

# PIANO SOUNDSCAPES

## PIANO SOUNDSCAPES



### VOLUME 1



“ An incredible story of focus and passion on how this catalogue came to exist. The music is outstanding and will be here for the planet to enjoy for many decades to come. We are honoured to work with James Stewart on growing new markets for this great catalogue. ”

**Damien Reilly** | Blue Pie Records USA

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# About The Condon Collection

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A portion of the Condon Collection piano rolls, prior to shipment from Australia.

The Condon music roll archive captures the playing of more than 700 pianists including Debussy and Gershwin.

The world's leading authority on piano rolls, Australian Denis Condon compiled this collection. Born in Hamilton, NSW in 1933, Condon began collecting piano rolls at the age of 15. His father, who had a heart condition and could no longer pump the pedals of the household player piano, traded the instrument for a reproducing piano.

As Condon says: "I was the only person I knew at the time who was interested in them,"

Manufactured in the early 1900s by companies including Welte Mignon (first marketed in 1904), Ampico (1911), Duo-Art (1914) and Hupfeld's Triphonola (1919), paper piano rolls recorded the degree of the force with which each note must be struck to reproduce the music as the artist played it in the recording session, which created a faithful reproduction of their playing style and technique.

Many legendary artists of this era preferred this medium to other recording methods such as cylinders or shellac discs. Now totalling more than 7,000 rolls (many more than 100 years old), the Condon Collection offers fascinating insights into the playing of Stravinsky, Gershwin, Debussy, Rubinstein, Horowitz and more. One of the jewels of the collection is the section devoted to Australian pianist-composer Percy Grainger. We have every recording made by Percy Grainger for the Duo-Art piano here in the collection as extremely rare orchestral and symphonic works as transcribed for piano.

Even though owners of reproducing pianos (Pianola's) often lament about what was not recorded in the twenty-five years of their reign as machines that "re-enacted the artist" in living rooms, we must consider ourselves fortunate for what was done.

Who would have thought that we could hear Eugene Goossens play the piano? Or Manuel de Falla? Or Scriabin who died as long ago as 1915?

This collection of rare performances not only contains music that had been not heard for over 60 years but "rarities" with many of them being treasures that were only discovered once the catalogue was created. The collection has been compiled with the help of James Stewart, one of Australia's greatest producers. This catalogue has been created for the world to enjoy and is now available digitally in a new repackaged form under the name of "PianoSounscapes Vol 1 - 50".

## **The Collection Highlights include recordings by:**

Richard Strauss (1864-1949) a prolific composer and one of the greatest conductors of his time. He made a mere handful of roll recordings, mainly for Welte Mignon. His performance of his own Dance of the Seven Veils leaves no doubt of his pianistic accomplishment.

Manuel de Falla (1876-1946) made six rolls, four for the Pleyela reproducing piano of music from The Three Cornered Hat and two for the Welte Mignon which contain two each of his Four Spanish Pieces. The second roll is recorded here. What an achievement!

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924) plays his own arrangement of the Pavane Op.60. It is one of twenty-two rolls he recorded, all of his own music except for Debussy's Fileuse from Pelleas and Melisande.

Raoul Laparra (1876-1943) will send many listeners to the music directory. He was a Prix de Rome winner in 1903 and he made use of Spanish idioms in his music. He made ten rolls, all of his own music. Judging by the five little pieces recorded here, he was a fine pianist.



Steinway Red Welte (1922), interior



The roll of Percy Grainger and his mother playing four hand music is unique. It is the only example of Rose Graingers playing in existence. Recorded in 1918, the roll was issued eighteen months after Rose's suicide in 1922. The two pieces are fragments and, if photographs of them at the piano are any guide, Rose played Primo.

Cyril Scott (1879-1970) made twenty-two rolls, all of his own music. The three heard here were recorded in Europe. Compare Lotus Land with Grainger's performance (also in the Collection).

Eugene Goossens (1893-1962) was well known as a conductor and a string player. He was also an efficient pianist. He made five rolls. This Folk Tune is one of two studies from his Op.38.

Alfred Grunfeld (1852-1924) made more than one hundred rolls, mostly of his own music. He was very popular in Germany and Austria. The lovely Romance heard here makes the listener very curious about other music by him. How the mighty has fallen - he is not listed in the New Grove!

Carlos Salzedo (1855-1961) a harpist, recorded the piano accompaniment for Debussy's Sacred and Secular Dances for harp and orchestra. One wonders just how much demand there was for this item. This Reverie is his only other roll.

Darius Milhaud (1892-1974) recorded seven rolls including some Chopin Mazurkas. The Memories of Brazil, heard here, were recorded in New York in 1927.

George Liebling (1865-1946), a pupil of Liszt, recorded some fifty rolls, many of them of his own music. He lived the latter part of his life in Hollywood.

Alfredo Casella (1883-1947) was a prolific composer. He made about twenty rolls. This little suite has three movements - Prelude, Serenata and Berceuse.

John Ireland (1879-1962) made only the two rolls heard here. Ragamuffin is the second of his London Pieces.

Max Reger (1872-1916) another prolific composer, he made twenty-two rolls, all of his own music. The Intermezzo heard here is in G minor and is No.5 from Op.45.

We hope that you will enjoy this collection of recordings as much as we have in putting this new packaging together.



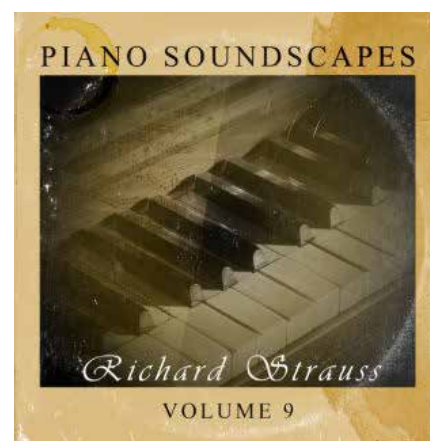
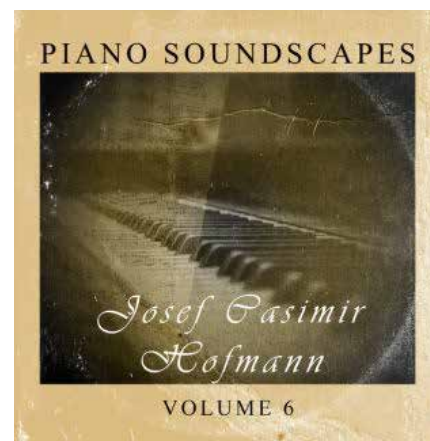
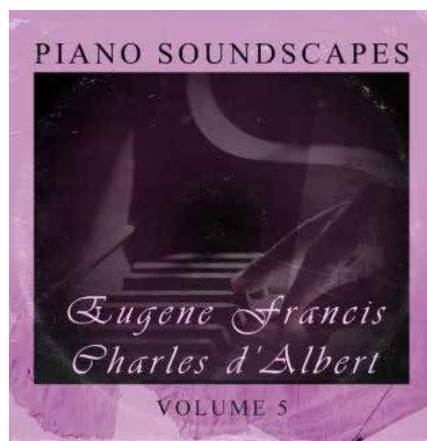
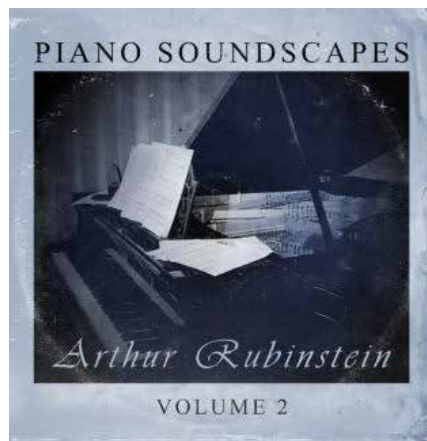
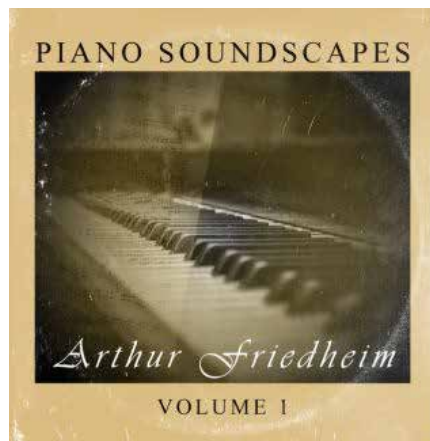
Aeolian Pianola circa. 1920

