

A UNIVERSITY COURSE IN HISTORICAL SOUND RECORDINGS*

by

Richard C. Burns

With the development of the phonograph as a popular and successful medium of musical reproduction since the turn of the century, there has accumulated an enormous treasury of recorded performances; and the accumulation continues at an ever-increasing rate, as this audience well knows.

Needless to say, we will always regret that the phonograph was not invented in time to make recordings, however primitive, of the playing of Bach or Mozart or Beethoven or Chopin. However, it was invented in time to catch the dying echoes of the era of bel canto singing and of romantic piano playing. It did not preserve the playing of Franz Liszt, but it did preserve the interpretative art of some of his pupils. It did not preserve the conducting of Richard Wagner, but it does allow us to hear performances of singers who sang under his direction. In general, it preserves, in much depth, a heritage of performance practice, and an attitude toward musical expression that was largely brought to an end by World War I.

Now that we are on the threshold of the centennial of the invention of the first phonograph by Thomas Alva Edison, I have undertaken to introduce an accredited university course in historical sound recordings.

The course is unique in that it deals with the history of music in terms of recorded performances. It also serves as an introduction to a field virtually ignored by professional musicological investigation. The materials presented in the course should be an indispensable background for anyone working in the area of

*This paper was originally presented at the ARSC meeting in Ypsilanti, Michigan on May 12 - 13, 1972; it was also presented at the MLA/ARSC meeting in Bloomington, Indiana on February 1 - 3, 1973.

19th-century music; yet, to the best of my knowledge, no such course has previously been offered for academic credit.

For too long, this area of musical expertise has been the domain almost exclusively of record collectors, and has not been communicated to very many performing musicians, or to those involved in music education and music history.

This has been due, in large part, to the inaccessibility of important recordings, the atrocious sound of many LP reissues, and the lack of any convenient and well-organized information and publicity suitable for an historical survey of the recordings.

Thus, the first duties of one presenting such a course are to know about the recordings, to organize the most significant ones into some kind of coherent presentation, to reproduce them satisfactorily, and to produce the pertinent information about them.

The person to cope with all this has to be a combination of record collector, audio engineer, and musicologist. In my own case, my experience as a recording engineer was also of value because the recording engineer, by the very nature of his profession, has to acquire a great deal of objectivity in regard to performance style. The engineer has no influence whatsoever on a performer's approach to a piece of music. He may, in fact, be in profound disagreement with it. However, his professional function is to realize what the performer is trying to accomplish and to produce a recording that best represents that objective.

So the questions then arise: "Where do we start?" "How do we organize the material into a course?" "To whom should the course be offered?"

Well, I had to deal with the last question first, and it was decided to offer the course to any student who could follow a musical score. The answer to the first question, "Where do we start?" had to be: "At the beginning." We would survey the oldest performance styles through the 19th century as evidenced mostly by recordings of performers who performed in the 19th century.

This would provide the background essential to anyone who wished to trace later developments of performance style through phonograph recordings; and, in fact, the course does contrast the performing styles of some more recent performers with the earlier ones.

Having decided, then, to start at the beginning, and having also decided to offer the course to students who did not necessarily have much knowledge of 19th-century music history, it seemed that the logical way to organize the course was to cover the development of music performance through the century, emphasizing those aspects that could be illustrated by the historical recordings. The nature of the material presented is such that the course is a legitimate offering for graduate, as well as undergraduate, credit. More is expected, of course, of the graduate student.

But before starting with the music history, there were some important preliminaries to attend to. I felt that it was essential for the students to understand the basic mechanics of the recording media, as this has a considerable effect on the esthetic evaluation of the recordings. All the material that I would present would be via tape and loudspeakers. However, I wanted them to begin by hearing and seeing the early cylinders and discs. Fortunately, Syracuse University has the extraordinary Audio Archives under the direction of Walter Welch, who needs no introduction to this audience.

