

= Georg Solti =

Sir Georg Solti , KBE (/ ʒɔːrʒ ˈsɒlʃi / ; 21 October 1912 ? 5 September 1997) was an orchestral and operatic conductor , best known for his appearances with opera companies in Munich , Frankfurt and London , and as a long @-@ serving music director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra . Born in Budapest , he studied there with Béla Bartók , Leó Weiner and Ernő Dohnányi . In the 1930s , he was a répétiteur at the Hungarian State Opera and worked at the Salzburg Festival for Arturo Toscanini . His career was interrupted by the rise of the Nazis , and being of Jewish background he fled the increasingly restrictive anti @-@ semitic laws in 1938 . After conducting a season of Russian ballet in London at the Royal Opera House he found refuge in Switzerland , where he remained during the Second World War . Prohibited from conducting there , he earned a living as a pianist .

After the war , Solti was appointed musical director of the Bavarian State Opera in Munich in 1946 . In 1952 he moved to the Frankfurt Opera , where he remained in charge for nine years . He took West German citizenship in 1953 . In 1961 he became musical director of the Covent Garden Opera Company , London . During his ten @-@ year tenure , he introduced changes that raised standards to the highest international levels . Under his musical directorship the status of the company was recognised with the grant of the title " the Royal Opera " . He became a British citizen in 1972 .

In 1969 Solti became music director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra , a post he held for 22 years . He relinquished the position in 1991 and became the orchestra 's music director laureate , a position he held until his death . During his time as the Chicago Symphony Orchestra 's eighth music director , he also served as music director of the Orchestre de Paris from 1972 until 1975 and principal conductor of the London Philharmonic Orchestra from 1979 until 1983 .

Known in his early years for the intensity of his music making , Solti was widely considered to have mellowed as a conductor in later years . He recorded many works two or three times at various stages of his career , and was a prolific recording artist , making more than 250 recordings , including 45 complete opera sets . The most famous of his recordings is probably Decca 's complete set of Wagner 's Der Ring des Nibelungen , made between 1958 and 1965 . Solti 's Ring has twice been voted the greatest recording ever made , in polls for Gramophone magazine in 1999 and the BBC 's Music Magazine in 2012 . Solti was repeatedly honoured by the recording industry with awards throughout his career , including a record 32 Grammy Awards as a recording artist .

= = Life and career = =

= = = Early years = = =

Solti was born György Stern (Hungarian : Stern György) on Maros utca , in the Hegyvidék district of the Buda side of Budapest . He was the younger of the two children of Móricz (" Mor ") Stern and his wife Teréz , née Rosenbaum , both of whom were Jewish . In the aftermath of the First World War it became the accepted practice in Hungary for citizens with Germanic surnames to adopt Hungarian ones . The right wing regime of Admiral Horthy enacted a series of " Hungarianisation " laws , including a requirement that state employees with foreign @-@ sounding names must change them . Mor Stern , a self @-@ employed merchant , felt no need to change his surname , but thought it prudent to change that of his children . He renamed them after Solt , a small town in central Hungary . His son 's given name , György , was acceptably Hungarian and was not changed .

Solti described his father as " a kind , sweet man who trusted everyone . He shouldn 't have , but he did . Jews in Hungary were tremendously patriotic . In 1914 , when war broke out , my father invested most of his money in a war loan to help the country . By the time the bonds matured , they were worthless . " Mor Stern was a religious man , but his son was less so . Late in life Solti recalled , " I often upset him because I never stayed in the synagogue for longer than ten minutes . " Teréz Stern was from a musical family , and encouraged her daughter Lilly , eight years the elder of the

children , to sing , and György to accompany her at the piano . Solti remembered , " I made so many mistakes , but it was invaluable experience for an opera conductor . I learnt to swim with her . " He was not a diligent student of the piano : " My mother kept telling me to practise , but what ten @-@ year @-@ old wants to play the piano when he could be out playing football ? "

Solti enrolled at the Ernő Fodor School of Music in Budapest at the age of ten , transferring to the more prestigious Franz Liszt Academy two years later . When he was 12 he heard a performance of Beethoven 's Fifth Symphony conducted by Erich Kleiber , which gave him the ambition to become a conductor . His parents could not afford to pay for years of musical education , and his rich uncles did not consider music a suitable profession ; from the age of 13 Solti paid for his education by giving piano lessons .

