

Otto Klemperer Curriculum vitae

- 1885** Born 14 May in Breslau, Germany (since 1945: Wrocław, Poland).
- 1889** The family moves to Hamburg, where the 9-year old Otto for the first time of his life spots Gustav Mahler (then Kapellmeister at the Municipal Theatre) out on the street.
- 1901** Piano studies and theory lessons at the Hoch Conservatory, Frankfurt am Main.
- 1902** Enters the Klindworth-Scharwenka Conservatory in Berlin.
- 1905** Continues piano studies at Berlin's Stern Conservatory, besides theory also takes up conducting and composition lessons (with Hans Pfitzner). Conducts the off-stage orchestra for Mahler's Second Symphony under Oskar Fried, meeting the composer personally for the first time during the rehearsals.
- 1906** Debuts as opera conductor in Max Reinhardt's production of Offenbach's *Orpheus in der Unterwelt*, substituting for Oskar Fried after the first night. Klemperer visits Mahler in Vienna armed with his piano arrangement of his Second Symphony and plays him the *Scherzo* (by heart). Mahler gives him a written recommendation as 'an outstanding musician, predestined for a conductor's career'.
- 1907-1910** First engagement as assistant conductor and chorus master at the Deutsches Landestheater in Prague. Debuts with Weber's *Der Freischütz*. Attends the rehearsals and first performance (19 September 1908) of Mahler's Seventh Symphony.
- 1910** Decides to leave the Jewish congregation (January). Attends Mahler's rehearsals for the first performance (12 September) of his Eighth Symphony in Munich.
- 1910-1912** Serves as Kapellmeister (i.e., assistant conductor, together with Gustav Brecher) at Hamburg's Stadttheater (Municipal Opera). Debuts with Wagner's *Lohengrin* and conducts guest performances by Enrico Caruso (Bizet's *Carmen* and Verdi's *Rigoletto*). Conducts Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* for the first time (1912). A public scandal following his affair with the soprano Elisabeth Schumann forces him to leave Hamburg.
- 1911** Enters the Kohnstamm Clinic in Königstein for treatment of a depression that had emerged the year before and is diagnosed as manic-depressive

(bipolar disorder).

Retreats to Schiltigheim near Strasbourg, where Pfitzner is music director of the opera, and immerses himself in studying scores.

1913-1914

Appointed first conductor of the Opera at Barmen.
Debuts with Wagner's *Tannhäuser*.

1914-1917

Conductor, later deputy musical director, under Hans Pfitzner at the Stadttheater in Strasbourg.
Debuts with a revival of Beethoven's *Fidelio*.
As later during manic periods, writes numerous compositions, some of which he includes in his Strasbourg farewell concert.

1917-1924

General musical director of the Cologne Opera.
Debuts with Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*.
Performs Janáček's *Jenůfa* in November 1918, and later gives the first performance of his *Katya Kabanová* outside Czechoslovakia (8 December 1923).

Mahler features prominently in his series of annual Cologne Opera concerts: Symphony No 2 (4 October 1919), followed in subsequent years by Symphonies Nos 1, 7 and 9, *Das Lied von der Erde* and the two *Lieder* cycles. Soloist in Beethoven's 'Emperor' Concerto that precedes Mahler's First Symphony is Artur Schnabel, a musician to whom he remains close throughout his life (Schnabel dies in 1951).

In Berlin on 16 April 1921, conducts his first concert with the Berlin Philharmonic in Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht* and *Pelleas und Melisande*, followed on 18 May by Mahler's Symphony No 2.

Converts to the Catholic faith (17 March 1919).

Marries the soprano Johanna Geisler (16 June 1919); their son Werner is born the following year, their daughter Lotte in November 1923.

Raised in a foster home in circumstances of poverty and domestic violence but blessed with an instinctive musicality and an attractive voice, Johanna Geisler finds shelter as a trainee member (*Aspirantin*) of the opera chorus at the Royal Theatre in Hannover at age 14. She joins the Cologne Opera on 1 September 1916 following a farewell performance at the Municipal Theatre in Mainz of Offenbach's *Hoffmanns Erzählungen* in which she sings all three female leading characters. Under her husband, she sings i.a. the roles of Despina, Queen of the Night, Donna Elvira, Marzellina, Carmen, and a highly successful Marietta in the premiere of Korngold's *Die tote Stadt* (4 December 1920). In 1927 at the Kroll Opera she will sing Helene in Hindemith's *Hin und zurück*. Continues her career until 1932, with but also 'despite' (Lotte Klemperer) her husband, e.g., Gilda at Berlin's Grosse Volksbühne where she also sings Adèle (1922). Her last appearances are with the Deutsche Musikbühne as the Countess in *Nozze di Figaro* and the Witch in Humperdick's *Hänsel und Gretel*.

1924-1927

General musical director of the Opera at Wiesbaden after failing to secure a position in Berlin.
Debuts with Beethoven's *Fidelio* and conducts numerous orchestral concerts that do much to spread his reputation abroad.