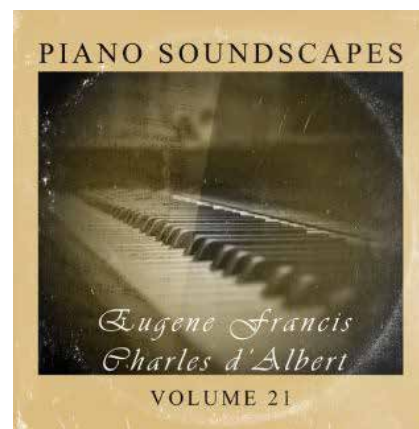
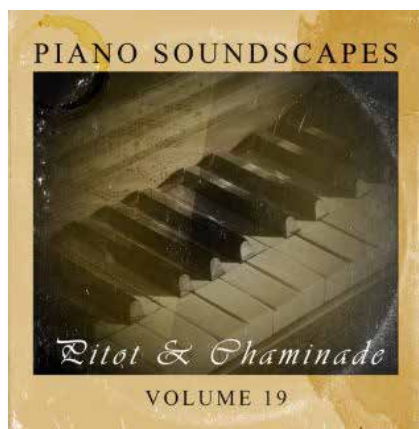
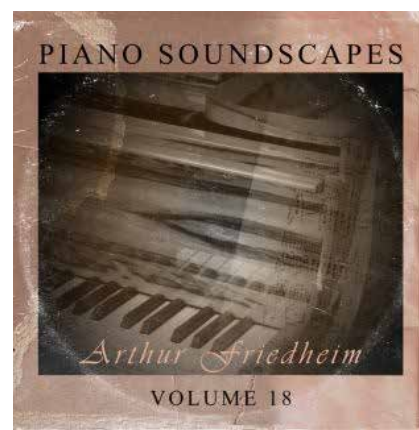
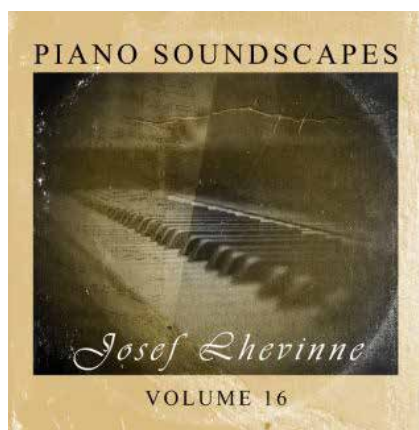
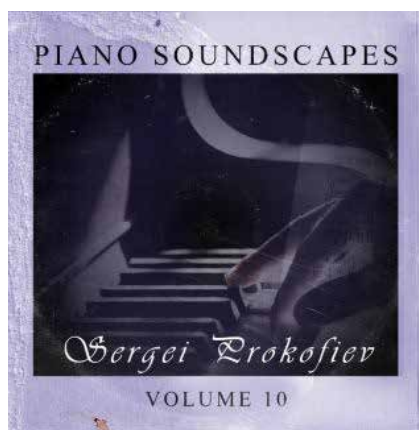


Behning Pianola

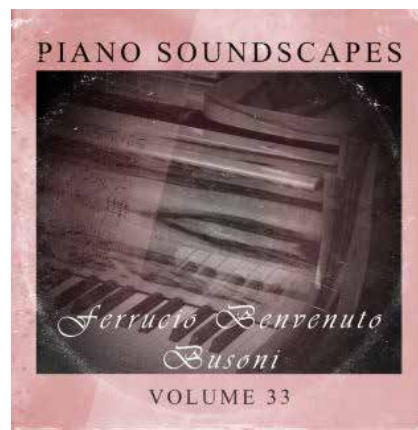
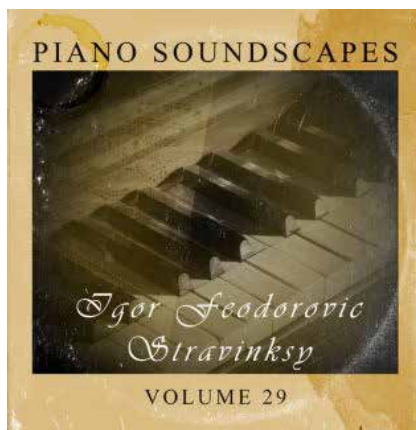
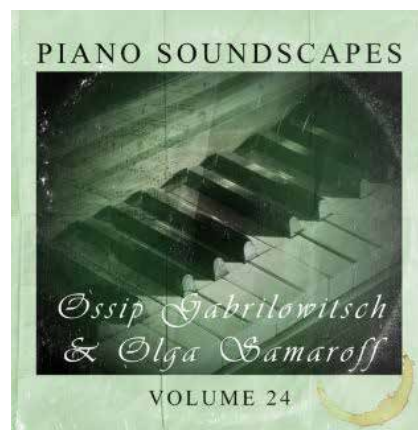


# Catalogue

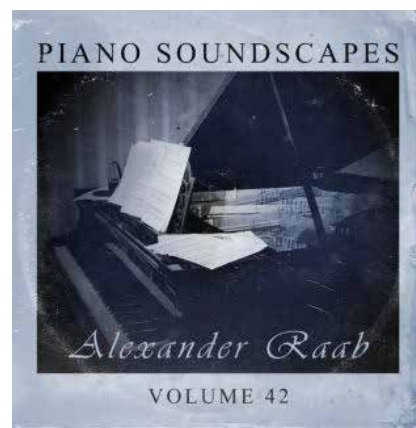
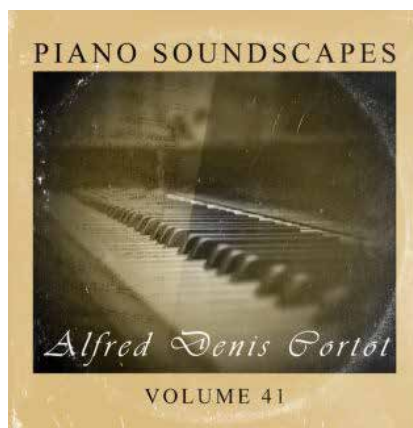
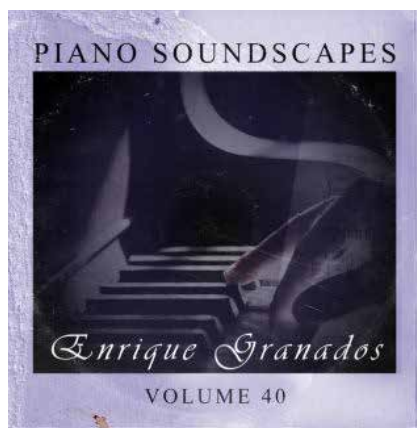
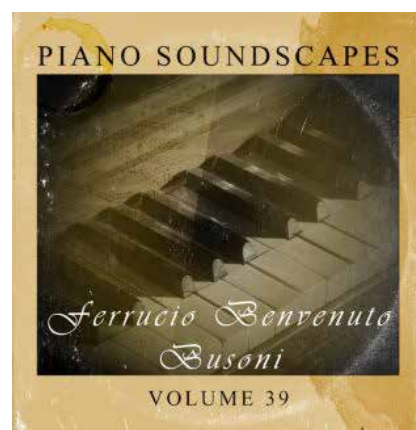
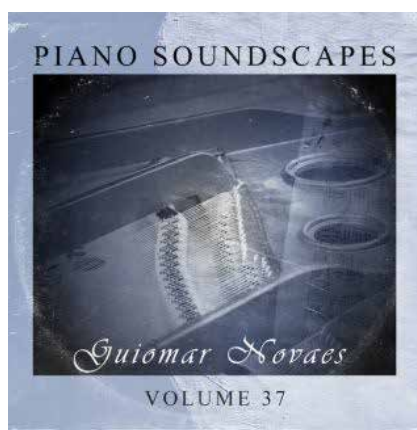
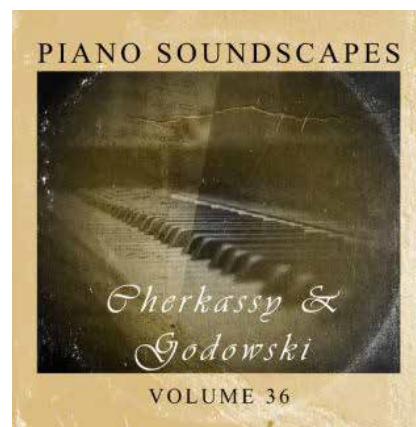












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# Artists

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## **Vladimir Horowitz (1904-1989)**

Along with Arrau, Serkin and Cherkassky, Horowitz has recently become a ghost in The Masters of the Roll.

