

# Sir Georg Solti: Wagner Discography

The conductor Sir Georg Solti recorded throughout his career for the Decca Record Company. During the 1950s and 1960s Decca had an alliance with RCA Records, and some of Solti's recordings were first issued on the RCA label.

Solti's first recordings were as a piano accompanist, playing at sessions in Zürich for the violinist Georg Kulenkampff in 1947. John Culshaw, a Decca producer, held Solti in high regard as a conductor, and he made his first recording as a conductor with the Zürich Tonhalle in Beethoven's *Egmont Overture*. With Culshaw, and later James Walker, producing his recordings, Solti's career as a recording artist flourished. His last public concerts, also with the Zürich Tonhalle, took place just a few weeks before his death in 1997.

Solti's most celebrated recording was Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* made in Vienna, with Culshaw producing, between 1958 and 1965. It has twice been voted the greatest recording ever made, the first poll being of readers of *Gramophone* magazine in 1999, and the second of professional music critics in 2011, carried out for *BBC Music Magazine*.

For Decca, Solti made more than 250 recordings, including 45 complete opera sets. Among the international honors given for his recordings were 32 Grammy awards – more than any other recording artist, whether classical or popular. In addition, Solti and Culshaw received the first NARAS Trustees' Award in 1967 for their "efforts, ingenuity, and artistic contributions" in connection with the Ring recording. Solti also received the Academy's 1995 Lifetime Achievement Award.

For his centenary, Decca is releasing a number of special boxed sets of Solti's recordings; two of them contain previously released Wagner operas:

## Der Ring des Nibelungen – Deluxe Edition

Decca has repackaged the four Solti *Ring* operas in a deluxe edition (released October, 2012) that includes the following (see recording details on the next page):

- The famous *Ring* recording made with the Vienna Philharmonic re-mastered with the latest technology to sound even better (14 CDs)
- An introduction to the *Ring* by scholar Deryck Cooke (2 CDs)
- Wagner overtures, *Siegfried Idyll*, *Kinderkatechismus* (1 CD) – Recorded in Vienna during the years when the Ring was in progress
- *The Golden Ring* – a behind-the-scenes film about the recording sessions (1 DVD)

Additional items exclusive to this set:

- *Ring Resounding* – Culshaw's long out-of-print book, first published in 1967 which details the entire recording process
- The complete cycle in 24-bit lossless format – the highest audio quality possible – all on 1 Blu-Ray audio disc
- Facsimile of Solti's score for *The Ride of the Valkyries* with original markings and explanations by Charles Kaye
- 5 high quality art prints of recording session photos
- *Gramophone* – a special 40-page brochure with facsimiles of original Decca advertisements and reviews

## Solti - Wagner, The Operas

Ten Wagner operas on the next page (excluding two entries marked with an asterisk) are included in a specially priced, 36-CD set, also released by Decca in October, 2012. This set includes *The Birth of an Opera* featuring rehearsals for the *Tristan und Isolde* performance included in this set with narration by John Culshaw.

Decca is releasing boxed sets featuring other composers that were central to Solti's recording career: Mozart, Bartok, Richard Strauss, and Verdi. There will also be a 2 CD set containing over 150 minutes of many previously unpublished live recordings and studio items spanning Sir Georg's entire professional career.

Two special concerts will take place in honor of Solti's centenary. On October 19, Valery Gergiev leads the World Orchestra for Peace, which Solti founded, in a concert at Carnegie Hall in tribute to him. They then travel to Chicago for another concert on October 21.

## **Wagner Society of New York, October 17, 2012**

Compiled by Bill Williams

Sources: Decca, Wikipedia, and WagnerOpera.net

This chart is available on the website of the **Wagner Society of New York** under **Special Topics**: [www.wagnersocietyny.org](http://www.wagnersocietyny.org)

# Sir Georg Solti: Wagner Discography - Complete Operas on Decca

Decca has repackaged the four Solti/Culshaw *Ring* operas in a deluxe edition, as well as a specially priced 36 CD set containing all ten major Wagner operas – see details on previous page. All of the operas below are included in the latter set except the two with an asterisk.

Opera	Soloists	Orchestra	Chorus	Date	Notes
Das Rheingold	Wotan: George London Fricka: Kirsten Flagstad Loge: Set Svanholm Alberich: Gustav Neidlinger Mime: Paul Kuen Donner: Eberhard Wächter Froh: Waldemar Kmentt Fasolt: Walter Kreppel Fafner: Kurt Böhme Freia: Claire Watson Erda: Jean Madeira Woglinde: Oda Balsborg Wellgunde: Hetty Plümacher Flosshilde: Ira Malaniuk	Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra		1958-Sep, Oct	
Tristan und Isolde	Tristan: Fritz Uhl Isolde: Birgit Nilsson Brangäne: Regina Resnik Kurwenal: Tom Krause Marke: Arnold van Mill Melot: Ernst Kozub Ein Hirt: Peter Klein Ein Seemann: Waldemar Kmentt Ein Steuermann: Theodor Kirschbichler	Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra	Vienna Friends of Music Society Chorus	1960-Sep	
Siegfried	Siegfried: Wolfgang Windgassen Brünnhilde: Birgit Nilsson Mime: Gerhard Stolze Wanderer (Wotan): Hans Hotter Alberich: Gustav Neidlinger Fafner: Kurt Böhme Erda: Marga Höffgen Waldvogel: Joan Sutherland	Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra		1962-May, Oct, Nov	
Götterdämmerung	Siegfried: Wolfgang Windgassen Brünnhilde: Birgit Nilsson Hagen: Gottlob Frick Alberich: Gustav Neidlinger Gunther: Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau Gutrune: Claire Watson Waltraute: Christa Ludwig Woglinde: Lucia Popp Wellgunde: Gwyneth Jones Flosshilde: Maureen Guy 1. Norne: Helen Watts 2. Norne: Grace Hoffman 3. Norne: Anita Vätkki	Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra	Vienna State Opera Chorus	1964-Oct, Nov	

