

MUSIC

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## Kent Nagano Conducts Classical Masterpieces

### A Music Documentary with the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin

Six master composers, six symphonies, a star conductor and a leading orchestra make **Kent Nagano Conducts Classical Masterpieces** a first-class music documentary. This is a lavish production in high definition quality which trends new visual paths, above all in the field of concert recording and fully reflects the high artistic standard of the concerts. The innovative approach is also mirrored, for example, in entertaining animated sequences which portray historically accurate episodes from the lives of the composers. Commentary elements focus on rehearsals and provide a look behind the scenes. Conductors and musicians talk about their work and about music.

The heart of each film is the concert recording which is characterized by outstanding technical and visual quality. All footage was shot in the Philharmonic Concert Hall in Berlin. Spectacular pictures, remote-controlled cameras, and crane and dolly pans make the captivated viewer an integral part of the event and not just a spectator.

In interview sequences Kent Nagano explains what he finds particularly important about each specific work and its interpretation. The maestro also provides the viewer with interesting supplementary information on the genesis and context of the work.

Commentary elements centring on rehearsals are another integral part of each programme.

In interviews the musicians talk about their work, about music and the orchestra, and about special features of their lives.

Finally, the animated sequences take the viewer on a fascinating journey into the world of each composer. The scenes portray events and encounters in their lives which had an important bearing on them personally and on their works. Another special element is that all dialogues are based on original quotes by the master composers and their contemporaries.

Kent Nagano, who has been working with the world's leading orchestras for many years now, is one of the most popular and most successful of all contemporary conductors. At the start of the 2000/2001 season he assumed musical responsibility for the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin as its chief conductor and artistic director. At the beginning of the 2006/2007 season he became its principal guest conductor.

Kent Nagano discovered his love of music at an early age. The grandson of Japanese immigrants, he grew up on a farm in California. He was taught to play the piano and the viola by his mother. Nagano first studied sociology and law before deciding at the age of 21 to devote himself entirely to music.

He celebrated his first major successes from 1988 to 1998 as music director of the Opéra National de Lyon, and from 1991 to the end of the 1999/2000 season as music director of the Hallé Orchestra in Manchester.

Kent Nagano came to Berlin for the 2000/2001 season and since then he has enriched the musical life of the German capital. In September 2006 he moved to Munich to replace Zubin Mehta as general music director of the Bavarian State Opera.

The Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin (DSO) is one of the great orchestras of today. Under the artistic direction of Kent Nagano the DSO sharpened its programme profile, improved its tonal homogeneity and flexibility. In this process Kent Nagano was able to fall back on the work of his predecessors: Ferenc Fricsay, Lorin Maazel, Riccardo Chailly, and Vladimir Ashkenazy.

## MUSIC

DOCUMENTARY  
52 | 26 MIN.



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### ORDER NUMBER

68 4669 | 06 x 52 min.  
66 4668 | 06 x 26 min.

#### 01 Mozart

Symphony No. 41, the **Jupiter Symphony** (1788)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) was an undisputed genius. In 1788 he wrote his last three symphonies in only three weeks. The last was the Jupiter Symphony No. 41 (KV 551). Despite his worsening financial situation, Mozart did not allow that and other concerns to affect his work. The Jupiter Symphony is a composition full of hope and gaiety. Mozart's final symphony represents the pinnacle of classical pre-Beethoven symphonic composition, a synthesis of the classical and the baroque.

#### 02 Beethoven

Symphony No. 3, **Eroica** (1803/04)

In his Eroica, Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827) took the definitive step from the “classical” symphony of the 18th century to the “great” symphony of the 19th. His Symphony No. 3 is a key work in the repertoire of any symphony orchestra. The pioneering elements of the work are its breadth, depth, orchestration, harmonics, and spirit. Initially, he conceived his “Third” symphony as the “Bonaparte Symphony”, a tribute to Napoleon. But he was so angered to learn that Napoleon had had himself crowned emperor, that Beethoven erased his name from the title page.

#### 03 Schumann

Symphony No. 3, **Rhenish** (1850)

Robert Schumann (1810–1856) fought a life-long battle against depression. Between two periods of crisis – isolation in Dresden and the years of his final illness – Schumann and his wife, Clara, enjoyed some happy years in Düsseldorf. It is thanks to this intermezzo that he was able to compose some of the great works of the Romantic movement, including his Rhenish symphony which he wrote in only four weeks. Robert Schumann's 3rd symphony is one of the most famous orchestral works between those of Beethoven and Brahms.

#### 04 Brahms

**Symphony No. 4** (1884/85)

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) is regarded as the last great classical composer. His compositions continue the tradition of Mozart and Beethoven. Brahms wrote his fourth symphony in 1884/85 at the peak of his creative powers. His “Fourth” is characterized by rich tonal beauty and profound musicality. But it also marks a conclusion. Although Brahms lived for a further twelve years, he never wrote another major orchestral composition.

#### 05 Bruckner

**Symphony No. 8** (2nd version, 1890)

The symphonic works of Anton Bruckner (1824–1896) are characterized by a constant evolution, even though he was generally regarded as an eccentric, not taken seriously as a composer, and was ridiculed by critics. He had to wait a long time for success and recognition. When his 8th Symphony was first performed at the Musikvereinsaal in Vienna in 1892, Bruckner was already 68 years old. The première of this epic work was a late triumph for the deeply religious composer. It is often referred to as the “crown of 19th century music”.

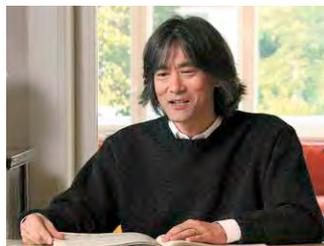
#### 06 Richard Strauss

**An Alpine Symphony** (1915)

An Alpine Symphony by Richard Strauss (1864–1949) is a typical example of what is known as programme music. In this monumental work, in separate, precisely defined sections Strauss describes a group of mountain climbers ascending one of the Alps. Works such as “Salome” and “Electra” earned him a reputation as a musical revolutionary. With the Alpine Symphony he fell back in part on classical forms of expression. Some critics attacked him for this while others saw a newly attained sovereignty in the spectacular work.

## MUSIC

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### ORDER NUMBER

60 4667 | 01-06  
6 x various lengths

- 01** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
**28 min.**  
Symphony No. 41 in C major KV 551  
Jupiter
- 02** Ludwig Van Beethoven  
**45 min.**  
Symphony No. 3 in E flat major, Op. 55  
Eroica
- 03** Robert Schumann  
**33 min.**  
Symphony No. 3 in E flat major, Op. 97  
Rhenish
- 04** Johannes Brahms  
**40 min.**  
Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Op. 98
- 05** Anton Bruckner  
**80 min.**  
Symphony No. 8 in C minor, WAB 108
- 06** Richard Strauss  
**48 min.**  
An Alpine Symphony, Op. 64