The faculty of the Franz Liszt Academy included some of the most eminent Hungarian musicians , including Béla Bartók , Leó Weiner , Ernő Dohnányi and Zoltán Kodály . Solti studied under the first three , for piano , chamber music and composition respectively . Some sources state that he also studied with Kodály , but in his memoirs Solti recalled that Kodály , whom he would have preferred , turned him down , leaving him to study composition first with Albert Siklós and then with Dohnányi . Not all the Academy 's tutors were equally distinguished : Solti remembered with little pleasure the conducting classes run by Ernő Unger , " who instructed his pupils to use rigid little wrist motions . I attended the class for only two years , but I needed five years of practical conducting experience before I managed to unlearn what he had taught me " .

= = = Pianist and conductor = = =

After graduating from the Academy in 1930 Solti was appointed to the staff of the Hungarian State Opera . He found that working as a répétiteur , coaching singers in their roles and playing at rehearsals , was a more fruitful preparation than Unger 's classes for his intended career as a conductor . In 1932 he went to Karlsruhe in Germany as assistant to Josef Krips , but within a year , Krips , anticipating the imminent rise to power of Hitler and the Nazis , insisted that Solti should go home to Budapest , where at that time Jews were not in danger . Other Jewish and anti @-@ Nazi musicians also left Germany for Budapest . Among other musical exiles with whom Solti worked there were Otto Klemperer , Fritz Busch , and Kleiber . Before Austria fell under Nazi control , Solti was assistant to Arturo Toscanini at the 1937 Salzburg Festival :

Toscanini was the first great musical impression in my life . Before I heard him live in 1936 , I had never heard a great opera conductor , not in Budapest , and it was like a lightning flash . I heard his Falstaff in 1936 and the impact was unbelievable . It was the first time I heard an ensemble singing absolutely precisely . It was fantastic . Then I never expected to meet Toscanini . It was a chance in a million . I had a letter of recommendation from the director of the Budapest Opera to the president of the Salzburg Festival . He received me and said : " Do you know Magic Flute , because we have an influenza epidemic and two of our répétiteurs are ill ? Could you play this afternoon for the stage rehearsals ? "

After further work as a répétiteur at the opera in Budapest , and with his standing enhanced by his association with Toscanini , Solti was given his first chance to conduct , on 11 March 1938 . The opera was The Marriage of Figaro . During that evening , news came of the German invasion of Austria . Many Hungarians feared that Hitler would next invade Hungary ; he did not do so , but Horthy , to strengthen his partnership with the Nazis , instituted anti @-@ semitic laws , mirroring the Nuremberg Laws , restricting Hungary 's Jews from engaging in professions . Solti 's family urged him to move away . He went first to London , where he made his Covent Garden debut , conducting the London Philharmonic for a Russian ballet season . The reviewer in The Times was not impressed with Solti 's efforts , finding them " too violent , for he lashed at the orchestra and flogged the music so that he endangered the delicate , evocative atmosphere . " At about this time Solti dropped the name " György " in favour of " Georg " .

After his appearances in London Solti went to Switzerland to seek out Toscanini , who was conducting in Lucerne . Solti hoped that Toscanini would help find him a post in the US . He was unable to do so , but Solti found work and security in Switzerland as vocal coach to the tenor Max

Hirzel , who was learning the role of Tristan in Wagner 's opera . Throughout the Second World War , Solti remained in Switzerland . He did not see his father again : Mor Stern died of diabetes in a Budapest hospital in 1943 . Solti was reunited with his mother and sister after the war . In Switzerland he could not obtain a work permit as a conductor , but earned his living as a piano teacher . After he won the 1942 Geneva International Piano Competition he was permitted to give piano recitals , but was still not allowed to conduct . During his exile , he met Hedwig (Hedi) Oeschli , daughter of a lecturer at Zürich University . They married in 1946 . In his memoirs he wrote of her , " She was very elegant and sophisticated Hedi gave me a little grace and taught me good manners ? although she never completely succeeded in this . She also helped me enormously in my career " .