Thus, at the Syracuse University Audio Archives the students are first given a talk on the mechanical reproduction of music, starting with the automatic chimes of the late Middle Ages and continuing through the flute clocks, music boxes, and reproducing piano. Their value as sources of musicological information is emphasized, and a recording is played of the flute clocks¹ (constructed by P. Primitivus Niemecz, a student of Haydn) playing pieces composed by Haydn for these clocks. A very brief survey of the history of the phonograph is

¹ Issued by Parlophone in 1932 for the Haydn bicentennial (PAR. R1164). A score of the flute clock works, transcribed by Ernst Fritz Schmid, is published by R.D. Row Music Co., Inc., New York.

given; and the students are then turned over to Professor Welch who lets them see and hear the real thing, and discusses the technology of making recordings.

The remainder of the lectures are given in my studio at the School of Music, and all playbacks are from tape. A great deal of technical effort has gone into the preparation of the tapes. The original materials from whatever source--78's, LP's, or tapes--usually had to be equalized, filtered and "de-ticked" in order to sound as convincing as possible. Pitches also had to be carefully attended to--and this led to a considerable amount of detective work where voice recordings were concerned, because the playing speed of acoustical records was not too well standardized and because singers, especially aging ones, were apt to transpose.

Another device that made the acoustical vocal recordings more acceptable to students was the addition of some reverberation. Fortunately, the School of Music is housed in Crouse College, a Victorian Gothic structure completed in 1889, and the acoustics of the auditorium are superb. So the vocal recordings were played back through the auditorium loud speaker system (two Klipsch La Scala speakers), and the sound was picked up by two microphones that hang in acoustically favorable locations in the rear of the auditorium. Using a two-track tape recorder, a direct transfer was recorded on the upper channel, and the reverberation was recorded on the lower channel.

In playback, a quadraphonic speaker system is used. The direct signal plus some reverberation is fed to the front speakers. Reverberation only is fed to the rear speakers, which are connected out-of-phase.² (The reverberation is also connected in an out-of-phase manner to the front speakers.) This does wonders for the old acoustical vocal recordings and makes the

² Two speakers are out-of-phase when an identical signal applied to both simultaneously makes the moving element of one move in the opposite direction of the moving element of the other. Readers desiring further information are referred to Alec Nisbett's The Technique of the Sound Studio (New York: Hastings House).

singers sound as if they were recorded in a medium-sized opera house. As a result of my experience with this, I am convinced that the four-channel record offers great possibilities in the reprocessing of old recordings.

I cannot demonstrate the exact sound to you here today. However, we are fortunate enough to have a two-track stereo tape playback system available, and I have specially engineered a few selections, adding two-track stereo Crouse Auditorium reverberation to them.

The first of these that I am going to play* is a recording of Alessandro Moreschi (1858-1922), the last castrato of the Sistine Choir. I am going to play the "Hostias et preces" by Terziani.³ This is a section of the Requiem Mass, and, as Moreschi was soprano soloist at the Requiem Mass for King Umberto I in 1900, I rather suspect that this is one of the selections that he sang, as this recording was made only two or three years after that event. I am certain that the piano and bassoon accompaniment was a convenience for recording purposes, and that this is not exactly the way it was accompanied in a church. However, our interest is in the voice of Moreschi. Some of the high notes soar out beautifully, and others are quite bad. Note how Moreschi propels some of the high notes by taking an anticipatory grace note an octave or so lower.

Henry Pleasants writes of the Moreschi recordings: "It is the faint echo of another time we hear, time strange to us and it is perhaps even stranger to realize that the distant age of the castrati and the modern age of the phonograph once, if ever so slightly, overlapped."⁴

I was apprehensive, when first presenting the course,

*Ed. Note--Periodically throughout the course of his presentation, Mr. Burns played appropriate historical recordings.

3 Terziani, "Hostias et preces" from the Requiem Mass, recorded in Rome, 1902/3 (G. & T. 54775). Long play reissue (EJS-564).

4 Henry Pleasants, "The Castrati," Hi Fi/Stereo Review (July, 1966).

that the surface noise of the recordings would prove to be too great a barrier for the class. After all, the students were not brought up on 78's as I was, and one hears reports that those who have not experienced having to listen through surface noise find it impossible to hear the music on 78's. I did not find this to be so. Of course, and particularly in regard to the vocal recordings, I could employ some selectivity. However, I warned the students that the records were not engineered for comfort. They were primarily engineered to provide what I considered to be the most natural reproduction of the voices or instruments possible, using my equipment. Within this limitation, there was a considerable effort to make the records as enjoyable to listen to as possible. The addition of reverberation did much to minimize the annoyance of the surface noise. Also, the records were always well mixed, so that several noisy records were not played consecutively. Finally there was the psychological effect of looking at the music. Scores of most of the pieces were projected, and if one is looking at a score, one is far less conscious of nonmusical sounds.

