

1756

W. A. MOZART

2006



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Sir THOMAS BEECHAM [St. Helens, Lancashire 1879-London 1961] developed a keen appreciation of literature, but only conducting interested him as a career. His first concerts, financed by his mother, were not successful; to improve he watched and listened in London's music venues. His father's treatment of his mother led to an estrangement, but with reconciliation Beecham's Pills financed seasons of opera and ballet at Covent Garden and Drury Lane from 1910 to 1914. During a career spanning six decades he founded four orchestras; the second plays here. Early reviews were cool, though gradually they waxed ever warmer. Perhaps his greatest achievement was in his self-appointed task to rehabilitate Mozart; a task shared with Bruno Walter. He had little interest in such matters as original instruments and small orchestras, but the elegance, balance and rhythm of his late recordings of Haydn and Mozart has not been matched by those who have. The excellent first horn in this record is probably one of the Brain family.

JULES BOUCHERIT [Morlaix 1878-Paris 1962] was taught by his mother, herself a violin teacher, and from 1890 by Jules Garcin at the Paris Conservatoire, where he took prizes in 1891 and 1892. He studied also with Lefort, a pupil of Massart. From 1894 he shared soloist duties at the Concert Colonne with his friend Thibaud. He gave many recitals in Paris with leading pianists including Diémer and Cortot. In 1920, at the suggestion of Fauré he became professor of violin at the Conservatoire, but in 1921 poor health forced him to give up public performance. He taught for over 30 years, his pupils including Astruc, Bobesco, Gitlis, Ferras, Neveu, Szeryng, Temianka and Denise Soriano. He later married the latter; she gave the première of Britten's violin concerto.

JOHN LEMMONÉ [Ballarat 1861- ?] was the son of an unsuccessful Greek gold digger named Lamoni. Lamoni soon became Lemon, adapted by his son for obvious reasons. Lemmoné started with a tin whistle, saw a flute in a pawnbroker's window and panned sufficient gold to purchase it. As a soloist he played with many orchestras and toured several times with Patti. As an impresario he brought Paderewski and other leading artists to Australia. For almost fifty years he was Melba's manager and flautist in her virtuoso repertoire. The relationship was one of mutual respect, it was entirely professional, and Lemmoné was perhaps the only person able to influence her.

ADA SASSOLI RUATA [Bologna 1886 or 1887-Rome 1946] studied in her native town and then with the virtuoso Hasselmans at the Paris Conservatoire, where she won first prize in 1902. She toured extensively in Europe and America, and toured the United Kingdom and Australia with Melba in 1904 and 1905. She played with various American orchestras and was a soloist with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. In 1916 she returned to Europe to be professor of harp at the

Accademia Chigiana of Sienna. Later she was professor at the Accademia Santa Cecilia in Rome. Her records include solos and accompaniments for Melba.

SERGEI RACHMANINOFF [1873-1943] In an interview Arthur Rubinstein was asked “You must have heard all the great pianists of the 20th century; who in your opinion was the greatest?” Without a moment’s hesitation: “Rachmaninov!” Rachmaninov is remembered today mainly as a composer; sometimes a composer can illuminate works of another composer beyond the powers of others.

EUGEN d'ALBERT [Glasgow 1864-Riga 1932] was of mixed Italian, French, German and Scottish origins. In 1876 he was in the first intake of the National Training School for Music (now the R.C.M.). He was taught piano by Ernst Pauer and composition by the Principal, Arthur Sullivan and he assisted Sullivan with orchestration. He was much influenced by Wagner, who visited London in 1877. He was amongst Liszt’s last pupils and Liszt spoke of him as a second Tausig. He met Brahms and played his concerti under him. Later his playing suffered as he gave himself more to composition.

MAXIMILIAN SCHWEDLER [Hirschberg 1853-Leipzig 1940] At his audition for the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra in 1881 he played the 265 note solo from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* in one breath. In 1895 he became principal flautist. Thus, from 1891 to 1897 he played under Mahler. From 1885 to c.1921 the firm of Kruspe manufactured conical bore flutes, essentially of early 19th century type, to his designs with improved intonation, mechanisms and response; all achieved without loss of traditional quality of tone. He wrote ‘the last great tutor for the simple system flute’ [Baines 1967]; the later editions omit any mention of ‘modern’ composers, Stravinsky, Debussy etc. Brahms praised Schwedler’s flutes and learned to play one.

ROBERT RADFORD [Nottingham 1874-London 1933] studied at the Royal Academy of Music. His concert début was at the Norwich Festival of 1899 and his stage début at Covent Garden as the Commendatore [*Don Giovanni*] in 1904. He was Hagen and Hunding in the first Ring cycle in English at Covent Garden under Hans Richter in 1910. From 1911 to 1919 he was first bass of the Beecham Opera and he was the first English Boris Godunov. In 1921 he became leading director of the British National Opera Company and became its first director. From 1929 he taught at the R.A.M. He never sang abroad, partly because his career was plagued by ill health.

