

‘...the unique strength of music as an ambassador for peace...’



**World Orchestra for Peace**

Founder Sir Georg Solti  
Conductor Valery Gergiev  
Patron Lady Solti  
Director Charles Kaye

## **Sir Georg Solti Conductor – biography –**

Sir Georg Solti was born György Stern on 21 October 1912, in Budapest, Hungary. He studied piano and composition with Ernő von Dohnányi, Zoltan Kodaly and Béla Bartók at the Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest, making his first public appearance at the age of 12. His first musical post was as assistant at the Budapest Opera in 1930, where he became répétiteur and conductor between 1934 and 1939. At the Salzburg Festivals of 1936 and 1937 he was assistant to Arturo Toscanini.

Solti went to Zurich at the outbreak of the Second World War, hoping Toscanini would act as his patron in America, but no visa was forthcoming and his family warned him not to return to Hungary. He resumed his career as a pianist, winning first prize at the Geneva International Competition in 1942. After the war, he was appointed General Music Director at the Munich Opera in 1946 and helped re-establish the company's high standards. In 1949 he conducted the music at Richard Strauss's funeral.

Solti went on to become one of the most influential conductors of the century holding the post of music director with the Frankfurt Opera (1952-61), Covent Garden (1961-71), the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra (1961), the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (1969-91), the Orchestre de Paris (1972-75), the Paris Opera (from 1973) and the London Philharmonic Orchestra (1979-83).

He made the first-ever complete stereo recording of the Ring cycle (still acclaimed as the milestone account of the four operas and recently voted Classical Recording of the Millennium), and in 1983 conducted it in Bayreuth in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the death of Richard Wagner. He also succeeded Herbert von Karajan as artistic director of the Salzburg Easter Festival (1992-94), and leaves a very considerable discography.

He died suddenly on 5 September 1997 while on holiday in Antibes, France, just as he was completing the final corrections to his memoirs.

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