Few pianists gained fame and recognition as rapidly as did Horowitz. His success in his native Russia before he was twenty-one was extraordinary. In St. Petersburg, at the age of sixteen, he played eleven programs without repeating an item. It was at this time, 1925, that he traveled to Freiburg to record his playing for the Welte Mignon. The recording rooms at Welte, so stylishly designed, must have pleased him greatly.

The longest phase of his career began with his first tour of the United States in 1928. A quick guide to the excitement engendered by Horowitz's playing in this collection may be had from just one track, the Doumka by Tchaikovsky. The composer thought this was his finest work for the piano - it is easy to agree with him when it is heard in this performance. To hear the young Horowitz with the fidelity offered by the compact disc is indeed a rare treat!



## **Claude Debussy (1862-1918)**

Although Debussy had no particular reputation as a pianist, he nevertheless was, from contemporary accounts, a fine interpreter of his own music. The gramophone records of his playing in existence are those in which he accompanied Mary Garden singing some of his songs. The group of Welte Mignon recordings which he made in 1913 are the only means by which his solo playing may be heard today.

While preparing his new edition of Debussy's piano music for Durand, Roy Howat made an extensive study of these rolls and he concluded that, in almost every case, where Debussy's performance on the roll differed from the printed score, the roll seemed to offer the more logical version of the music.

Debussy's playing of Evening in Granada haunts the memory long after hearing it. The magical habanera rhythm, the sounds of a distant flamenco and the Moorish touches in the melody - it all captures a rare atmosphere. The Submerged Cathedral is amazing, a unique performance in regard to tempo, dynamic contrasts and pedaling.



## **Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)**

Stravinsky was one of the first composers to write specially for the mechanical piano. His Etude for Pianola written for the Aeolian Company in 1917 made use of the fact that the composer was not restricted to ten (or twenty) fingers. Writing about his transcriptions of works for the player piano, he said: "It developed and exercised my imagination by constantly setting me new problems of instrumentation, closely bound up with acoustics, harmony and part-writing. The Firebird Ballet was the most ambitious set of rolls ever issued of a single work for the reproducing piano. The six rolls include a surprisingly elaborate amount of information printed along the rolls, all written by Stravinsky.

Stravinsky's reputation as a composer, arranger, adapter, writer and performer is surely consolidated by what we hear from seventy-five years ago on this disc.



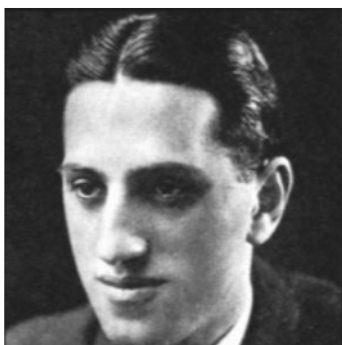
### **Vladimir Horowitz (1904-1989)**

Paderewski rose from Polish provincial obscurity not only to become the best-known pianist in the world, but Prime Minister of Poland just after the Great War as well. He was the twentieth century's first matinee idol: for more than fifty years, until his death in 1941, he was a household name all over the world.

He was a devotee of the reproducing piano. As early as 1906 he recorded fourteen performances for the Welte-Mignon and over a period of some fifteen years from 1918 he made more than thirty rolls for the Duo-Art piano. His endorsement of this material was consistent and enthusiastic.

His own pieces that are heard here demonstrate that much of his writing was for the salon, the music is stylish, beautifully crafted and it falls easily on the ear. The Minuet and the lovely Melody from Songs of a Traveler contrast well with the lively Cracovienne (a highly syncopated Polish dance) and the sparkling Caprice. The delicate rubato of the Waltzes and the nobility of the A flat Ballade and the C sharp minor Scherzo show that it was here that he reached the height of his powers.

The spell that this great man cast is well documented in Adam Zamovski's excellent biography of him published more than forty years after his death. (A. Zamovski: Paderewski [Collins, London. 1983]). Thanks to the technology of the 1990's we can experience just what all the fuss was about.



### **George Gershwin (1898-1937)**

When he was in his teens, Gershwin learnt to play the piano by observing and imitating the player piano. When he was asked to record for Duo-Art, Gershwin made sure that his earliest renditions, with the unrelenting thrashing at the keys and constant marimba effects, did their best to sound like a player piano.

From 1919, when he recorded I Was So Young, You Were So Beautiful, to 1926 when he made his last roll, Sweet and Lowdown, he had developed into one of the best-known writers of popular songs in the world. He was a great party performer and his rolls give us a good idea of how he must have played on these occasions. The bounce and verve in the performances are astonishingly lifelike.

It should be remembered that reproducing pianos were the province of the wealthy when they were new. Hence the Duo-Art catalogue included Gershwin, Phil Ohman, Pauline Alpert, Eddie Duchin and others. How very lucky we are to be able to share these performances seventy-five years later with such fidelity.



### **Artur Schnabel (1887-1982)**

It could be argued that Schnabel was the most famous pianist of this century. In his long life he appeared in films, he was the subject of a television series, wrote two best-selling autobiographies and he gave concerts for more than seventy years.

It is not generally known that he made some thirty rolls for the reproducing piano. He was something of a Chopin specialist; the Nocturne Op.15 No. 2 issued in July 1919 gives a fine idea of the subtle coloration he could conjure up and the Barcarolle Op.60 is as near-perfect a performance as is possible to imagine of this great piece.

He played an imaginative repertoire being the first pianist to introduce the music of Albéniz outside of Spain; the dissonant chords of El Albaicín must have excited Duo-Art owners in December 1919. The Debussy pieces on this disc demonstrate his astonishingly secure technique - the Island of Joy is marvelously vivid.

In his unique arrangement of the Hymn to the Sun from Rimsky-Korsakov's The Golden Cockerel he tosses in a few more melodies from the opera - a unique document as he had no particular reputation as an arranger. Prokofiev's Diabolical Suggestion still has the power to shock after seventy-five years, especially when it is attacked so fearlessly as it is by Schnabel.





### **Vladimir Horowitz (1904-1989)**

Born in Switzerland, Cortot, in his early years was a great champion of Wagner. He conducted the first performance of *Gotterdammerung* in France in 1902. The piano became his main interest and he won prizes playing the works of Beethoven and Liszt, two composers with whom he was not associated in his later career.

Cortot recorded more than fifty rolls for the reproducing piano, those that may be heard in this collection were made when he was in his forties and at the height of his career. The Chopin Andante Spianato and Polonaise gives a good idea of how he must have sounded then. The spiky brilliance of the Polonaise contrasts well with the range of color in the Andante. Although the Beethoven Op.109 Sonata is sober in aspect, a few Gallic touches gives Cortot's performance an individuality which, seventy-five years on, still keeps our interest.

Our attitude to the playing of early twentieth century pianists is mellowing - so many of them played, like Cortot, with an individuality of style which many of today's listeners find refreshing.



### **Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)**

Ravel's small output for the piano is very much in contrast to the value it has in contemporary piano playing. *Jeux d'Eau*, for example, is regarded as demanding a totally new technique from those wishing to perform it - listen to Schmintz playing it in 1919; every tone of color of which the piano seems capable is exploited in this performance. The composer's rendition of *The Valley of the Bells* is beautifully understated, it could stand as a signpost to Ravel's character, it sums up his style in one work. The other works of his own that he plays in this collection all give us further and new insights into his character.

The English pianist Katherine Bacon's roll of the *Ondine* from *Gaspard de la Nuit* is remarkable. The piece holds no problems for her, either technically or musically. These rolls of Ravel's music played by the composer and his contemporaries show that he was understood and very much appreciated in his own lifetime.



### **Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)**

When the seventeen rolls that Prokofiev made for the Duo-Art reproducing piano were issued in the early 1920's they must have seemed to have been avant garde by owners of Duo-Art pianos. Yet they stayed in the catalogues until production ceased in the 1930's. Prokofiev left Russia during the 1917 Revolution and his concert giving after his arrival in the United States puzzled his audiences because he played only his own music, they were not ready for his unique style.

