

The conductor and composer Antal Doráti was one of the most distinguished musicians of the 20th century. He was born in Budapest on April 9 1906 and rose to become the youngest ever conductor of the Royal Opera House in his native city soon after graduating at age 18. In 1928 he went to Dresden as assistant to Fritz Busch and subsequently was engaged as conductor at the opera house in Münster/Westfalia, where he stayed until 1933. From 1934–1941 he was first second conductor, later music director of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and, subsequently, of the American Ballet Theater in New York. His American debut as a symphony conductor came in 1937, when he guest-conducted the National Symphony in Washington, D.C. He became an American citizen in 1947. From 1945–1949 Doráti directed and greatly revitalized the Dallas Symphony. He became music director of the Minneapolis Symphony in 1949, where he stayed for 11 years.



In 1963 he was appointed Chief conductor of the BBC Orchestra, a post he held for 4 years. This was followed by a similar position with the Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra (from 1965–1972). Parallel to his European activities he became music director of the National Symphony in Washington in 1970, followed by the same position 1977 in Detroit. At the same time (since 1975) Antal Doráti accepted the Royal Philharmonic's invitation to become their chief conductor. From 1981 he became "Conductor Laureate" for life of 3 orchestras (RPO London, Stockholm Philharmonic and Detroit Symphony).

Antal Doráti's recording activities commenced in 1936, his total number of recordings reached nearly 600. Many of them won international prizes, amongst others 32 "Grand Prix". His most important recording project was the complete recording of the 107 Haydn symphonies and 8 of the composer's operas. Antal Doráti's influence in the musical world has been highly significant, not only as a conductor. He has an impressive number of compositions to his credit, which are performed worldwide more and more. His teaching activities include regular masterclasses at the Royal College of music in London as well as at the Music Academy in Budapest. Both institutions made him their honorary member. Also masterclasses at the Salzburg Festival, Dartington and Bern – Basel are mentionable.

His autobiography "Notes of seven decades" was published in 1975. A second book "For inner and outer peace" – a subject which interested him greatly during his last years– was edited after his death in 1988. In this period he also returned to his other talents, which included drawing and painting.

His distinctions included the post of Honorary President of the Philharmonia Hungarica, four honorary doctor degrees, the rank of Chevalier of the order of Vasa of Sweden, the Cross of Honour, 1st class "Artibus et Litteris" of Austria, the order of "Chevalier des Arts et Lettres" de France and others. The Royal Academy of Music in London honoured Antal Doráti by appointing him an Hon.R.A.M. And in 1983 her Majesty the Queen appointed him an Hon. KBE(Knight of the British Empire) in recognition for his service to music in Britain.

Antal Doráti died in his Swiss home in Gerzensee on november 13, 1988.

# BERG

Suite From "Lulu"

Three Excerpts From "Wozzeck"

Soprano Vocals – Helga Pilarczyk

Conductor – Antal Dorati

The London Symphony Orchestra



Alban Berg assembled his Lulu Suite for orchestra and soprano in 1934. This suite involves music from his opera Lulu, which was still incomplete when the composer died prematurely at the age of fifty in the following year. The opera's short score was already finished, and the first two acts were completely orchestrated. It was from these first two movements that the music for the concert suite was drawn. It is in five movements and is slightly more than a half hour in duration. Earlier in his career, Berg had created a similar assemblage from his first opera, entitled Three Fragments from Wozzeck, but the Lulu Suite is better known and more frequently recorded. This is perhaps because the latter work is more diverse. The Wozzeck pieces concentrate exclusively on the music surrounding the protagonist's wife Marie. In the Lulu Suite, listeners hear music concerning a broad range of characters. The opening setting concerns Alwa, one of Lulu's many lovers. His father is Doctor Schoen, to whom the main character delivers her Lied der Lulu in Act II of the opera and in the third movement of the concert suite. In the fifth movement, the soprano also performs a brief excerpt from the role of Countess Geschwitz, another fatality to Lulu's charms. The orchestral interludes include music set in Paris and the East Side of London, where Jack the Ripper murders Lulu. The concert suite also features different musical forms, including a rondo and a set of variations. There is a lot to hear in this suite, making it something more than a contracted showcase intended to get an audience to the actual opera. It is an outstanding work in its own right.

The text is by Wedekind, an elder peer of the composer who originally conceived of the opera as a play in which he also sometimes performed. In fact, when Berg was a young man, still a teen in 1903, he saw a play production of Lulu featuring Wedekind as Jack the Ripper. The playwright's wife recorded in her diary seeing the young and handsome composer in the audience. The play had an enormous effect on Berg, as his enthusiastic praises of the work in his letters demonstrate. Though he had a stately bearing matched with an outward, bourgeois respectability, the Austrian was no angel. Unlike Webern, his friend and fellow student of Schoenberg at the time, Berg did not shy away from the seamier side of life. He regarded sensuality as an enormous energy deserving of the same respect as other human traits. This may have been used as an excuse for his extramarital affairs, though it was not a part of his life that he shared with his more pious friends. Berg did not go to shocking excesses in order to live out his worldview, but he did attempt to woo married women and did similar sorts of unlovely things. To the benefit of music, his overt sensuality carried over into his art perfectly. His depictions of the darker side of human nature are often more mysterious and ambiguous than a

one-dimensional evocation of evil. Though Lulu killed people and Jack the Ripper did the same, the opera unfolds with a musical setting that depicts a raw and unknowable element in the human psyche that civilization grasps blindly at in order to tame it. This setting is transferred from the opera to the Lulu Suite with uncanny perfection, revealing a talented genius that regarded some weaknesses and a misunderstood power.

Musically, Wozzeck is in the same freely atonal style Berg had developed in the Three Orchestral Pieces, Op. 6, although there are many pseudo-tonal and tonal passages interspersed, almost always for dramatic effect. In order to reflect the unique character of the scenes, Berg felt it necessary to construct a separate, musically closed form for each one. This device does not seem to evoke the number operas of the past, but rather lends the work a very modern cohesion and concision that focus its grim, violent subject matter. Each scene is part of a larger multi-movement form that covers an entire act.

Act One, with its focus on the divergent aspects of Wozzeck's personality, needed a loosely constructed form. Its five scenes are set as five character pieces -- Suite, Rhapsody, Military March and Lullaby, Passacaglia, and Quasi-Rondo. The developmental Act Two called for a more dramatic and organic form; hence its Symphony-Sonata, Fantasy and Fugue, Largo, Scherzo, and Rondo con introduzione movements. In Act Three, the inevitability of the catastrophe and epilogue is characterized musically by six inventions on ostinato ideas -- inventions, respectively, on a theme, a note, a rhythm, a hexachord, a key, and on a regular eighth note figure. The fourth and fifth scenes are separated by an important interlude, which receives its own invention (thus there are six inventions rather than five).

Berg himself thought the opera to be very successful; the listener could be completely unaware of the complex web of musical and dramatic form while being completely absorbed by the human and social elements. Indeed, this has proven Wozzeck's most enduring quality; it stands as a landmark achievement in both music and music drama, and is one of the elite few among twentieth century operas to enjoy repertory status.

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## Suite From "Lulu" Three Excerpts From "Wozzeck"

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### "Lulu" Suite

1 Rondo 16:21

2 Ostinato 3:43

3 Lulu's Song 2:13

4 Variations 4:36

5 Adagio 8:59

### Wozzeck, Three Excerpts

6 Act I, Scenes 2 And 3 7:42

7 Act III, Scene 1 5:23

8 Act III, Scenes 4 And 5 7:22

Total Time: 56:19

Recording Info: Recorded 1961 by Mercury Records

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