- 1924/25** Travels three times to the Soviet Union for concerts in Moscow and Leningrad (Beethoven, Brahms, Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, Schoenberg [*Verklärte Nacht*], R. Strauss, Moussorgsky, Borodin; directs Bach's Brandenburg Concert No 1 from the harpsichord); gives the Russian premiere of Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* Suite and leads three performances of *Carmen* at the Bolshoy Theater.
- While poorly attended at first, the cumulative success of subsequent concerts soon propels Klemperer into the status of a near cultural public hero, with Leon Trotsky famously visiting him in his dressing room after the final of four performances of Beethoven's Ninth.
- 1924** First (acoustic) recordings (November): Beethoven, Symphonies Nos 1 & 8, Schubert, 'Unfinished', and the *Adagio* from Bruckner's Symphony No 8, all with the Berlin State Opera Orchestra.
- 1926** Conducts his first concerts in the USA (New York), including works by Haydn, Beethoven, Brahms, Bruckner (Symphony No 8) and Stravinsky (*Petrushka*). Receives ovations at the end of his 10-week tour but audience response falls behind his Russian successes: audience taste for polished surfaces and technical virtuosity typically runs counter to Klemperer's performing style, prompting him at one point to substitute Mahler's Symphony No 9 with a programme of popular fare.
- 1927-1931** Kroll Opera: general director, later general musical director, of the Berliner Staatsoper am Platz der Republik, known as the Kroll Opera. Among the design and production team he assembles are Ewald Dülberg, Hans Curjel, Jürgen Fehling, Gustaf Gründgens, László Moholy-Nagy, Oskar Schlemmer and Teo Otto. Crucially, the singers making up the generally young cast of soloists are all adroit actors, among them Rose Pauly, Moje Forbach, Jarmila Novotna, Else Ruziczka, Hans Fidesser, Charles Kullmann, Fritz Krenn, Willi Domgraf-Fassbaender, Iso Golland and Albert Peters. Together they create a new style of interpreting opera whose innovative designs, contemporary costumes and lifelike stage action lead to legendary performances of, i.a., *Fidelio*, *Don Giovanni*, *Fliegender Holländer*, *Hoffmann's Erzählungen*, *Freischütz* and *Falstaff*.
- Conducts the first performances of Schoenberg's *Glückliche Hand* and Hindemith's *Hin und zurück* and *Neues vom Tage*, and the first staged performance of Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* together with his *Mavra* and *Petrushka*; also conducts Stravinsky's *l'Histoire du soldat* (in German), Hindemith's 1926 opera *Cardillac* and Křenek's *Leben des Orest*.
- Conducts an annual eight to ten concerts with the Berlin Staatskapelle featuring, i.a., Hindemith as soloist in his own Viola Concerto and Igor Stravinsky in his own piano concerto and *Capriccio*; performs Stravinsky's *Les Noces*, *Baiser de la fée*, *Apollon musagète*, *Firebird* Suite and *Symphonie des Psaumes*, Schoenberg's *Begleitmusik zu einer Lichtspielszene*, Janáček's Sinfonietta, Debussy, 2 *Nocturnes*, Ravel's *Alborado del gracioso* and Brecht/Weill's 'Lindbergflug' Cantata, as well as Mahler, Symphonies Nos 2, 4 and 9 and *Das Lied von der Erde*. An all-Bach concert opens with the first Brandenburg Concerto, which remains a Klemperer favourite throughout his entire career.

Typical Klemperer-Kroll programmes: Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No 6 (performed 'one voice per part', Paul Hindemith playing first viola), Hindemith's Violin Concerto, Weill's '*Dreigroschen*' Suite and Stravinsky's *Pulcinella*; Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No 4, Beethoven's Piano Concerto No 1 (with Edwin Fischer) and 'Grosse Fuge', and Hindemith's Concerto for Orchestra; Hindemith's Concert Music for Piano, Brass and Harps (with Walter Giesecking) and Beethoven's Symphony No 9.

Conducts landmark performances of Bach's *Johannes Passion* (18 December 1929 and 26 March 1931) and Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* (15 March 1930) with the Berlin Philharmonic Chorus.

1929 In January conducts his first concerts with the Concertgebouworkest, Amsterdam, returning in April to take over three concerts from Willem Mengelberg (Mahler, Symphony No 2 and *Das Lied von der Erde*). In November debuts in London conducting the London Symphony Orchestra in Bruckner's Symphony No 8.

1931 Conducts at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he directs a new stage production of *Nozze di Figaro* from the harpsichord and with reduced orchestra forces; performs *Die Meistersinger* to great acclaim followed by a new production of the complete *Ring*; at his two final concerts (5 and 7 October) conducts Beethoven, *Eroica*, and Stravinsky's *Symphonie des Psaumes*.

1931-1933 Musical director at the Staatsoper Unter den Linden, Berlin, after the closure of the Kroll Opera.
Conducts new production of Mozart's *Così fan tutte*.

1932 Goethe Medal (a state medal commemorating the centenary of Goethe's death).
5 December: conducts his first performance of Bach's Mass in B-minor, with the Berlin Philharmonic Chorus.

1933 Leaves Germany, first for Zurich, then for Vienna; conducts in Budapest and Vienna (with Bela Bartók as soloist in his Piano Concerto No 2).

Travels to the USA in October where he conducts the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra for the first time.

1934-1939 Principal conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra. Studies with Schoenberg who, as many other expatriate artists and intellectuals from Europe (Thomas Mann, Theodor Adorno, Bertolt Brecht, etc.), also decides to settle in Los Angeles; gives the world premiere of Schoenberg's arrangement for orchestra (1938) of Brahms' Piano Quartet in G minor, Op. 25, also conducts his Quartet Concerto (1933) with the Kolisch Quartet.
Conducts numerous concerts covering an extensive symphonic and instrumental repertoire, also in the Hollywood Bowl, many of them transmitted by radio.
Conducts the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic (i.a., April 1935: Alban Berg's *Lulu* Suite; December 1935: Mahler, Symphony No 2).

