

Bruno Walter (born Bruno Schlesinger, September 15, 1876 – February 17, 1962) was a German-born conductor, pianist, and composer. Born in Berlin, he left Germany in 1933 to escape the Third Reich, settling finally in the United States in 1939. He worked closely with Gustav Mahler, whose music he helped establish in the repertory, held major positions with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Salzburg Festival, Vienna State Opera, Bavarian State Opera, Staatsoper Unter den Linden and Deutsche Oper Berlin, among others, made recordings of historical and artistic significance, and is widely considered one of the great conductors of the 20th century.

Born near Alexanderplatz in Berlin to a middle-class Jewish family, he began his musical education at the Stern Conservatory at the age of eight, making his first public appearance as a pianist when he was nine; he performed a concerto movement with the Berlin Philharmonic in 1889 and a full concerto with them in February, 1890. He studied composition at Stern with Robert Radeke de.Robert Radecke, and remained active as a composer until about 1910 (see list of compositions below). But it was seeing an 1889 concert by the Berlin Philharmonic led by Hans von Bülow, he wrote, that "decided my future. Now I knew what I was meant for. No musical activity but that of an orchestral conductor could any longer be considered by me. He made his conducting debut at the Cologne Opera with Albert Lortzing's *Der Waffenschmied* in 1894. Later that year he left for the Hamburg Opera to work as a chorus director. There he first met and worked with Gustav Mahler, whom he revered and with whose music he later became strongly identified



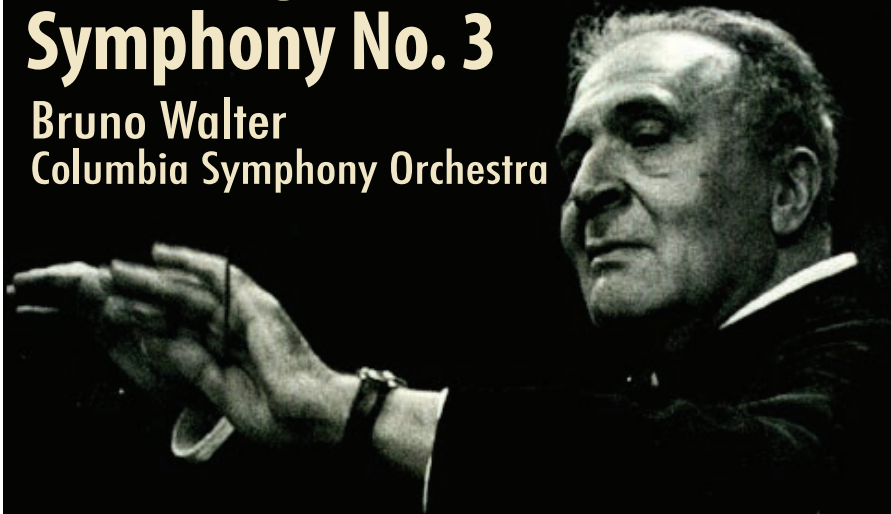
Conducting In 1896, he was appointed Kapellmeister of the Stadttheater (municipal opera) in Breslau, on the strength of a recommendation from Mahler to the theater's director, Theodor Löwe. However, Löwe required that before taking up this position the young conductor change his last name from Schlesinger, which literally means Silesian, "because of its frequent occurrence in the capital of Silesia". In a letter to his brother paraphrased by Erik Ryding and Rebecca Pechesky, Walter said he had "suggested several names, which Mahler wrote down and gave to Löwe, who returned the contract with the name Bruno Walter. These biographers add that Walter wrote to his parents that he found that "having to change his name was 'terrible,'""; they report that Mahler and his sisters "pressed" Walter to make the change of name, and add that, contrary to occasional unsubstantiated reports, it "is unknown" whether Löwe's stipulation had anything to do with a desire to conceal Walter's Jewish origins.

In 1897, Walter became Chief Conductor at the municipal opera in Pressburg. He found the town provincial and depressing, and in 1898 took the position of Chief Conductor of the Riga Opera, Latvia. While there, he converted to Christianity, probably Roman Catholicism. In 1899 Walter was appointed music director of the Temeswar, Austria-Hungary (now Timisoara, Romania) Opera. Walter then returned in 1900 to Berlin, where he assumed the post of Royal Prussian Conductor at the Staatsoper Unter den Linden, succeeding Franz Schalk; his colleagues there included Richard Strauss and Karl Muck. While in Berlin he also conducted the premiere of *Der arme Heinrich* by Hans Pfitzner, who became a lifelong friend.

