

Herbert von Karajan was among the most famous conductors of all time -- a man whose talent and autocratic bearing lifted him to a position of unprecedented dominance in European musical circles. He was born on April 5, 1908 in Salzburg, Austria, to a cultured Austrian family of Greek descent (their original name was Karajannis). His musical training began at the Mozarteum Conservatory in Salzburg where he studied piano with Franz Ledwenke, theory with Franz Zauer, and composition with Bernhard Paumgartner, who encouraged Karajan to pursue conducting. Karajan graduated from the conservatory in 1926, and continued his studies at the Vienna Academy of Music and Performing Arts, where he studied piano with Josef Hofman and conducting with Alexander Wunderer and Franz Schalk. Karajan's conducting debut came on January 22, 1929, with the Mozarteum Orchestra in Salzburg. Consequently, the young maestro directed a performance of Strauss' Salome at the Salzburg Festspielhaus, and was named principal conductor of the Ulm Stadttheater, where he remained in that capacity until 1934.

The next fourteen years saw the young conductor's reputation grow rapidly. He was named music director of the Aachen Stadttheater (1934-1942), had his debut at the Vienna State Opera (1937), and accepted a position with the Deutsch Grammophon Gesellschaft (1938-1943). In 1939, Karajan was appointed conductor of the Berlin State Opera, and director of the Preussische Staatskapelle Symphony concerts. In 1948, he was appointed for life, to the position of director of the Chorale Society at the Society of the Friends of Music, in Vienna.

In 1948, Herbert von Karajan also served at the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, the Philharmonia Orchestra, and La Scala, before succeeding Wilhelm Furtwängler as the music director of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra -- a union that would cement his reputation as one of the world's premier conductors. In 1955, Karajan brought that orchestra to the United States on the first of many international tours. The decade that followed saw Karajan accept several appointments, including those to the Salzburg Festival and the Vienna State Opera. In 1967, Karajan had his Metropolitan Opera debut, conducting a performance of Wagner's Die Walküre, and the same year, founded the Salzburg Easter Festival. In 1968, the Herbert von Karajan Foundation was founded to support the research of "conscious musical perception."

Herbert von Karajan was awarded the "Ring of the Province of Salzburg," Golden Gramophone, Arts Prize (Lucerne), Grand Prix International du Disque, Gold Medal of the Royal Philharmonic Society, German Golden Disc Prize, UNESCO International Music Prize, Olympia Prize of the Onassis Foundation, and multiple Gramophone awards, among others. He was elected to an honorary senate seat at the University of Salzburg. The maestro was also recognized with honorary degrees from a host of universities.

Karajan, along with Akio Morita and Norio Ohga (president and vice-president respectively, of Japanese Sony Group), unveiled and presented the Compact Disc Digital Audio System in 1981. In 1982, Karajan founded Telemondial S.A.M. with Uli Markle, in an effort to document the maestro's illustrious legacy on videotape and laser disc, and to help broaden the scope of "musical expression," through the use of modern technology. In 1984, Karajan recorded the complete Beethoven symphonies with film adaptation, made possible by his own Telemondial. In 1988, Deutsch Grammophone released a collection of one hundred "masterworks" recordings made by the conductor. Herbert von Karajan's discography is impressive to say the least, and will certainly endure in musical arenas, as some of the most valued interpretations of the repertoire available. Herbert von Karajan, often referred to as "general music director of Europe," died in Salzburg of heart failure July 16, 1989.



Dvorak

Symphony No. 8

Herbert von Karajan
Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra
Recorded live



Mastered in DSD256

The Eighth Symphony was performed for the first time in Prague's Rudolfinum on 2 February 1890 at one of the Popular Concerts organised by the artists' association Umelecka beseda. Dvorak conducted the work himself, as he did its British premiere, which was performed in London on 24 April of that same year at a concert hosted by the Philharmonic Society in St. James's Hall. The symphony was a resounding success, in the eyes of both the public and the critics. Dvorak was portrayed in the British press as the only living composer who could rightfully be named as Beethoven's successor: "Dvorak alone – though he, too, like Brahms, has sought to keep to the Beethoven school – has been able to bring a distinctly new element into the symphony". Dvorak described his experiences of the concert to his friend, Vaclav Juda Novotny: "The concert came off wonderfully, perhaps more so than at any time in the past. After the first movement there was universal applause, after the second it was even louder, after the third it was so thunderous that I had to turn round several times and thank the audience, but, after the finale, the applause was tempestuous – from the audience in the auditorium, in the galleries, from the orchestra itself, and from the people sitting behind it by the organ – they all clapped so hard, it was almost unbearable. I was called back to

the concert podium several times – in short, it was all so wonderful and sincere, just like it is at premieres at home in Prague. I am delighted and thank God that it turned out so well!" Dvorak conducted the symphony several times after that: in Frankfurt on 7 November 1890, in Cambridge on 15 June 1891, when he received an honorary degree from the city's university, on 12 August 1893 as part of the event "Czech Day", organised during the World Fair in Chicago, and once again in London on 19 March 1896. German concert audiences were able to hear the work thanks to the vigorous efforts of tireless promoter of Dvorak's music, conductor Hans Richter, who included the symphony in a programme for a Vienna Philharmonic concert on 4 January 1891. Richter immediately informed Dvorak of the success of the Viennese premiere: "You would certainly have been thrilled by this performance. We all feel that this is a superb work, and that is why we were all so enthusiastic about it. The triumph was both fervent and heartfelt."

**Transferred from a 15ips 2-track tape
Recorded Live at the
Salzburg Festival August 15, 1974**

Dvorak Symphony No. 8

Herbert von Karajan
Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra

Recorded Live at the Salzburg Festival August 15, 1974

1. Allegro con brio (G minor – G major)
2. Adagio (E-flat major – C minor – C major)
3. Allegretto grazioso – Molto vivace (G minor, ending in G major)
4. Allegro ma non troppo (G major)

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