

## MASTERING EQUIPMENT

Merging Technologies  
Hapi Digital Converter  
Antelope Audio Isochrone 10M

Weiss Saracon Sample Rate Conversion Software

Weiss POW-r Dithering Software

Analog: 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  
Dehavilland Tube Tape Pre-amp  
Retro Instruments 2A3 Dual-channel tube program equalizer

Merging Pyramix Audio Software

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

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## Facts about this Recording

Recorded by Command Classics 1962 on 35mm film

Engineer Mastering - George Piros Engineer

Recording Chief - Robert Fine

Producer - Enoch Light

Transferred from a Command 4-track tape



## WAGNER

*Preludes and Overtures*

DIE MEISTERSINGER von NURNBERG  
(Prelude to the Opera)

FAUST OVERTURE

Introduction to Act III-LOHENGRIN  
DER FLIEGENDE HOLLANDER-OVERTURE  
RIENZI OVERTURE

WILLIAM STEINBERG  
*Conducting*  
The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra



HIGH DEFINITION TAPE TRANSFERS

Die Meistersinger is Wagner's sole comic opera. The opera's Prelude, one of the most popular of all concert hall selections, is a musical summary of the entire work. It opens with the grandiose theme, associated with the Master Singers themselves - those solid, worthy, and somewhat pompous guildmen who have learned to sing by the book and who see to it that no one sings without it. A restless, searching theme sometimes called the Lyric Motive is stated briefly by the strings, then interrupted by the magisterial March of the Master Singers (a theme, by the way, which Wagner based squarely on one of the old "prize master tones"). The development of the March and related themes is arrested by the entry of The Prize Song - the melody with which Walther finally wins the approval of the Master Singers and the hand of Eva. There is other thematic material in the Prelude, but these are the most easily recognized motives, and the ones most fully exploited as the piece builds to a re-statement of the opening theme that has no equal for sheer weight and conclusiveness. A Faust Overture was completed in 1840. Wagner was in Paris at this time, finishing *Rienzi*, performing various bits of musical hackwork to support himself, and making determined but largely futile efforts to interest the Parisian musical establishment in Wagner and his works. Because of its early date and its purely instrumental nature, *Faust* has a special interest for a student of Wagner's style - but it also has its own appreciable merits. Though it is regarded as a symphonic poem, it was initially intended as the first movement of a more or less conventional symphony on the *Faust* theme. Wagner abandoned the project to work on *Fliegende Hollander*, and in doing so turned his back on symphonic composition forever. The Overture is in sonata form, and is illustrative of *Faust* in solitude - "longing, despairing, cursing," and Wagner. The introduction (for bass tuba and double basses) is, surprisingly, a bit suggestive of Gounod's picture of the despairing *Faust*; a variation of this opening theme is the movement's main subject. The development, recapitulation, and coda are all quite regularly elaborated, and the composition's total effect is at times reminiscent of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schumann - even Tchaikovsky - but almost never of the later Wagner. Another longtime concert favorite is the brief Prelude to Act III of *Lohengrin*, the last (1848) of Wagner's pre-*Tristan* operas, and perhaps the most accessible and sure-fire of all his works. This

prelude precedes the Bridal Chamber Scene; Elsa, having been accused of murder but vindicated in trial by combat by *Lohengrin*, has just married him, and the music depicts the joy of the wedding celebration. The bustling main theme is interrupted by a middle section derived from the famous bridal chorus. The *Flying Dutchman* (*Der Fliegende Holländer*) dates from 1841, and is thus the earliest of Wagner's operas to still hold a place in the repertory. It was a story in a collection of Heinrich Heine's that first aroused Wagner's interest in the legend of the Dutchman as the subject for an opera. (It is, of course, the tale of the captain eternally bound to an oath that compels him to sail the seas till Judgment Day dawns, or until a woman proves faithful to her bond to him - either circumstance being regarded as only a remote possibility.) The famous overture evokes the storm-blasted Norwegian coast, and makes use of thematic material from the opera. The dominant motives, in their order of appearance are: 1) The Dutchman's own motive, with which the overture opens, 2) The motive associated with Senta's love and fealty, 3) A theme taken from the Dutchman's Act I monolog (the passage beginning "Wie oft in Meeres tiefsten Schlund") connected with the Dutchman's restless wandering, and 4) A jolly sailor's song, first sung in the opera by members of Daland's crew. These themes are alternated and developed until, at the overture's end, Senta's peaceful theme emerges as a sign of redemption. *Rienzi*, the Last of the Tribunes, was Wagner's first successful opera. It is a full-scale, old-fashioned grand opera of five acts. Its libretto deals with various feuds and uprisings during the fourteenth century in Rome, much complicated by a love affair between *Rienzi*'s sister, Irene, and a scion of one of the warring families. The opera was initially performed at Dresden in October of 1841, and was enthusiastically received; in this century, it has been accorded only very occasional revivals, though the overture is a familiar concert selection. This overture is based on themes from the opera, among which five are easily recognized: 1) The Trumpet Call, which opens the piece and recurs at several points, 2) *Rienzi*'s Prayer, a soaring melody which is the opera's most famous tune, 3) The Cry-for Freedom, derived from the choral finale of the first act, 4) The Battle Hymn, which is first stated by unison trombones, and 5) A motive from the Act II finale, which dominates the second half of the overture.

# Wagner Prelude and Overtures

WILLIAM STEINBERG and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra

- 1. Die Meistersinger von Nurnberg**
- 2. Faust Overtures**
- 3. Lohengrin\_ Intro to Act III**
- 4. Der Fliegende Hollander - Overture**
- 5. Rienzi Overture**

Recorded by Command Classics 1962 on 35mm film

Engineer Mastering - George Piros Engineer Recording Chief - Robert Fine Producer - Enoch Light

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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.

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