In 1901, Walter accepted Mahler's invitation to be his assistant at the Court Opera in Vienna. Walter led Verdi's *Aida* at his debut. In 1907 he was elected by the Vienna Philharmonic to conduct its Nicolai Concert. In 1910, he helped Mahler select and coach solo singers for the premiere of Mahler's Symphony No. 8. In the following years Walter's conducting reputation soared as he was invited to conduct across Europe – in Prague, in London where in 1910 he conducted *Tristan und Isolde* and Ethel Smyth's *The Wreckers* at Covent Garden, and in Rome. When Mahler died on May 18, 1911, Walter was at his deathbed. On June 6, he wrote to his sister that he was to conduct the premiere of Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*, he did so in Munich on November 20, 1911, in the first half of an all-Mahler concert (the second half contained Mahler's Symphony No. 2 (Mahler) On June 26, 1912 he led the Vienna Philharmonic in the world premiere of Mahler's Symphony No. 9.

BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 3

Bruno Walter Columbia Symphony Orchestra



HIGH DEFINITION TAPE TRANSFERS



Mastered in DSD256

Beethoven Symphony No. 3 in E flat major ("Eroica"), Op. 55

Beethoven completed this work in 1804; it was introduced privately in Vienna, chez Prince Lobkowitz, to whom it is dedicated. Beethoven also conducted the public premiere on April 7, 1805, in the Theater-an-der-Wien. Despite everything written to the contrary, the Sinfonia eroica was never a "portrait" of Napoleon Bonaparte, although Beethoven did plan to dedicate it to the charismatic Corsican "First Consul of France." He went into a rage, however, when a pupil, Ferdinand Ries, brought news in May 1804 that Napoleon had crowned himself Emperor. According to Ries, Beethoven shouted that the General was only "an ordinary human being, [and] went to the table, took hold of the title page, tore it in two, and threw it on the floor."

A different story posits that Beethoven erased the Napoleonic dedication from a copy made in August 1804 and entitled Sinfonia grande. In fact, Sinfonia eroica did not appear as the work's title until publication in 1806.

What Beethoven never told Ries was that Prince Lobkowitz, before May 1804, had proffered a handsome fee in exchange for the dedication, which Napoleon's subsequent arrogance made possible. Or that Beethoven realized the advantage in bringing with him a Sinfonia Bonaparte when a Parisian trip was proposed later on (but never materialized). It was conductor Arturo Toscanini who put everything into perspective 50-odd years ago: "Some say Napoleon, some say Hitler, some say Mussolini; for me it is Allegro con brio."

The sheer length of the Eroica's first movement was revolutionary -- an opening movement of 691 measures, plus an exposition repeat of 151 measures. No less revolutionary was Beethoven's jarring C sharp at the end of a main theme in E flat major -- indeed it is an E flat arpeggio. Not until the recapitulation does that C sharp become D flat enharmonically. It is in this movement that the long-range harmonic connections explored over the course of the Romantic era have their real start; the movement is heroic mainly in the vastness of its

reach.

A "Funeral March" slow movement was hardly revolutionary, but the span of his C minor slow movement, in rondo form, was unprecedented, and so was its range of emotions from outright grief to C major solace. Although "hunt" music in the third-movement Trio may have startled the Eroica's first audience after funerary tragedy on an unprecedented scale, hunting music in Beethoven's time was even more modish than funeral marches. However, he used it for more than mere surprise in the midst of an onrushing and sometimes raucous scherzo (thereby banishing minuets and Ländlers until the symphonies of Bruckner and Mahler). Psychologically he needed sunshine after so much weighty, solemn music.

He was also setting up a racy finale -- a set of variations including a fugue that detractors ever since have called a falling-off of inspiration. This kind of argument ignores, however, not only what preceded the Eroica historically -- Bach's Goldberg Variations for example -- but also Beethoven's own ennoblement of the form. He had already used the legato second theme of his Eroica finale in *The Creatures of Prometheus* (ballet music of 1800), in an 1802 Contredanse, and as the subject of 15 keyboard variations that same year (Op. 35), subtitled Eroica once the symphony had been published. A never-ending wonder is the viability of this subject after so much use. Beethoven's range of invention in the symphonic finale of 1804 -- from hymnody to humor, from fugue to dance, culminating in a Presto coda -- successfully freed the listener from the gripping, even shocking drama that has stalked his first and second movements.

Beethoven Symphony No. 3

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- 1 Allegro Con Brio 16:05
- 2 Marcia Funèbre: Adagio Assai 15:33
- 3 Scherzo: Allegro Vivace 6:03
- 4 Finale: Allegro Molto 12:16
- Total Time: 49:57

Transferred from a 15ips tape
Recorded January 20, 23, and 25, 1958; American Legion Hall



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