LÉNER QUARTET In the uncertain times at the end of the Great War Jenő Léner and Józef Smilovits, violins, Sándor Roth, viola and Imre Hartman, cello left the Budapest Opera Orchestra, retired to the country and studied with Leó Weiner to form a quartet. All were born in the years 1894 and 1895, and all were first class players with similar notions of vibrato, tone production and portamento; the latter more than is fashionable today. The personnel remained unchanged from the quartet’s début in 1919 until it broke up in Mexico in 1941. It achieved enormous

popularity, particularly in the Beethoven centenary year, unchallenged until the rise of the Busch Quartet in the '30s.

FLONZALEY QUARTET Aristotle's magnanimous man gave a trireme to the state; the Swiss-American banker Edward de Coppet sponsored a quartet. The founder members were Adolfo Betti and Alfred Pochon, violins, Ugo Ara (Louis Bailly 1918-1924), viola, and Iwan d'Archambeau, cello, all of the Belgian school. Sponsorship and single-minded commitment to chamber music resulted in performances of the highest standard. The quartet performed from 1903 to 1929.

Sir CHARLES SANTLEY [Liverpool 1834-Hove near Brighton 1922] was a choirboy and amateur singer before studying with Gaetano Nava in Milan and Manuel Garcia in London. In 1857 he appeared in London in Haydn's *Creation* and in Pavia as the doctor in *La Traviata*. He was soon singing at the Opéra in Paris and at Covent Garden. He was in the premières of *Lurline* (Wallace, 1860), *The Puritan's Daughter* (Balfe, 1861) and *The Lilly of Killarney* (Benedict, 1862), and Gounod added an aria for him in the English première of *Faust* in 1863. In 1870 Santley was the first English Flying Dutchman (in Italian). He was in great demand for the various English music festivals and for three decades from 1871 he made highly acclaimed tours of North America, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. His 1903 records were probably made at a low pitch of A = c.430Hz.

GRAZIELLA PARETO née Engràcia Pareto y Homs [Barcelona 1889-Rome 1973] studied with Caridad Hernández in Barcelona and with Melchior Vidal in Milan. Her début was as Micaëla (*Carmen*) in Barcelona in 1906. She sang at the Teatro Colón, Buenos Aires; Teatro Payret, Havana; La Scala; the Opéra, Monte Carlo; the Ravinia Opera, Chicago; the Salzburg Festival; the San Carlo, Naples; the Imperial Opera, St. Petersburg and at Covent Garden in the Beecham Company. She had great success in such roles as Gilda (*Rigoletto*), Adina (*L'Elisir d'Amore*), Ophelia (*Hamlet-Thomas*), Rosina (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*) and Violetta (*La Traviata*).

LILLI LEHMANN [Würzburg 1848-Berlin 1929] was born into a family of singers and was taught by her mother. From her début in 1865 as first boy in *Die Zauberflöte* her repertoire widened with astonishing versatility to include over 170 roles - Brünnhilde (*Siegfried* and *Die Götterdämmerung*), Dinorah, Donna Anna and Donna Elvira, Euryanthe, Carmen, Isolde, Leonore (*Fidelio*), Marguerite de Valois (*Les Huguenots*), Norma, Philine (*Mignon*), the Queen of the Night, Rosina, Sulamith (*Die Königin von Saba*) and Violetta. Also astonishing is that she could sing several diverse roles in one week. At the opening season of Bayreuth in 1876 she sang Helmwig, Woglinde and the Forest Bird. The scenes of her greatest triumphs were Berlin, from 1870, Vienna, from 1882, and New York, from 1885. Her career lasted in opera 45 years, and in concert almost 60 years. She organised the Salzburg Festivals from 1901 and sang in them. Her students included Farrar, Fremstad, Laubenthal and Ursuleac.

JOHN McCORMACK [Athlone 1884-Boosterstown near Dublin 1945] was taught

by Vincent O'Brien in Dublin and in 1902 won a prize there; later another prize-winner became his wife. In 1906 a patron enabled him to study in Milan under Vincenzo Sabbatini. After experience in minor Italian houses he appeared at Covent Garden in 1907 and went on to become one of the most admired opera singers world wide. However, he felt that operatic situations were contrived and artificial and, recognising his own limitations as an actor, he turned to the recital platform and the new wireless. Though of Scottish immigrant parentage, he saw himself as intensely Irish and is regarded by many as the greatest Irishman of the first half of the 20th century.

The ODEON GRAND STRING ORCHESTRA Before the Great War catalogues offered very little symphonic fare, and then only an occasional movement. Allowing that the work is compressed to fit on to four '78' sides; about 18 minutes, this may well be from the first 'complete' recording of a symphony; the rightly more celebrated Beethoven Fifth under Arthur Nikisch following in 1913. The conductor is not named and one can only surmise that the players were drawn from one or more of the Berlin orchestras. Full wind scoring is clearly heard; though not always entering as written.

