

Music: Maestro's Return

Monday, Feb. 04, 1935

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For the tenth time in as many years the pulse of all musical New Yorkers beat faster last week. There was no new performer who had become the fashionable rage overnight, no gaudy advertisements, no fireworks. But a little grey-haired Italian had arrived in Manhattan again to conduct the Philharmonic-Symphony.

At rehearsals the orchestramen worked as they had not worked since the little Maestro left them last spring. They played Salome's Dance brilliantly enough to suit most conscientious conductors. But Arturo Toscanini interrupted time & again. He pleaded with them to remember that Salome was "a very passionate woman," attempted to illustrate by undulating his negligible hips.

At the performance audience and players rose as one man to honor the world's greatest conductor. But Toscanini rapped quickly for attention and proceeded to make something vital and thrilling out of Bruckner's long-winded Seventh Symphony. When the performance was ended the audience stayed to cheer but the conductor plucked at the concertmaster's sleeve, his cue for the players to clear the stage. For Toscanini, who scorns the dessert of applause, the evening ended with the last mighty unison of the Bach-Respighi Prelude & Fugue.