

ude and part of the Concerto, and the Blumenfeld are played with real distinction. In these pieces, Barere's conception of the music harnesses his tendency toward overt technical display and causes his pianism to serve expressive ends.

Producer Brian Crimp writes at length and with glowing enthusiasm about Barere's playing as revealed on these and other recordings, and hopes for a reassessment of his reputation. As a reading of the foregoing comments makes clear, this reviewer is scarcely inclined to name Barere as worthy of a high place in any musical pantheon. But his is an individual and readily identifiable style, and perhaps some who are understandably starved for anything resembling the grand manner of Romantic pianism will find pleasure and satisfaction listening to these recordings. Others, who admire the great recorded mementos of Hofmann, Rachmaninoff, Godowsky, and Friedmann at their best, may find it difficult to avoid feeling outrage when confronted with Barere's musical insensitivity and unrelievedly visceral interpretive outlook. *Reviewed by David Breckbill*

Enrico Caruso

The Complete Caruso—Including the Original Victor Talking Machine Company Master Recordings. RCA Victor Gold Seal 60495-2-RG. 12 CDs.

The Caruso Edition, Vol. I, 1902-1908. Pearl EVC I. 3 CDs.

The Caruso Edition, Vol. II, 1908-1912. Pearl EVC II. 3 CDs.

Enrico Caruso—Opera Arias and Songs, Milan 1902-1904. Angel/EMI Great Recordings of the Century CDH 7610462. 1 CD.

Since the LP record first appeared over 40 years ago, admirers of the vocal art of Enrico Caruso have been offered several collections of the legendary tenor's complete recordings, only to find they were neither complete nor consistently well-produced. Both RCA Victor and Pearl are now offering collections which hold the promise of filling that void. The RCA Victor set is packaged handsomely in a cardboard box holding three jewel cases which contain four CDs each, along with a 242 page booklet. The box is printed in gold on a maroon background in a style resembling the Victor Red Seal catalogs from the early 1920s. The CDs are printed with the red acoustic-style label used by the Victor Company after 1914, the Victor label most familiar to collectors of acoustical recordings. Altogether, the packaging is extremely well thought out and attractive. The booklet contains two informative articles, "Caruso in His Time" by Michael Scott, and "Caruso and the Victor Talking Machine Company" by William C. Moran. A bibliography also is provided, listing five excellent sources which were used in the preparation of this collection. The booklet's size is due, in part, to the inclusion of translations in German, Italian and French.

Cross-referencing of the Caruso recordings could not be more complete. In addition to the chronological contents of each CD, there are listings by composer, opera title, title of each selection, first line of each selection, as well as lyricist. There is also a list of assisting artists, including singers, instrumental soloists, and composers who served as accompanists. Only the chronological listing could be improved upon. Recording dates and matrix numbers are meticulously documented, but original Victor catalog numbers are not included. This will make it difficult for many collectors to distinguish between "published" recordings, that is, those shellac pressings which originally were issued by Victor with acoustic-style labels and catalog numbers, and those which were "unpublished," surfacing later as test pressings, electrical transcriptions on 78 rpm discs, and/or LP records.

Both the Bolig¹ and Moran² discographies list the total number of extant 78 rpm sides recorded by Caruso, including those unpublished items known to exist, as 245. There are no discrepancies between these two sources regarding the total number of titles found and issued to date. The RCA Victor booklet lists all 245 items among the contents of their *Complete Caruso*, but one item actually is missing (more on that below).

The title of the RCA Victor collection gives the impression that all of the Victor recordings have been newly transferred from the original masters. Such is not the case, however. All of the recordings previously issued on LP by RCA in their Soundstream-processed *The Complete Caruso* are presented here from the same transfers. These originally were prepared by Dr. Thomas G. Stockham, Jr., developer of the process and President of Soundstream, Inc. at the time the LPs were issued. The Soundstream series began with vol. 4 and ended with vol. 16. Volumes 1, 2 and 3 would have contained all of the Milan recordings from 1902-04, the piano-accompanied Victors from 1904-05, as well as a few later items not included on the previous LPs. However, the first three volumes actually were never issued, leaving their first *Complete Caruso* an unfinished project.

