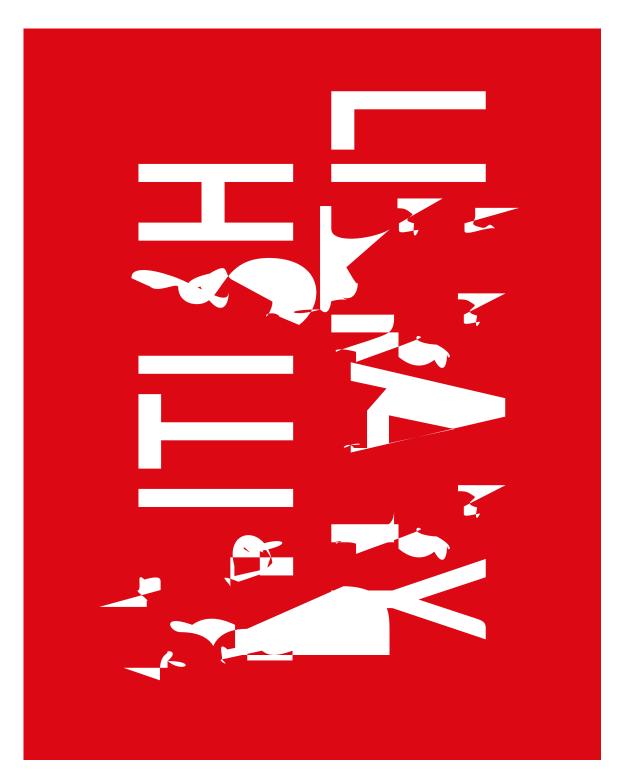# [Recording of the week: Toscanini conducts Elgar](#)

This week's selection comes from Kevin Lemonnier, Preservation Audio Engineer.

This is the only known recording in existence of Arturo Toscanini (1867-1957) conducting the BBC Symphony Orchestra performing Elgar's Introduction and Allegro Op. 47. The performance took place during the 1937 London Music Festival and was privately recorded off broadcast, onto a lacquer disc, by audio engineer [Kenneth H. Leech](#) (1892-1995).

[Toscanini conducting Elgar's Introduction and Allegro Op. 47](#)

Portrait of the composer Arturo Toscanini c.1926 (J. Paul Getty Museum)

The audio quality is rather poor due to wear and shrinkage of the cellulose nitrate but it still reveals a driving performance from the Italian master.

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[Recording of the week: John Blackwood McEwen](#)

This week's selection comes from Jonathan Summers, Curator of Classical Music Recordings.

Scottish composer Sir John Blackwood McEwen (1868-1948) had a distinguished career producing a large amount of music, little of which is heard today. He was Principal of the Royal Academy of Music from 1924-1936 and was knighted in 1931. His String Quartet No. 6, 'Biscay', written in 1913 (and confusingly published as No. 8), consists of three movements. The second and third were recorded in 1916 by the London String Quartet and a live recording from 1951 of the complete work exists from the Library of Congress. Here is the delightful third movement, [La racleuse](#) (The Oyster-Raker) from 1916.

[String Quartet No. 6 (Biscay)_La racleuse](#)

Portrait of Sir John Blackwood McEwan by Reginald Grenville Eves (Royal College of Music, CC BY-SA 4.0) via Wikimedia Commons

Visit Chamber Music on British Library Sounds to listen to more performances by the London String Quartet.

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