

Richard Wagner - Rheingold (1982)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Das Rheingold: Entrance of the Gods into Valhalla* 2. *Die Walküre: Ride of the Valkyries*
3. *Die Walküre: Magic Fire Music* 4. *Siegfried: Forest Murmurs [Instrumental]* 5.
Götterdämmerung: Dawn and Siegfried's Rhine Journey 6. *Götterdämmerung: Siegfried's*
Funeral Music Cleveland Orchestra George Szell – conductor (CBS Masterworks, Great
Performances 2)

The revolutionary and controversial German composer Richard Wagner composed a 13+ hour opera cycle (The Ring) based on Nordic mythology. Even though I have been a fan of orchestral and chamber music for over 25 years, I have only actually listened to a handful of operas in their entirety. I once sat down to listen to "Rheingold", which is Wagner's first instillation of the Ring cycle, and became so dreadfully bored that I shut it off after the first hour.

Not with standing, the "excerpts" from "The Ring" are quite amazing: very lush; majestic; very brassy and bombastic; and at times vividly picturesque. Wagner, after all, was to become the inspiration behind the whole post-Romantic movement. Mahler, Bruckner, Richard Strauss, Elgar, Nielsen, Franck, even Alban Berg and Ottorino Respighi; have been influenced by Wagner's orchestrations.

Someday, I may give the complete operas another chance, but for now, these flawless reditons by the outstanding George Szell and the Cleveland Orchestra are just the right dosage of Wagner for my diet. --- Joe Anthony "Joe Anthony" (Massachusetts, USA), amazon.com

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The "Great Performance" series contained many great artists interpreted for the ages by some of the worlds best conductors. This compilation of some of Wagner's greatest is outstanding. Though the choral voices are missing, the power is not. Every orchestral interpretation is presented with the gravitas and majesty that is Wagner. The "Ride of the Valkyries" and "Siegfried's Funeral" are powerful. For those that are looking for great interpretations of Wagner, this is the one to start with. --- Bowie V. Ibarra "author of "Down the Road... (In the great republic of Texas)

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