anywhere else except for Gilbert and Sullivan. The singers complained that he often left them without support when they were unaccompanied to which he responded that since there was no orchestral part it was not necessary for him to conduct. He constantly questioned Walton's scoring, which did not endear him to the composer and a further difficulty was that Sargent's eyesight was failing but he was too vain to wear spectacles when conducting. Since the score had still not been printed Sargent was working from the rehearsal score which was rather indistinct in parts. He seemed uncertain of the score and even during performance he counted the bars out loud, which was very off-putting for the performers. On one occasion he brought Geraint Evans in a bar too early with an enormous flourish., Evans decided to ignore this and came in at the proper time. Evans notes in his biography that Walton often had to be called into rehearsals to help and he became increasingly disenchanted. (Unbelievably, Sargent was still the conductor at the Covent Garden revival in 1963 even though Walton pleaded with David Webster to find somebody else. Christopher Hassel, the librettist, died from a heart attack whilst running for a train to attend one of the revived performances.)..."

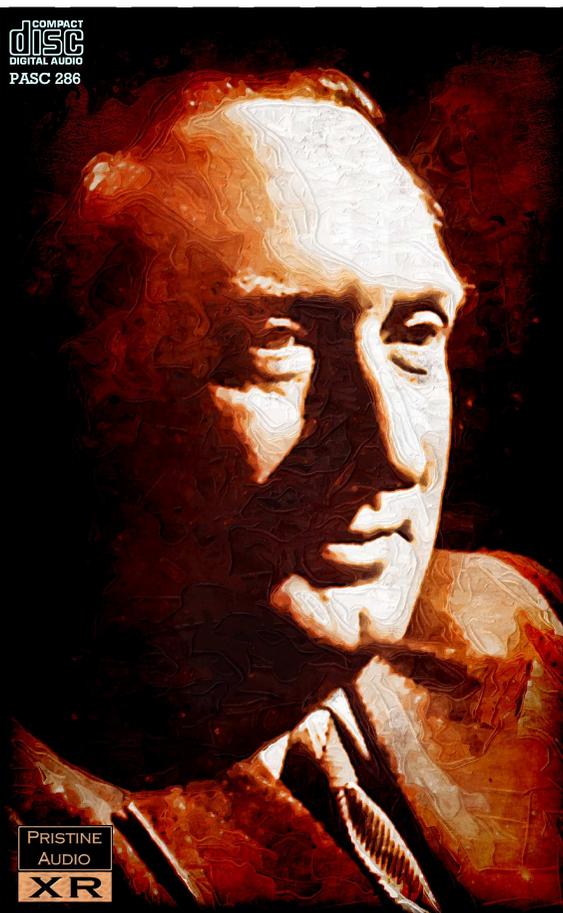
From "*This unfortunate opera*" by Len Mullenger - <http://www.musicweb-international.com/troil1.htm>

Recording and restoration notes

Both of these recordings benefitted from the development of true high fidelity equipment during the 1950s and are good examples of what could be achieved at the time. It is unfortunate that the earlier recording, *Scenes from Troilus and Cressida*, was made only in mono, but the Ambient Stereo version of our remastering does at least add some air and space around the performers. In both cases I have been able, in XR remastering, to reduce background noise whilst lifting the veil which hung over the upper treble. In the case of *Troilus and Cressida* the slightly cramped and restricted lower frequencies have also been greatly improved. **AR**

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

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WALTON CONDUCTS

TROILUS & CRESSIDA (SCENES)

ELISABETH
SCHWARZKOPF

RICHARD LEWIS

PARTITA FOR ORCHESTRA

PHILHARMONIA
ORCHESTRA

MONO & STEREO STUDIO
RECORDINGS, 1955 & 1959

Walton conducts Walton

WALTON Troilus and Cressida (SCENES)

- 1 Is Cressida a slave (9:56)
- 2 Slowly it all comes back (6:00)
- 3 How can I sleep (4:05)
- 4 If one last doubt remains (9:11)
- 5 Now close your arms (7:56)
- 6 All's well (12:05)
- 7 Diomedel Father! (4:35)

Troilus Richard Lewis

Cressida Elisabeth Schwarzkopf

Evadne Monica Sinclair

Watchman Geoffrey Walls

Watchman John Hauxwell

Watchman Lewis Thomas

WALTON Partita for Orchestra (stereo)

- 8 1st mvt. - Toccata: Briosio (4:50)
- 9 2nd mvt. - Pastorale siciliana: Andante comodo (6:01)
- 10 3rd mvt. - Giga burlesca: Allegro gioiale (4:58)

Philharmonia Orchestra Sir William Walton



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32-bit XR remastering by
Andrew Rose

Cover artwork based on a
photograph of **Sir William Walton**

Scenes from Troilus & Cressida
Recorded 18 April - 20 May, 1955,
Kingsway Hall, London
First issued as Columbia 33CX1313

Partita for Orchestra
Recorded 6 & 16 February, 1959
Kingsway Hall, London
First issued as Columbia 33CX1679

Total duration: **69:37**

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