= = = Munich and Frankfurt = = =

With the end of the war Solti 's luck changed dramatically . He was appointed musical director of the Bavarian State Opera in Munich in 1946 . In normal circumstances this prestigious post would have been an unthinkable appointment for a young and inexperienced conductor , but the leading German conductors such as Wilhelm Furtwängler , Clemens Krauss and Herbert von Karajan were prohibited from conducting pending the conclusion of denazification proceedings against them . Under Solti 's direction , the company rebuilt its repertoire and began to recover its pre @-@ war eminence . He benefited from the encouragement of the elderly Richard Strauss , in whose presence he conducted *Der Rosenkavalier* . Strauss was reluctant to discuss his own music with Solti , but gave him advice about conducting .

In addition to the Munich appointment Solti gained a recording contract in 1946 . He signed for Decca Records , not as a conductor but as a piano accompanist . He made his first recording in 1947 , playing Brahms 's First Violin Sonata with the violinist Georg Kulenkampff . He was insistent that he wanted to conduct , and Decca gave him his first recording sessions as a conductor later in the same year , with the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra in Beethoven 's *Egmont* overture . Twenty years later Solti said , " I 'm sure it 's a terrible record , because the orchestra was not very good at that time and I was so excited . It is horrible , surely horrible ? but by now it has vanished . " He had to wait two years for his next recording as a conductor . It was in London , Haydn 's *Drum Roll* symphony , in sessions produced by John Culshaw , with whose career Solti 's became closely linked over the next two decades . Reviewing the record , *The Gramophone* said , " The performance of the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Georg Solti (a fine conductor who is new to me) is remarkable for rhythmic playing , richness of tone , and clarity of execution . " *The Record Guide* compared it favourably with EMI 's rival recording by Sir Thomas Beecham and the Royal Philharmonic .

In 1951 Solti conducted at the Salzburg Festival for the first time , partly through the influence of Furtwängler , who was impressed by him . The work was *Idomeneo* , which had not been given there before . In Munich Solti achieved critical and popular success , but for political reasons his position at the State Opera was never secure . The view persisted that a German conductor should be in charge ; pressure mounted , and after five years Solti accepted an offer to move to Frankfurt in 1952 as musical director of the Frankfurt Opera . The city 's opera house had been destroyed in the war , and Solti undertook to build a new company and repertoire for its recently completed replacement . He also conducted the symphony concerts given by the opera orchestra . Frankfurt 's was a less prestigious house than Munich 's and he initially regarded the move as a demotion , but he found the post fulfilling and remained at Frankfurt from 1952 to 1961 , presenting 33 operas , 19 of which he had not conducted before . Frankfurt , unlike Munich , could not attract many of the leading German singers . Solti recruited many rising young American singers such as Claire Watson and Sylvia Stahlman , to the extent that the house acquired the nickname " Amerikanische Oper am Main " . In 1953 the West German government offered Solti German citizenship , which , being effectively stateless as a Hungarian exile , he gratefully accepted . He believed he could never return to Hungary , by then under communist rule . He remained a German citizen for two decades .

During his Frankfurt years Solti made appearances with other opera companies and orchestras . He

conducted in the Americas for the first time in 1952 , giving concerts in Buenos Aires . In the same year he made his debut at the Edinburgh Festival as a guest conductor with the visiting Hamburg State Opera . The following year he was a guest at the San Francisco Opera with Elektra , Die Walküre and Tristan und Isolde . In 1954 he conducted Don Giovanni at the Glyndebourne Festival . The reviewer in The Times said that no fault could be found in Solti 's " vivacious and sensitive " conducting . In the same year Solti made his first appearance with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra , at the Ravinia Festival . In 1960 he made his debut at the Metropolitan Opera in New York , conducting Tannhäuser , and he continued to appear there until 1964 .