LUCREZIA BORI née Lucrezia Borja Gonzalés de Riancho [Gandia near Valencia 1887-New York 1960] was educated in a convent school and then studied piano and theory at the Valencia Conservatory. In 1908 she studied voice in Milan with Sibella and Vidal. Her début as Micaëla in Rome resulted in immediate engagement for La Scala, where she was the first Octavian in 1911. She appeared with great success in Barcelona, Buenos Aires, Busseto (Verdi centenary 1913), Madrid, Paris and especially New York, frequently with Caruso. An operation on her vocal chords in 1915 halted her career, but in 1919, after renewed study, she sang again. She appeared in many premières. In 1936 she retired and joined the management of the Metropolitan Opera.

HERMANN JADLOWKER [Riga 1877-Tel-Aviv 1953] came from an orthodox Jewish background. His father allowed him to study singing with the Riga cantor Rossowski and later agreed to him having a career in opera. Thus he studied in Vienna under Gänsbacher. After experience in Cologne and Stettin he returned in 1901 to Riga where, for five years he doubled as opera singer and cantor. From 1907 he appeared for many years in Berlin, but also sang extensively in Boston, London, Stuttgart (Bacchus, première *Ariadne auf Naxos* 1912), The Hague (Beethoven Festival 1910), New York and Vienna. In 1929 he returned to Riga as cantor and teacher. He emigrated to Palestine in 1938, teaching and occasionally singing. The voice is not always ingratiating, but it is always expertly managed and musically used.

BRASS BAND Stollwerck is a well known make of chocolate in Germany. One guesses that records were pressed in chocolate for consumption and in plastic for listening. A special machine must have been needed for these tiny (3.1"/8cm diameter) vertically recorded discs. The words of the song, from a set of three

commissioned for a children's book, are printed on the elegant box; presumably one sang along with Mozart in the nursery.

CHOIR with QUARTETTE of SOLOISTS of the CAPELLA SISTINA The first recordings of the Capella Sistina, the Pope's personal choir since the 4th century, were made in 1902 and 1904. Separating the two sessions was the Motu Proprio by which Pope Pius X, newly elected and keenly interested in music, swept away secular practices which had invaded liturgical music. The record calls to mind Mozart's visit to the Sistine Chapel in 1770 and how after hearing Allegri's *Miserere* he went home and wrote out the entire score from memory. Alessandro Moreschi, the last castrato, can be heard leading the vocal quartet.

ANTONINA NEZHDANOVA [Krivaya Balka near Odessa 1873-Moscow 1950] was part Polish, Russian and Ukrainian. Both parents were teachers with good voices; the home was full of music. Only in 1899 could she commence serious studies at the Moscow Conservatoire. Her fees were covered by Dr. Burda, a friend, and she was taught by Umberto Mazetti, whom she later married. She also studied piano. In 1902 as part of her finals she sang Costanza (*Il Seraglio*) at the Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow. On the strength of this she was asked at short notice to sing Antonida (*Ivan Susanin*). She became rapidly a leading soprano throughout Russia, but, from choice, rarely went abroad. An exception was the 1912 season in Paris, where she sang with great success, particularly in *Rigoletto* with Caruso and Ruffo. After the revolution she sang in Europe to suit the new régime's cultural aspirations. She continued to appear in concerts and on the radio until 1943. After Mazetti's death in 1919 she married the pianist Nicolai Glovanov. In 1944 she became a professor at the Moscow Conservatoire.

ZINAIDA JURJEVSKAJA [Russia 1894 or 1896-Andermatt 1925] was a student of Alma Fohström and sang at the Marinsky Theatre, St. Petersburg before leaving in 1917 to study in Berlin, where she made her début in 1922 in *Le Coq d'Or*. Here, in 1924 she sang the title role in the local première of *Jenufa*. During a fit of depression whilst on holiday in Switzerland she took poison and threw herself into the River Reuss.

LOUISE KIRKBY LUNN [Manchester 1873-London 1930] had some lessons locally and then studied with Alberto Visetti at the Royal College of Music. In 1893, whilst still a student, she appeared at short notice in *Genoveva* (Schumann-English première) and in 1894 in *Le Roi la dit* (Delibes). Her official début was in 1896 as Nora in *Shamus O'Brien* (Stanford-première). From 1897 to 1899 she was with the Carl Rosa Opera Company, from 1901 to 1914 and from 1921 to 1922 she sang at Covent Garden; including Caruso's début in 1902. From 1902 to 1904 and from 1906 to 1908 she was at the Metropolitan Opera. In 1909 she was the first English Delilah. She excelled as a Wagner singer and she had an extensive career on the concert platform.

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