Great Conductors of The 20th Century Vol.28 - Rudolf Kempe

CD1 *1. Brahms: Tragic Overture* Bruckner: Symphony No.4 'Romantic' *2. I. Bewegt, Nicht Zu Zchnell 3. II. Andante Quasi Allegretto 4. III. Scherzo. Bewegt 5. IV. Finale. Bewegt, Doch Nicht Zu Schnell*
Berliner Philharmoniker (1) Münchner Philharmoniker (2-5) CD2 Beethoven: Symphony No.3 'Eroica'
1. I. Allegro Con Brio 2. II. Marcia Funebre. Adagio Assai 3. III. Scherzo. Allegro Vivace 4. IV. Finale. Allegro Molto 5. Wolf - Italian Serenade
Ravel: 'Daphnis et Chloé' – Suite No.2
6. I. Lever Du Jour. Lent 7. II. Pantomime. Lent 8. III. Danse Generale. Lent 9. Johann Strauss II - Leichtes Blut – Polka
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (1-4) Münchner Philharmoniker (5-8) Wiener Philharmoniker (9) Rudolf Kempe – conductor

The German conductor Rudolf Kempe was born in 1910 at Niederpoyritz, near Dresden, where he studied (with Fritz Busch) at the city's Musikhochschule. In 1928 he was appointed principal oboist with the Dortmund Opera orchestra and almost immediately to a similar position with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra (1929-36). There he played under Furtwängler, Richard Strauss, Beecham, Walter, Klemperer and Erich Kleiber. He made his conducting debut in 1935 with the Leipzig Opera, where he was employed as répétiteur and assistant conductor (1936-42). After the war, he established his credentials as an opera conductor in Chemnitz (1945-48), Weimar (1948-49), Dresden, where he also conducted the Staatskapelle (1949-52), and Munich (1952-54). His international reputation was secured by guest appearances at the Vienna State Opera (1951), Covent Garden (1953), the Metropolitan Opera in New York (1954) and Bayreuth (1960). In 1961, he became chief conductor of the Royal Philharmonic at the invitation of Sir Thomas Beecham, becoming the Orchestra's 'principal conductor for life' in 1970. He left the RPO in 1975 to become chief conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra but died one year later. He was also music director of the Zürich Tonhalle Orchestra (1965-72) and the Munich Philharmonic (1967-76). With his solid grounding in German opera houses it is not surprising that Kempe is remembered particularly as an outstanding interpreter of the works of Wagner and Richard Strauss.

With much of Kempe's commercial discography currently available on CD, this compilation concentrates on the conductor's live broadcasts. The 1972 studio performance of Bruckner's 'Romantic' Symphony with the Munich Philharmonic appears on disc for the first time, as do the Munich performances of Wolf's Italian Serenade (from 1971) and the Second Suite from Ravel's ballet Daphnis et Chloé (from 1974). Elsewhere, Kempe's associations with the Berlin and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestras are recognised in recordings from 1960 of Brahms's Tragic Overture and Strauss's Polka Leichtes Blut. The live recording of Beethoven's 'Eroica' Symphony, from the 1974 Prague Festival, is also new to the catalogue and represents Kempe's long and fruitful relationship with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. It also complements the conductor's earlier EMI studio recordings in Berlin (1959) and Munich (1972) by supplying the added excitement of a live occasion. --- bayreuthclassical.blogspot.com

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