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# TOSCANINI

## The Final New York Philharmonic Concert

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Arturo Toscanini, at the concert given for the Pension Fund of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra last night in Carnegie Hall, repeated the first program he conducted with that body at his historic opening performance of Jan. 14, 1926. Toscanini was then 59. On the twenty-fifth of next March he will be 77. Not the slightest weakening of his phenomenal capacities was perceptible last night, nor the abatement of his power to electrify an orchestra and an audience.

There was the same interpretive wisdom and imperious command; the same exalted sense of beauty and capacity for the revelation of the uttermost reaches of a composer's thought. Also it was recognized that now, as then, Mr. Toscanini has a place among the great orchestral interpreters which is entirely his own, and that the orchestra which sounded so wonderfully when he made his initial appearances sounds as remarkably under his baton today.

The program in question began with Haydn's Clock symphony; continued with Respighi's "Pines of Rome"—new in 1926; Sibelius' tone-poem, "The Swan of Tuonela"; the death music and funeral march from "Goetterdaemmerung," and Weber's "Euryanthe" overture. The variety of interpretive tests it imposes is self-evident. These tests were met with Mr. Toscanini's exceptional power to evoke fresh marvel from familiar things, and his insistence upon the closest observance of the letter as well as the spirit in all music that he undertakes to interpret.

There is no need to give particulars of Mr. Toscanini's achievements. The singular thing is that, well as we have known them, they seemed fresh, new again. One had not fully remembered the marvel of his evocation of the beauty, sentiment and style of eighteenth-century Haydn—perhaps, after all, the greatest accomplishment of the evening.

The overwhelming effect of the bad, swollen, noisy music of Respighi was easier to recall and anticipate in advance. The score is concrete enough for that, heaven knows, and was played with the ultimate of color and climax. One berated oneself, while sympathizing with those who cheered.

The unique Toscanini was he who revealed again for us the vision of the young poet that Sibelius was when he composed the "Swan of Tuonela," singing of the tenderness and mystery of the death, and the unfoldment of Wagner's epical lament, which no interpreter gives with more of pathos and heroic grandeur. Weber is not young in point of years, yet his music flashed gallantly and with the accents of deathless youth again.

Olin Downes, *New York Times*, 14 January 1945 (excerpt)

#### Producer's Note

When Toscanini took to the podium at Carnegie Hall on the evening of 13 January 1945 he was to conduct the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York (now known simply as the New York Philharmonic Orchestra) for the very last time. He opted to repeat the programme he had conducted in his debut with the orchestra almost exactly 19 years earlier, on 14 January 1926. He had conducted the orchestra a dozen times in the 1942 season, after his Gala Farewell concert of April 29, 1936, and once more in 1944 as part of a combined Red Cross concert in Madison Square Garden with the NBC Symphony Orchestra, but this really was his last farewell to the orchestra: a special one-off concert in aid of the orchestra's pension fund.

The concert was not broadcast live, and as a result it is unclear as to exactly where our source recording originated. It was clearly an in-house recording, cut onto acetate discs, and there is a suggestion it may have been made for Toscanini's personal use. It is also possible that the concert was broadcast overseas as part of the war effort. The source discs themselves varied in quality - the opening of the Haydn in particular suffered surface damage that I've tried to ameliorate as much as possible. Elsewhere a wide frequency range and clear sound has been possible with the acceptance of slightly higher background hiss than I would normally aim for - attempts to reduce this further caused unacceptable musical quality loss. I have also had to keep applause down to a bare minimum in order to squeeze the entire concert onto a single CD - these performances were very well received indeed! **Andrew Rose**

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# ARTURO TOSCANINI

## THE FINAL NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC CONCERT



Haydn *Symphony No. 101*  
Respighi *The Pines of Rome*  
Sibelius *The Swan of Tuonela*  
Wagner *Siegfried's Funeral Music*  
Weber *Euryanthe Overture*

Live recording, Carnegie Hall, 1945

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TOSCANINI *NYP Pension Fund Concert, 1945*

XR remastering by Andrew Rose

Cover artwork based on a  
photograph of Arturo Toscanini with  
the Philharmonic-Symphony  
Orchestra of New YorkLive at Carnegie Hall, New York  
13 January 1945  
In-house recording

Total duration: 79:53

HAYDN *Symphony No. 101 in D major, "Clock", Hob 1:101*

- 1 1st mvt. - Adagio - Presto (8:49)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Andante (7:14)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Menuet (Allegretto) - Trio (6:56)
- 4 4th mvt. - Finale (Vivace) (4:14)

RESPIGHI *Pines of Rome*

- 5 1. Pines of the Villa Borghese (2:35)
- 6 2. Pines Near a Catacomb (6:44)
- 7 3. Pines of the Janiculum (7:05)
- 8 4. Pines of the Appian Way (4:24)

- 9 SIBELIUS *Lemminkäinen Suite, Op. 22 - 2. The Swan of Tuonela* (9:55)
- 10 WAGNER *Götterdämmerung - Siegfried's Death and Funeral Music* (13:09)
- 11 WEBER *Euryanthe, Op. 81 - Overture* (8:48)

Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York  
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