RCA Victor has attempted to rectify that situation with the issue of this CD collection. All of the Milan recordings and 1904-05 Victors have been newly transferred from the originals by William R. Moran, founder and Honorary Curator of The Archive of Recorded Sound at Stanford University. Mr. Moran also has supplied transfers of two later items not included on the LP edition. The most unusual of these is the opening tenor solo from the *Rigoletto* Quartet, recorded on January 25, 1917, presumably as a test for the complete version with Galli-Curci, Perini and de Luca. This recording first was issued by the Stanford Archive on a seven-inch 33 1/3 rpm disc. The second item is the 1917 version of "M'apparì tutt'amor" from *Martha*. Volume 14 of the RCA LP series actually contained the 1906 version of this aria, where the 1917 recording was supposed to have appeared.

Mr. Moran's transfers of the Milan recordings and the 1904-05 Victors generally are very good in terms of overall sound quality, but he does not appear to have made a firm decision regarding the pitch reference for these recordings. Aida Favia-Artsay made a convincing case for pitching the Milan recordings closer to A=435 Hz rather than the customary A=440Hz, the latter being correct for all of the American recordings.³ This writer firmly agrees that the pitch standard for the Milan recordings should be no higher than A=438. If the Milan recordings are pitched at A=435 or A=438, there is a more natural development of Caruso's vocal timber when the 1902 recordings are compared to his later American records. In addition, Caruso's vibrato sounds faster than it should if the Milan recordings are pitched at A=440. It is most important that the pitch reference remain constant. Mr. Moran has transferred the April 11, 1902 Gramophone and Typewriter Company (G&T) recordings at A=435, but the November 30 and December 1, 1902 G&T's are in the 438 to 440 range, as are the April 1903 Zonophones. The three Anglo-Italian Commerce Company (AICC)/Pathé cylinders are inconsistent, with "E lucevan le stelle" from *Tosca* at A=435, Pini-Corsi's "Tu non mi vuoi piu ben" at A=438 and "Qui sotto il ciel" from *Les Huguenots* at A=440.

The difference between A=440 and A=435 is less than one-quarter step and many readers may believe that this is nitpicking. To these ears, however, the difference is significant. Since Mr. Moran did not make a firm decision regarding the pitch

reference for these recordings, Caruso's timbre and vibrato change from one recording session to the next. Discrepancies such as these can arise when the speed of the recordings is determined by setting the turntable according to number of revolutions per minute thought to have been used at the original sessions, as opposed to using musical pitch as the guide.

One of Mr. Moran's transfers is nearly one-half step sharp by either pitch reference, that being the 1903 Zonophone version of Zardo's "Luna fedel." All of the other selections in this collection are correctly pitched, in accordance with Favia-Artsay. Incidentally, this reviewer uses a Korg Model WT-12 Chromatic Tuner for determining correct pitch. The Korg tuner allows the pitch reference to be varied from A=433 to as high as A=447.

Another factor which makes this collection somewhat frustrating is the juxtaposition of two radically different philosophies regarding restoration of historical recordings. The Soundstream-processed material sounds very different from the more conventional transfers provided by Moran, making a study of Caruso's vocal development rather difficult.

Also included in non-Soundstream transfers are the three unpublished items from 1917 first issued by RCA in their 1973 Caruso Centennial album (ARM4-0302). Although Dr. Stockham is credited with these items as well, they are obviously not his work. They are the same transfers used in ARM4-0302, and the transfer engineer remains anonymous. All three are alternate takes of previously issued recordings, including a *Lucia* Sextet from January 25, along with Tosti's "L'alba separa dalla luce l'ombra" and "Oh! Lumière du jour" from Rubinstein's *Néron*, both recorded on April 15 of that year. In each case, the unpublished take appears first, in a conventional transfer, followed by the published version processed by Soundstream. However, one item is amiss, that being the Tosti song. When this writer analyzed each of the allegedly unpublished items included in ARM4-0302, performance differences were found which, in most cases, made it easy to verify that the recordings were different from their published counterparts.⁴ Caruso was an imaginative and spontaneous singer, who never performed a piece *exactly* the same way twice.

