

Ataulfo Argenta was a leading Spanish conductor who appeared to be developing an important career that was cut short by his early death at the age of forty-four.

He was a musically talented child who attracted considerable attention as a pianist, then entered the Royal Conservatory in Madrid at the age of thirteen in 1927. He won a Premio Extraordinario in piano at the Conservatory in 1930, and the Kristina Nilsson Prize in 1931.

The latter prize enabled him to study piano and conducting in Belgium and Germany. These studies saw him safely outside of Spain when the Civil War broke out in that country. After the end of that conflict, when general war broke out in Europe in 1939, he returned to neutral Spain where he worked in a variety of musical jobs, including staff keyboard player (mostly piano and celesta) with the National Orchestra in Madrid.

He returned to Germany for more studies from 1941 to 1943, studying conducting with Carl Schuricht and teaching piano at the Kassel Conservatory, then returned to Spain and made his conducting debut on a broadcast concert with the national radio orchestra.

His first performance with Spain's National Orchestra was on October 10, 1945. It is remembered as a brilliant debut and it led to his being appointed the orchestra's music director in 1947, a post he retained until his death.

He first conducted outside of Spain when pianist José Iturbi hired him to be his conductor in a performance the pianist organized at Harringay Arena in London; the orchestra was the London Symphony. This began a demand for his services as guest conductor with various European orchestras and on South American tours. He also founded a major music festival in Grenada.

He signed a contract with England's Decca record company and specialized in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century music, especially Spanish music. Among his most notable recordings was the opera Goyescas by Enrique Granados and the symphonic work Danzas fantásticas by Turina, which remained in the LP catalogue for over twenty years. His conducting style was lean, muscular, and precise. He was considered to be on the verge of a major international career when he died.



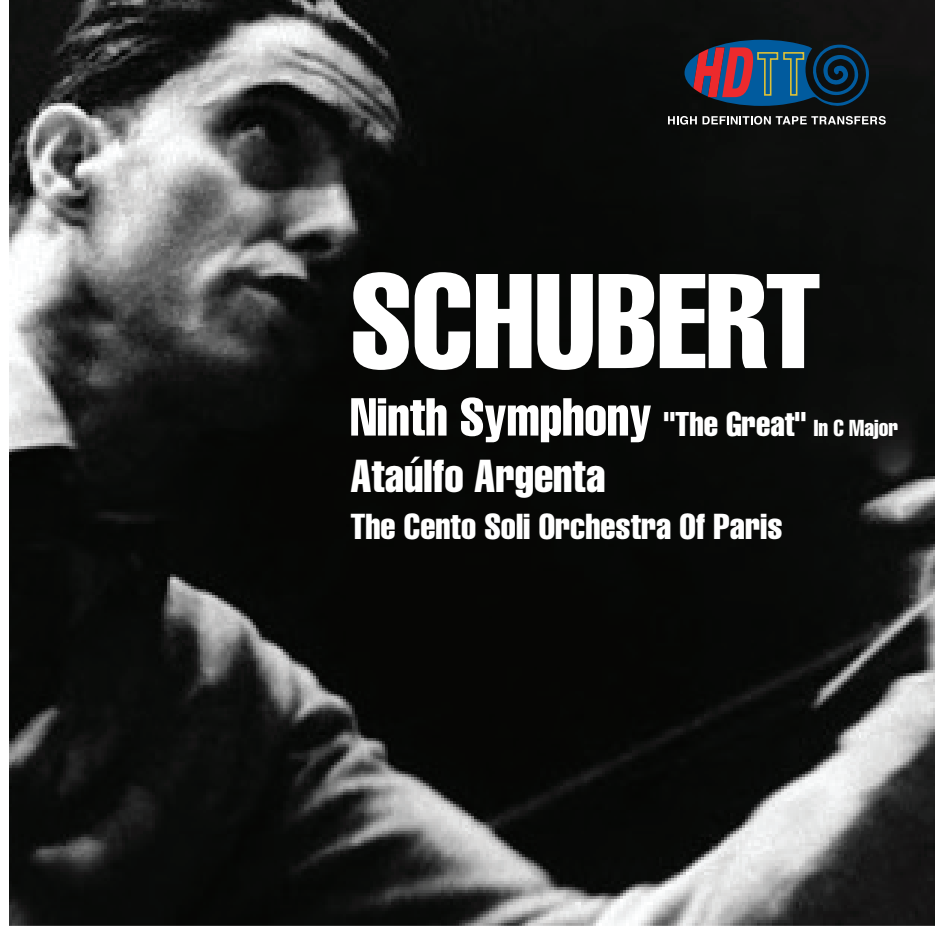
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# SCHUBERT