1936 Travels twice to Europe. In May conducts concerts in Prague, Budapest

and Moscow, where he is deeply impressed by Dimitri Shostakovich at home playing him his just-finished Symphony No 4; tells him he has had enormous success performing his First Symphony, First Piano Concerto and the *Golden Age* and *Bolt Suites* 'all over North and South America'. In June conducts in Vienna and Strasbourg. Returns in late September for concerts again in Strasbourg, Vienna (i.a., Alban Berg's Violin Concerto with Louis Krasner as soloist on 25 October; Berg had died on 24 December 1935) and Moscow.

- 1937** Programmes of his Los Angeles concerts feature Sibelius' Symphony No 4, Mahler, *Das Lied von der Erde*, and Bach, *Johannes Passion*.
- 1939** Diagnosed with a (benign) brain tumour for which he is operated in a specialist clinic in Boston, suffering partial paralysis of the right side of his face and body; narrowly escapes life-threatening complications from meningitis.
- 1940** Obtains US citizenship.
Dismissed as conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra.
- 1940/41** Enters an extreme manic phase and subsequently leads a highly unstable existence away from his family in New York plagued by financial problems and with social conflicts damaging his reputation.
- Counting as unreliable, finds the number of his guest appearances over the next 5 years markedly reduced and generally limited to local ensembles (often made up of immigrants), such as the New Friends of Music (assembled by Rudolph Kolisch and performing at the New School, where Hanns Eisler and Theodor Adorno are on the teaching staff), the WPA Symphony Orchestra, and the New York City Symphony Orchestra.
- 1941/43** Moves back and forth between New York and Los Angeles.
May/June 1942: conducts three highly successful concerts in New Mexico (witness Hanns Eisler: 'the best performance of Beethoven's Fifth [I have] ever heard').
September 1942: manic phase subsides.
- 1943/44** Early 1943: joined in New York by daughter Lotte, who accompanies him on his tour along the East Coast.
April 1943: returns to the family home in Los Angeles, though with only two concerts in the offing.
Enters a depressive phase that will last until well into 1946.
- 1944** Makes a renewed but again unsuccessful attempt to gain a foothold in New York. Conducts a mere two concerts in the Hollywood Bowl, Los Angeles (25 July: Schubert, 'Unfinished', Purcell, 'Dido's Lament,' Wagner, two *Wesendonck* Lieder (with Lotte Lehmann), Bach, Air and Gavotte from Orchestral Suite No 3, and Mozart, 'Haffner' Symphony; 27 July: Wagner, *Meistersinger* Overture, Richard Strauss, *Don Juan*, and Beethoven, *Eroica*).
- 1945** Emerges slowly from depressive phase, with more concerts scheduled and his financial situation improving.
Between 8 and 14 February, in honour of the composer's 70th birthday

conducts the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra in 5 performances of Schoenberg's Second Chamber Symphony (programme also includes Beethoven, Symphony No 5).

On 16 May, shares the platform with Igor Stravinsky for an 'American-Russian Friendship Concert', performing Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony and Prokofiev's Cantata *Alexander Nevsky*, in between which Stravinsky conducts his *Firebird* Suite.

On 21, 22 and 25 October, performs Bach's Brandenburg Concertos and the two violin concertos with the Music Guild Chamber Players (leader Henri Temianka and Ingolf Dahl cembalo).

On 13 and 14 December conducts the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra in Alban Berg's Violin Concerto, with Joseph Szigeti as soloist, and Brahms' Symphony No 2.

1946 Conducts his first concerts in Europa after the war: Stockholm, Rome (Bach, *St Matthew Passion*, in Italian), Florence, Turin, Paris, and Baden-Baden where he is the first great émigré musician to return to his native country; conducts the Amsterdam Concertgebouworkest in Interlaken. First recordings for Vox in Paris (Bach, Mozart); invites René Leibowitz to attend the sessions of the Brandenburg Concertos.

1946-1954 Without permanent domicile, returns periodically to the USA so as not to lose his US citizenship.

1947-1950 Enters a prolonged and extreme manic phase. Musical director of the Budapest State Opera (i.a., *Don Giovanni*, *Zauberflöte*, *Entführung*, *Così fan tutte*, *Fidelio*, *Hoffmanns Erzählungen*, *Lohengrin*, *Meistersinger*, all sung in Hungarian). Conducts numerous concerts with the Budapest Radio Orchestra (Bach, Mozart, Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* [in German]).

1947 Conducts the Amsterdam Concertgebouworkest again in Interlaken. Conducts at the Bach Festival in Strasbourg. Conducts the Wiener Philharmoniker during the Salzburg Festival.

1948 5 March: in London conducts the Philharmonia Orchestra for the first time (Bach's Orchestral Suite No 3, Stravinsky's *Symphony in Three Movements*, and Beethoven's *Eroica*).
2 and 3 May: conducts the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra for the first time after the war (Mozart, 'Prague' Symphony, and Mahler, Symphony No 4).

