



Press Info:

RICHARD WAGNER:

- Wesendonck-Lieder
- Tristan and Isolde
 - Prelude to Act I
 - Isolde's Narrative and Curse
 - Isolde's Lament and Love-Death
- Götterdämmerung
 - Brünnhilde's Immolation Scene



RICHARD STRAUSS:

- Four Last Songs (Nos. 2 - 4)
- Elektra
 - Elektra's Monologue

KIRSTEN FLAGSTAD, soprano

Orchester der Städtischen Oper Berlin

GEORGES SEBASTIAN, conductor

live in Berlin, 1952

These recordings were made on 9 and 11 May 1952 and document the latter part of Kirsten Flagstad's career. They were made a few weeks before her 57th birthday, thus at a time when most sopranos will have been forced to change over to the so-called *character fach*. The Norwegian soprano however, even at this late stage, was still in almost full command of her incomparably rich voice, even after a demanding career spanning over three decades.

The present recordings of two concerts given at the Berlin Titania-Palast with the Orchestra of the Municipal Opera are particularly noteworthy: on the one hand, the Wagner songs sound fresher and more present than in the recording made four years later under Hans Knappertsbusch; on the other, the Berlin live-recording of the Strauss songs is technically far superior to the recording made in London. By the way, in May 1950 Kirsten Flagstad had given the first performance of the "Four Last Songs" by Richard Strauss – at the request of the composer.

A tribute to her unique status was also the multitude of her concert engagements: During the course of her career, she sang more than eighty parts in around 2100 performances and also gave approximately 250 concerts with orchestra and 600 recitals.

For this production there are two  "Producer's Comments": one by producer Ludger Böckenhoff at www.audite.de/en/download/file/292/pdf, the other by Rüdiger Albrecht (audio archives Deutschlandradio) at www.audite.de/en/download/file/293/pdf.



The production is part of our series „Legendary Recordings“ and bears the quality feature „1st Master Release“. This term stands for the excellent quality of archival productions at audite. For all historical publications at audite are based, without exception, on the original tapes from broadcasting archives. In general these are the original analogue tapes, which attain an astonishingly high quality, even measured by today's standards, with their tape speed of up to 76 cm/sec. The remastering – professionally competent and sensitively applied – also uncovers previously hidden details of the interpretations. Thus, a sound of superior quality results. CD publications based on private recordings from broadcasts or old shellac records cannot be compared with these.

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