



## Esoteric

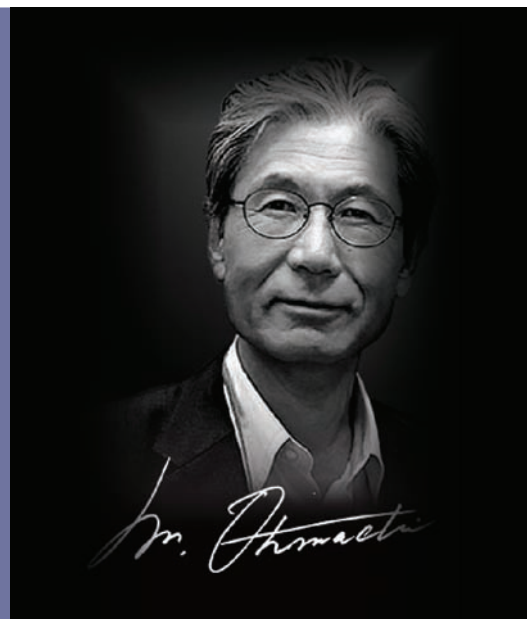
December 2009 / Decca & Deutsche Grammophon Collection

# Decca masterpiece collection vol.2 & Deutsche Grammophon masterpiece collection

A milestone of Super Audio CD/CD re-mastering, bringing a new experience to all listeners - brought to you by the experience and technology of ESOTERIC.

### A note from producer...

The reissuing of the Decca masterpiece series has attracted a lot of attention both for its uncompromising commitment to recreating the original master recording and for using our hybrid Super Audio CD/CD re-mastering technology to improve sound quality. Now the time has come for the release of Deutsche Grammophon's finest. This series marks the first hybrid SA-CD/CD release of two selections that have been mainstays of the Deutsche Grammophon catalog since the initial release on LP, later making their way on to CD. These new audio versions feature DSD mastering of the original recordings.



### ESOTERIC equipment used for re-mastering

The criterion of re-mastering is to faithfully capture the quality of the original master tapes. ESOTERIC's flag ship D/A converters, model D-01VU, Rubidium master clock generator model G-0Rb and ESOTERIC MEXCEL cables, were all used for this re-mastering session. This combination of highly advanced technology greatly contributed to capturing the high quality sound of the original master tapes with the performer.



## Tchaikovsky

*Swan Lake, Op.20 - Highlights*

Anatole Fistoulari  
Concertgebouw Orchestra  
of Amsterdam

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (184-1893)  
Swan Lake, Op.20 - Highlights

1. Introduction (Moderato assai)

### Act I

2. No. 1: Scène (Allegro giusto)
3. No. 2: Valse
4. No. 8: Danse des couples  
(Tempo di polacca)

### Act II

5. No. 10: Scène (Moderato)
6. No. 11: Scène (Allegro moderato)
7. No. 13d: Danses des cygnes  
(Allegro moderato)
8. No. 13e: Pas d'action (Andante)

### Act III

9. No. 20: Dabse hongroise  
(Czardas: Moderato assai)
10. No. 5b: Pas de deux  
(Tempo di valse - Andante  
- Tempo di valse  
- Allegro molto vivace)
11. No. 24: Scène (Allegro)

### Act IV

12. No. 27: Danse des petits cygnes  
(Moderato)
13. No. 29: Scène final  
(Andante - Allegro agitato)

[Original Recording]

Producer: Ray Minshull

Engineer: Gordon Parry, Kenneth  
Wilkinson

Location: Concertgebouw, Amsterdam  
Recording date: 22 & 23 Feb. 1961

**“Swan Lake”, one of the greatest musical masterpieces of all time, is brought to life through the chance encounter of Fistoulari, the god of ballet, and the renowned Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. The miraculous Decca sound captured by Kenneth Wilkinson and Gordon Parry is recreated through SACD/CD hybridization, effectively preserving this masterpiece for all of posterity.**

## ■ The historic masterpiece of Anatole Fistoulari, the ultimate ballet conductor of the 20th century

Anatole Fistoulari (August 20, 1907 – August 21, 1995) was born in Kiev, and today is known as one of the greatest ballet conductors of the 20th century. His baton wielded a sound imbued with a rich sense of color, characterized by a lively, driving pulse. Most of all, his performances generated an atmosphere full of beauty and elegance. Particularly through the recordings of these performances, Fistoulari’s genius is highly regarded by music fans all over the world.

