

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.



Respighi

Ancient Dances and Airs for Lute



Antal Dorati
conducting the
Philharmonia Hungarica

For all the late-Romantic extravagances in his Roman Trilogy, Respighi loved plainchant and Renaissance and Baroque music. His Ancient Airs and Dances suites are his most successful efforts to bring early music to his contemporary listeners, in terms of the taste and imagination of his arrangements as well as audience appeal. Surely the most instantly loveable of the three suits is the second.

Respighi's instrumentation for the second suite looks extravagant on paper: piccolo and pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, and trumpets, plus harp, harpsichord/celesta, and strings. Yet Respighi's settings are remarkable for their delicacy and light step. His sources are sixteenth- and seventeenth century Italian and French lute and guitar pieces he found mainly in turn-of-the-twentieth century transcriptions by Italian musicologist Oscar Chilesotti.

The first movement employs a galliard, saltarello, and canario from Fabritio Caroso's balleto *Laura soave*, which itself was derived from Cavalieri's music for the 1589 wedding of Ferdinand de' Medici and Christine of Lorraine. The galliard is supposed to be a fairly quick dance, and the saltarello by implication is an even faster dance based on the same tune, but Respighi begins at an easy pace, the oboe singing a delicate, courtly air over a lute-like pizzicato accompaniment. The pace picks up as the fuller orchestra takes on the melody, with the strumming effect even more pronounced. The

related and rougher canario helps fill out the movement's middle section, before a mirror-like reminiscence of the first part.

Danza rustica, or country dance, takes off from a treatment by Jean-Baptiste Besard of a simpler *Branle de village* published by Robert Ballard in 1614. It's a stomping country dance, but the main string melody has considerable breadth and the harpsichord never gets lost in Respighi's full orchestration (the trumpets are muted in imitation of old cornets).

A softly tolling effect begins the third movement, adapted from the anonymous seventeenth century *Campanae parisienses*, imitating Paris bells. This slow yet not quite religious music wraps around a string-oriented treatment of the exquisite aria *Divine Amaryllis*, written by Antoine Boësset but associated more with its publisher, Marin Mersenne. The irresistible finale, *Bergamasca*, started out as a virtuosic piece by Bernardo Gianoncelli, covering the entire range of the archlute and employing tunes from Bergamo, in northern Italy. Respighi passes the bumptious tune through various colorful subgroups of instruments, interrupts it with a hen-like central section, and ends with the orchestra in full cry.

Respighi

Ancient Dances and Airs For Lute

Antal Dorati conducting the Philharmonia Hungarica

Suite No. 1 (For Orchestra)

1 Balleto Detto "Il Conte Orlando" 3:09

2 Gagliarda 3:54

3 Villanella 5:13

4 Passo Mezzo E Mascherada 4:14

Suite No. 2 (For Orchestra)

5 Laura Soave - Balletto Con Gagliarda,

Saltarello E Canario 4:07

6 Danza Rustica 4:13

7 Campanae Parisienses - Aria 5:10

8 Bergamasca 5:44

Suite No. 3 (For Strings)

9 Italiana 3:43

10 Arie Di Corte - Andante Cantabile 1:57

11 Arie Di Corte - Allegretto :26

12 Arie Di Corte - Vivace :44

13 Arie Di Corte - Lento Con Grande
Espressione 1:28

14 Arie Di Corte - Allegro Vivace :15

15 Arie Di Corte - Vivacissimo :41

16 Arie Di Corte - Andante Cantabile 2:13

17 Siciliana 3:05

18 Passacaglia 4:08

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Engineer - C. Robert Fine Recording Supervisor - Wilma Cozart



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