Guest Conductor

ERICH LEINSDORF

There are few names in the symphonic and operatic worlds as well known and respected as that of Erich Leinsdorf. A musician since his early years, he has conducted on every continent, made an extraordinary number of recordings, and held a series of coveted posts in American music. Today he travels extensively as guest conductor of the world's finest orchestras.

Born in Vienna in 1912, Mr. Leinsdorf began serious musical study when he was 11 and a few years later won a scholarship to the State Academy of Music, where he studied piano, cello, theory, composition and conducting. At the age of 22 he became assistant to Bruno Walter at the Salzburg Festival and in the next three years served in the same capacity under Arturo Toscanini.

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Shortly before his 26th birthday, Maestro Leinsdorf made his debut conducting at the Metropolitan Opera and at Toscanini's recommendation was engaged for the next five years as assistant conductor at the Met.

In 1943 — having conducted performances at which such legendary artists as Flagstad, Meitchior, Pinza and Tibbett were singing — Mr. Leinsdorf accepted an appointment as music director of the Cleveland Orchestra. He subsequently served as conductor and music director of the Rochester Philharmonic for nine seasons.

Returning to New York in 1956, Mr. Leinsdorf became director of the New York City Opera where he conducted the American premières of Frank Martin's The Tempest, Carlisle Floyd's Susannah, and Orff's Der Mond. The following year he was appointed by Rudolf Bing to the newly created post of music consultant at the Metropolitan Opera.

From 1962-69 Mr. Leinsdorf headed the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Berkshire Music Festival, during which time he conducted more than 400 different works by 96 composers. He led many world and American premières of music by the most distinguished composers of the day, among them, Walter Piston, Elliott Carter, Benjamin Britten, Samuel Barber and Gunther Schuller, and revived such neglected masterworks as the original version of Beethoven's Fidelio, Strauss' Ariadne auf Naxos and Schumann's Scenes from Goethe's Faust.

Since leaving his post with that orchestra Maestro Leinsdorf has conducted on every continent: He has toured Australia and New Zealand with the Cleveland Orchestra; the Far East with the...
London Philharmonic; Europe with the London Symphony, Royal Philharmonic and Vienna Symphony; the United States with the New York Philharmonic; and Mexico with the London Philharmonic. In South America he has led opera performances at the Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires and in Europe he has conducted the five symphony orchestras in London, the Orchestre de Paris, the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, the Berlin Philharmonic, the Tonhalle of Zurich and others. His United States engagements have included the Boston Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Minnesota Orchestra and Houston Symphony.

Mr. Leinsdorf also has made a triumphant return to the Metropolitan Opera, leading widely acclaimed new productions of Tristan und Isolde and Siegfried as well as the revival of Die Walküre. During the summer of 1975 he appeared at the Bayreuth Festival conducting Tannhäuser, the only new production at Bayreuth for the season.

Mr. Leinsdorf's autobiography, Cadenza, was published by Houghton-Mifflin in 1976. Erich Leinsdorf made his Chicago Symphony debut in February, 1961, and most recently conducted the Orchestra at the opening concerts of the 1975-76 season. He also led the Chicago Symphony on its 1975 Illinois tour, conducting concerts in Springfield, Decatur, Normal, Charleston and Urbana.