In his lifetime Fistoulari recorded a considerable number of works, including accompaniments for arias and concertos, as well as full ballets. Among the works he conducted, this particular version of “Swan Lake”, recorded with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in 1961, is the luminous masterpiece that secured Fistoulari’s legacy within the annals of classical recordings. The original album contains 13 numbers selected from the complete ballet, and is the only recording Fistoulari ever made with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. This album is also popular in Japan and has seldom disappeared from the catalog, with reissues consistently being released since it first appeared on LP.

No. 4, conducted by Georg Solti (regard as the finest performance and recording) and this excerpt of “Swan Lake” were both recorded. Though Decca made a number of recordings during the monophonic era, these two recordings in 1961 mark the first that Decca performed in stereo. However, during Haitink’s time with the Concertgebouw most of the recordings were done by Philips; thus until the 1980s these two recordings were among the few stereo recordings of the Concertgebouw made by Decca. Kenneth Wilkinson and Gordon Parry, two renowned sound engineers that were the driving force behind the Decca sound, worked under famed producer Ray Minshull to create this recording. They carefully and vividly recorded each characteristic sound of the Concertgebouw, such as the charming woodwinds, the brilliant and gorgeous brass, and above all, the richly tinged sound of the string section. These recordings are nothing short of miraculous masterpieces!

As with past ESOTERIC projects, the entire SACD hybridization process was uncompromising in its efforts, from selecting the master recording tapes to the final DSD mastering. Carefully tuned, top-grade equipment from ESOTERIC, such as the D/A converter and the rubidium clock generator, were used for the DSD mastering. MEXCEL cables were used for the signal transfer system to fully convert the original and lively sound of Decca’s analog master to hybrid SACD.

## ■ Super Audio CD/CD hybridization achieves the ultimate sound recreating the full and extremely rich sound of the Concertgebouw

1961 is the year Bernard Haitink was appointed chief conductor of Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, a post that he would share with Eugen Jochum. In February of the same year, Decca held a stereo session in which Mahler’s Symphony



Anatole Fistoulari  
(Photo: Decca)



## Sibelius

### Symphony No. 1 in E Minor, Op. 39

Lorin Maazel  
Wiener Philharmoniker

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)

Symphony No. 1 in E Minor, Op. 39

1. I. Andante – Allegro energico
2. II. Andante
3. III. Scherzo (Allegro)
4. IV. Finale (Quasi una fantasia)

Karelia Suite, Op. 11

5. I. Intermezzo (Moderato)
6. II. Ballade
7. III. Alla Marcia

[Original Recording]

Producer: John Culshaw  
Engineer: Gordon Parry  
Location: Sofiensaal, Vienna  
Recording date:  
September 1963 (Symphony),  
March 1963 (Suite)



Lorin Maazel  
(Photo: Decca)

The young Maazel conducting the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, sharply and precisely portraying the passionate drama of Sibelius.

ESTORERIC's uncompromising SACD/CD hybridization of these monumental recordings is finally complete. This album has been highly regarded since its initial release, and this hybrid re-master resurrects these cherished recordings with sound that is even more vibrant and breathtaking.

## ■ The stunning brilliance of the razor-sharp Maazel in his early 30s

Though he recently stepped down from his post as Music Director of the New York Philharmonic, Lorin Maazel (born March 6, 1930) is still actively working as a conductor. This album contains Sibelius's Symphony No. 1 and the "Karelia" suite, both which Maazel recorded in 1963 with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra when he was only 33 years old. This recording is widely regarded as a masterpiece, for it perfectly captures Maazel's acute sensitivity and aggressive sense of musical interpretation. Likewise, this is the first recording of Maazel and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra performing together, and provides a glimpse of recordings the young Maazel did for Decca, the first being with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra in 1962. From the standpoint of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, this record marks the beginning of the only Sibelius symphonic library (recorded in 1961 – 1968) that Decca has made to date. In addition to Decca, Maazel had already begun recording for Deutsche Grammophon and EMI at the time this performance was recorded. This period signifies the start of his illustrious career, in which he made his debut in 1960 as the youngest conductor to ever perform at the Bayreuther Festspiele. Maazel would later record these works again in 1992, this time with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra (Sony).