Today all is changed, the Op.12 pieces on this disc have lost their novelty and, while they are still spiky and cheeky, their harmonic language is everyday stuff now. The Toccata Op.11 and the Sarcasms give us a chance to hear the composer/pianist at his best.



### **Alexander Scriabin (1872-1915)**

A mystic who thought his compositions would bring about a revolution in the world of his music, Scriabin appears to today's audiences to be a fairly tame composer. The eighteen rolls that he made for the reproducing piano are all of his own works. His playing vacillated between the gently poetic and explosive assaults on the keyboard - exemplified here by the four Preludes

His rarefied world with its unique harmonies can be glimpsed in the *Desire* Op.57 and the *Mazurka* Op.42. A remarkable composer who, like Prokofiev, played only his own music.



### **Sergei Liapounov (1859-1924)**

Liapounov was a pupil of Tchaikovsky - he was an enthusiastic collector of Russian folk music, much of which formed the basis of his compositions. After the 1917 Revolution, Liapounov, who had been Professor of Piano at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, moved to Paris. His monumental set of twelve studies which he called Etudes d'Execution Transcendante were dedicated to Liszt. They were modeled after Liszt's great set of the same name. Of these pieces the last, entitled Elegy on The Death of Liszt, is the most impressive of all Liapounov's works. It is similar in mood to Tchaikovsky's Doumka which is in the Horowitz section of the Collection.

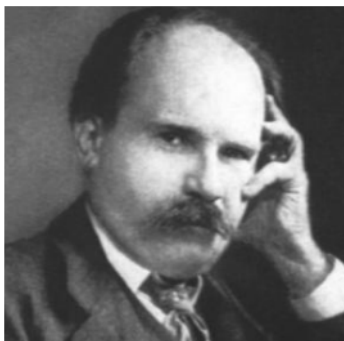
The four rolls which Liapounov made for the Welte Mignon are the only examples of his playing in existence and the roll used to make this recording is of extreme rarity.



### **Wilhelm Bachaus (1884-1969)**

The Collection includes more than seven hundred pianists from the first thirty years of the twentieth century who recorded their playing for reproducing pianos of one sort or another. The collection includes virtually every world famous pianist of the time, from Carl Reinecke born in 1824 to Shura Cherkassky born in 1911. Some were more prolific than others in the matter of recording piano rolls - Bachaus was one of the busiest of all; he made nearly two hundred rolls. These include some of the very best performances that may be heard on reproducing pianos, as this disc demonstrates.

In his later years Bachaus tended to eschew any brilliant technical display even though, right to the end of his long life, he had complete command of the piano. Yet, in the 1920's he could, and did, show off with the best of them. Liszt's Concert Study in F minor is one of the most difficult of all his works but Bachaus has no trouble with it at all, an exceedingly flamboyant performance! The disc ends with a selection of items from the Brahms-Paganini Variations, an attractive array of virtuoso items in which Bachaus displays every facet of his talent at the piano.



### **Eugène d'Albert (1864-1932)**

Despite his Continental sounding name, d'Albert was a Scot. He eventually settled in Germany where, during World War I he repudiated his British birth, declaring himself to be a German. While some of the piano rolls also display idiosyncracies in his playing, amongst the hundred or so that he made, there are many that give a very good idea of what his playing must have been like when he won the Mendelssohn Scholarship and studied with Liszt. Indeed the two Liszt pieces on the disc are contrasting examples of his best work - the Valse Impromptu is refined and poetic while the Polonaise in E is a barnstorming performance which, if played at the end of a recital, would bring cheers from the audience.

One of the most interesting performances here is d'Albert's own arrangement of airs from his best-known opera, Tiefland (one of twenty-one operas that he wrote). The Beethoven Sonata Op.90 is rhythmically logical and the dynamic control shows good judgement throughout. The Bach Passacaglia has the most secure rhythm of anything on the disc - this is d'Albert's own transcription of Bach's monumental organ piece. D'Albert had an exceedingly complex private life - he married six times. One of his wives was Teresa Carreno who also features in the Collection.



### **Manuel de Falla (1876-1946)**

Made six rolls, four for the Pleyela reproducing piano of music from The Three Cornered Hat and two for the Welte Mignon which contain two each of his Four Spanish Pieces. The second roll is recorded here. What playing!



### **Wanda Landowska (1877-1959)**

Although her fame today is as a harpsichordist, Landowska never abandoned the piano. Her interpretations of Beethoven and Mozart on this disc are such that we, today, consider her style to be in advance of her time. Forgoing the *rallentando* and the imprecise cording to be found in the playing of many pianists of her day, she held concert audiences spellbound throughout her career.

She made rolls for Hupfeld, Welte and Aeolian spanning some twenty-five years of her concert work. Beethoven's *Andante Favori* is played here with affection and great beauty of tone, while she will be found to be incomparable in the eighteenth century music. It must not be forgotten that she was a pupil of Moriz Rosenthal and that she grew up in the era of high Romanticism. This gives her performances a special interest to listeners who value style as we know it today.



### **Myra Hess (1890-1965)**

Born in London, she studied with Tobias Matthay at the Royal Academy of Music. He regarded her as a most exceptional talent. Her concertizing throughout Europe from 1907 and in the United States from 1922 soon gave her a following which admired the uncompromising quality of her programs and her unfailing ability to „deliver the goods“. The dozen or so rolls she made for the Duo-Art piano give a good idea of her repertoire. The Beethoven Op.79 Sonata and the two Brahms pieces demonstrate the dedication in her playing, while the Scarlatti Sonata, the *Paradisi Sonata* and the little Bach *Toccata* show off her impeccable technique.

She was created Dame Commander of the British Empire in 1941 for her work organizing concerts in London during the blitz. Her playing for the Duo-Art is characterized by warmth, thoughtfulness and taste.



### **Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)**

What an extraordinary link with the past is Saint-Saëns. Friend of Rossini, Berlioz, Gounod and Liszt, pupil of Halevy and teacher of Faure, he was at the forefront of the world of music for seventy years. His wide range of interests astonished his contemporaries - traveler, astronomer, philosopher and playwright - he also found time to compose an amazing number of works, his opus numbers running to 169.

Saint-Saëns made nearly fifty rolls for the reproducing piano, his last session being for Aeolian when he visited the United States to attend the San Francisco Exposition at the age of eighty. His *Improvisation on the Finale to Act One of Samson and Delilah* must have been a particular favorite with him as he made four different rolls of it and, as one would expect from an improvisation, they are indeed very different from each other.

Another view of his music is given by August Schnabel Tollefsen's performance of the *Allegro Appassionato Op.70*, a committed and tempestuous rendition. Eugene d'Albert's playing of the *Etude in the Form of a Waltz* makes an interesting comparison with Alfred Cortot's performance, also to be found in the Collection.





### **Fanny Bloomfield-Zeisler (1863-1927)**

Although she was born in Austria, Mme. Zeisler, whose family moved to Chicago when she was five years old, is regarded as an American pianist. She was from a musical family, her cousin being Moriz Rosenthal. She was sent to Europe, to Leschetitzky who sponsored her debut in Vienna when she was twenty. By the turn of the century her success on the concert platform equaled that of Sophie Menter, Teresa Carreno and Clara Schumann. The last years of her life were clouded by bouts of mental illness. Her work for the reproducing piano, for which she recorded more than fifty items, is of considerable importance, especially since she left very few gramophone records.

Sixteen pianists recorded Chopin's Op.31 Scherzo for the reproducing piano, including Rachmaninov, Plante, Scharwenka and Hofmann. The three Chopin nocturnes presented here were recorded in New York in 1920.

The D flat rendition is particularly colorful - she finds counter melodies in the tenor register which give a marvelous spontaneity to the whole piece.

The Funeral March sonata is blessed with a most beautiful trio in the third movement. It's stillness and contrast is remarkable. A performance to return to again and again. Mme. Zeisler was an enthusiast for the Welte Mignon reproducing piano - she said of it: 'At the genius of its inventors the piano virtuoso is deeply indebted, for now a bit of immortality is vouchsafed even to him.'

