



Edition Wilhelm Furtwängler – RIAS recordings with the Berlin Philharmonic on 14 LPs

aud 87.101

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From marketing material: "The majority of the concerts given by Wilhelm Furtwängler and the Berlin Philharmonic between 1947 and 1954 were recorded by the RIAS Berlin. The original tapes from the RIAS archives have been made available for the first time for this edition so these recordings offer Unsurpassed Technical Quality!"

A number of works – the Third, Fifth and Sixth Symphonies by Beethoven as well as Johannes Brahms' Third Symphony – are included in two interpretations. They reveal how Furtwängler was able to accentuate different aspects of a work whilst maintaining the same, clear basic conception – and how the actual interpretation depended on the context of the particular program.

This production is part of Audite's "Legendary Recordings" series and bears the quality features "1st Master Release". This term stands for the excellent quality of archival productions at Audite. For all historical publications at Audite are based, without exception, on the Original Tapes from broadcasting archives. In general these are the Original Analogue Tapes, which attain an Astonishingly High Quality, even measured by today's standards, with their tape speed of up to 76 cm/sec. The remastering – professionally competent and sensitively applied – also uncovers previously hidden details of the interpretations. Thus, a Sound of Superior Quality results! CD publications based on private recordings from broadcasts or old shellac records cannot be compared with this incredible 14LP 180g Vinyl Deluxe Box Set."

First of all, if you don't like mono then you STILL SHOULD GIVE THESE LPS A CHANCE! Really. They are that nice. The tonal balance is forward and alarming. But, once you get past the first couple of minutes, you forget about all the audio sonics qualities and just fall into the music. Furtwängler has complete control of the orchestra and is a master of dynamic range. The Adagio movement of Beethoven's Pastorale (Symphony No. 6 in F Major, Op. 68) is utterly amazing. You will be completely fatigued when listening to this movement. The dynamic range and crescendos are like nothing I have heard prior. And to boot, there are two different performances of this score by the same symphony and Furtwängler (1947 and 1954). Why two versions? To give the listener a view into Furtwängler's world during WWII and post WWII.

During the aforementioned Adagio movement, there are a few crescendos where the kettle drums are struck hard. Compared to other recordings of this score, the Audite LP has more dynamic impact, as the transients from the kettle drum are quite lifelike and shocking. The drums also have tautness and real world tonality. Quite worth the price of admission.

All of the symphonies on this 14 LP set are captivating in their own right. This music

sends the listener back 70+ years. It's as though you are listening in a Black/White world (read, no colorvision) and enjoying every moment. The music is raw, exciting and captivating. Highly recommended.