1949 January: conducts Walter Felsenstein's production of *Carmen* at the Komische Oper Berlin; meets up with Hanns Eisler and Bertolt Brecht, both back again in Berlin.
11 August–10 October: first Australian tour (Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne, Adelaide) with programmes featuring works by Brahms, Bruckner, Mahler, Debussy, Stravinsky and Shostakovich (Symphony No 9).
8 November: in London conducts the Philharmonia Orchestra (for the second time) in Beethoven, *Grosse Fuge*, Bartók's Piano Concerto No 3 (with György Sándor) and Brahms' Symphony No 1.

1950 6-14 May: conducts a new production at the Scala in Milan of *Die Zauberflöte* (in Italian), followed by final performances in Budapest: *La Traviata* (26 May), *Don Giovanni* (4 July), *Die Fledermaus* (15 July) and

Beethoven, Symphony No 9 (18 July).

20 July–14 October: second Australian tour, including performances of Schoenberg's 'Theme and Variations', Stravinsky's Symphony in D and Mahler's Symphony No 2 (the surviving taped live performance is till today the fastest on record).

October-November: conducts concerts in Los Angeles and Montreal ; records again for Vox in Paris (Schubert's Fourth Symphony)

10 December: conducts the Concertgebouworkest in Amsterdam in Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* with Kathleen Ferrier and the Dutch tenor Frans Vroons as soloists.

19-23 December: conducts the RIAS Symphony Orchestra in West Berlin recording Mozart symphonies.

1951

January: returns to Amsterdam for further concerts with the Concertgebouworkest replacing Rafael Kubelik.

February: withdraws from scheduled performances in Rome of *Fidelio* which he was to stage as well as conduct following irreconcilable differences with the production's Leonora. Instead, travels to Israel where his younger sister Marianne had moved in 1935 and conducts the Jerusalem Radio Orchestra in hastily improvised concerts with a Mozart programme, twice in Tel Aviv and once in Jerusalem.

11 March: conducts memorial concert in Amsterdam with the Concertgebouworkest for Willem Mengelberg (Beethoven, *Eroica*, and Mahler, 'Abschied' from *Das Lied von der Erde*).

March-June: records significant repertoire for Vox in Vienna with the Wiener Symphoniker (Beethoven's Symphonies 5 and 6 and *Missa Solemnis*, Bruckner, Symphony No 4, Mendelssohn, '*Italian*', Mahler's Second Symphony and *Das Lied von der Erde*; piano concertos by Beethoven, Schumann and Chopin), providing a much needed source of income during the period of near inactivity that follows in 1952-1953.

25 and 29 June: conducts the Philharmonia Orchestra in the recently opened Royal Festival Hall; first discussions with Walter Legge about a recording contract for EMI's Columbia label.

11, 12 and 14 July: returns to Amsterdam to conduct the Concertgebouworkest in i.a. Mahler's Second Symphony, again with Ferrier, and the Dutch soprano Jo Vincent.

August: conducts in Argentina and Venezuela.

12 October: falls and fractures the neck of his left femur in Montreal, Canada, necessitating a long period of convalescence which induces a depression that will last till the end of 1952. Among his very few visitors are Joseph Szigeti and Henri Temianka with his Paganini Quartet who play him Schubert's String Quintet. Reads Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* (premiered on 11 September in Venice) and Bartok's Concerto for Orchestra.

1952

22 April: makes first appearance in Montreal after his hospitalization. Signs recording contract with EMI (10 recordings over a two-year period). Conducts in the USA (Chicago) and again in Canada (a Montreal concert leaves an indelible impression upon the then 27-year old Pierre Boulez, who in 1988 vividly recalled 'the intensity Klemperer radiated in spite of

his immobility'; as of 1964 Klemperer will take a keen interest in Boulez's developing career).

Forced to remain in the US as the authorities refuse to renew his passport.

1953 Conducts a small number of concerts in the USA (Chicago, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles) and in Canada (Montreal).
23 December: finally obtains the extension of his American passport enabling him to travel back again to Europe.

1954 Embarks on an intensive, virtually uninterrupted year-long tour encompassing concerts in The Hague, Amsterdam, Paris, Copenhagen, Essen, Cologne (WDR), Berlin (RIAS), Winterthur, Zurich, Florence, Rome, London, Milan, Bergamo, Venice, Palermo, Lisbon, Porto, Montreux, Lugano, Ascona and Munich.

Appointed principal conductor of the Philharmonia Orchestra.
Makes first recordings (mono) with Walter Legge as producer for EMI Columbia (Hindemith, Mozart, Brahms).
Regains his German citizenship and obtains a new German passport; decides to settle in Zurich, Switzerland.

1955 Conducts concerts in London, Cologne (WDR: *Don Giovanni* and *Missa Solemnis*), Vienna, Amsterdam, Zurich, Lucerne, Hamburg (NDR), Florence and again London (BBC).

Records his first Beethoven performances for EMI: Symphonies Nos 3, 5 and 7 (3-7 October and 17 & 19 December). All sessions are taped both in mono and stereo but the recordings are published in mono only; the stereo version of the 7th becomes available in 1988 when remastered for CD release, thereby restoring Klemperer's dynamics in the *Presto* (see comments in Discography on <http://www.archiphon.de/arde/discologica/OK-Disco-composer-WU.pdf>)

In the meticulous diary she kept of Klemperer's concert and recording activities since 1954 Lotte Klemperer enters for 16 December 1955: "[W]e listened to masters of the Beethoven recordings so far with Legge in Abbey Road. Though very good, OK wanted to do them all over again, finally said to Legge: '*Sie wissen, ob es gut genug ist, ob es sich verkauft, – ich werde ja doch nie fertig*' ('You know whether it is good enough, whether you have a saleable product – I don't think I will ever be done'), and asked him in the future to decide alone."