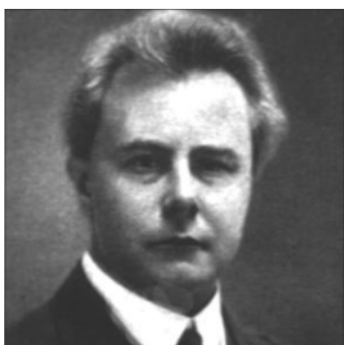


### **Josef Lhévinne (1874-1944)**

The son of a trumpeter, Lhevinne was born in Moscow. Along with Rachmaninov and Scriabin he trained under Safanov and made his debut playing the Emperor Concerto with Anton Rubinstein conducting. It was while living in Berlin that Lhevinne traveled to Freiburg to record for the Welte Mignon reproducing piano first in 1907 and then again in 1912. He later went to live in the USA where he joined the staff of the Julliard School. It was at this time that he recorded for the Ampico reproducing piano.

Some collectors of reproducing pianos regard Lhevinne's performance of Liszt's Fantasy on Meyerbeer's Robert the Devil (found in the Rarities section of the Collection) to be the most sensational roll ever issued.

Lhevinne's phenomenal technique was nurtured in that atmosphere where examinations demanded that the students be first examined upon technique and, if they failed to pass this section of the test they were not even asked to perform their pieces. In an eight-year course, under this scheme, the first five years were spent on technique. A most challenging arrangement!



### **Josef Hofmann (1876-1957)**

Like the majority of the great pianists, Hofmann was a prodigy. By the time he was twelve he had done a sensational tour of Europe and was half way through an American series of some one-hundred concerts when The Society for the prevention of Cruelty to Children intervened. Josef Hofmann was certainly no stranger to the reproducing piano. From 1905 to 1930 he consistently visited the recording laboratories to produce more than a hundred roll titles. His entire output would seem to be of the finest quality - from his timeless playing of Beethoven to the delights of Mendelssohn's Rondo Capriccioso. Compare Hofmann's playing of the Op.42 Waltz of Chopin with that of Paderewski.

Hofmann found time to write two books of piano playing. His compositions include five piano concertos, a symphony, a 'symphonic narrative' for orchestra and many piano pieces. This remarkable man was able, in 1937, to give a concert in New York's Metropolitan Opera House to commemorate his first concert there fifty years before. How exciting it is to be able to hear his playing with such clarity and fidelity through reproducing pianos.



### **Enrique Granados (1867-1916)**

Enrique Granados had an extensive career as a virtuoso pianist and despite the fact that he made some forty or so reproducing piano rolls, we have no idea of how he sounded in the regular concert repertoire (i.e., playing music by other composers) because all the rolls he made were of his own music. One thing is certain though, everything that he did record is played with sparkle, secure technique and great style. The recordings used for this disc are from the Welte Mignon sessions in Freiburg (1908) and the Duo-Art sessions in New York (1916).

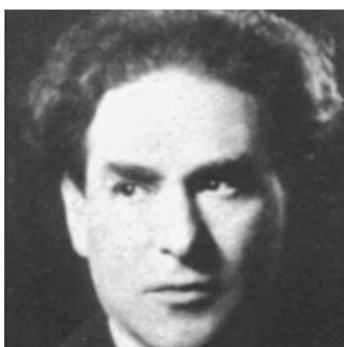
The two recordings of Granados improvising are of special interest - they are reminiscent of the Goyescas music which would have been on his mind when he recorded them. He was in New York for the world premiere of the opera Goyescas at that time. A few days later he and his wife sailed to Europe on the "Sussex"; they were drowned when the ship was torpedoed in the English Channel. So, those New York recording sessions were certainly the last serious work that he did at the piano. The sensitive listener is moved by the poignant circumstances of these performances - we are witness, eighty years later, to these very personal renditions which, at the time, were only available to those with access to a Duo-Art reproducing piano.



### **Arthur Friedheim (1859-1932)**

In his autobiography "Life and Liszt" Friedheim relates an account of one of his lessons with Liszt at the Villa de'Este. "Late one afternoon I sat down at the piano to play Harmonies du Soir. Before I had time to begin, he called me to the window. With a wide sweep of his arm he pointed out the slanting rays of the declining sun which were mellowing the landscape with the delicate glamour of approaching twilight. "Play that," he said. "There are your evening harmonies." What was Friedheim to remember of this scene some thirty years later when, in New York, he recorded the performance of Harmonies du Soir that is on this disc?

Friedheim was born in St. Petersburg of German parents. A studious child, he was a pupil of Anton Rubinstein for four years. By the time he was eighteen he was seeking out Liszt in Weimar to study with him. He stayed with Liszt for eight years, eventually becoming his secretary and his last amanuensis. Later he gained high academic honors and, for the rest of his life, he was associated with music schools in England, Canada and the United States. He was the first pianist to give a concert in the then new Carnegie Hall.



### **Harold Bauer (1873-1951)**

Bauer studied the violin until he was nineteen when Paderewski advised him to take up the piano. A largely self-taught pianist, Bauer said that the only technical study he did at the piano was to take difficulties from repertoire pieces and use them as models for further study. Above all, on the concert platform his technique was entirely subordinated to the meaning of the music he was playing.

An entertaining comparison can be made with the Beethoven Turkish March (arr. Rubinstein). Not only do Bauer and Hofmann choose wildly differing tempos but they seem to use different texts as well! The Little Gavotte by Beethoven may be a case of Bauer doing a "Kreisler" - the 1927 Duo-Art catalogue relates that this piece was from a collection in the British Museum and that it is "arranged and edited by Harold Bauer." It is not listed in the New Grove nor does it appear in print.

The pieces on this disc that are by Bauer are delightful. They were taken up by other pianists of his day and he often included them in his own programs.

This version of the Bach Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue is edited by Hans von Bulow who showed taste and a profound knowledge of style. Bauer contributes a similar taste and style in his execution of it. The Fugue in particular is beautifully delineated in this performance. A treasure from these old roll catalogues.



### **Genevieve Pitot**

Recording her playing only for the Duo-Art reproducing piano, Genevieve Pitot was a pupil of Alfred Cortot. Born in New Orleans of French parents she began her musical studies at the age of eight. She made her debut in Paris and toured Europe and the United States extensively. She recorded fifty-five items for the Duo-Art.

Pitot's performance of Strauss's Tales From the Vienna Woods is marvelously refreshing. Seventy-five years ago when this roll was first issued it was not easy to obtain satisfactory recordings of the orchestral version of such works, let alone those delightful café orchestra versions complete with zither. So piano roll manufacturers released straightforward performances which are now unique.

We all know the exciting arrangements of Strauss waltzes by such men as Godowsky, Rosenthal and Cherkassky, but here is a simple version which is direct and uncomplicated. Pitot's playing, generally, is natural; it is ideal for the kind of repertoire that this disc contains. For the four hand performance of Offenbach's Overture to Orpheus in the Underworld, she is joined by Robert Armbruster, more of whose playing may be found in the Collection.



### **Cecile Chaminade (1857-1944)**

All of the performances of Mme. Chaminade's music on this disc are by the composer. They were recorded in the London laboratories of the Aeolian Company for the Duo-Art reproducing piano in 1921. These sessions were the only ones that she made for any reproducing piano. A quick grasp of the style to be found in her work may be had from hearing her play Guitare from Op.32. The crisp, brilliant playing found here is typical of her playing.

The best-known piece on this disc is her Concert Study Op.35 Autumn which she plays confidently and with considerable charm. She toured the world as a concert pianist from the 1890's to the 1930's having great success wherever she went. More than seventy of her pieces were available to owners of reproducing pianos, many of the played by the finest pianists of the day - Rudolph Ganz, Yolanda Mero, Fannie Bloomfield-Zeisler, Michael von Zadora and Marguerite Volavy all played her pieces.



### **Leopold Godowsky (1870-1938)**

Percy Scholes, writing in The Mirror of Music in 1944 stated: "The present writer, for some time a London music critic, registers his strong conviction that Busoni, from his perfect command over every means of expression and his complete consideration of the relation of every phrase in a composition to every other phrase and to the whole, was the truest artist of all the pianists he ever heard." Strong words! This is the effect that Busoni had on his contemporaries. He himself wanted recognition as a composer, his earnings as a pianist merely provided him with the means of a livelihood so that he could get on with the task of composing, reading and research.

A good idea of the grandeur of his playing can be had from hearing the Liszt E major Polonaise on this disc. He plays his own cadenza, a revelation in itself. The other two Liszt pieces are splendid too - the enormous range of dynamics in Feux Follets and the delightful lightness of La Chasse. These performances bring us so very close to this great man.