Opera	Soloists	Orchestra	Chorus	Date	Notes
Die Walküre	Brünnhilde: Birgit Nilsson Siegmund: James King Sieglinde: Régine Crespin Wotan: Hans Hotter Hunding: Gottlob Frick Fricka: Christa Ludwig Gerhilde: Vera Schlosser Ortlinde: Helga Dernesch Waltraute: Brigitte Fassbaender Schwertleite: Helen Watts Helmwige: Berit Lindholm Siegrune: Vera Little Grimgerde: Marilyn Tyler Rossweisse: Claudia Hellmann	Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra		1965-Oct, Nov	
Tannhäuser	Tannhäuser: René Kollo Elisabeth: Helga Dernesch Venus: Christa Ludwig Wolfram: Victor Braun Landgraf: Hermann Hans Sotin Walther: Werner Hollweg Biterolf: Manfred Jungwirth Heinrich: Stephan Rügamer Reinmar: Norman Bailey Ein junger Hirt: Member of the Vienna Boys Choir 4 pages: Members of the Vienna Boys Choir	Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra	Vienna State Opera Chorus	1970-Oct	
Parsifal	Parsifal: René Kollo Kundry: Christa Ludwig Gurnemanz: Gottlob Frick Amfortas: Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau Titurel: Hans Hotter Klingsor: Zoltán Kelemen Altsolo: Birgit Finnilä Gralstritter: Robert Tear Gralstritter: Herbert Lackner Knappe: Rotraud Hansmann Knappe: Marga Schiml Knappe: Heinz Zednik Knappe: Ewald Aichberger Blume: Lucia Popp Blume: Alison Hargan Blume: Anne Howels Blume: Kiri Te Kanawa Blume: Gillian Knight Blume: Margarita Lilowa	Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra	Vienna Boys' Choir, Vienna State Opera Chorus	1971-Dec; 1972- Feb, Jun, Nov	

Opera	Soloists	Orchestra	Chorus	Date	Notes
Die Meistersinger	Hans Sachs: Norman Bailey	Vienna Philharmonic	Vienna State	1975-Sep, Oct;	
	Walther von Stolzing: René Kollo	Orchestra	Opera Chorus	1976-Mar	
	Eva: Hannelore Bode				
	Magdalene: Julia Hamari				
	David: Adolf Dallapozza				
	Veit Pogner: Kurt Moll				
	Kunz Vogelgesang: Adalbert Kraus				
	Konrad Nachtigall: Martin Egel				
	Sixtus Beckmesser: Bernd Weikl				
	Fritz Kothner: Gerd Nienstedt				
	Balthasar Zorn: Martin Schomberg				
	Ulrich Eisslinger: Wolfgang Appel				
	Augustin Moser: Michel Sénéchal				
	Hermann Ortel: Helmut Berger-Tuna				
	Hans Schwarz: Kurt Rydl				
	Hans Foltz: Rudolf Hartmann				
	Ein Nachtwächter: Werner Klumlikboldt (Note: The name is an anagram of "Bernd Weikl" and "Kurt Moll")				
Der fliegende Holländer	Holländer: Norman Bailey	Chicago Symphony	Chicago	1976-May	
	Daland: Martti Talvela	Orchestra	Symphony Chorus		
	Senta: Janis Martin				
	Erik: René Kollo				
	Mary: Isola Jones				
Steuermann: Werner Krenn					
Der Ring des Nibelungen*	Hildegard Behrens, Siegfried Jerusalem, et al	Bayreuth Festival Orchestra	Bayreuth Festival Chorus	1983-Jul, Aug	Live. Unpublished. Tapes destroyed.
	Lohengrin	Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra	Vienna State Opera Concert Choir	1985-Nov, Dec; 1986-Jun	
Lohengrin	Lohengrin: Plácido Domingo				
	Elsa: Jessye Norman				
	Telramund: Siegmund Nimsgern				
	Ortrud: Eva Randova				
	König Heinrich: Hans Sotin				
	Der Herrufer: Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau				
	Ein Edle: Peter Jelosits				
	Ein Edle: Thomas Mohr				
Ein Edle: Anton Scharinger					
Ein Edle: Alfred Sramek					
Die Meistersinger*	Hans Sachs: José van Dam	Chicago Symphony	Chicago	1995-Sep	Live
	Walther von Stolzing: Ben Heppner	Orchestra	Symphony Chorus		
	Eva: Karita Mattila				
	Magdalene: Iris Vermillon				
	David: Herbert Lippert				
	Veit Pogner: René Pape				
	Kunz Vogelgesang: Roberto Sacca				
	Konrad Nachtigall: Gary Martin				
	Sixtus Beckmesser: Alan Opie				
	Fritz Kothner: Albert Dohmen				
	Balthasar Zorn: John Horton Murray				
	Ulrich Eißlinger: Richard Byrne				
	Augustin Moser: Stephen Tharp				
Hermann Ortel: Kevin Deas					
Hans Schwarz: Stephen Morscheck					
Hans Foltz: Kelly Anderson					
Ein Nachtwächter: Kelly Anderson					