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# Bruno Walter

## conducts Mahler

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### Symphony No. 9 Symphony No. 1

This record comes to us so loaded with history and legend, and it carries its burden with such triumphant sure-footedness, that I have no hesitation in declaring it one of the greatest musical monuments of our time.

Mahler's Ninth Symphony, his last completed work, and undoubtedly his consummate achievement, was presented to the world in Vienna in 1912, the year after his death, by his disciple Bruno Walter. For those who understood Mahler (few enough at that time), it seemed to sum up, not only the soaring aspirations and despairs of this tormented genius himself, but those of a whole civilisation - the pre-1914 world of Vienna and the rest of Europe. And when Vienna fell to the Nazis, one of the last performances given there by Walter, before he left, eventually to settle in the U.S.A., was of the same work; and this, perpetuated by HMV in the form of a 20-side 78 rpm recording - the first ever made of the work - seemed more than ever to be an appropriate memorial to a glorious and irrecoverable past, not least in the imperfections inseparable from a recorded concert performance, which were felt to be part and parcel of a poignant historic occasion. And now it is once more fitting that the eighty-five-year-old Bruno Walter should have rounded off his life's work with a recording of the Ninth which is a superb, definitive realisation of the work, in interpretation, performance, and recorded sound alike.

Deryck Cooke, *The Gramophone*, September 1962 - *excerpt from review of Symphony No. 9 LP issue*

#### Transfer notes

As with a number of recordings of this era, I approached this classic, some would say definitive historic document with a degree of trepidation. Once again I had to ask myself whether I could bring any significant improvement to the sound quality to justify my own efforts - and achieve something sufficient to persuade those who already know the recording well that it's worth hearing afresh. Mahler's 6th Symphony was once famously dismissed as "Brass, lots of brass, incredibly much brass! Even more brass, nothing but brass!", yet here I would point the listener first to the brass to hear what dramatic sound improvements have been made. Gone is the dim, veiled sound of even the most recent "official" Sony CD issues, to be replaced by an openness and clarity that lets these instruments shine through as never before. Suddenly the whole sound of the original recordings sounds cluttered and constricted by comparison. Listen next to the very low end, the depths of bass which underpin the orchestra, the growling rumbled of double basses and low percussion that seem almost absent in the original - they were there all along, just waiting to be found and returned to audibility. A monumental work such as the Ninth requires a monumental sound - and now this monumental recording has it. Coupling it with the First beings together Walter's two stereo Columbia Symphony Mahler recordings, surely now sounding as fine as any ever recorded.

A.R.

FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT [WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM](http://WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM)  
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## Columbia Symphony Orchestra

Stereo Columbia studio recordings, 1961

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MAHLER SYMPHONIES Nos. 9 & 1  
WALTER, COLUMBIA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

XR remastering by **Andrew Rose**

Cover artwork based on a photograph of  
**Bruno Walter**

**Symphony No. 9 (82:08)**

Recorded 16 January 1961  
American Legion Hall, Hollywood, USA  
First issued as Columbia M2S 676

**Symphony No. 1 (52:39)**

Recorded 14/21 January & 4/6 February 1961  
American Legion Hall, Hollywood, USA  
First issued as Columbia MS 6394

Total duration: **2hr 14:48**

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## Walter conducts Mahler

### MAHLER Symphony No. 9 in D major

#### DISC ONE

- 1 1st mvt. - *Andante comodo* (29:37)
- 2 2nd mvt. - *Im Tempo eines gemächlichen Ländlers. Etwas täppisch und sehr derb* (17:45)
- 3 3rd mvt. - *Rondo-Burleske: Allegro assai. Sehr trotzig* (13:18)

#### DISC TWO

- 4 4th mvt. - *Adagio. Sehr langsam und noch zurückhaltend* (21:28)

### MAHLER Symphony No. 1 in D major "TITAN"

- 2 1st mvt. - *Langsam, schleppend, Immer sehr gemächlich* (13:29)
- 3 2nd mvt. - *Kräftig bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell, Recht gemächlich* (6:58)
- 4 3rd mvt. - *Feierlich und gemessen, ohne zu schleppen* (11:32)
- 5 4th mvt. - *Stürmisch bewegt – Energisch* (20:41)

**Columbia Symphony Orchestra Bruno Walter**

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