In the recording studios Solti 's career took off after 1956 , when John Culshaw was put in charge of Decca 's classical recording programme . Culshaw believed Solti to be " the great Wagner conductor of our time " , and was determined to record the four operas of Der Ring des Nibelungen with Solti and the finest Wagner singers available . The cast Culshaw assembled for the cycle included Kirsten Flagstad , Hans Hotter , Birgit Nilsson and Wolfgang Windgassen . Apart from Arabella in 1957 , in which he substituted when Karl Böhm withdrew , Solti had made no complete recording of an opera until the sessions for Das Rheingold , the first of the Ring tetralogy , in September and October 1958 . In their respective memoirs Culshaw and Solti told how Walter Legge of Decca 's rival EMI predicted that Das Rheingold would be a commercial disaster (" ' Very nice , ' he said , ' Very interesting . But of course you won 't sell any . ' ") The success of the recording took the record industry by surprise . It featured for weeks in the Billboard charts , the sole classical album alongside best sellers by Elvis Presley and Pat Boone , and brought Solti 's name to international prominence . He appeared with leading orchestras in New York , Vienna and Los Angeles , and at Covent Garden he conducted Der Rosenkavalier and Britten 's A Midsummer Night 's Dream .

= = = Covent Garden = = =

In 1960 Solti signed a three @-@ year contract to be music director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic from 1962 . Even before he took the post the Philharmonic 's autocratic president , Dorothy Chandler , breached his contract by appointing a deputy music director without Solti 's approval . Although he admired the chosen deputy , Zubin Mehta , Solti felt he could not have his authority undermined from the outset , and he withdrew from his appointment . He accepted an offer to become musical director of Covent Garden Opera Company , London . When first sounded out about the post he had declined it . After 14 years of experience at Munich and Frankfurt he was uncertain that he wanted a third successive operatic post . Moreover , founded only 15 years earlier , the Covent Garden company was not yet the equal of the best opera houses in Europe . Bruno Walter convinced Solti that it was his duty to take Covent Garden on .

The biographer Montague Haltrecht suggests that Solti seized the breach of his Los Angeles contract as a convenient pretext to abandon the Philharmonic in favour of Covent Garden . However , in his memoirs Solti wrote that he wanted the Los Angeles position very much indeed . He originally considered holding both posts in tandem , but later acknowledged that he had had a lucky escape , as he could have done justice to neither post had he attempted to hold both simultaneously .

Solti took up the musical directorship of Covent Garden in August 1961 . The press gave him a cautious welcome , but there was some concern that under him there might be a drift away from the company 's original policy of opera in English . Solti , however , was an advocate of opera in the vernacular , and he promoted the development of British and Commonwealth singers in the company , frequently casting them in his recordings and important productions in preference to overseas artists . He demonstrated his belief in vernacular opera with a triple bill in English of L 'heure espagnole , Erwartung and Gianni Schicchi . As the decade went on , however , more and more productions had to be sung in the original language to accommodate international stars .

Like his predecessor Rafael Kubelík , and his successor Colin Davis , Solti found his early days as musical director marred by vituperative hostility from a small clique in the Covent Garden audience . Rotten vegetables were thrown at him , and his car was vandalised outside the theatre , with the words " Solti must go ! " scratched on its paintwork . Some press reviews were strongly critical ; Solti

was so wounded by a review in The Times of his conducting of The Marriage of Figaro that he almost left Covent Garden in despair . The chief executive of the Opera House , Sir David Webster , persuaded him to stay with the company , and matters improved , helped by changes on which Solti insisted . The chorus and orchestra were strengthened , and in the interests of musical and dramatic excellence , Solti secured the introduction of the stagione system of scheduling performances , rather than the traditional repertory system . By 1967 The Times commented that " Patrons of Covent Garden today automatically expect any new production , and indeed any revival , to be as strongly cast as anything at the Met in New York , and as carefully presented as anything in Milan or Vienna " .

