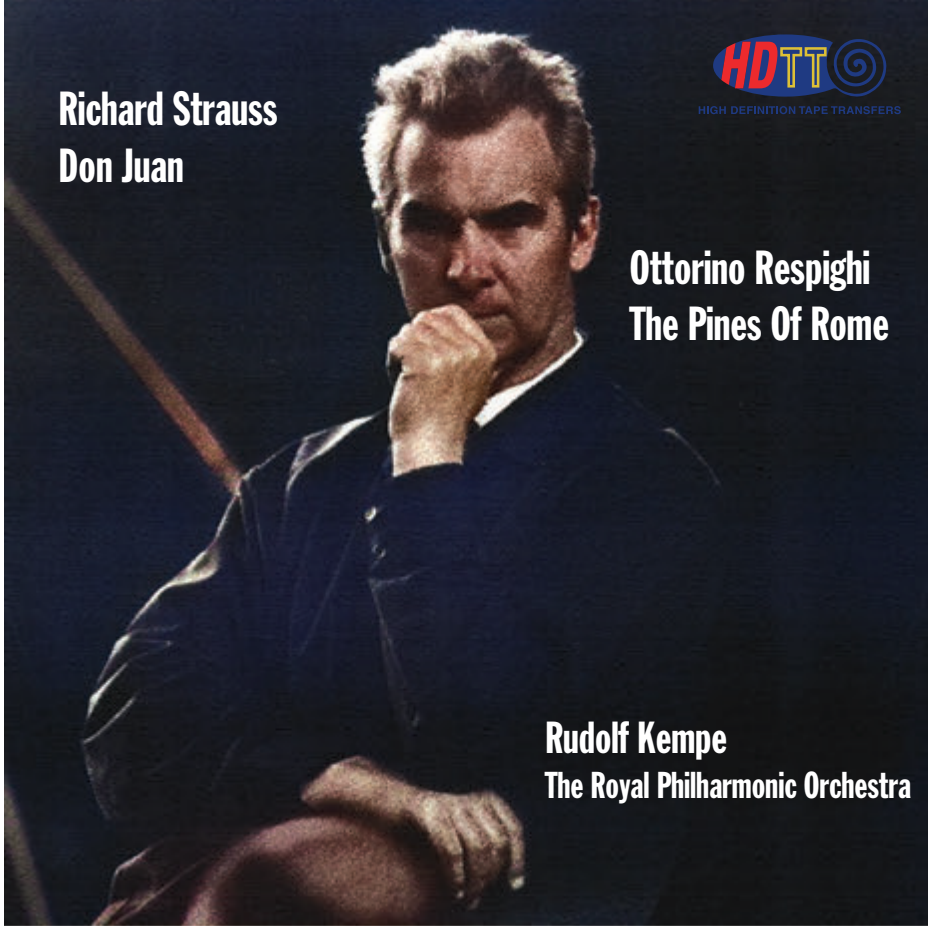


with balance and texture, and singers particularly appreciated his efforts on their behalf.

Kempe made a great impression in England, and in 1960 Thomas Beecham named him associate conductor of London's Royal Philharmonic. Kempe became the orchestra's principal conductor upon Beecham's death the following year, and, after the orchestra was reorganized, served as its artistic director from 1963 to 1975. He was also the chief conductor of the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra from 1965 to 1972, and of the Munich Philharmonic from 1967 until his death in 1976. During the last year of his life he also entered into a close association with the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

Interpretively, Kempe was something of a German Beecham. He was at his best lively, incisive, warm, expressive, but never even remotely self-indulgent in the Austro-Germanic and Czech repertory.



Richard Strauss

Don Juan

Ottorino Respighi
The Pines Of Rome

Rudolf Kempe
The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

One of the great unsung conductors of the middle twentieth century, Rudolf Kempe enjoyed a strong reputation in England but never quite achieved the international acclaim that he might have had with more aggressive management, promotion, and recording. Not well enough known to be a celebrity but too widely respected to count as a cult figure, Kempe is perhaps best remembered as a connoisseur's conductor, one valued for his strong creative temperament rather than for any personal mystique.

He studied oboe as a child, performed with the Dortmund Opera, and, in 1929, barely out of his teens, he became first oboist of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra. His conducting debut came in 1936, at the Leipzig Opera; this performance of Lortzing's *Der Wildschütz* was so successful that the Leipzig Opera hired him as a *répétiteur*. Kempe served in the German army during World War II, but much of his

duty was out of the line of fire; in 1942 he was assigned to a music post at the Chemnitz Opera. After the war, untainted by Nazi activities, he returned to Chemnitz as director of the opera (1945–1948), and then moved on to the Weimar National Theater (1948–1949). From 1949 to 1953 he served as general music director of the Staatskapelle Dresden, East Germany's finest orchestra. He then moved to the identical position at the Bavarian State Opera in Munich, 1952–1954, succeeding the young and upwardly mobile Georg Solti. During this period he was also making guest appearances outside of Germany, mainly in opera: in Vienna (1951), at London's Covent Garden (1953), and at New York's Metropolitan Opera (1954), to mention only the highlights. Although he conducted Wagner extensively, especially at Covent Garden, Kempe did not make his Bayreuth debut until 1960. As an opera conductor he was greatly concerned

Richard Strauss Don Juan

Ottorino Respighi The Pines of Rome

Rudolf Kempe The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

1 Richard Strauss - Don Juan 17:05

2 Ottorino Respighi - The Pines Of Rome 20:43

Recorded on May 22,23,25, 1964, in Kingsway Hall London by RCA for Readers Digest
Engineer – Kenneth G. Wilkinson Producer – Charles Gerhardt



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