



Nimbus Records

Weber
Schubert
Schumann
Brahms
Stanford
Hurlstone

with
David Lloyd
piano

Jack Brymer

Nimbus
Rediscovered Recordings

Nimbus - Rediscovered Recordings

Jack Brymer, clarinet (1915-2003)

David Lloyd, piano (1937-2010)

DISC 1

Johannes Brahms

	Clarinet Sonata No. 1 in F minor Op. 120 No. 1 (1894)	22:27
1	I Allegro appassionato	8:02
2	II Andante un poco adagio	4:30
3	III Allegretto grazioso	4:27
4	IV Vivace	5:28

Carl Maria von Weber

	Grand duo concertant Op. 48 (1815-16)	19:30
5	I Allegro con fuoco	6:56
6	II Andante con moto	5:59
7	III Rondo. Allegro	6:35

Johannes Brahms

	Clarinet Sonata No. 2 in E-flat Op. 120 No. 2	21:05
8	I Allegro amabile	8:38
9	II Allegro appassionato	5:22
10	III Andante con moto	7:04

Total playing time 63:19

Analogue Recording

Tracks 1-7

Recorded in Handsworth Wood Studio, Birmingham, 1-2 October 1973

Engineer: Gerald Reynolds Producer: Numa Labinsky

Previously released on LP NI2108

DISC 2

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

	Sonata in A minor D.821 'Arpeggione'	15:27
1	I Allegro moderato	5:59
2	II Adagio	3:54
3	III Allegretto	5:34

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

	Fantasiestücke Op. 73	11:16
4	I Zart und mit Ausdruck	3:33
5	II Lebhaft, leicht	3:22
6	III Rasch und mit Feuer	4:21

William Hurlstone (1876-1906)

	Characteristic Pieces for clarinet and piano (1899)	14:48
7	I Ballade	5:54
8	II Croon Song	2:58
9	III Intermezzo	2:11
10	IV Scherzo	3:45

Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924)

	Clarinet Sonata Op. 129 (1911) ICS 14	19:43
11	I Allegro moderato	7:34
12	II Caoine	5:57
13	III Allegretto grazioso	6:12

Total playing time 61:08

Digital Recording

CD 1 Tracks 8-10 & CD 2

Recorded at Wyastone Leys Concert Hall, 29-30 April 1992

Engineer & Producer Crac Downes

The present release is part of a short series of recordings sitting on the shelves of the Nimbus archive that were 'rediscovered' during the 2020 COVID shutdowns. In those quiet days idle hands and minds posed the question: 'So, do we have anything unissued that we can use to construct a release programme?' This casual enquiry initiated a full investigation that has continued for five years and revealed more than fifty recording projects that, for one reason or another, never made it into the world. Some of these recordings go back to the founding of Nimbus in the late 1960s. There is no single reason to account for their neglect, and in every case we have found no justification for holding them back any longer. The original analogue tapes, typically one-inch, four track, 30ips, transferred to a digital medium with no problem. We decided to archive them at 192k, thus preserving them for next generation use. Early digital tapes, from 1981/82, using U-matic cassettes, sometimes required surgical intervention to repair passages of lost signal, but having been stored in the same warm, dark room for their entire lives also transferred reliably for the most part.

Jack Brymer

The following brief biography appears on the LP sleeve of a recording titled 'The Voice of The Instrument' released on the Discourses label in 1973. This short-lived series had educational as well as musical aims. Jack Brymer was the obvious, perhaps the only, choice to present a recital of clarinet masterworks to the British public. On this record his colleagues were The Fidelio Quartet and David Lloyd (piano).

Jack Brymer OBE MA Hon RAM. Born in South Shields, Jack Brymer was educated at London University and started his professional life as a teacher. In 1947 he was invited by Sir Thomas Beecham to join the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, where he became principal clarinet. He served on the staff of the Royal Academy of Music from 1951 to 1958 and as Professor at the Royal Military School of Music, Kneller Hall. In 1963, after the death of Sir Thomas Beecham, he became principal clarinet of the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

Other musical appointments include Director of the London Wind Soloists, member of the Wigmore Prometheus and of the London Baroque Ensemble. Jack Brymer is now principal clarinet with the LSO and in recent years has established an international reputation as a soloist.

Always a popular figure among professional musicians, Jack Brymer now reaches a much wider public through his numerous records and regular appearances both on radio and television.

