

Wiener Philharmoniker (Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra = VPO), one of the most famous symphony orchestras of the world, founded by O. Nicolai (together with A. Schmidt and A.J. Becher) at the beginning of 1842, emerging from a union of musicians of the court opera orchestra (the members of the VPO are still recruited from the orchestra of the Vienna State Opera); the first philharmonic concert took place in the Großer Redoutensaal hall in Vienna on March 28, 1842. Subscription concerts have been performed since 1860 (in the Großer Musikvereinsaal concert hall since 1870). The VPO performed outside Vienna for the first time at the first Salzburg music festival in 1877 (Salzburg is still an important performance venue during the festival season). Long-term conductors include F.O. Dessoff (1860-1875), Hans Richter (1875-1882, 1883-1898), Gustav Mahler (1898-1901), Joseph Hellmesberger, Jr. (1901-1903), Felix Weingartner (1908-1927), Wilhelm Furtwängler (1927-1930, Main Conductor 1938-1945) and 1947-1954) and Clemens Krauss (1930-1933). In the intervening years and since 1954 the VPO has been managed by guest conductors. - The VPO went on its first tour abroad (Paris) in 1900.



10-11 subscription concerts, the Nicolai-concert (since 1887) and the traditional New Year's Concert (since 1940) are performed every year. The VPO ball, which has taken place annually at the Musikverein since 1924, is one of the main social events of the Viennese ball season. Outstanding personalities emerging from the VPO include A. Nikisch, H. Richter, Franz Schmidt and A. Rosé.

The repertoire still focuses on classical symphony (J. Haydn, W.A. Mozart, L.v. Beethoven) and is complemented by Austrian symphonic music of the 19th century. Strict selection procedures, homogeneous training of musicians, tradition and the capacity to modulate the orchestra guarantee the worldwide reputation of the VPO, which uses a slightly elevated pitch in comparison to the standard pitch of  $a' = 440$  Hz.

The VPO has been an independent association with basic democratic structures ("democracy of kings") and has accepted women musicians in the orchestra since 1997 (first female member A. Lelke, harp). It awards an honorary ring (Rudolf Serkin, Leonard Bernstein, Clemens Krauss, W. Schneiderhan, Herbert von Karajan, Karl Böhm et al.) for outstanding merit.

## MASTERING EQUIPMENT

*Digital: Antelope Audio Eclipse 384  
Antelope Audio Isochrone 10M Rubidium atomic reference generator*

*Korg MR2000 DSD recorder*

*Weiss Saracon Sample Rate Conversion Software*

*Weiss POW-r Dithering Software*

*Analogue: Studer 810 Reel to Reel with  
Custom by JRF Magnetics & Siltech wiring  
Nagra 4S custom by JRF Magnetics*

*Aria tape head pre-amp by ATR Services  
Retro Instruments 2A3 Dual-channel tube program equalizer  
Sontec MEP-250EX Parametric EQs*

*VPI Classic Turntable w/ Benz Wood Cartridge  
Rogue Audio Phone Pre-amp*

*Power Sources: PS Audio P10 Power Plant  
and Power Plant 300*

*Power Cords: Purist Audio Design, Essential Sound Products,  
Speltz Anti-Cables*

*Vibration Control: Symposium Acoustics Rollerblocks,  
Ultra platforms, Svelte shelves*

*Sonic Studio CD.1 Professional CD Burner  
using Mitsui Gold Archival CD's*



# MOZART Symphonies 33 and 39

István Kertész Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra



István Kertész (28 August 1929 – 16 April 1973) was an internationally acclaimed Jewish Hungarian orchestral and operatic conductor who, throughout his brief but distinguished career led many of the world's great orchestras, including the Cleveland, Chicago, Philadelphia, New York, Los Angeles, Pittsburgh, Detroit, San Francisco and Minnesota Orchestras in the United States, as well as the London Symphony, Vienna Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Israel Philharmonic, and L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. His orchestral repertoire numbered over 450 works from all periods, and was matched by a repertoire of some sixty operas ranging from Mozart, Verdi, Puccini and Wagner to the more contemporary Prokofiev, Bartók, Britten, Kodály, Poulenc and Janáček. Kertész was part of a rich musical tradition that produced fellow Hungarian conductors, János Ferencsik, Eugene Ormandy, George Szell, János Füst, and Sir Georg Solti. Kertész fashioned his style on his model Bruno Walter, and like Walter, he commanded a warmly luxurious resonance in the middle-European repertory, especially in the Austrian tradition and in Brahms. Barry Tuckwell of the London Symphony brass section deemed Kertész "one of the great ones with whom we were always glad to make music."

Conductor Istvan Kertesz made some remarkable recordings for Decca from the mid 1960s until the early 70s, before his tragic death by drowning. His Dvorak and Schubert Symphony Cycles are both outstanding (see my review of the latter, and his recordings of Mozart are

excellent. This CD, as are other Mozart discs in this series, has the Vienna Philharmonic playing magically and sounding beautiful, but I award a fifth star here because the conductor seems the most comfortable performing these bread and butter symphonies. Kertesz isn't always my first choice in this repertoire, but in my opinion one can never have too many accounts of the great Mozart Symphonies, so I am happy to have this CD in my collection.

The Vienna Philharmonic plays beautifully, and their style is to the manner born. The sound is clear, if a bit shrill on top at loud volume (for some reason, this CD as mastered was recorded at a higher level than the other two. And one performance, that of Sym. 33 in B-flat, K. 319, feels joyous and exhilarating. It was done in a session in Oct. 1963, early on in Kertesz's all too brief career (he died in a drowning accident in Israel in 1973, at the age of 43 while his talent was still peaking).

By the lofty standards of this armchair-conductor, Kertesz does not put a foot wrong interpretatively. All too often, the slow movement of the G Minor can sag and drag but not here: it is a *momento mori* of late summer. They are superbly recorded: what a joy it is to hear the double-basses given their due in this fabulous music. This is the Vienna Philharmonic playing within their considerable limits with a fine conductor in the saddle.

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## Symphonies 33 and 39

István Kertész Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra

### **Symphony No. 39**

**1-Adagio**

**2-Andante con moto in A-flat major**

**3-Menuetto: Trio**

**4-Allegro**

### **Symphony No. 33**

**5-Allegro assai**

**6-Andante moderato**

**7-Menuetto**

**8-Finale: Allegro assai**

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Please Note: In the interest of preserving the superb sound quality of these historic recordings, they have been preserved in their original, pristine state for maximum fidelity. Transferred from commercially released, analog reel-to-reel tapes (some of which are more than 50 years old), the recordings themselves can be subject to certain "artifacts" which are an inseparable part of the original analog recording process, such as tape "hiss" or other defects, and these may be audible on certain music tracks. Because your CD or DVD-A was individually "burned" in order to realize superior sound quality to stamped, mass-produced versions, microscopic cosmetic blemishes may be visible. Please regard these tiny marks as evidence of the "human touch" in the care and individual attention that each and every HD TT disc receives during its very demanding manufacturing process.



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