In the case of "L'alba separa dalla luce l'ombra," the phrase "Veder non voglio il giorno" is the key. In the unpublished take (matrix no. B-19484-1) the two syllables of the word "giorno" are sung as two quarter notes on the second and third beats of the measure, whereas in the published version (B-19484-2) they are sung as two eighth notes on the second beat, followed by a quarter rest on the third. In the CD collection, RCA Victor actually has issued the *unpublished* take twice, back to back, even though the matrix numbers indicate that both versions are present. The first time around, take 1 is presented in a conventional transfer, followed immediately by the Soundstream version. The sound is so radically different, that one is lead immediately to conclude that they are two different recordings. The above musical analysis indicates otherwise. RCA had made the same error on the LP collection; Volume 14 contained take one, even though the jacket listed the published take two.

This raises a question about the entire Soundstream project. Did Dr. Stockham work from original 78 rpm pressings, or did he use tapes supplied to him by RCA? There is strong aural evidence to indicate that actually he applied the Soundstream process to tapes and not to original discs. The Soundstream process was promising in certain respects. Caruso's voice was presented with a warmth sometimes lacking on conventional transfers, and the horn resonance problems associated with acousti-

cal recording were eliminated, as claimed. What was unfortunate about the Soundstream transfers was the quality of the original source material. Instead of using the best available copies, RCA apparently supplied tapes they had made for previous LP reissues. Many of the copies used were very noisy, some incredibly so. Perhaps the worst example is *Senza nessuno* by de Curtis, recorded September 11, 1919. Although the Soundstream process minimized the high frequency surface noise of the original recordings, the low frequency noise actually was increased, resulting in a constant rumble accompanying nearly every selection. This was, perhaps, the most disturbing side effect of the Soundstream process.

RCA was notorious for applying artificial reverberation to LP reissues of historical material, including many recordings of Caruso. It can be heard on several of the Soundstream-processed selections, including "Inspirez-moi, race divine" from Gounod's *La Reine de Saba*, recorded 2-5-1916, and "De mon amie, fleur endormie" from Bizet's *Pearl Fishers*, recorded 12-7-1916. There is also a trace of reverberation on "Deh, ch'io ritorni" from *L'Africana*, made during his last recording session on September 16, 1920. In fact, it would appear that the source for this recording is the same tape RCA used for the 1962 album *Caruso: The Voice of the Century* (LM-2639). Had Stockham used original pressings, he most certainly would not have applied reverberation to a select few, leaving the others unscathed.

RCA was fully aware of Favia-Artsay's research on the correct playback speeds of the Caruso recordings. Although they previously had issued literally dozens of Caruso recordings transferred at the wrong speeds, they corrected this problem when they prepared the Soundstream LPs. Since it appears that previously prepared tapes, rather than original 78 rpm discs, were used for the Soundstream process, it is reasonable to conclude that a variable-speed tape recorder was employed to correct errors in pitch on the original tapes.

Returning to Tosti's "L'alba separa," it is probable that Dr. Stockham was sent the wrong tape for the preparation of the Soundstream LPs, so the same error has been perpetuated on the CD collection. For those not in possession of the original recording, the published version of "L'alba separa" can be heard on several reissues, including an RCA Victor LP entitled *Caruso Sings Neapolitan Songs* (LTC-1129, first issued in 1953) and vol. 16 of Olympus Records' Caruso Series (ORL-316). The latter was a series issued in England in the late 1960s.

One editing error is rather troublesome on the RCA Victor CD collection; the two halves of the Tomb Scene from *Aida* are presented in reverse order, with "O terra addio" given first, followed by "La fatal pietra." On vol. 6 of the Soundstream LP series, they were presented in the correct sequence, but RCA somehow managed to reverse them during the preparation of the present collection. They are listed in the wrong sequence in the booklet, as well. On a positive note, RCA Victor has decided correctly that the unpublished *Rigoletto* Quartet from February 3, 1908 does not exist. Both the Caruso Centennial collection (ARM4-0302) and the Metropolitan Opera's Caruso album (MET-101) were purported to have contained this unpublished take, but actually it turned out to be the published recording of February 7. The February 3 take has never actually surfaced; that issue can finally be laid to rest.