Although this was an important bonus, the major purpose in projecting the scores was not to minimize psychologically the surface noise, but to give the student a greater understanding of the performances. Interpolated cadenzas and ornaments cannot be appreciated as such unless one examines the score, or unless one is much more familiar with the music than I could expect the students to be.

It was decided to offer this as a one-semester, two-credit course. This meant that the material would be presented in fourteen two-hour lectures. With the exception of the first two, each lecture would consist of a one-hour talk and one hour of music. An outline of the course is as follows: one lecture on the history and technology of sound recording at the Syracuse University Audio Archives; five lectures on the development of opera and opera singing, starting with Mozart and including Rossini, Donizetti, Bellini, French opera through Meyerbeer and Gounod, and Verdi's La Traviata and Otello; three lectures on styles of piano playing in the music of Chopin, Liszt, Schumann, and Brahms; one lecture on choral and oratorio performances; one lecture on string

playing; two lectures on the orchestra and conducting; and, finally, one on Wagnerian opera.

Certain important areas of recorded performances had to be entirely neglected, such as lieder singing, the organ, Russian opera, French piano music and chansons, verismo opera, and Puccini. Possibly in the future the course can be enlarged to two semesters, and we can cover all of these areas, as well as devote more time to comparisons with contemporary performances and to student projects. At present, time is so limited that one begrudges having to spend any of it on contemporary performance recordings, since the students can hear these on their own initiative easily enough. The projection of scores also compensates for this omission to a considerable extent.

The consideration of opera singing starts with the art of the castrato, as related by Quantz, Burney, and others via Henry Pleasants' The Great Singers.⁵

A few paragraphs from Robert Donington's article on ornamentation are quoted, and one section of this wonderfully sets the key for the entire course. He is talking about a study of ornamentation in baroque music for which we have information only from musical scores, mechanical musical instruments, and literary sources. But how wonderfully this remark of his fits the study of historical recordings: "But our real problem, lying as it does in precisely those elements which the approximations of written notation never can convey, demands patience, humility and intuition as well as scholarship. We have to saturate our ears once more with those lost subtleties of duration, tempo, rhythm, emphasis, balance, proportion, in short of expression, which are the soul of embellishment."⁶

The art of embellishment started to decline during the classical period, coinciding with the disappearance

⁵ Henry Pleasants, The Great Singers (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1966).

⁶ Robert Donington, "Ornamentation," in Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians (5th ed., 1954) VI, 366-67.

of the castrato from opera and the rise of the Austro-German instrumental composers to supremacy. In the vocally-dominated world of Italian music, however, this art was still fundamental to the performance of the operas of Rossini, Donizetti, and Bellini, and only gradually declined as the 19th century progressed, and composers, led by Verdi, developed a somewhat different role for the voice in the developing music drama.

Fortunately, the phonograph record has preserved performances of singers whose art developed during a period in which the traditions of embellishment were still very much alive, and thus I consider the first few opera lectures to be the most important part of the course, since a familiarity with the art of the 19th-century bel canto singer is essential for an understanding of performance styles in all branches of 19th-century music. In fact, one wonders just how much scholars of baroque performance style are missing when they overlook the extraordinary recorded treasury of vocal performances that exists!

Evidently the earliest born singer to record an opera aria is Sir Charles Santley (1834-1922).⁷ Santley was a pupil of Manuel Garcia II, son of the first Count Almaviva in Il Barbiere di Siviglia, and one of the most influential voice teachers of the 19th century. In listening to Santley's performance of "Non piu andrai"⁸ with some of the recitative preceding it, we have to realize that we are hearing a singer of 69 years of age, and that the beauty of his tenor voice has all but vanished. But the style of singing, the rhythm, the ornamentation, the spirit are a model of great

7 Since writing this paper, I have discovered that Gustave Walter, born 17 days before Santley, also recorded an opera aria: Thomas, "Leb wohl Mignon," from Mignon, recorded in Vienna, 1905 (G. & T. 3-42154). Also, Rococo has recently issued a recording by Jean-Baptiste Faure, born Jan. 15, 1830. It is a recording of "Viens, Léonore," from La Favorite by Donizetti. The recording comes from a private cylinder made in Milan, 1897-99.