## ■ Super Audio CD hybridization achieves the ultimate sound

This recording session was performed in Vienna at the Sofiensaal, the concert hall where Decca was originally based. The collaboration of producer John Culshaw and recording engineer Gordon Parry lively captures the characteristic sound of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. As with Dvořák's "From the New World" conducted by Kertesz, this hybrid SACD vividly depicts the manner in which the youthfully ardent conductor pours his energy into this long-established orchestra and essentially resurrects it. The freshness of the young Maazel is perfectly conveyed by the strong drumming of the timpanis in the "scherzo" 3rd movement, and by the deliberate progression of the climax in the 2nd movement. Along with the Tchaikovsky symphonic library that was recorded during the same period, this recording recreates the dashing conducting style of Maazel in the 1960s.

## ■ "One of Maazel's masterpieces in his youth"

"The Sibelius symphonic library, which a young Maazel recorded in the 1960s with the renowned Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, is one of the finest among his many records. In this performance of Symphony No. 1, he works to create music with a fervent passion powered by a relentless drive. So strong is this drive it generates a sharp friction between him and the orchestra, but the friction itself seems to be extremely musical and sufficiently thrilling. There are moments when the sound seems a little close to the microphone, but the commendable quality of this recording still rings true today." (Tsuguhiko Yoshii, from "The Record Geijutsu Special Issue: Classical Music Record Book Vol. 1 - Symphony", 1985)



## Schoenberg, Berg, Webern

Schoenberg : "Verklärte Nacht"  
 Webern: "Passacaglia"  
 Berg: "3 Orchestral Pieces"

Herbert von Karajan  
 Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra

Arnold Schoenberg (1874 - 1951)  
 Verklärte Nacht op.4  
 nach dem Gedichten von Richard Dehmel  
 Revidierte Fassung für Streichorchester

1. Grave
  2. Molto rallentando (100\*)
  3. Pesante (201)
  4. Adagio (229)
  5. Adagio (370)
- \*Takt (Associated Music Publishers, New York)

Anton Webern (1883 - 1945)

6. Passacaglia für Orchester op.1

Alban Berg (1885 - 1935)  
 Drei Orchesterstücke op.6  
 Neufassung: 1929

7. 1. Präludium. Langsam
8. 2. Reigen.  
Anfangs etwas zögernd-Leicht beschwingt
9. 3. Marsch. Mäßiges Marschtempo

[Original Recording]  
 Executive Producer: Dr. Hans Hirsch  
 Recording Producer: Hans Weber  
 Tonmeister (Balance Engineer): Günter Hermans

This album presents Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra (BPO) at their height, bringing out the pure euphoria and sensuality of the Second Viennese School. Listen to the pinnacle of orchestral art, fully restored from DG's original analog recordings through state-of-the-art DSD mastering technology.

### ■ The seminal works of Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra at their height

The 4 LP box set "Second Viennese School (Berg, Webern, Schoenberg)/Karajan & Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra," originally released by Deutsche Grammophon (DG) in 1975, is a pivotal masterpiece that fully captures the superb collaboration of Karajan and the BPO at its height in the 1970s. The box set contains nine representative orchestral works by Schoenberg, Berg and Webern, and was recorded in between live performances held from December 1972 to February 1974. This set rivals the LaSalle Quartet's "Second Viennese School - String Quartets" (5 LP box set from DG, released in 1972) as one of the landmark collections of the 1970s. Likewise, the vinyl release of these composers' works helped them to earn greater recognition. At the time this collection was made few actual recordings of these works existed, and with little commercial profit to be expected from their release, it could be said that Karajan himself made an investment in these recordings.