Once again, RCA Victor has failed to produce an absolutely complete Caruso collection, though this time they are only one selection short of that goal. It is also unfortunate that they chose to rely on the previously issued Soundstream transfers

for the bulk of the collection. Enrico Caruso deserves the same careful attention that RCA Victor, so far, has given Arturo Toscanini in their ongoing collection devoted to the legendary conductor. This requires going back to the best original source material for each and every recording, as they are doing for Toscanini.

However, the RCA Victor collection cannot be totally dismissed. Aside from the lack of a consistent pitch reference for the Milan sessions, nearly all of the recordings have been reproduced at the correct speeds, and it remains to be seen whether or not Pearl will issue all of the unpublished items included in this collection, particularly the three alternate takes from 1917. The RCA Victor collection is certainly reasonably priced, and recent New York City sales have offered this set for less than \$90.00. This is most fortunate, since eventually it may prove necessary to purchase both the Pearl and the RCA Victor collections in order to own each and every extant recording of Enrico Caruso.

Rather than presenting their entire collection in a single installment, as RCA Victor has done, Pearl is issuing "The Caruso Edition" in four volumes of three CDs each. Reviewed here are Volumes I and II, since the remaining two have not yet appeared at the time of this writing. Although Pearl previously had issued two Caruso CDs, *The Caruso Edition* does not draw on any of those recordings. All of the transfers for the present Pearl edition have been newly prepared by Ward Marston. In order to obtain the best surviving copies of each recording, nine different private collections were drawn upon, including those of John R. Bolig, Ward Marston, Larry Holdridge and Mark Obert-Thorn.

Each volume of "The Caruso Edition" contains a booklet with interesting, if not revelatory notes by John Steane, including an introductory article which is duplicated in each volume, as well as specific comments on Caruso's career and the recordings in question. In his text, Mr. Steane cites specific recordings according to the discs on which they appear. Unfortunately, there does not appear to have been a producer to coordinate the listing of contents with the notes. Mr. Steane refers to the total number of discs in the entire collection, whereas the contents listings number the discs as they appear in each volume. Thus, track six on disc three in volume II is referenced as track six on disc six in the notes.

The notes and contents listings are not without errors, both typographical and factual. Mr. Steane includes the 1905 aria from *Don Pasquale* among Caruso's first recordings with orchestral accompaniment; in fact, all of the 1905 recordings are with piano. In addition, the recording dates listed for the Milan sessions are not always consistent with the best current research in this area.^{1,2,5} November 12, 1902 is the date given by Pearl for the second G&T session, but the three cited references all agree on November 30 and/or December 1 for this group. The same sources also place the AICC/Pathé cylinders no earlier than October of 1903, but Pearl lists them as "Spring, 1903." To Pearl's credit, both matrix and catalog numbers are included, and unpublished recordings are clearly labelled "unissued."

The technical work offered by Mr. Marston is of a very high caliber, with sound uniformly better than the RCA Victor set, not to mention nearly any reissues on LP records. His transfers have been done with modern electrical playback equipment, but, consistent with previous Pearl releases, radical processing of the original recordings has been avoided. He has not attempted to make these recordings sound "hi-fi" by using excessive filtering of surface noise, or by resorting to digital restoration systems such as Cedar, No-Noise and Soundstream. Yet due to careful selection

of the best possible copy of each recording, the noise is not excessive for recordings of this vintage. Needless to say, not a trace of artificial reverberation has been used on any of these recordings, giving the listener an honest aural picture of the originals. Best of all, with only one transfer engineer at the helm, the sound is remarkably consistent throughout.

Ward Marston has paid meticulous attention to the pitch of the original recordings. Mr. Marston has, however, chosen A=440 as the pitch reference for the Milan recordings, but he has done so uniformly, resulting in a consistent Caruso timbre from one selection to the next. Generally, Mr. Marston's transfers of the Milan recordings are less noisy than those done by Mr. Moran for RCA Victor. All of the recordings in Volumes I and II have been pitched in accordance with Favia-Artsay, with the exception of three selections which are sure to generate controversy. The first and most controversial is the February 20, 1907 recording of the Quartet from *Rigoletto*, with Bessie Abott, Louise Homer and Antonio Scotti. The only other recording made by Caruso on that day was his extraordinary "O Paradiso!" from Meyerbeer's *L'Africana*, which was recorded at score pitch, at the very common Victor speed of 76.60 rpm. Yet the *Rigoletto* Quartet requires a very unusual speed of 80.00 rpm in order to play at score pitch. In a letter to this reviewer, Dr. John Bolig wrote that he and Ward Marston spent an entire morning listening to this recording and concluded that Caruso and company had, in fact, transposed the Quartet down one-half step, which makes the speed of this recording 76.60 rpm.