8 Mozart, Le Nozze de Figaro, recorded in London, 1903 (G. & T. 05200). Long play reissue (Rococo 5205).

Mozart performance.

Adelina Patti (1843-1919) was by all accounts, the greatest soprano of the last third of the 19th century. Patti came from a family of opera singers and in 1860, at the age of seventeen, she made her operatic debut in New York as Lucia. This was followed by leading roles in Sonnambula, Barber of Seville, I Puritani, Linda de Chamounix, Moses in Egypt, Don Pasquale, L'Elisir d'Amore, Martha, Don Giovanni, Traviata, Trovatore, and Rigoletto, all in her first opera season at the age of seventeen!

But Patti was already a veteran performer before her operatic debut. As a child she had made concert tours with Ole Bull and with Louis Moreau Gottschalk. Patti's embellishment of "Una voce poco fa" aroused the ire of Rossini, especially her embellishment of the recitative.

Recordings were made of Patti at the age of 63 at her castle in Wales, and the engrossing story of the occasion is related in Gaisberg's The Music Goes Round.⁹ In the course, Patti's recording of Mozart's "Voi che sapete"¹⁰ is played as an example of the freedom of treatment of tempo and note values that no singer would dare venture in the music of Mozart today. Yet how wonderfully she expresses the musical and verbal imagery of the aria, and with what verve and personality! The aria is a canzone, or song, about the joys and trials of love sung by Cherubino in the second act of Le Nozze de Figaro.

Lilli Lehmann (1848-1929) is represented singing Mozart, Meyerbeer, and Wagner. Like Flagstad at a later time, Lehmann started in light roles before developing into one of the greatest dramatic sopranos of her era. She made her final appearance as Isolde at the age of sixty! Her execution of appoggiaturas in "Ach ich liebte"

⁹ Frederick W. Gaisberg, The Music Goes Round (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1942).

¹⁰ Mozart, "Voi che sapete," recorded in Craig y Nos, Wales, Dec., 1905 (G. & T. 03051). Long play reissue (Rococo R-3).

is a model of stylistic Mozart singing.¹¹ Her Wagner recordings are of especial interest, as she sang at the first Bayreuth Festival in 1876.

Of the art of Fernando de Lucia (1860-1925) the old phonograph recordings present us with an embarrassment of riches. Although De Lucia was born considerably later than the previously mentioned singers, his performing style seems to be a throwback to that of the early decades of the 19th century, and his extraordinary "Ecco ridente" from The Barber of Seville has received widespread recognition as an outstanding example of bel canto singing. Among other De Lucia recordings played, I must single out the incredibly beautiful duet, "Prende l'anel" from La Sonnambula that De Lucia recorded with Maria Galvany in Milan in 1908.¹²

Maria Galvany was born in Granada, Spain, in 1878, studied at the Madrid Conservatory, and made her debut in Cartagena in 1897. She had a successful international career in the first decade of this century, but after her vocal powers waned, she lived in poverty in South America and died in a Brazilian poorhouse.

And now to the playing of the recording: a marriage contract has been signed between Anina and Elvino, and the two sing this duet as Elvino places the wedding ring on Anina's finger. Note the extraordinary way in which the voices match, even the vibratos, and the way they breathe together, especially in the cadenza at the end.

The art of recitative performance was not overlooked either, and one particularly delicious specimen of it from The Barber of Seville was played as performed by Dino Borgioli (1891-1960), Riccardo Stracciari (1875-1955), and Salvatore Baccaloni (born 1900) from the first electrical recording of the opera.¹³ The recitative

¹¹ Mozart, Die Entführung aus dem Serail, 1907 (Odeon 80008). Long play reissue (Eterna 743). This plays a semitone above written pitch when played at 33 1/3 rpm.

¹² Bellini, "Prende l'anel," from La Sonnambula (G. & T. 054217). Long play reissue (Belcantodisc BC 216).

