

4/23/2018 Question of the Week

In April 1933 (eighty-five years ago this month), famed Philadelphia Orchestra Conductor Leopold Stokowski teamed up with what technology company to perform the world's first concert transmitted by telephone wire?

- a) General Electric
- b) RCA Victor
- c) Bell Labs
- d) Westinghouse

Answer: Bell Labs

Leopold Stokowski (1882-1977) served as the Philadelphia Orchestra's conductor from 1912 to 1936. During his time in Philadelphia, Stokowski oversaw some of the orchestra most notable artistic and technological achievements accomplishments, such as introducing the nation to Gustav Mahler via his 8th Symphony in 1916 and producing the orchestra's first recordings starting in 1917.

In 1929, the orchestra began producing live radio broadcasts of concerts for NBC from its home in the Academy of Music on Broad Street. Displeased with the sound quality of the broadcasts, Stokowski sought out Dr. Harvey Fletcher of Bell Labs to help create technological solutions. Dr. Fletcher participated in Bell's work in recording technology and acoustic research during his tenure there from the 1920s to the 1940s.