Transposition was not uncommon during Caruso's time, but lowering the *Rigoletto* Quartet was practically unheard of. Yet it seems unlikely that the Victor technicians would have changed the lathe speed during the recording session. Although Caruso was in magnificent form for the recording of "O Paradiso!" his voice goes sharp for an instant on the very last note. It is possible that he felt more comfortable lowering the tessitura of the Quartet after the slight mishap on the previous recording. Or perhaps soprano Bessie Abott, a singer decidedly inferior to her company, made the request. On the other hand, it is possible that the mishap at the end of "O Paradiso" was caused by a problem with the recording lathe, in which case a change in recording apparatus may have been made. It also is possible that Caruso and his colleagues moved to a different, perhaps larger, recording room for the ensemble.

To this writer, the transposition sounds correct. Caruso's vocal timbre more closely resembles that of the other recordings made around the same time, including his most famous recording, "Vesti la giubba" from *Pagliacci*, which was made at his next recording session, March 17, 1907. Played at score pitch, his timbre is lighter, and his vibrato noticeably faster than on other contemporary recordings. Fortunately, listeners may decide for themselves in what key the Quartet was recorded, since Pearl offers the selection at both speeds. This level of commitment is rare among record companies and should be applauded.

The other two controversial choices in speeds are both from the November 6, 1909 session. Six recordings were made that day, and four of them reproduce at score pitch when the speed is 75.00 rpm. Yet "O tu che in seno agli angeli" from *La Forza del Destino* is 1/2-step flat at this speed, as is Tosti's song "Pour un baiser." In the case of these recordings, there was absolutely no reason for Victor to have changed lathe speeds for two of the selections. The matrix numbers are consecutive for the entire session; "Pour un baiser" was recorded first and the aria from *La*

Forza was third. It seems a virtual impossibility that the lathe speed would have varied back and forth between 78.26 and 75.00 rpm. Aurally, the selections in question sound correct at the speeds Mr. Marston has chosen. In addition, a friend of this writer has sheet music to the Tosti song in A-flat Major, the key which results from playback at 75.00 rpm, so a case of transposition may not even apply here.

Although the title of Pearl's collection gives no indication that the anthology will necessarily be complete, the notes refer to the anthology as "this complete edition of Caruso's recordings." Volume II ends with recordings from *Martha* made on January 7, 1912, and so far every extant recording, published and unpublished, has been included. Pearl's notes even mention the allegedly unpublished *Rigoletto* Quartet from Feb. 3, 1908, citing ARM4-0302 and concluding that the recording included in that set was, in fact, the familiar published version. It would appear that Pearl is considering every unpublished item, including those which appeared in the RCA Caruso Centennial collection. If this proves true, then Pearl will be the first and only label to have issued the complete extant recordings of Enrico Caruso. The first two volumes must be considered indispensable to any serious Caruso collector; if the remaining installments result in a complete collection, Pearl will have produced a milestone. Volumes III and IV of the Pearl "Caruso Edition" are expected to be issued by the summer of 1991, in which case a review should appear in the Fall 1991 issue of the *ARSC Journal*.

EMI's collection of Caruso's 1902-1904 Milan recordings contains one version of each aria and song recorded by the tenor during the course of his sessions for G&T, Zonophone and AICC. The G&T versions are given preference, with recordings from the other companies used for selections not recorded by G&T. Caruso made 22 recordings for G&T, but only two were duplicated. "Celeste Aida" from Verdi's *Aida* and "Dai Campi" from Boito's *Mefistofele* were made during his first recording session, on April 11, 1902 and were re-made during his second session, on November 30 of that year. For the current CD, EMI has chosen the earlier, and rarer, versions of these two arias.