¹³ Rossini, The Barber of Seville, recorded in Milan, 1929 (Columbia 67935-D from CM-OP-8).

follows the famous aria, "Largo al factotum," and it opens with Figaro still boasting about himself. Riccardo Stracciari, who is the Figaro, performed the role almost a thousand times in a long and distinguished career.

A considerable show is done with the mad scene from I Puritani. First, the entire scene is played from the complete recording with Joan Sutherland.¹⁴ Then Maria Callas' performance from her first recording sessions in 1949 is played.¹⁵ Next we hear Olympia Boronat (1867-1934),¹⁶ Frieda Hempel (1885-1955),¹⁷ and Selma Kurz (1874-1933).¹⁸ Here we have an interesting study of five quite different and marvelous singing styles, and also a good demonstration of how operatic scenes were cut to fit the time limitations of the 78 rpm record.

When I first heard an Olympia Boronat recording, I could scarcely believe my ears--the singing was so incredibly beautiful and poignant. Boronat was sent through the Milan Conservatory by the Queen Mother of Italy and graduated with the grand prize--a gold medal. She had her career, however, not in Italy, but in Russia and Poland, having married a very wealthy Polish nobleman.

Max de Schauensee wrote that Boronat's voice was characterized by a "wonderfully luminous pianissimo in the highest register, a remarkable trill, a caressing, even, legato and countless lovely morendo effects."

Kobbé designates the mad scene from I Puritani as "one of Bellini's finest inspirations and perhaps

The following citations refer to various recordings of Bellini's I Puritani:

14 (London 3-Lon.-1373).

15 (Cetra CB20483).

16 Recorded in St. Petersburg, 1904 (G. & T. 53351). Long play reissue (Rococo R-28).

17 Recorded in 1912 (G-053289). Long play reissue (Rococo R-8).

18 Recorded in Vienna, 1910/11 (G-053277/8). Long play reissue (Rococo R-37).

the loveliest and most purely musical of 19th-century mad scenes." "Elvira enters with hair dishevelled. Her looks and gestures show she is bereft of reason," read the stage directions in the Novello score. Elvira sings of her lover's vow of eternal fidelity. Now he has fled from her and if he does not return, she wishes to die. . .

The coloratura singing and beautiful trill of the famous French basso, Pol Plançon (1854-1914) is demonstrated from recordings of two of his favorite arias, one from Le Caïd of Thomas¹⁹ and the other from Le Chalet of Adam.²⁰

The great "creators" of the Verdi roles of Otello and Iago, Francesco Tamagno (1850-1905) and Victor Maurel (1848-1923), are heard as well as some of the greatest of their successors: Giovanni Zenatello, "live" from Covent Garden, 1926; Leo Slezak; Giovanni Martinelli, "live" from the Metropolitan Opera House, 1938; Antonio Magini-Coletti; and Lawrence Tibbett.

The replacement of the harpsichord by the piano occurred at about the same time that the castrato singer was being replaced as operatic hero by the tenor. But just as Donizetti and Bellini wrote much of their music in the bel canto style even after the castrato no longer held the stage, so at the keyboard the bel canto tradition was continued in the music of Chopin and Liszt. Chopin was so much affected by Bellini that he told his pupils to go to the opera and listen to the ornaments and phrasing of the singers. And Liszt created his opera transcriptions full of gorgeous cadenzas and coloratura and filigree--vocal and orchestral music transplanted to the piano.

So the Chopin lecture follows the one on Bellini. And that is a crowded one indeed! It covers Chopin's playing, quoting various sources. Then the three most important pianist-teachers of the 19th century are

19 Thomas, "Air du Tambour-Major," from Le Caïd, recorded in U.S.A., March 14, 1906 (V-18143-B in album M-816).

20 Adam, "Vallons de L'Helvetie," from Le Chalet, recorded in U.S.A., 1904 (V-81037). Long play reissue (Rococo R-9).

discussed: Franz Liszt, Anton Rubinstein, and Theodore Leschetizky, as most of the important pianists of the last third of the 19th century and the first third of this one were either taught by or were much influenced by at least one of the three. In addition, the French school of pianism has to be discussed.