1956 Conducts numerous concerts in Cologne, Berlin, Vienna, Rome, London (studio concert for the BBC: *Missa Solemnis*), Munich, Zurich, Strasbourg, Mannheim, Montreux, Turin.
March: First EMI recordings published in stereo (Mozart, Handel).
24 April-18 May: conducts his first Beethoven cycle with the Amsterdam Concertgebouworkest.

3 November: Klemperer's wife, Johanna, dies in a Munich hospital, over the radio in her hospital bed having heard her husband conduct for the last time, on 19 October, as he leads the Bayerische Rundfunk Orchester in Haydn's 'Clock' Symphony and, poignantly, Mahler's Symphony No 4, with its final movement for soprano, 'Wir geniessen die himmlischen

Freuden'. Lotte Klemperer takes charge of her father's personal cares and assumes full responsibility for all his professional matters, including conducting engagements, recording contracts, fees, etc.

1957 Enters a manic phase that intermittently will last until well into 1962. Conducts concerts in Berlin, Basel, Amsterdam (in February i.a., Stravinsky, *Symphony in Three Movements*; Bruckner, *Symphony No 5*; in May Beethoven, *Missa Solemnis*), Geneva, Rome (Beethoven, *Symphonies Nos 1 and 9*), Copenhagen, Cologne (Bruckner, *Symphony No 8*), Munich (Stravinsky, *Pulcinella*, and Brahms, *Symphony No 4*) and Edinburgh (Mahler, *Das Lied von der Erde*, with Anton Dermota and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, the only time ever he decides to use two male voices – Lotte Klemperer: 'Legge's or possibly [Lord] Harewood's idea').

October/November: conducts an enthusiastically acclaimed Beethoven cycle with the Philharmonia Orchestra in the Royal Festival Hall, London, coinciding with EMI studio recordings of *Symphonies 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, and 9*.

1958 Conducts extensively in Cologne, Amsterdam (second Beethoven cycle), The Hague, Vienna (Symphoniker and Philharmoniker), Berlin, London, Stockholm, Luzern (Berliner Philharmoniker).

8 April: receives the Federal Republic of Germany's *Großes Verdienstkreuz* (Grand Order of Merit) at the West German Embassy in London.

In June travels for a second time since 1951 to Israel to visit his sister; in Tel Aviv rehearses 'quasi for fun' (Lotte Klemperer) the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra in the first movement of Beethoven's *Seventh Symphony* after ill health forces him to cancel an earlier *à-l'improviste* organized concert with them. Restlessness and nightlife also here signal Klemperer's unabated manic phase.

30 September/1 October: during the night in bed at his home in Zurich suffers second- and third-degree burns over 15 per cent of his body as he falls asleep smoking his pipe and, to disastrous effect, tries to douse the fire with alcohol. Forced to drop plans for appearances in Bayreuth with Wieland Wagner (*Meistersinger*) as well as in The Hague (Holland Festival: *Tristan*). Endures a long period of convalescence with repeated skin grafts (till July 1959). Klemperer, now aged 73, only gradually regains his physical and mental strength and re-assumes his former stature.

1959 Walter Legge appoints Klemperer 'principal conductor for life' of the Philharmonia Orchestra after Karajan's decision to move from EMI to Decca and DGG. Klemperer and the orchestra embark on numerous stereo recordings for EMI which in the 1960s will make him their most profitable classical recording artist as well as rapidly consolidating the orchestra's reputation.

5 September: first concerts after hospitalization in Luzern.

5 October: diagnosed with benign pericarditis which forces him to cancel *Tristan* performances planned for December at the Met in New York.

October/November: Beethoven cycle with the Philharmonia in London wins critical acclaim.

1960 During a reception (11 May) given by EMI on the occasion of his 75th

anniversary (14 May) Heather Harper sings a number of his Lieder. The following year (6 March) Klemperer will engage the Philharmonia for private recordings of some of his own orchestral works.

1 September: conducts Mahler, *Das Lied von der Erde* with Ernst Haefliger and Christa Ludwig at the Luzern Festival.

Among his concerts in London: Beethoven, *Missa Solemnis* (17 October); Brahms, Double Concerto and Beethoven, Triple Concerto (11 November, with Henryk Szeryng, Janos Starker and Annie Fischer); Bruckner, Seventh Symphony (17 November).

Partly because of their limited and repetitive repertoire, Klemperer's concerts around this time with the Philharmonia fail to attract the critical acclaim that had been their hallmark previously. However, in Vienna the Beethoven cycle he gives there with the Philharmonia Orchestra in May and June proves hugely successful.

1961 Between October 1961 and May 1962 Klemperer resides in London for numerous studio recordings as well as regular concerts. Conducts as well as produces to great acclaim a number of performances of *Fidelio* at Covent Garden and one in Zurich. At the same time, his concerts still meet with restrained or even openly critical reception. The latter is also true for the first performance he conducts on 22 June in Amsterdam with the Concertgebouworkest of his Symphony No 1 ('In Two Movements'), which the orchestra, in an unpardonable affront, receives with total silence at the end of their first play-through, the towering performance they give in the evening of Bruckner's Symphony No 6 perhaps meant to make amends.