Transfer engineer Keith Hardwick, a name justifiably admired by collectors of historical recordings, has provided the best transfers ever done of these recordings, Caruso emerging with a vividness and presence which belies their age. The surface noise, particularly on the G&T recordings, is remarkably unobtrusive, again considering the vintage of the originals, yet there is no evidence of excessive filtering. EMI has been extremely conscientious regarding preservation of the original metal parts of recordings made by their predecessors, His Masters Voice and G&T. Mr. Hardwick has extracted remarkable sound from many of his reissues using vinyl pressings made from those metal parts, which have far less surface noise than the original shellac records. The extraordinary sound of the G&T recordings would indicate that metal parts were used in the preparation of this CD; if not, then Mr. Hardwick has had access to original pressings in unusually fine condition.

Several of Caruso's Milan recordings are of considerable historical importance because they capture the tenor in roles he created. The first G&T session included two arias from Franchetti's *Germania*, exactly one month after the world première of that opera. Two of his "creator" recordings feature the composer as accompanist, lending an additional aura of authenticity to his performances. Francesco Cilea accompanies Caruso in "Non più nobile" from *Adriana Lecouvreur*, and "Amor ti vieta" from *Fedora* presumably is accompanied by Umberto Giordano. EMI does not credit Giordano as accompanist, and there is still some controversy regarding his

alleged presence on this recording. However, the late Martin Sokol cited a Gramophone Company advertisement in which a letter from the composer was quoted: "Enthusiastic over the marvelous Monarch Gramophone, I accede with pleasure to your request to have my Fedora sung by my friend Caruso, I myself seated at the piano."⁵

Although the AICC cylinders were technically quite inferior to the G&T recordings, they contain two selections which Caruso never recorded for any other label. The most interesting of these is "Qui sotto il ciel" from Meyerbeer's *Gli Ugonotti*. Caruso was highly regarded as one of the last great Meyerbeer singers, following in the footsteps of Tamagno and de Reszke, but he left only a handful of recordings of that composer's music. Despite the primitive sound, this is an extremely important Caruso recording, and Keith Hardwick's transfer is superior to any others which have been issued.

Mr. Hardwick has pitched these recordings at A=438, consistently. Correct playing speeds, combined with the best sound likely to be heard from these recordings, makes this disc invaluable. Serious collectors who purchase either of the complete collections discussed above, must consider the EMI CD an essential supplement. Bravo to Keith Hardwick and EMI for providing a model of how historical reissues should be produced. *Reviewed by Gary A. Galo*

Notes:

¹Bolig, Dr. John R. "A Caruso Discography." In Michael Scott, *The Great Caruso*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1988.

²Moran, William R. "Discography of Original Recordings." In *Enrico Caruso: My Father and My Family*, Enrico Caruso, Jr. and Andrew Farkas, Amadeus, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1990.

³Favia-Artsay, Aida. *Caruso on Records*. The Historic Record (1965).

⁴Galo, Gary A. "Caruso: The Unpublished Recordings of ARM4-0302 and the Question of Authenticity." *Antique Phonograph Monthly*, Vol. 7, No. 9 (1984).

⁵Sokol, Martin. "The Pre-Victor Recordings of Enrico Caruso," *Antique Phonograph Monthly*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (1977).

CONGRES DU CAIRE: Arab Art and Folk Music, 1932.

Paris, Institut du Monde Arabe/Bibliothèque Nationale, 1988. Two CDs packaged with illustrated book, APN 88/9-10.

Developments in music theory, analysis and teaching methods, along with marked differences between theoretical considerations and actual performance practice, led to the founding of the Institut de Musique Orientale in Cairo in 1929. The Institut hosted an International Congress of Arab Music from 28 March to 3 April 1932, following two weeks of conferences. A number of important figures in the Arab music world were in attendance from Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Iraq, Lebanon, and Turkey. Observers and participants from the West included musicologists Erich von Hornbostel, Egon Wellesz, and Curt Sachs, along with composers Paul Hindemith and Bela Bartók.

Bartók, along with Mansur Awad, supervised recordings by resident and visiting singers and musicians; 335 out of 360 wax masters survived the trip from Alexandria to Manchester for processing by HMV. Apparently (the notes aren't clear), copies were pressed in limited quantities for archival use and never put in the