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PASC 367

Paul Paray

conducts Liszt and Wagner

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Every time I think of the conductor Paul Paray I recall a tale told to me by the ex-LPO clarinetist Basil Tchaikoff about the Frenchman's London visits in the 1940s, when he refused to mount the rostrum until he was paid in full...and in cash! The LPO loved him (apparently, had Beecham not returned from America, they may well have offered him the top job) but our loss was Detroit's gain, and we're very fortunate that, thanks to Mercury's enterprise and superb engineering team, we can enjoy the fruits of Paray's considerable labours with the Detroit Symphony ... Paray's greatest virtues were his vitality, his impeccable sense of rhythm, his ability to maximise on a composer's tone palette and his overall stylishness. This isn't the first Pristine Paray reissue – there's also some superb Wagner and Russian fare – and I sincerely hope it won't be the last.

Rob Cowan, *Gramophone*, Awards 2012 - review of *Pristine PASC346*, excerpt

Transfer notes

This release brings to a conclusion our series covering the recordings of Paul Paray with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra which Mercury Records have chosen not to reissue on CD. They are presented here in order of recording, and span the end of the mono era and the birth of commercial stereo recording.

In each case, with the exception of Wagner's *Flying Dutchman Overture*, these are Paray's only recordings of these works, and as such are valuable additions to the present day catalogue. All have been remastered using Pristine's 32-bit XR method, and it has been interesting to note how the corrective influence of these technology become less intensive as the recording technology used by Mercury improved considerably between 1953 and 1956.

In one instance we have chosen to use an alternative source to the original Mercury LPs. Wagner's *Forest Murmurs* occupied the end of an LP side in Mercury's release, and its loud, brassy climax suffered terribly as a result from end-of-side distortion. A later reissue on the Wing label (a Mercury subsidiary) avoids this problem, if slightly at the expense of the top end clarity found elsewhere on the original Mercury pressings.

Overall, however, sound quality is as good as we have come to expect from Mercury. With the final recording in stereo we have opted to present the rest of the programme in Ambient Stereo, which provides a sense of space around the musicians without sacrificing the integrity of the central mono signal. **AR**

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



LISZT Les Preludes
WAGNER Orchestral Music
Detroit Symphony Orchestra
Mono and Stereo studio recordings, 1953-1956

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PARAY CONDUCTS LISZT AND WAGNER
PARAY, DETROIT SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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XR remastering by **Andrew Rose**

Cover artwork based on
a photograph of **Paul Paray**

LISZT Les Preludes

Recorded 26-28 December 1953
Issued as Mercury MG 50036

WAGNER

Tracks 2-4 : 27 November 1954

Track 5: 25 March 1955

Tracks 2-5 Issued as Mercury MG 50033

Track 6: 23-24 March 1956

Issued as Mercury Stereo SR 90107

Total duration: **75:24**

Paray Liszt & Wagner

- 1 LISZT Les Preludes (15:52)
- 2 WAGNER The Flying Dutchman - Overture (9:56)
- 3 WAGNER Parsifal - Good Friday Spell (10:02)
- 4 WAGNER Siegfried - Forest Murmurs (8:08)
- 5 WAGNER Tristan und Isolde - Prelude and Liebestod (18:13)
- 6 WAGNER Parsifal - Prelude to Act 1 (13:13)

Detroit Symphony Orchestra Paul Paray

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