In London in October, the tide then turns again fully in Klemperer's favour as he conducts the Philharmonia in a Beethoven cycle that finds a far more positive public as well as critical response than the year before. November: Bach's *St Matthew Passion* concluded in EMI studio.

1962 January: conducts 7 performances of Mozart's *Zauberflöte* at Covent Garden.
February/March in EMI studio: records *Fidelio*; concludes Mahler, Symphony No 2.
25 March: conducts Bach's *St Matthew Passion* at the Festival Hall, London.
5 and 9 April: conducts two repeat performances of *Fidelio* at Covent Garden.
4 May: conducts Berlioz' *Symphonie fantastique*, to unanimous critical acclaim.

September: manic phase has by now given way to a depression that by early October is 'definite and deep' (Lotte Klemperer).

October/November: conducts a series of concerts with the Philadelphia Orchestra in Philadelphia, New York, Washington and Baltimore. Critical response is at first reserved but by the end the tour proves a great success.

End December: 'The worst of OK's depression is now over. A mild depression – sometimes more, sometimes less – remains for a long time' (Lotte Klemperer). As always when in the more quiet, rather subdued mood that follows upon a manic phase, Klemperer embarks on a period

of intensive and concentrated work. With the restlessness typical of manic phases temporarily held at bay, and with the limitations generated by his burn wounds effectively overcome, Klemperer's concert and recording activities reveal markedly new creative powers.

- 1963** Conducts three more performances of *Zauberflöte* at Covent Garden. EMI studio: conducts numerous new recordings of classical core repertoire (Tschaikovsky, Schubert, Berlioz, Bruckner, Dvorak, Beethoven, Mozart) but also Stravinsky (*Symphony in Three Movements*). Conducts *Lohengrin* at Covent Garden (5 performances). For the role of Ortrud, sung by Régine Crespin, Klemperer had originally wanted Maria Callas; Legge's plans to record various arias similarly failed to materialize. Conducts a large number of concerts in London with the Philharmonia Orchestra (i.a., Bach's Brandenburg Concertos; Wagner, Bruckner, Mahler's Symphony No 2 with Heather Harper and Janet Baker), and again a highly successful Beethoven cycle, including the *Missa Solemnis* in the Royal Festival Hall.
- 16 and 19 September: attends concerts by the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra under Kyrill Kondrashin (i.a., Shostakovich, Symphony No 4, which the composer had played for Klemperer in Leningrad in May 1936 but had then been forced to withdraw; Kondrashin had given the belated world premiere in December 1961). During guest appearances in Vienna, conducts both the Wiener Philharmoniker (Mahler's Second Symphony) and the Wiener Symphoniker (Beethoven, Symphonies Nos 2 and 3).
- 1964** 26 February: attends Pierre Boulez's rehearsals at the Royal Festival Hall with the BBC Symphony Orchestra for his first London concert.
- 8 March: having left EMI Walter Legge dissolves the Philharmonia Orchestra that he founded in 1945. On 18 March the orchestra decides to re-group as a cooperative under own management called the New Philharmonia Orchestra (NPO), with Klemperer as the orchestra's president.
- 27 October: conducts the NPO in Beethoven's Symphonies Nos 1 and 9 at the season's opening concert in the Royal Albert Hall (filmed by the BBC).
- Guest appearances in Berlin (Berliner Philharmoniker: Bach, Mozart, Beethoven) and Cologne (Bach, Mozart, Berlioz' *Symphony fantastique*). Conducts the Concertgebouworkest for what would be the last time (9 and 11 July: Beethoven, Symphonies Nos 1 and 9). EMI studio: *Messiah*; *Zauberflöte*; Bruckner, Symphony No 6.
- 1965** January-May: conducts in Munich (Mahler, Symphony No 2, with Heather Harper and Janet Baker), London (Brahms, Symphonies No 3 and 4), Rome (Beethoven, Symphonies 2 and 3), Florence (Mahler, Symphony No 2, with Gundula Janowitz and Hilde Roessl-Majdan; Beethoven, Symphonies Nos 6 and 7; Mozart, 'Haffner', and Berlioz, *Symphonie fantastique*), Stockholm (Mozart, Symphony No 40, Berlioz, *Symphonie fantastique*; Beethoven, Symphonies Nos 2 and 3; the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra play him a fanfare in celebration of his 80th

birthday and make him an 'honorary member' of the orchestra).

30 August: attends Kubelik's rehearsals in Luzern with his Bayerisches Rundfunk Sinfonie Orchester of Janack's *Aus einem Totenhaus*.

2 November: conducts Mozart, Symphony No 40 and Bruckner, Symphony No 9 with the NPO in London, repeat performance (24 November) in Zurich.

EMI studio: Haydn and Mozart symphonies; Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, followed (17 October) by a performance in the Royal Festival Hall.

1966 Conducts the NPO in Beethoven's Violin Concerto (with Yehudi Menuhin) and Berlioz, *Symphonie fantastique* (30 January); Bach, Haydn and Strauss (8 February); Beethoven, *Grosse Fuge* and Symphonies Nos 8 and 7 (20 February).

Conducts in Cologne (11 March: Beethoven, Symphonies Nos 4 and 5), Munich (31 March and 1 April: Schubert, Symphony No 8, Bruckner, Symphony No 4); Hamburg (3 May: Mozart, Symphony No 40, Bruckner, Symphony No 7); Berlin (11, 12 and 13 May: Berliner Philharmoniker in Beethoven, Symphonies Nos 4 and 5).