The company 's repertory in the 1960s combined the standard operatic works with less familiar pieces . Among the most celebrated productions during Solti 's time in charge was Schoenberg 's Moses and Aaron in the 1965 ? 66 and 1966 ? 67 seasons . In 1970 , Solti led the company to Germany , where they gave Don Carlos , Falstaff and Victory , a new work by Richard Rodney Bennett . The public in Munich and Berlin were , according to the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung , " beside themselves with enthusiasm " .

Solti 's bald head and demanding rehearsal style earned him the nickname " The Screaming Skull " . A music historian called him " the bustling , bruising Georg Solti ? a man whose entire physical and mental attitude embodied the words ' I 'm in charge ' . " Singers such as Peter Glossop described him as a bully , and after working with Solti , Jon Vickers refused to do so again . Nevertheless , under Solti , the company was recognised as having achieved parity with the greatest opera houses in the world . Queen Elizabeth II conferred the title " the Royal Opera " on the company in 1968 . By this point Solti was , in the words of his biographer Paul Robinson , " after Karajan , the most celebrated conductor at work " . By the end of his decade as music director at Covent Garden Solti had conducted the company in 33 operas by 13 composers .

In 1964 Solti separated from his wife . He moved into the Savoy Hotel , where not long afterwards he met Valerie Pitts , a British television presenter , sent to interview him . She too was married , but after pursuing her for three years , Solti persuaded her to divorce her husband . Solti and Valerie Pitts married on 11 November 1967 . They had two daughters .

= = = Chicago Symphony Orchestra = = =

In 1967 Solti was invited to become music director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra . It was the second time he had been offered the post . The first had been in 1963 after the death of the orchestra 's conductor , Fritz Reiner , who made its reputation in the previous decade . Solti told the representatives of the orchestra that his commitments at Covent Garden made it impossible to give Chicago the eight months a year they sought . He suggested giving them three and a half months a year and inviting Carlo Maria Giulini to take charge for a similar length of time . The orchestra declined to proceed on these lines . When Solti accepted the orchestra 's second invitation it was agreed that Giulini should be appointed to share the conducting . Both conductors signed three @-@ year contracts with the orchestra , effective from 1969 .

One of the members of the Chicago Symphony described it to Solti as " the best provincial orchestra in the world . " Many players remained from its celebrated decade under Reiner , but morale was low , and the orchestra was \$ 5m in debt . Solti concluded that it was essential to raise the orchestra 's international profile . He ensured that it was engaged for many of his Decca sessions , and he and Giulini led it in a European tour in 1971 , playing in ten countries . It was the first time in its 80 @-@ year history that the orchestra had played outside of North America . The orchestra received plaudits from European critics , and was welcomed home at the end of the tour with a ticker @-@ tape parade .

The orchestra 's principal flute player , Donald Peck , commented that the relationship between a conductor and an orchestra is difficult to explain : " some conductors get along with some orchestras and not others . We had a good match with Solti and he with us . " Peck 's colleague , the violinist Victor Aitay said , " Usually conductors are relaxed at rehearsals and tense at the concerts . Solti is the reverse . He is very tense at rehearsals , which makes us concentrate , but relaxed during the

performance , which is a great asset to the orchestra . " Peck recalled Solti 's constant efforts to improve his own technique and interpretations , at one point experimentally dispensing with a baton , drawing a " darker and deeper , much more relaxed " tone from the players .

As well as raising the orchestra 's profile and helping it return to prosperity , Solti considerably expanded its repertoire . Under him the Chicago Symphony gave its first cycles of the symphonies of Bruckner and Mahler . He introduced new works commissioned for the orchestra , such as Lutosławski 's Third Symphony , and Tippett 's Fourth Symphony which was dedicated to Solti . Another new work was Tippett 's Byzantium , an orchestral song @-@ cycle , premiered by Solti and the orchestra with the soprano Faye Robinson . Solti frequently programmed works by American composers , including Charles Ives and Elliott Carter .

