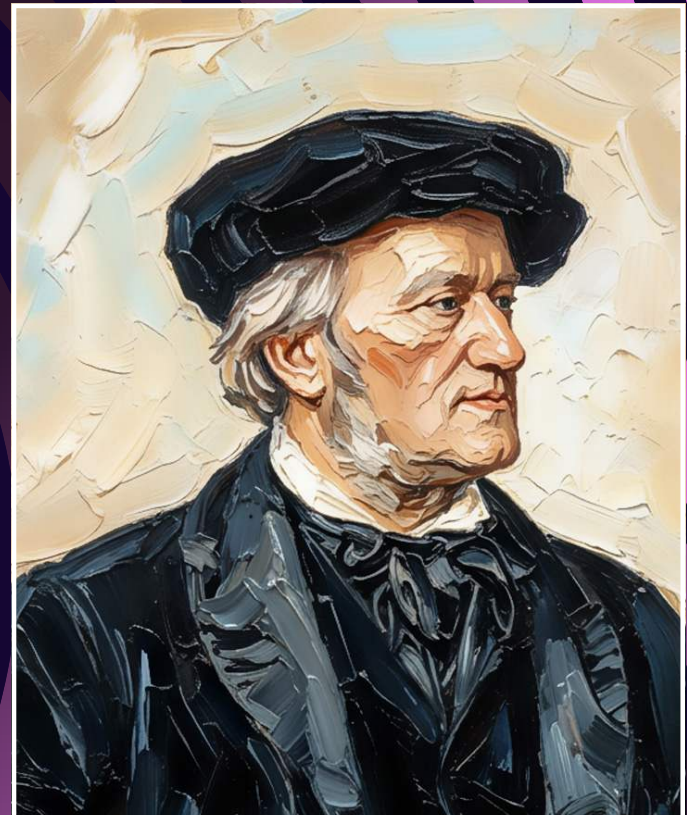


WAGNER

Prelude and Liebestod from “Tristan und Isolde”

Philharmonia Orchestra
Yuri SIMONOV



Richard Wagner
Prelude and Liebestod
from *Tristan und Isolde*, WWV90 (18:16)

Philharmonia Orchestra
Yuri Simonov, *conductor*

Recorded at St John's Smith Square, London, August 1990.

Original producer: **Edward Fisk**

Original engineer: **John Timperley**

Originally issued in 1991 on Collins Classics

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Of all composers, perhaps **Richard Wagner** (1813–1883) arouses the most heated debate: many find his operas long-winded and obnoxious, seeing his writings as the ramblings of an outspoken bigot, whilst others approach these same works in a state of ecstasy, extract from his diaries only those passages which illustrate his intentions to revolutionise staging, ignoring the more contentious episodes. Whatever one's feelings about the man, the power and intensity of his musical vision have left an indelible mark upon subsequent composition and staging.

Whilst at work on Siegfried, the third opera in his “Ring of the Nibelungen” cycle, Wagner composed his grand romantic tragedy Tristan und Isolde, and also began Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg, his only comic opera – three works quite dissimilar in style.

Tristan und Isolde was composed between 1857 and 1859, and is considered a watershed that represents a full culmination of 19th-century musical and dramatic Romanticism as well as a turning point in harmony, extending the boundaries of tonality – and, for some critics of the era, decency, for Wagner's music left little to the imagination. Wagner's concert extract for orchestra combines the opening prelude of the opera with the “Liebestod”, the final scene in which Isolde sees her lover finding eternal life in death.

NOTES ON THE ARTIST

Conductor **Yuri Simonov**, born 4 March 1941, studied at the Leningrad Conservatory under Nikolai Rabinovich, and was later an assistant conductor to Yevgeny Mravinsky with the Leningrad Philharmonic. Simonov first conducted at the Bolshoi Theatre in 1969, and was named chief conductor of the company in February 1970, the youngest chief conductor in the company's history at that time. He held the post until 1985. In 1986, he established the USSR Maly State Orchestra, and subsequently made several commercial recordings with the ensemble. He became music director of the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra in 1998. Outside of Russia, Simonov was music director of the Belgian National Orchestra from 1994 to 2002.

Maestro Simonov has recorded with the Berlin Philharmonic for EMI and made numerous recordings for independent British labels Collins Classics and Tring International. In the Russian Federation and former Soviet Union, he has recorded for Melodiya and several Russian-based independent labels. Since the early 2020s, videos of Maestro Simonov in action – showcasing his inimitable and inventive conducting style – have achieved a sizable cult following on YouTube.

James Murray and Audra Fendrick

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