Jack Brymer's work is well represented on record as an outstanding orchestral player and concerto soloist. He also made appearances directing The London Wind Soloists on the Decca label in the 1960s, notably in the five LP set of Mozart Complete Wind Music (1963). But of his recital work with piano there is very little apart from the Discourses LP already mentioned, and the Nimbus album recorded in October 1973 and released in 1979. This recital contained two cornerstones of Brymer's repertoire, one or both of them invariably included in virtually every concert he gave, Weber's 'Grand Duo Concertant' and Brahms' F minor Sonata. The LP remained in the catalogue until Nimbus closed its LP manufacturing in the early 1980s. The present issue is the first reissue in any format. The session notes show an entirely trouble-free couple of days. They include ideas for further projects, listing music by Schubert, Brahms, Poulenc and Hindemith, but no return visits occurred at this time.

Although I was not present on the 1973 sessions I do have a personal connection. David Lloyd was my tutor at the RNCM in Manchester between 1977-79. In those years I turned pages for him at many recitals with Jack Brymer, hearing all of their repertoire on multiple occasions. I appreciated Jack as a captivating performer one who established immediate rapport with all types of audiences, schools, music societies, concert venues big and small. He spoke about the music he was about to play fluently always giving helpful signposts to listeners less familiar with classical music. In August 1979 David and I were making a return trip to Manchester from a Brymer/Lloyd concert in the West Country. We stopped off to see the founders of Nimbus in Monmouth. There the journey ended for me. I did not go back to College but was

tempted away from academia by the founder of Nimbus. The offer of a six-month position as 'musical person without portfolio', sometime sleeve-note writer, and (very) junior producer seemed too good to pass.

David and Jack had a very close musical bond though they were complete opposites, Jack calm and urbane, David, always a nervous performer, often on the edge of hysteria. But it worked. I believe their collaboration began in the late 1960s. The first recital notice I have found being for a Lecture Recital 'My Life with the Clarinet' at the Benn Memorial Hall, Rugby Saturday 15 March 1969. They worked together for the remainder of Jack's concert life.

The second recording session took place in the Nimbus Foundation concert hall in April 1992, almost twenty years after the first session in Birmingham. It came about through Crac Downes, the son of conductor Sir Edward Downes, who as a young man had been a pupil of Jack Brymer. He was working in the music department at Nimbus and suggested that we should capture some more of the duo's repertoire before it was too late.

Brahms Sonata in E-flat was an obvious choice, as were the Schubert and Schumann pieces. Less obvious were the Hurlstone Characteristic Pieces and the Stanford Sonata. I imagine Jack and David wanted to get some of the bigger pieces in the can, but it would have been equally wonderful to have snuck in the 'Pocket Size Sonata' by Alec Templeton or Joseph Horowitz's Sonatina. Jack Brymer was a serious musician, but he played the smaller pieces with unrivalled delicacy. Perhaps a legacy of his years with the RPO under Beecham. The 1992 sessions were edited and sent to the performers and there the project halted. For reasons lost to time this material is only now in 2026 getting its first release.

As a champion of the clarinet, without peer in the UK, Jack Brymer's observations on the rise of the clarinet in the 20th century are worth repeating.

The rise in popularity of the clarinet – as an instrument to play, rather than just to hear – during the past two decades, has been a phenomenon somewhat difficult to explain. There is no single reason for this, but rather a compound of several. ... The first reason must certainly be its recent comparative cheapness, in contrast with the price paid for the three other main members of the woodwind family. The second reason – its extreme versatility. This flexibility of character means that the clarinet can be used in almost every musical combination, from huge symphony orchestras to small jazz groups. From large military or concert bands to the smallest of chamber music combinations. ... Naturally, the instrument is not by any means perfect. It is the most difficult of all instruments to keep perfectly in tune, and the very variety of tone which is its glory means that you can also make a really unpleasant noise on it if you are not fully determined to do otherwise. The instrument in fact needs a *musical* approach to be really played; and this is one reason for the fact that although many are called, few are chosen.

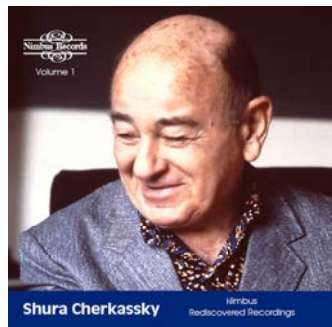
Extract from the booklet presented with Discourses LP ABK 16, 1973

Adrian Farmer. Creative Director, Nimbus Records

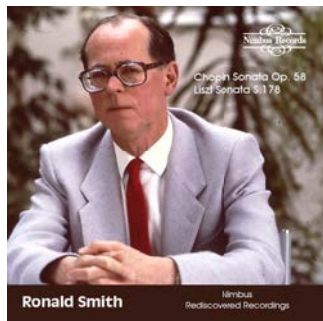
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Studio recordings from 1975 & 1977



Studio recordings from 1981



Studio recordings from 1980



Studio recordings from 1972