### ■ Greatest orchestral works of the Second Viennese School

This album features three representative orchestral works of three composers from the box set, brilliantly capturing the lingering afterglow of the late Romantic School. This marks the first time, through the days of LP and CD, that a compilation of these works has been released. Only the genius of Karajan fully exploiting the powerful and broad dynamic range of the BPO could produce such a rich and textured sound.

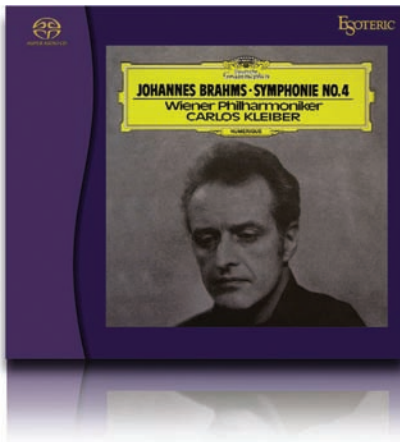
Particularly inspiring is the BPO string section's performance of "Verklärte Nacht" written for string orchestra, a piece reminiscent of "Tristan und Isolde". The BPO string section magnificently depicts the rich luminance of the late Romantic School, fully demonstrating the true worth of the orchestra. In Berg's "3 Orchestral Pieces" and Webern's "Passacaglia", which were composed for large triple-wind orchestra, the stunning contrast between the subtle tone variations of soft muffled sections, as light as lithophane, and the overpowering sound of the orchestra in tutti is truly remarkable. It is only fitting that these recordings be considered masterpieces, for they left an indelible mark on the celestial art of orchestra in the 20th century.

### ■ Super Audio CD/CD brings out the distinct differences of each recording site

For the three works featured in this album, the Berg piece was recorded at the Jesus Christ Church in Berlin's Dahlem district in 1972, while the Schoenberg and Webern pieces were recorded at the Philharmonic in Berlin. Though the Jesus Christ Church had served as DG's principal recording site for Karajan and the BPO, around that time the decision was made to conduct recordings at the Philharmonic, the BPO's home concert hall. This "Second Viennese School (Berg, Webern, Schoenberg)" reflects this transition. As was done with the ESOTERIC project in the past, uncompromising efforts were made at each stage of the SA-CD hybridization process to recreate the original sound, from selecting the master tape for the recording to the final DSD mastering. ESOTERIC's top grade equipment, such as the carefully adjusted D/A converters, rubidium clock generator, and MEXCEL cables, were fully-utilized in the DSD mastering to store all of the information from the original analog master onto disc. This technology allows one to distinguish between the two recording sites more clearly than ever: the Jesus Christ Church - one of the few sites capable of producing rich reverberation and capturing the minute differences in sound, yet plagued by poor insulation and noise from planes flying overhead - and the Philharmonic - a first-class concert hall that brilliantly captures even the faintest pianissimo.

### ■ Breathtaking beauty and the intense dramatic tension of the string ensemble (Minao Shibata)

- The performance of "Verklärte Nacht" by Karajan and Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra at the NHK Hall in 1973 was undoubtedly the climax of the orchestra's Japan tour. The beauty of the string ensemble coupled with its intense dramatic tension took my breath away. I was completely overwhelmed by both its severity and tremendous aesthetic quality. When I first put the needle on "Verklärte Nacht", I yearned to experience that the awe and emotion I first felt when I heard the piece performed. I have listened to numerous live performance and recordings of "Verklärte Nacht" by various conductors and orchestras, and each time I have discovered something new, or some deeper sense of expression. However, I'm afraid that this new recording by Karajan may have forever denied us the chance to experience such new encounters and thrills. Though we can't really predict the feelings and emotions with which human beings will listen to music centuries from now, we do know that Karajan explored every facet of this score possible in our time, giving us the sound we hear now. **(Minao Shibata, from the liner notes for the first Japanese version LP)**