12 July: travels to Jerusalem to visit his sister, Marianne, who the following day is being operated for cancer; enters a subdued manic phase and starts again to compose.

9 August: on holidays in Sils Maria, slips and breaks his good hip, for which he is operated on 16 August.

27 October: attends Ernst Bloch lecture in Winterthur.

16 and 17 December: goes through the score of Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* with Carlos Kleiber, who is to conduct a performance the following year in Vienna.

EMI studio: *Don Giovanni*; Beethoven's violin concerto (with Yehudi Menuhin); concludes Mahler, *Das Lied von der Erde* (with Christa Ludwig).

1967 14 January: though at this time neither manic nor depressed, goes through his own manuscripts and destroys a major part of them.

6 February: officially leaves the Roman Catholic Church and returns to his Jewish faith and regular visits to the Synagogue.

26 and 28 February: conducts Mahler's Symphony No 9 with the NPO in the Royal Festival Hall following EMI studio sessions (at which, after more than 30 years, Klemperer again uses a baton); Mahler's Ninth looms large in subsequent years as Klemperer performs it again with the NPO on 28 March 1968, then in Vienna with the Wiener Philharmoniker (9 June 1968), in Edinburgh and Luzern again with the NPO (30 August and 6 September 1968 resp.) and finally in Jerusalem with a reinforced Jerusalem Radio Orchestra (4 August 1970).

8 March: sits in on Pierre Boulez's rehearsals at the Royal Festival Hall with the BBC Symphony Orchestra in works by Bartók, Webern and Schoenberg; a week later attends Boulez all-Stravinsky concert.

4 April: Awarded the Nikisch Prize by the City of Leipzig.

8-22 May: travels to Israel to see his ailing sister Marianne; visits Nazareth and the Lake of Tiberias; is 'horrified by the military tattoo'

which he witnesses on Israel's Independence Day (14 May, his own birthday) and 'repulsed by all the propaganda' (Lotte Klemperer).
20 May: conducts the Jerusalem Radio Orchestra in searing performances of Webern's *Freischütz* Overture, Schubert's 'Unfinished' and Mozart's Adagio and Fugue K 546 and Symphony No 41, K 551, 'Jupiter'.

29-31 July: attends the Bayreuth Festival, primarily because of Pierre Boulez's *Parsifal*; also sees *Tannhaeuser* and *Lohengrin*.

10-16 August: again travels to Jerusalem to see his sister whose situation has much worsened; is present at a poorly-attended Pierre Boulez concert with the Jerusalem Radio Orchestra (Stravinsky, Schoenberg, Webern, Schumann).

5 September: Klemperer's sister Marianne dies in Jerusalem.

22 September: is awarded the '*Pour le Mérite*' order from the West German government at the German Embassy in Bern.

14 and 16 November: conducts Bach's Mass in B minor at the Royal Festival Hall, London, following EMI studio recording (October/November).

Continues to compose: Symphony No 2 (late 1967), *Der verlorene Sohn* and *Das Ziel* (operas, early 1968); orchestrates Rameau's Gavotte and 6 Variations (on 2 February, Klemperer responds somewhat sceptically to the score Paul Dessau had sent him of his 'Symphonic Adaptation' for full orchestra of Mozart's E-flat String Quintet, K 614: 'a vibraphone in an arrangement of Mozart? I don't know').

EMI studio: Mozart, Piano Concerto K 503 (March) and the complete Beethoven piano concertos together with the Choral Fantasy, with the young Daniel Barenboim as soloist (October/November).

EMI studio: *Petruschka* (March; not released by EMI; a re-mastered version from different takes is available on CD from Testament).

1968

19 March: conducts a concert performance of *Der Fliegende Holländer* at the Royal Festival Hall following EMI studio recording (with Anja Silja and Theo Adam).

19 May and 16 June: conducts five concerts with the Wiener Philharmoniker at the Vienna Festival (Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Bruckner, Mahler, Schubert, R. Strauss and Wagner).

15 September: conducts Bach's B-minor Mass at the Royal Festival Hall.

1 October: conducts Mahler, Symphony No 7, at the Royal Festival Hall (following EMI studio recording).

10 October: conducts his orchestration of the Rameau Variations, Mozart's Prague Symphony, K 504, and Schumann, Symphony No 2 (following EMI studio recording).

18 October: conducts the NPO in Paris, with Beethoven, Symphony No 7 (following EMI studio recording) substituted for the Schumann.

3 November: records his own newly finished Symphony No 2 privately at Abbey Road Studios together with his 1933 orchestral piece *J'accuse*.

November: symptoms of an approaching depression disappear again and by end April 1969 Lotte Klemperer will be able to report: 'All in all during these months OK was well again and in good spirits. Though quieter, there was no depression.'