The Bach Chaconne takes us to another world. This astonishing arrangement is still in the repertoire of today's concert pianists. The power, insight and musicianship displayed in this performance are aspects to be studied again and again. To hear the man himself is a moving experience. A few months after Busoni's death in 1924 his widow, Gerda, heard a Welte Mignon roll of her husband's playing. After listening for a few minutes she rushed from the room in tears, wringing her hands and crying "Ferruccio! Ferruccio!" Seventy-five





### **Enrique Granados (1867-1916)**

Although it would seem that Pachmann's best playing preceded any form of recording we are fortunate to possess so many examples of his later work. As well as making many gramophone records (where his antics and hums were a distraction) he made more than fifty reproducing rolls

A quick way to dispel any doubts about his technical prowess is to play Liszt's Rigoletto Paraphrase from the present disc. He was seventy-seven when he recorded that item and he makes it his own by starting in the middle of the piece and altering a lot of it as it proceeds. The wayward nuances in Chopin's Op.36 Impromptu are not at all offensive while the Op.47 Ballade is given a new lease of life in Pachmann's hands. Another comparison that is well worthwhile making is the performance of Chopin's Minute Waltz - Pachmann and Friedman. Both are wildly eccentric yet there is much enjoyment to be had from them. Pachmann actually recorded this waltz twice for Welte Mignon in 1906 and again in 1925.

Richard Aldrich writing in 1904 of a New York recital by Pachmann wrote "It is difficult for Mr. de Pachmann to carry conviction as a truly great artist, but as a wonderful one, as a worker of a magical spell of his own, there is no one like him." Much of the truth in this statement certainly comes through to us ninety-five years later when listening to this disc.



### **Shura Cherkassky (1911 - 1995)**

Cherkassky began recording for the Duo-Art reproducing piano when he was twelve years old, the youngest pianist ever to do so. The first roll issued (in January 1924) was of Rachmaninoff's Polka de W.R. Listening to it seventy five years later we are struck by the amazing individuality of the interpretation, the confidence with which a boy can alter Rachmaninoff's printed score and the beauty of tone he evokes from the piano. Try the Liszt transcription of Schumann's Spring Night - one of the most beautiful of all performances available on the reproducing piano.

Try Moszkowski's Love Waltzes and compare the playing with that of Fannie Bloomfield-Zeisler (also available in the Collection) and Cherkassky's own Prelude Pathetique is a beautifully tender rendition. There is the splendid version of Liszt's Paraphrase on the quartet from Verdi's Rigoletto which competes with fifteen others on the reproducing piano including Busoni, Essipoff, Godowsky, Leginska and Pachmann. A pupil of Josef Hofmann, Cherkassky is one of the most individual pianists of the century.



### **Leopold Godowsky (1870-1938)**

At the age of nine, Godowsky made his concert debut in his hometown of Vilna, Poland. He always denied ever having a teacher, yet Artur Rubinstein said: "It would take me five hundred years to get that kind of mechanism." And again, Heinrich Neuhaus, his pupil said, "The main impression was that everything is terribly simple, natural, beautiful and completely effortless." So here is one of the greatest pianists of all time on this disc - if you doubt it, just play the Chopin G minor Ballade Op.23.

Here is a performance that can be heard again and again, it can be compared with any before or since and still be called outstanding by any criterion. And so it is with any of the one hundred and seventy piano rolls which Godowsky recorded between 1907 and 1930. The present disc presents a delightful mixture of the familiar - Chopin's Nocturne in E flat Op.9 - and the unfamiliar - Moszkowski's Polonaise in D Op. 17. There is much to enjoy here.



### **Paquita Madriguera Segovia (1900 - ?)**

Like so many concert pianists Mme. Segovia was a prodigy. She was playing in public from the age of five. Born in Barcelona in 1900, she studied at the Granados Academy of Music there, first with Frank Marshall (who also taught Alicia de Larrochal) and then with Granados. She made her debut as a concert pianist when eleven years old. She later toured widely in Paris, London, South America and the United States - often with her brother, Enrique (b. 1902), a violinist.

The seventeen items on this disc appear to be the entire legacy of Mme. Segovia's pianoplaying. The confidence and color inherent in all her work is particularly evident in the Granados Allegro de Concerto.

One of the most beautiful performances here is that of Delahaye's La Mouche (The Fly). The gentle guitar rhythm murmurs along while an arching melody, very much in the Spanish style, sings above it. Fascinating forgotten music!

Segovia's sensational tours of Europe and The Americas, Mrs. Sawyer pondered as to what had become of her. She mused that it was possible that Mme. Segovia had by then a family which kept her busy with activities which did not include a concert career. We are fortunate to have her fine playing available to us after more than eighty years of silence.



### **Percy Grainger (1882-1962)**

Grainger's first successes took place in London in 1900. He was the sensation of the season both in the concert hall and in the salon. He introduced new music to his British audiences and he aroused great demonstrations of enthusiasm. At the outbreak of war in 1914 he and his mother went to the United States. He recorded for the Duo-Art from then to the end of production in 1932. In all he made some sixty-five titles for the Duo-Art and never recorded for any other reproducing piano.

This disc contains some of the best playing to be found on any reproducing piano. Take Grieg's Peer Gynt Suite for example. Not only is it refreshing to hear it in Grieg's arrangement for the piano, but Grainger's playing is spontaneous, lyrical and very agreeable. Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Suite is in a four-hand transcription, both parts being played by Grainger. For excitement try the Debussy Toccata. Grainger was the first to play this piece outside France.

The mistaken idea that Grainger was just a weird eccentric is dispelled by his performance of Schumann's Symphonic Studies Op.13. From the stately opening to the well-controlled Finale, the playing will be found to be full of interest. Grainger does a great service to Schumann's wonderful music.



### **Alexander Raab (1882-1940)**

Of all the pianists featured in this Collection, Alexander Raab is surely the least known. He was born on March 14, 1882 in the Hungarian town of Raab. Indeed Raab may not be his original name, he could have had a complex Hungarian name and so may have taken the name of the town of his birth for his concert career. He studied at the Vienna Music School winning the Beethoven Prize in 1901. He then went on to study with Leschetitzky.

Liszt made transcriptions of Schubert Waltzes in nine sets which he called Evenings in Vienna. They were among Leschetitzky's favorite pieces which he enjoyed teaching, pieces which kept appearing in the concert programs of his pupils. Compare Raab's performance with that of Paderewski, another Leschetitzky pupil also to be found in the Collection.

In Chopin's Funeral March Sonata Op.35 Raab's playing will be found to be disciplined, accurate, individual and at the same time, adventuresome and exciting. He does not repeat the exposition of the first movement but otherwise the playing from eighty-five years ago is stylish and up to date. Thanks to the Duo-Art and digital recording we are able to appreciate the work of this interesting and very able pianist from the past.



### **Ossip Gabrilowitsch (1878-1936)**

Born in St. Petersburg, Gabrilowitsch came to the concert circuit with impeccable credentials. After study with Anton Rubinstein he was with Leschetitzky in Vienna for two years. He made his debut in Berlin in 1896 which led to tours of Europe and, in 1900, the United States. Again and again reports of his recitals used the word "elegant" to describe his playing. He became very interested in conducting and from 1918 until his death he led the Detroit Symphony Orchestra which he built into a first class ensemble.

When it came to the matter of technique, Gabrilowitsch was a polished performer. Leschetitzky's Intermezzo in Octaves allows him to show off his amazing skill in playing octaves. Like most of Leschetitzky's pupils, Gabrilowitsch concentrated on the romantic repertoire, especially music by other Russians. Forgotten today, the works of Wassily Sapelnikoff, ten years older than Gabrilowitsch and just as famous in his day as a virtuoso, are well worth hearing.

His playing of Chopin is wonderful, the Fantasy Impromptu is an ideal performance, the two studies are full of interest and the Waltz in E minor, with its varied repeats and its dynamic extremes is most exciting.

A magnificent pianist whose brilliance still shines after seventy-five years, thanks to the reproducing piano.



### **Olga Samarov (1882-1948)**

Lucy Hickenlooper was born in San Antonio, Texas, and her musical training was a family affair. She was taught first by her mother and then by her grandmother. Later on when she went to Ernest Hutcheson for further tuition, he advised her to adopt her grandmother's name for her concert career. She was one of the first writers and lecturers on „music appreciation“. Olga Samarov was married to Leopold Stokowski for ten years.