Solti 's recordings with the Chicago Symphony included the complete symphonies of Beethoven , Brahms , Bruckner and Mahler . Most of his operatic recordings were with other orchestras , but his recordings of *The Flying Dutchman* (1976) , *Fidelio* (1979) , *Moses und Aron* (1984) and his second recordings of *Die Meistersinger* (1995) and Verdi 's *Otello* (1991) were made with the Chicago players .

After relinquishing the position of music director in 1991 , Solti continued to conduct the orchestra , and was given the title of music director laureate . He conducted 999 concerts with the orchestra . His 1,000th concert was scheduled for October 1997 , around the time of his 85th birthday , but Solti died that September .

= = = Later years = = =

In addition to his tenure in Chicago Solti was music director of the Orchestre de Paris from 1972 to 1975 . From 1979 until 1983 he was also principal conductor of the London Philharmonic Orchestra . He continued to expand his repertoire . With the London Philharmonic he performed many of Elgar 's major works in concert and on record . Before performing Elgar 's two symphonies , Solti studied the composer 's own recordings made more than 40 years earlier , and was influenced by their brisk tempi and impetuous manner . A critic in *The Guardian* wrote that Solti " conveys the authentic frisson of the great Elgarian moment more vividly than ever before on record . " Late in his career he became enthusiastic about the music of Shostakovich , whom he admitted he failed to appreciate fully during the composer 's lifetime . He made commercial recordings of seven of Shostakovich 's fifteen symphonies .

In 1983 Solti conducted for the only time at the Bayreuth Festival . By this stage in his career he no longer liked abstract productions of Wagner , or modernistic reinterpretations , such as Patrice Chéreau 's 1976 Bayreuth Ring , which he found grew boring on repetition . Together with the director Sir Peter Hall and the designer William Dudley , he presented a Ring cycle that aimed to represent Wagner 's intentions . The production was not well received by German critics , who expected radical reinterpretation of the operas . Solti 's conducting was praised , but illnesses and last @-@ minute replacements of leading performers affected the standard of singing . He was invited to return to Bayreuth for the following season , but was unwell and withdrew on medical advice before the 1984 festival began .

In 1991 Solti collaborated with the actor and composer Dudley Moore to create an eight @-@ part television series , *Orchestra !* , which was designed to introduce audiences to the symphony orchestra . In 1994 he directed the " Solti Orchestral Project " at Carnegie Hall , a training workshop for young American musicians . The following year , to mark the 50th anniversary of the United Nations , he formed the World Orchestra for Peace , which consisted of 81 musicians from 40 nations . The orchestra has continued to perform after his death , under the conductorship of Valery Gergiev .

Solti regularly returned to Covent Garden as a guest conductor in the years after he relinquished the musical directorship , greeted with " an increasingly boisterous hero 's welcome " (Grove) . From 1972 to 1997 he conducted ten operas , some of them in several seasons . Five were operas he had not conducted at the Royal Opera House before : *Carmen* , *Parsifal* , *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* , *Simon Boccanegra* and a celebrated production of *La traviata* (1994) which propelled

Angela Gheorghiu to stardom . On 14 July 1997 he conducted the last operatic music to be heard in the old house before it closed for more than two years for rebuilding . The previous day he had conducted what proved to be his last symphony concert . The work was Mahler 's Fifth Symphony ; the orchestra was the Zurich Tonhalle , with whom he had made his first orchestral recording 50 years earlier .

Solti died suddenly , in his sleep , on 5 September 1997 while on holiday in Antibes in the south of France . He was 84 . After a state ceremony in Budapest , his ashes were interred beside the remains of Bartók in Farkasréti Cemetery .

= = Recordings = =

Solti recorded throughout his career for the Decca Record Company . He made more than 250 recordings , including 45 complete opera sets . During the 1950s and 1960s Decca had an alliance with RCA Victor , and some of Solti 's recordings were first issued on the RCA label .