- 1969** 22 January: conducts the NPO in London: Mendelssohn, *Incidental Music to Midsummer Night's Dream*.
 28 January: conducts Brahms, Piano Concerto No 2 (with Vladimir Ashkenazy) and Symphony No 4.
 March: conducts 5 repeat performances of *Fidelio* at Covent Garden (with Anja Silja in the title role).
 6, 7 and 10 May: in Paris conducts the Orchestre de Paris to great acclaim (Beethoven, *Eroica*) and the Bavarian Radio Orchestra in Munich (Mendelssohn and Beethoven).
 30 September: conducts his Symphony No 2 at the Royal Festival Hall (first public performance; followed by EMI recording on 3 November).
 28 October: conducts Wagner, *Walküre*, Act 1, at the Royal Festival Hall, London, following EMI recording sessions.
 Interviews with Peter Heyworth in Klemperer's home in Zurich.
- 1970** 3 February: conducts concert performance in London of *Nozze di Figaro* following EMI studio recording (later awarded the coveted 'Preis der deutschen Schallplatten Kritik').
 24 February: Beethoven, Violin Concerto with Igor Oistrakh, and Bruckner, Symphony No 9 (Gennady Rozhdestvensky also present at piano rehearsal with Oistrakh and concert).
 19 March: attends dress rehearsal in Zurich for Křenek's opera *Karl V*.
 21 April: after hugely enjoying a performance in Basel of Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, immerses himself in reading other Beckett plays (*Endgame*, *Happy Days*, *Krapp's Last Tape*, etc.).
- 14 May, Klemperer's 85th anniversary: performs Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*, with Richard Lewis and Janet Baker, at the Royal Festival Hall.
 19 May: attends performance in his honour of his String Quartet No 7 by the Bartok String Quartet, who he commends for having 'assiduously played in tune' ('*sehr sauber gespielt*').
 26 May-30 June: conducts what would be his last Beethoven cycle in London with the NPO, transmitted by the BBC for television.
- 26 July-6 August: travels to Israel, where he visits the grave of his sister Marianne in Jerusalem.
 4 August: conducts Mahler's Symphony No 9 in Jerusalem with the Jerusalem Radio Orchestra reinforced by members of the GADNA Youth Orchestra. Klemperer's casual inquiry with his local driver whether 'it is difficult to become an Israeli citizen' spurs the authorities into action: when Lotte transmits a subsequent telephone call from the Interior Ministry asking whether he would like to become 'Israeli', Klemperer responds: 'Why not!' Receives Israeli passport at a party following the concert with full media and TV coverage.
- 25 and 26 September: conducts his last concert in Germany at the Beethoven Festival in Bonn with the NPO (Symphonies Nos 1 and 3).
 26 and 27 October: in EMI studio concludes Wagner, *Walküre*, Act 1, and records Act 3, 'Wotan's Abschied'.
 8 November: conducts Mozart, Symphonies 29 and 40, and Piano Concerto No 25, K 503 (with Alfred Brendel) at the Royal Festival Hall.
 17 November: conducts Bruckner, Symphony No 8 (with own cuts in Finale), following EMI studio recording.
 26 November: attends a performance in Basel of Büchner's *Dantons Tod*.

Lorin Maazel appointed 'associate principal conductor' of the NPO.

- 1971** 21 February: conducts concert performance of *Così fan tutte* at the Royal Festival Hall following EMI studio recording (January/February).
16 and 20 May: conducts Mahler, Symphony No 2, with Anne Finley and Alfreda Hodgson (commemorating the 60th anniversary of Mahler's death).
- June: conducts what would be his last concerts in Israel with the Jerusalem Radio Orchestra (Bach, Brandenburg Concertos, 1, 3, 4 and 6 and Mozart, Symphonies Nos 25, 39-41); as no other halls are available, concerts take place in the run-down Edison Cinema (Lotte Klemperer: 'ugly and in bad neighborhood'); though 'at one point OK, dissatisfied, wants to cancel' (Lotte Klemperer), the concerts prove hugely successful.
- 14 August: as depression sets in, cancels planned private play-through in London with the NPO of his opera *Das Ziel*, and again destroys a huge amount of his manuscripts.
26 September: conducts what would be his final concert in the Royal Festival Hall: Beethoven's 'King Stephan' Overture and Piano Concerto No 4 (with Daniel Adni) and Brahms, Symphony No 3 (rehearsals and part of the concert recorded on film; audio recording of the entire concert published on CD by Testament).
- EMI studio: Haydn, Oxford Symphony; Mozart, Wind Serenade K 335.
28 September: becomes Honorary Member of the Royal Academy, London.
Plans for EMI studio recordings: Mozart's *Entführung aus dem Serail*, Bach's *St John's Passion*, Sibelius' Symphony No 5.
- 1972** Has to cancel a performance of Bruckner's Symphony No 7, scheduled for 21 January, due to ill health. Approaching the age of 87, Klemperer decides upon medical advice to conduct no longer in public but only in the recording studio.
1 December: as scheduled recording dates for Mozart's *Entführung* again and again have had to be moved Klemperer writes EMI producer Peter Andry that he has decided to withdraw from the project entirely, citing health reasons, but retaining the prospect of smaller recording projects. However, Klemperer never works again. Lotte Klemperer subsequently asks the NPO to remove his name as chief conductor from all their literature.
- 1973** 24 April: as a tribute to their former chief the NPO play Klemperer's Symphony No 2 under Lorin Maazel. Klemperer is not strong enough to attend.
14 May: among the few friends who visit him on his 88th birthday is Hans Curjel, whose monumental book *Experiment Krolloper 1927-1931* will appear in 1975.
28 June: Klemperer slips into a coma.
6 July: Klemperer dies in his home in Zurich at 6:15 in the afternoon and is buried on 10 July in the Jewish cemetery of Zurich-Friesenberg.



Based on:

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