

CRQ Editions: Summer 2018

For many years the Austrian-born conductor Hans Swarowsky has held a great attraction for record collectors. A continuing presence in the earlier days of the LP, his name floated around numerous smaller labels, often in relation to rare and unusual repertoire. At the same time a respected teacher of conducting in Vienna his name was also closely linked to some of the major musical figures of more recent times: Abbado, Mehta, Sinopoli and many more. Yet live recordings conducted by Swarowsky have been very hard to come by. We now seek to rectify this situation with a rare live recording from the last year of Swarowsky's conductorship of the Scottish National orchestra, 1959, when he conducted both this orchestra and the BBC Scottish Orchestra in an incandescent version of Richard Strauss's *Ein Heldenleben*. This performance is also of interest in that it was given in St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow, which was subsequently burnt down in 1962. It was a fine Victorian concert Hall noted for its generous acoustic. The programme on this CD is completed by a further pair of live performances conducted by Swarowsky in Los Angeles in 1966, when he led the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestras in Richard Strauss's *Death and Transfiguration* and Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*.

2018 sees the sixtieth birthday of Aprile Millo, the American soprano who thrilled audiences largely in North and South America during the 1980s and 1990s. The true successor to the great dramatic soprano heritage of Cigna, Cerquetti and Souliotis, Millo is a singer of real substance. Her debut at Carnegie Hall, New York, took place in 1986 with a performance of Verdi's exciting opera *I Lombardi alla Prima Crociata*. This riveting performance has never before been released complete on CD, and *I Lombardi* is an opera not otherwise represented in Millo's discography. Conducting on this occasion was the great proponent of unfamiliar operas, Eve Queler. The cast also included Carlo Bergonzi singing a Verdi tenor role which he never recorded commercially, and the fine American bass Paul Plishka. Throughout the atmosphere is absolutely electric making this a live recording not to miss.

Václav Talich was one of the very greatest conductors of the early half of the twentieth century but his recorded legacy is small, partly as a result of the political upheavals of the 1930s and 1940s. A close friend of the composer Josef Suk, perhaps his finest recorded performance is his account of Suk's mighty *Asrael* Symphony, written in memory of both Suk's father-in-law Dvořák and his daughter and Suk's wife Otilka. With Talich conducting the Czech Philharmonic, which Talich did more than anyone else to establish as a great European orchestra, this is a performance of truly searing intensity. Graham Silcock's new transfer from pristine copies of a late Supraphon LP edition does full justice to this magisterial reading.

Shura Cherkassky's late stereo concerto recordings with Sir Adrian Boult and the London Philharmonic Orchestra, made originally by the World Record Club, have mysteriously never been reissued complete on CD, despite excellent engineering and attractive performances. The repertoire consists of the Schumann, Grieg and Tchaikovsky First Concertos as well as Litolff's *Scherzo* from his *Fourth Concerto Symphonique*. These recordings form an indispensable part of Cherkassky's elusive discography. As a filler we have also added his earlier, infectious account of Shostakovich's *First Piano Concerto*, with trumpeter Harold Jackson and the Philharmonia Orchestra under Herbert Menges.

A dominant figure in Viennese musical life through the twentieth century, the conductor and composer Max Schönherr has largely dropped completely out of sight since his death in 1984. Schönherr was conductor of the Vienna Radio Orchestra from 1938 to his retirement in 1968 and was a ceaseless supporter of Viennese light music. He was a natural choice to conduct operetta excerpts in the early 1950s when the American Remington label was using the Viennese radio as a source for master tapes. For his recordings of excerpts from *Die Fledermaus* and *Der Zigeunerbaron*

– Johann Strauss II's two most popular operettas – he assembled casts completely at home with the elusive idiom of Viennese operetta, which included the distinguished Hungarian mezzo Vera Rozsa and the German tenor Hugo Meyer-Welfing. These recordings are the aural equivalent of a glass of champagne!

Basil Cameron was one of the leading British conductors of the post-war era, having earned his international spurs as a conductor of the San Francisco and Seattle Symphony Orchestras during the inter-war period. Returning to England he assisted first Sir Henry Wood and then Sir Malcolm Sargent at the BBC Promenade Concerts conducting a vast number of concerts. Wood described Cameron as “a practical and professional musician with a real grip over the orchestra”. Rare recordings from two 1957 Promenade Concerts, released for the first time, now demonstrate Cameron's strengths with great clarity. In addition to shorter works by Rossini, Delius and Tchaikovsky, this newly published set contains two large scale concerti – Rachmaninov's Second Piano Concerto (with Cor de Groot) and Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto (with Ralph Holmes) as well as a considered performance of Tchaikovsky's Pathétique Symphony, with the final movement performed in memory of Denis Brain.

One of the most highly regarded clarinetists of the twentieth century, Reginald Kell divided his time between England and America. Perhaps for this reason his recordings tend to be more elusive than those of many other distinguished instrumentalists. His excellent accounts of the two Mozart Wind Serenades, K. 375 and K. 388, and of the Mozart Clarinet Concerto were all made for the American Decca (no relation to British Decca) company in the early 1950s. They fully demonstrate why Kell was held in such high regard, not least by such connoisseurs as Sir Thomas Beecham, with whom he performed the Mozart Concerto at the first concert ever to be given by the Philharmonia Orchestra, in 1945.

The Lithuanian-born French based pianist Vlado Perlemuter was one of the most poetic interpreters of Chopin of his generation. His cool, slightly understated but technically immaculate performances brought out all the poetry of Chopin's music, in ways that often eluded more demonstrative pianists. Perlemuter made three purely Chopin LPs for the Concert Hall label during the later 1950s. Until now these have never been issued as a complete set. Comprising the complete Waltzes, but performed in Perlemuter's own fascinating personal order, the complete Preludes and a varied recital containing several major individual works, this set presents both a major pianist of the twentieth century at his finest and a most satisfying Chopin recital.

Jascha Horenstein continues to be one of the best-selling conductors on CRQ Editions. To date there have been two significant gaps in Horenstein's available discography: Mozart's Symphony No. 40 and Brahms's Symphony no. 4, in each case an absence preventing the creation of a complete cycle of both the late Mozart symphonies and the complete Brahms symphonies. These gaps are now rectified with the publication of performances emanating from Horenstein's visit to the capital of Uruguay, Montevideo, in 1955, when he conducted both these key works in concerts with the symphony orchestra created and run by the Uruguay government, La Orquesta Sinfonica del Sodre. Recorded by Uruguay Radio these performances fill key gaps in our understanding of Horenstein's genius.

The first volume in our publication of Maurice Cole's complete recording of Bach's 48 Preludes and Fugues, originally recorded by Saga, has been well received, and we now publish the second volume. This set of three CDs contains not only the complete Book Two of Bach's 48, but also stereo recordings of Bach's Italian Concerto and Overture in the French Style in B minor. The reissue of Cole's complete recording of Bach's 48 has helped to re-establish his presence as one of England's major pianists of the last mid-century period.

In addition to the normal release of CDs, the autumn also sees the publication of two other issues of interest to record collectors. The first of these is a DVD-ROM containing the complete concerts conducted by Sergiu Celibidache with the London Symphony Orchestra between 1978 and 1982 in high quality mp3 files. Celibidache made a major impact on British musical life with an aesthetic quite at odds with what was then considered usual. The second publication of interest is the first edition of a complete discography of the recordings of Sir Charles Mackerras by Brian Godfrey. Mackerras's recording legacy was enormous, containing many recordings of the greatest interest, of which this discography provides full details.