Then there is the matter of the reproducing piano. I do not adhere to the school of thought that considers the reproducing piano performances to be useless. I am much impressed by the work that has been done in recent years to properly play the piano rolls, and I find on many of the records and tapes of reproducing piano performances now available not only an extraordinary source of performance information, but also, in many cases, a source of esthetic pleasure.²¹

Amid all the talk we manage to hear some performances, and the first is Moritz Rosenthal playing the Romanze from the Concerto in E Minor²² which always makes a great impression on the students. Rosenthal was a pupil of Carl Mikuli (himself a Chopin pupil), Rafael Joseffy, and Franz Liszt. Rosenthal made a piano roll of Chopin's Waltz in A Minor, Op. 42 for Ampico in 1922²³ and seven years later recorded the same waltz for Thomas Edison.²⁴ Recordings of both are played for comparison, and the known problems and deficiencies of reproducing pianos are briefly covered.

From Rosenthal we turn to three pianists who were born while Chopin was alive: Theodore Leschetizky (1830-1915), Francis Plante (1839-1934), and Vladimir de Pachmann

21 The interested reader is referred to John Farmer's "The Reproducing Piano," Journal of the British Institute of Recorded Sound, Nos. 25 & 26; also Denys Geroult's notes to Argo records (DA 41/43).

22 Chopin, Romanze from the Concerto in E Minor, recorded with the Berlin State Opera Orchestra, Frieder Weissmann conducting, in Berlin, 1930 (Parlophone R902/4 & E11113/4). Long play reissue (MJA 1966).

23 A tape recording made from this piano roll is available in the Keyboard Immortals series (see discography).

24 Unpublished Edison recording, courtesy of the Syracuse University Audio Archives.

(1848-1933). We are again able to compare a reproducing piano performance with a record of Pachmann's performance of the Minute Waltz.²⁵ In both Pachmann plays a cadenza of his own devising at the end of the middle section.

Next I am going to play a tape of a pianist that we would never be able to hear at all if it were not for the reproducing piano, as she is not known to have made any records. She is Fanny Bloomfield Zeisler. Although she was born in Vienna in 1863, she was brought up in Chicago. She went to Leschetizky at the age of fifteen, and after five years of study she returned to America, where she had a successful career. Although the piano roll probably does not do complete justice to her touch and tone, it does show an exquisite sense of rubato, phrasing, and dynamics to thoroughly substantiate Schonberg's assertion that "She was probably one of the great ones."²⁶ We hear now Chopin's Waltz in G flat, Op. 70, No. 1.²⁷

An entire lecture is devoted to the performance of the piano music of Franz Liszt by his pupils Arthur Friedheim (1859-1932), Bernhard Stavenhagen (1862-1914), Vera Timanoff (born 1855), Jose Vianna de Motta (1868-1948), and Frederick Lamond (1868-1948); also Arthur de Greef (1862-1940) and Emil Sauer (1862-1942), who are usually classified as Liszt pupils but appeared too late at Weimar to receive much in the way of actual instruction from him. The listening is introduced by appropriate readings from the delightful Amy Fay²⁸ and the much more sober Arthur Friedham.²⁹

²⁵ Chopin, Minute Waltz, recorded in London, 1907 (G. & T. 5566). Long play reissue (GEM 103). Reproducing piano version (AS CO A-119).

²⁶ Harold C. Schonberg, The Great Pianists (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963), p. 335.

²⁷ A tape recording made from the piano roll is in the Keyboard Immortals series.

²⁸ Amy Fay, Music Study in Germany (Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1880). Unabridged and corrected republication by Dover Publications, Inc., New York, 1965.

²⁹ Arthur Friedham, Life and Liszt (New York: Taplinger Publishing Co., 1961).

The third lecture on piano music is devoted to performances of the music of Schumann and Brahms, and here, of course, we have to discuss Friedrich Wieck and Clara Schumann as well as the two great composers themselves. We listen to performances by pupils of Clara Schumann and by some pianists who knew Brahms as well as those of others, such as Lamond and Rachminoff, who represent other traditions. The performance of Kinderszenen by Fanny Davies (1861-1934)³⁰ never fails to attract much favorable comment.