Critics often wrote of her amazing power at the piano. Her roll of the Brahms Rhapsody in G minor, with its explosive contrasts, could have been recorded recently rather than ninety years ago, such is the freshness of her playing.

Faure's Impromptu Op.31, is given a poised rendition here with beautiful phrasing and grand style. But it is the Chopin Sonata in B minor that really takes our attention - a timeless interpretation, a spacious opening movement, a fleeting scherzo, a thoughtful largo and a noble finale. Compare this performance with that of Harold Bauer which is also available in the Collection.

Samarov was a very fine teacher. She worked in a succession of well-known music schools in the U.S. Her pupils included William Kapell, Eugene List, Rosalyn Tureck and Alexis Weissenberg.



### **Ignacy Friedman (1882-1948)**

Born in Podgorze, Poland in 1882, Friedman was one of the truly astonishing Leschetitzky pupils. He was, technically, one of the most complete pianists in history. Reviews invariably spoke of his profound tone, his ease at the piano and his imaginative interpretations.

He toured widely being especially popular in the United States. As can be seen from the items on this disc, his repertoire was typical of its time. He had a reputation for surprising his listeners with unexpected dynamic extremes and with sudden, but always musical, ritardando or accelerando. Even though his later years were marred by the specter of arthritis, he played and taught until almost the end of his life. At the outbreak of war in 1939 he was in Australia and, thinking that the Northern Hemisphere was no place for a Jew, he made his home in Sydney where he remained until his death in 1948.

Friedman's playing here takes the reproducing piano to its limits - pianissimo runs, crashing chords and carefully phrased melodies simultaneously appear with highly original and complex accompaniments. Gentle trills glide chromatically from phrase to phrase, flutter pedaling abounds and glittering figurations appear all over the keyboard. The powerful and taxing Hungarian Rhapsody No.14 of Liszt concludes this disc. The playing is indeed powerful.





### **Rudolph Ganz (1877-1972)**

A pupil of Busoni, Rudolph Ganz was born in Zurich. He was one of the most energetic musicians of his time. He delighted in gaining recognition for new composers; he played for the first time many works by Debussy, d'Indy, Ravel, Busoni, Bartok, Dohnanyi and Korngold. Ganz composed more than two hundred songs as well as orchestral pieces and a great deal of piano music. He was in demand as a conductor, and he led the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra in the 1920's. He was busy making piano rolls too - more than two hundred titles for every make of reproducing piano. The recital assembled on this disc is of great variety indeed, from Haydn, so stylishly played, to Ganz's own pieces. They all demonstrate remarkable musicianship. Two of Ganz's performances that are on this disc were used by the Aeolian Company as show pieces for the Duo-Art - the Sinding Rustle of Spring and the Sibelius Romance. Ganz once said that a concert goer stated that she could easily hear a difference between the pianist's live performance of the Sibelius piece and that of the piano roll, to which Ganz replied: "Then you are very clever indeed because I myself can hear no difference."

This wonderful pianist who was composer, educator, editor, conductor, author and historian, shows off much of his best work on this disc. His beautiful playing will be around for years to come, thanks to the CD.



### **Guiomar Novaes (1896-1973)**

In the balmy days of the reproducing piano there was a huge market for such machines in South America. The Aeolian Company issued separate roll lists for the Latin American market, they realized that commercially it was an important area. There were a number of South American pianists in these lists but none so outstanding as Guiomar Novaes. She was born in Brazil and, as is the case with so many concert pianists, she was a prodigy. At the age of fourteen she was studying with Isador Philipp in Paris. She graduated from the Paris Conservatoire in 1911 with the first prize. She was a success wherever she went and for the rest of her life she toured all over the world. Audiences used to clamor for her to play Gottschalk's Grand Fantasy on the Brazilian National Anthem, especially in her native Brazil. They would be on their feet with excitement by the end of it. Something of this hysteria is captured by the Duo-Art - the roll was one of their biggest sellers.

Overall the contents of this disc make a most varied and entertaining program. Even the wellworn Spring Song and the faded music of Benjamin Godard are brought to life by the affection and warmth displayed by this great artist.



### **Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)**

Although mention is often made of his use of the piano both as repetiteur and in composition, Mahler had no particular reputation as a pianist. These rolls, made when he was Director of the Vienna Opera in 1905, may have been made as a sales promotion for the Welte Mignon which was a new concept at that time. After all, Director of the Vienna Opera was the most prestigious appointment in the world of music at that time.



### **Richard Strauss (1864-1949)**

A prolific composer and one of the greatest conductors of his time. He made a mere handful of roll recordings, mainly for Welte Mignon. His performance of his own Dance of the Seven Veils leaves no doubt of his pianistic accomplishment.

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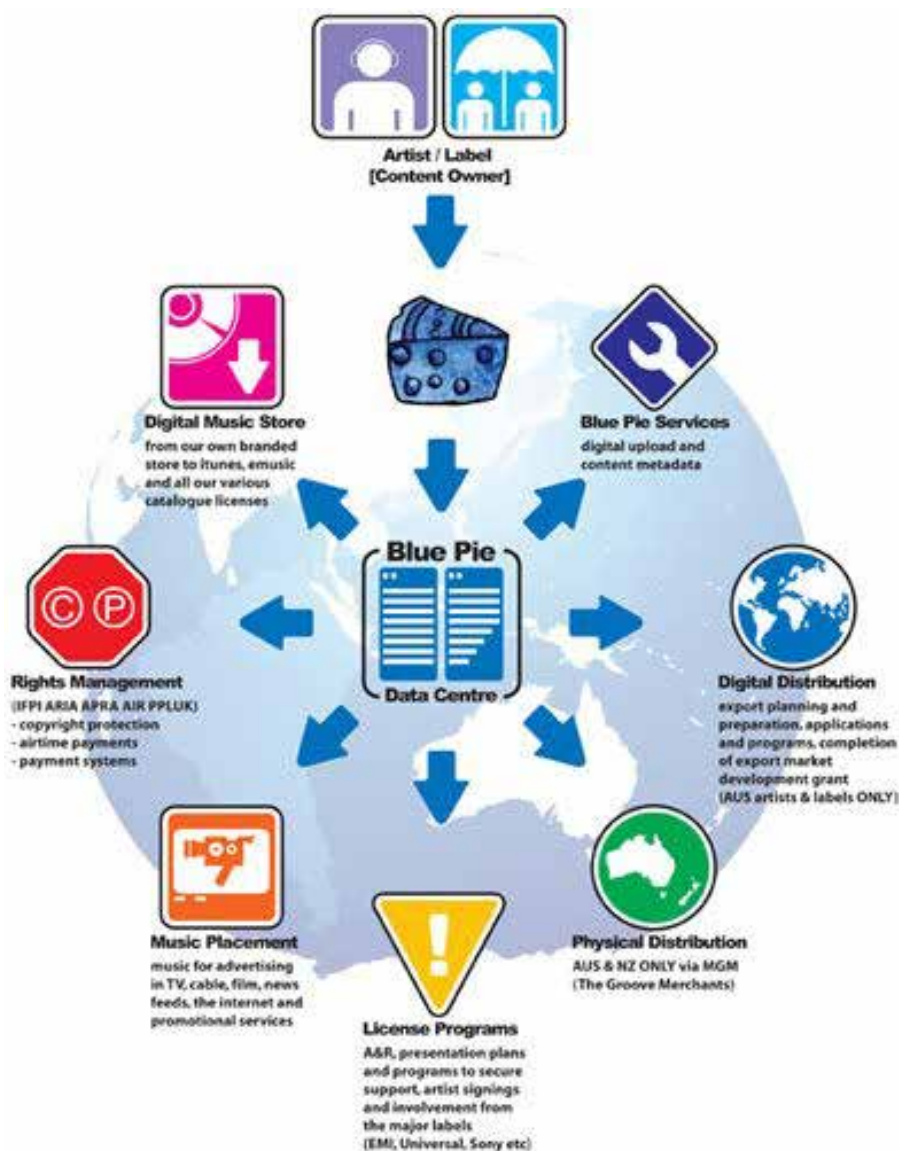


