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Wagner

His Life and Music

Written and read by **Stephen Johnson**

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The Music

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Total time: 8:57:18

The music on this recording is taken from the NAXOS catalogue

DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER

ORF Symphony Orchestra; Pinchas Steinberg, conductor 8.660025–26

ORCHESTRAL HIGHLIGHTS

Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra; Michael Halász, conductor 8.550136

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Tamara Takács, mezzo-soprano; Jenő Jandó, piano 8.550400

ORCHESTRAL HIGHLIGHTS

Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra (Katowice);
Johannes Wildner, conductor 8.550498

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Malaga Philharmonic Orchestra; Alexander Rahbari, conductor 8.557055

DIE WALKÜRE

Jan-Hendrik Rootering, Wotan; Renate Behle, Brünnhilde;
Staatsorchester Stuttgart; Lothar Zagrosek, conductor 8.660172–74

OPERA CHORUSES

Chorus of the Royal Swedish Opera; Royal Swedish Orchestra;
Leif Segerstam, conductor

8.557714

GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG

Luana DeVol, Brünnhilde; Ronald Bracht, Hagen;
Staatsorchester Stuttgart; Lothar Zagrosek, conductor

8.660179–82

ORCHESTRAL EXCERPTS, VOL. 2

Alessandra Marc, soprano; Seattle Symphony; Gerard Schwarz, conductor

8.572768

Music programming by Sarah Butcher



Stephen Johnson studied at the Northern School of Music, Manchester, at Leeds University under Alexander Goehr then at Manchester University. Since then he has written regularly for *The Independent* and *The Guardian*, and was Chief Music Critic of *The Scotsman* (1998–9). He has also broadcast frequently for BBC Radios 3 and 4, and for the BBC World Service, including a series of fourteen programmes about the music of Bruckner for the centenary of the composer's death (1996). He is the author of *Bruckner Remembered* (Faber, 1998), a contributor to *The Cambridge Companion to Conducting* (CUP, 2004), and a regular presenter for Radio 3's *Discovering Music*. In 2003 Stephen was voted Amazon.com Classical Music Writer of the Year.

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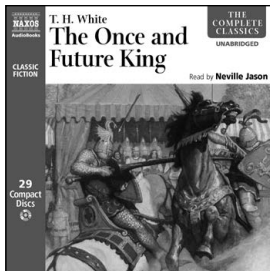
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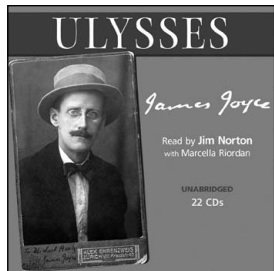
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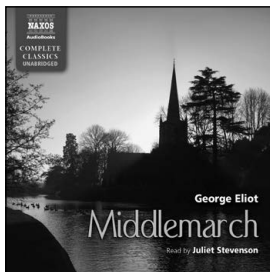
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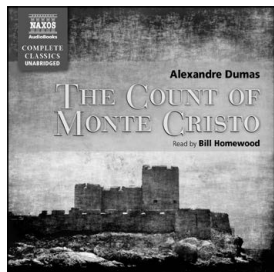
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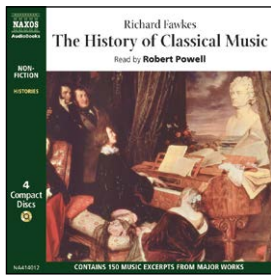
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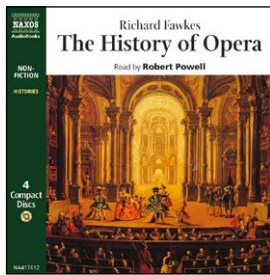
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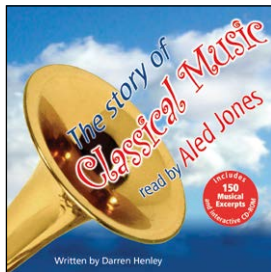
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Wagner

His Life and Music

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Well over a century after Wagner's death, the man and his music are as controversial as ever. Praised for his profound insights into the workings of the human heart, he has also been condemned as a dangerous libertine, a proto-fascist and an arrogant bore. His vast four-part operatic *Ring* cycle has been elevated as one of the greatest achievements of western culture and dismissed as an unparalleled example of creative megalomania.

This audiobook makes no attempt to gloss over the darker sides of Wagner's character, personally or artistically, but argues that the finer aspects of his vision transcend its flaws. It tells the story of an extraordinary life, and charts Wagner's development, from unpromising beginnings, into the creator of some of the most brilliantly innovatory and seductively beautiful music ever composed.



Stephen Johnson has written regularly for *The Independent* and *The Guardian*, and was Chief Music Critic of *The Scotsman* (1998–9). He has also broadcast frequently for BBC Radios 3 and 4 and for the BBC World Service, including a series of fourteen programmes about the music of Bruckner for the centenary of the composer's death (1996). He is the author of *Bruckner Remembered* (Faber 1998), a contributor to *The Cambridge Companion to Conducting* (CUP 2004), and a regular presenter for Radio 3's *Discovering Music*.

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