## Johannes Brahms Symphony No. 4

Carlos Kleiber  
Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra

Johannes Brahms (1833 - 1897)  
Symphonie Nr. 4 e-moll op. 98

1. I. Allegro con brio
2. II. Andante moderato
3. III. Allegro giocoso-Poco meno presto-Tempo
4. IV. Allegro energico e passionato-Più Allegro

Recorded: March 12-15, 1980,  
Musikverein, Grosser Saal, Wien

[Original Recording]  
Executive Producer: Dr. Hans Hirsch  
Recording Producer: Hans Weber  
Tonmeister (Balance Engineer):  
Klaus Scheibe  
Recording Engineer: Hans-Rudolf Müller  
Editing: Günter Hermanns

The greatest Brahms piece of all time, bursting with Carlos's unique expression! DSD mastering recreates the vivid sound of DG's treasured original master recordings.

### ■ An enduring charisma that lives on in death: Carlos Kleiber's last studio recording with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra

The popularity of conductor Carlos Kleiber (July 3, 1930 – July 13, 2004) still shows no sign of slowing down five years after his death. He had a charisma that mystified countless audiences with his graceful and gorgeous conducting, extremely few concerts and limited repertoire, and frequent cancellations. But most of all, Kleiber delighted audiences with the charm of the actual performance, regardless of opera or concert being played. In total Kleiber made only nine studio recordings, eight of which were for DG, the first being "Der Freischütz" (1973) and the last "Tristan und Isolde" (1982), as well as one for EMI.

All other recordings were of live performances, with both official and bootleg versions existing. This performance of Brahms Symphony No. 4, recorded in March of 1980, is fourth recording with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. It stands out as both Kleiber's first digital recording, but also his last studio recording with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. His first performance of this work at the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra's subscription concert in December of 1979 was a great success. Four months later he energetically committed himself to make the recording in the studio. The sense of exuberance pervading this studio performance is truly remarkable. His interpretation can be considered revolutionary, for it swept away the sense of ennui inherent maybe epoch-making in terms that it cleared away the inherent ennui of this symphony. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that the subtle emphasis on phrases and voice parts lends more depth to the sound, clearly seen within the exquisite agogics in the third movement's theme.

### ■ The supreme SA-CD/CD hybridization becomes a reality

Compared to Kleiber's past three albums with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, this recording captures his characteristically fluid and clear sound with remarkable clarity. This is made possible by the unique advantages digital recordings offer. As was done with the ESOTERIC project in the past, uncompromising efforts were made at each stage of the SA-CD hybridization process to recreate the original sound, from selecting the master tape for the recording to the final DSD mastering. Likewise, the D/A converters, rubidium clock generator and MEXCEL cables were all used for DSD mastering. The careful adjustment of ESOTERIC's top grade equipment has made it possible to store all of the information from the original master onto disc, creating an unconstrained sound that is authentic.

### ■ This performance may never be surpassed (Hiromi Saito).

- A dynamic expression that fully exploits the talents of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. There is no sense of ambiguity clouding this performance. This conductor does not tacitly follow the score, but tries to bring out the underlying meaning and express it to the fullest. Thus, the amazingly delicate melodies are put together carefully and precisely. One could say that this the unique performance depicts Carlos's youthful and carefree personality. **(Tadao Koishi, from "The Record Geijutsu Special Issue: Classical Music Record Book Vol. 1 - Symphony", 1985)**

- A powerful performance as intense as a raging inferno, recorded when Kleiber was 50 years old. Pure magnificence and splendor! It instantly captivates the listener with its depth and masculine dynamism. The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra's fiery passion and sonority really gets one excited. The thick brass, swirling strings, and the all-important tight percussion are what really stand out with this orchestra. It's hard to imagine another performance ever surpassing this. **(Hiromi Saito, from "1000 Monumental Masterpieces of Classical Music", 2007).**

## Experience for yourself...

the legendary performance of this new **Super Audio CD/CD format**. For experienced and new music lovers alike, the care and attention that has gone into creating these beautifully recorded masterpieces is nothing short of astounding. Discover the composers "soul" hidden within the music, and bring it to life in your home like only Esoteric can.

Please contact Nigel Crump at Symmetry for further information.