Solti was one of the first conductors who came to international fame as a recording artist before being widely known in the concert hall or opera house . Gordon Parry , the Decca engineer who worked with Solti and Culshaw on the Ring recordings , observed , " Many people have said ' Oh well , of course John Culshaw made Solti . ' This is not true . He gave him the opportunity to show what he could do . "

Solti 's first recordings were as a piano accompanist , playing at sessions in Zurich for the violinist Georg Kulenkampff in 1947 . Decca 's senior producer , Victor Olof did not much admire Solti as a conductor (nor did Walter Legge , Olof 's opposite number at EMI 's Columbia Records) , but Olof 's younger colleague and successor , Culshaw , held Solti in high regard . As Culshaw , and later James Walker , produced his recordings , Solti 's career as a recording artist flourished from the mid @-@ 1950s . Among the orchestras with whom Solti recorded were the Berlin Philharmonic , Chicago Symphony , London Philharmonic , London Symphony and Vienna Philharmonic orchestras . Soloists in his operatic recordings included Birgit Nilsson , Joan Sutherland , Régine Crespin , Plácido Domingo , Gottlob Frick , Carlo Bergonzi , Kiri Te Kanawa and José van Dam . In concerto recordings , Solti conducted for , among others , András Schiff , Julius Katchen , Clifford Curzon , Vladimir Ashkenazy and Kyung @-@ wha Chung .

Solti 's most celebrated recording was Wagner 's Der Ring des Nibelungen made in Vienna , produced by Culshaw , between 1958 and 1965 . It has twice been voted the greatest recording ever made , the first poll being among readers of Gramophone magazine in 1999 , and the second of professional music critics in 2011 , for the BBC 's Music Magazine .

= = Honours and memorials = =

Honours awarded to Solti included the British CBE (honorary) , 1968 , and an honorary knighthood (KBE) , 1971 , which became a substantive knighthood when he took British citizenship in 1972 , after which he was known as Sir Georg Solti . He received honours from other countries , including Austria , Belgium , Denmark , France , Germany , Hungary , Italy , Portugal and the US . He received honorary fellowships or degrees from the Royal College of Music and DePaul , Furman , Harvard , Leeds , London , Oxford , Surrey and Yale universities .

In celebration of his 75th birthday in 1987 , a bronze bust of Solti by Dame Elisabeth Frink was dedicated in Lincoln Park , Chicago , outside the Lincoln Park Conservatory . It was first displayed temporarily at the Royal Opera House in London . The sculpture was moved to Grant Park in 2006 in a new Solti Garden , near Orchestra Hall in Symphony Center . In 1997 , to commemorate the 85th anniversary of his birth , the City of Chicago renamed the block of East Adams Street adjacent to Symphony Center as " Sir Georg Solti Place " in his memory .

Record industry awards to Solti included the Grand Prix Mondial du Disque (14 times) and 32 Grammy Awards (including a special Trustees ' Grammy Award , shared with John Culshaw , for the recording of the Ring (1967) and a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award (1996)) . He won more Grammys than any other recording artist , whether classical or popular . In September 2007 ,

as a tribute on the 10th anniversary of his death , Decca published a recording of his final concert .

After Solti 's death his widow and daughters set up the Solti Foundation to assist young musicians . Solti 's memoirs , written with the assistance of Harvey Sachs , were published the month after his death . Solti 's life was also documented in a 1997 film by Peter Maniura , Sir Georg Solti : The Making of a Maestro . In 2007 Valerie Solti was appointed a Cultural Ambassador of Hungary , an honorary title granted by the Hungarian state .

In 2012 a series of events under the banner of " Solti @ 100 " was announced , to mark the centenary of Solti 's birth . Among the events announced were concerts in New York and Chicago , and commemorative exhibitions in London , Chicago , Vienna and New York . In the same year Solti was voted into the inaugural Gramophone " Hall of Fame " .