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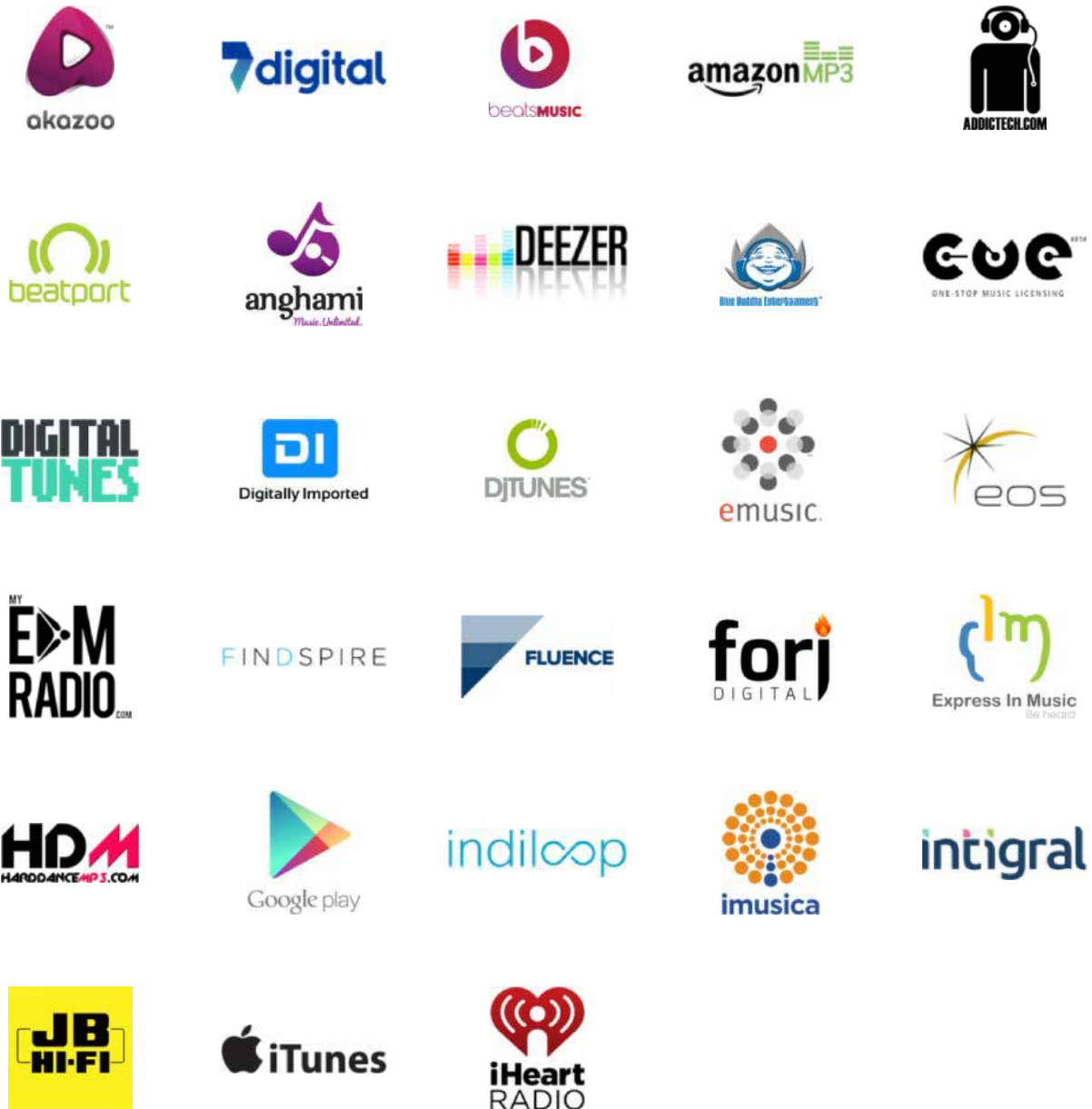




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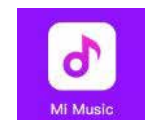
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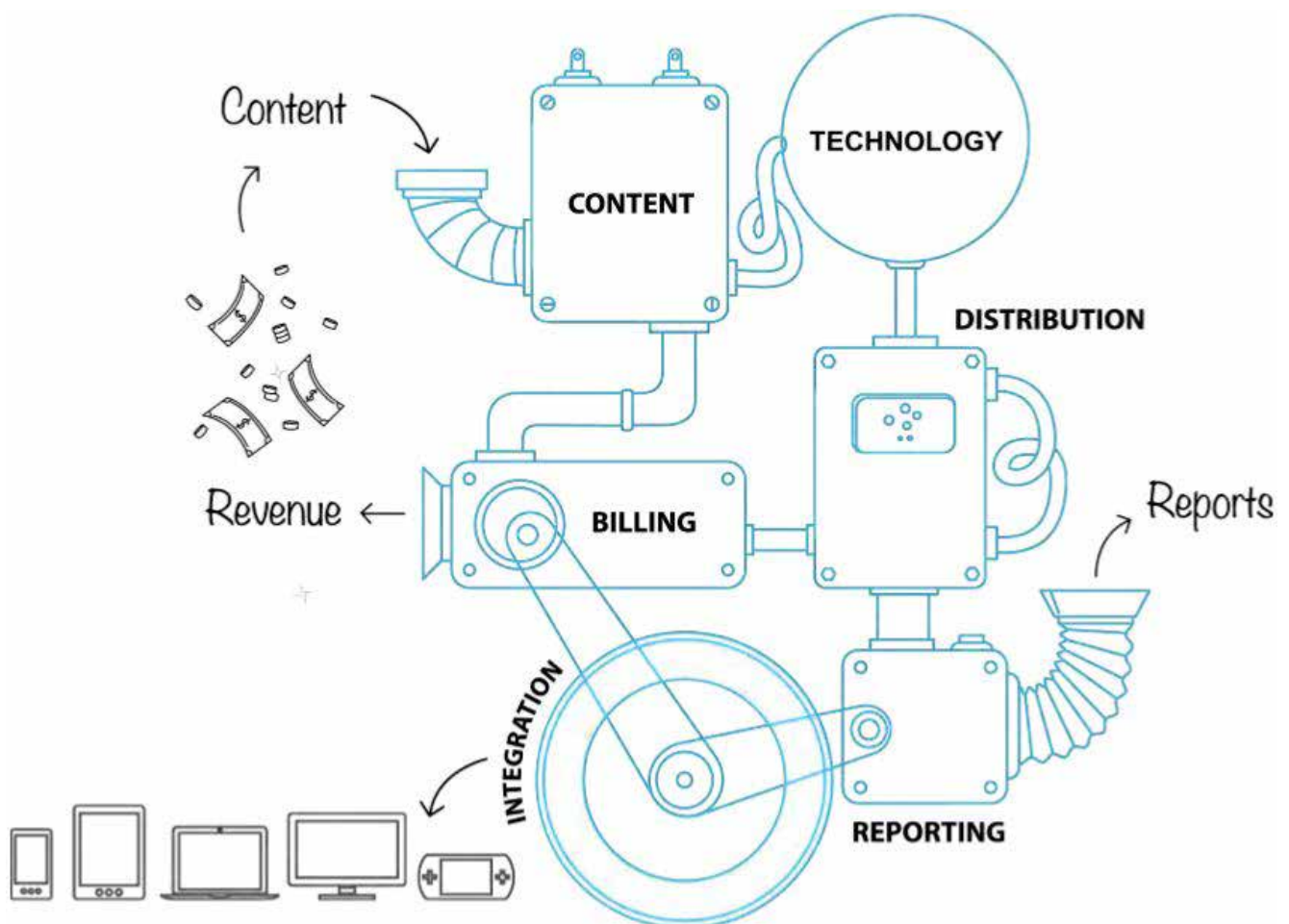
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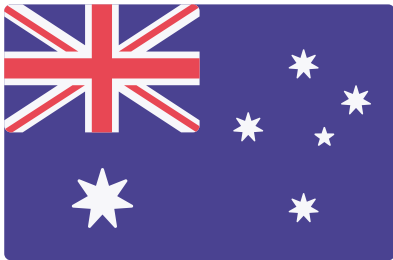


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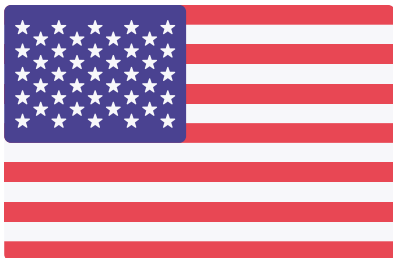
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