**Ninth Symphony "The Great" In C Major**

**Ataúlfo Argenta**

**The Cento Soli Orchestra Of Paris**



Symphony No. 9 in C Major, byname Great C Major, symphony and last major orchestral work by Austrian composer Franz Schubert. It premiered on March 21, 1839, more than a decade after its composer's death.

Schubert began his Symphony No. 9 in the summer of 1825 and continued to work on it over the next two years. In 1828 Vienna's Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde (Society of Friends of Music) agreed to give the premiere, but the orchestra struggled with the length and technical complexity of the new piece and ultimately refused to perform it. In its place Schubert offered a shorter work in the same key, his Symphony No. 6 (Little C Major), which had not yet been heard publicly. He died nearly a month before that work's premiere on December 14, 1828.

The unperformed Symphony No. 9 might have vanished if not for the intervention of Robert Schumann. At the time better known as a music journalist than as a composer, Schumann traveled in 1838 to Vienna, where he met with Schubert's brother Ferdinand, who showed him the scores of several unperformed works. Schumann persuaded Ferdinand that the music, in particular Symphony No. 9, would be better-off in Leipzig, where his friend Felix Mendelssohn was championing new compositions. Mendelssohn agreed to take on the symphony, and it was performed the following year, albeit in an abridged version.

Symphony No. 9 reveals the deep influence of Beethoven on Schubert. The elder master had lived in Schubert's native Vienna for all of the younger composer's life, and Schubert revered but never dared to meet him. Not only is Schubert's symphony nearly as long as Beethoven's own Symphony No. 9, but it also draws upon Beethoven's compositional approaches. Its forms and compositional structures are much as Beethoven would have crafted them.

Beethoven himself had learned those ideas in large part from the works of Joseph Haydn and Mozart, but he gave them broader and freer expression. Schubert follows Beethoven's approach more than that of the earlier masters.

The first movement opens bravely with a solo horn call that gradually develops into a more-spacious melody that reappears in the full orchestra. Quicker tempi bring with them a galloping motif that allows the music to charge forward dramatically, often with contrasting melodies overlying that fundamental rhythm. Melodies stated early in the movement reappear after development of fragments of those melodies, as a Beethovenian sonata form would demand.

For the second movement, the solo oboe begins with a gentle marchlike theme, soon boldly restated by the strings. Throughout this movement, assertive strings and brass are set against more-wistful woodwinds for diversity of colour, much as Beethoven does in the second movement of his Symphony No. 5.

The third movement again evokes Beethoven with a boisterous scherzo, its opening theme of determined brass and low strings reappearing at the movement's closing, the middle ones devoted to a more-flowing Ländler-like melody. The decided contrasts are again reminiscent of Beethoven's approach in the third movements of his own symphonies.

For the final movement, Schubert begins with a fanfarelike call from the brass that leads into a heroic sonata-form structure of swirling energy for the full orchestra. In the last movement the music is even more effusive than that of the first movement, allowing the symphony to storm gloriously into its final bars.

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1. Andante 13:57
  2. Andante 13:30
  3. Allegro 10:13
  4. Allegro 11:50
- Total Time: 49:30

Transferred from a 2-track tape 15ips tape  
Recorded in Paris November 1957 by Omega Records



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