When we come to 19th-century string players, the recorded materials are much more sparse. Fortunately Joseph Joachim (1831-1907) made five records in Berlin, 1903. Joachim was one of the most influential musicians of the 19th century and dedicatee of the Brahms Violin Concerto. He also introduced the Bach unaccompanied sonatas to the violinists' repertory. One of his Bach and one of his Brahms recordings are played.

Some other especially interesting examples of the older Austro-Hungarian-Bohemian style of string playing are the recordings of the Rosé Quartet, whose leader, Arnold Rosé (1863-1946), was concertmaster of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra for more than fifty years, and the recordings of the Bohemian Quartet, whose personnel consisted of Karel Hoffman (1872-1936), Josef Suk (1874-1935), Georg Herold (1875-1934), and Ladislav Zelenka (born 1881). The performance of the Smetana Quartet in E Minor by the Bohemian Quartet,³¹ so unlike any that we would ever hear today, is a moving experience.

Leopold Auer (1845-1930) trained more great violinists than any other violin teacher in history. His pupils included Zimbalist, Elman, Heifitz, Milstein, Stern, Seidel, Menges, and Menuhin. Auer's only known recordings are two that he had made privately, and that he used to give to some of his pupils. Both of these are played, and in the case of the Tchaikovsky Melody, Op. 42, No. 3, his

³⁰ Schumann, Kinderszenen, recorded in London, 1928 (Columbia L 2321/2).

³¹ Smetana, Quartet in E Minor, recorded in Berlin (?) 1928 (Polydor 95076/9).

performance is compared with that of his pupil, Mischa Elman.³²

The Franco-Belgian school of violin playing is also discussed, and performances by Pablo de Sarasate (1844-1908), Eugene Ysaÿe (1858-1931), Fritz Kreisler (1875-1962), and the Capet Quartet are played.

The violin tape that I have brought to play is The Violin Maker of Cremona by Jenő Hubay, performed by the composer.³³ Hubay was born in 1858, the son of a professor of violin at the Budapest Conservatory. At the age of eleven Hubay played a Viotti concerto in public, and two years later his father sent him to study with Joachim. Hubay next went to Paris and became an intimate friend of Vieuxtemps and was appointed to a professorship at the Brussels Conservatory. However, he left that post after four years to take his father's place at the Budapest Conservatory. Hubay was noted as a composer and teacher as well as a performer, and he was famed for such pupils as Franz von Veczey, Steffi Geier, Jelly d'Aranyi, Eddy Brown, and Joesph Szigeti. The recording, made in the winter of 1928-29, when Hubay was seventy, reveals his playing in a remarkable state of preservation. And what a noble style of playing it is! The start is a little rough, which is the fault of the recording.

From the world of conductors, rehearsal excerpts by Toscanini, Koussevitzky, and Beecham are played. The development of the symphony orchestra and of the role of the conductor are discussed.

The First Movement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony is discussed in some detail, with reference to Felix Weingartner's On the Performance of Beethoven's Symphonies³⁴ as well as to Richard Strauss' "Notes on the Interpretation

³² Tchaikovsky, Melody, Op. 42, No. 3, recording date uncertain (V-74053).

³³ Hubay, The Violin Maker of Cremona, recorded in Budapest or Vienna, winter, 1928-29 (G-AN-217).

³⁴ Felix Weingartner, On the Performance of Beethoven's Symphonies, trans. by Jessie Grosland (Berlin: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1907).

of Beethoven's Symphonies.³⁵ Three performances, chosen for their varied approaches, are then compared: those conducted by Arthur Nikisch (1855-1922),³⁶ Sir Landon Ronald (1873-1938),³⁷ and Richard Strauss (1864-1949).³⁸

The most profound impression of all the orchestral performances was made by the Adagio from Mahler's Ninth Symphony,³⁹ recorded at a concert performance in Vienna, January 16, 1938, by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Bruno Walter. The execution of Mahler's written-in portamentos by the strings is of a kind that one does not hear from a modern orchestra. I had chosen this piece also as an example of the development of orchestral scoring since Beethoven; the great number of performance instructions in the way of expression marks, tempo instructions, even bowings is in contrast to Beethoven's economy of directions.

These are just a few highlights of the course. Many other great and historical performers are presented, and, of course, there are also many that, regrettably, have to be omitted. However, the students are given a broad introduction to the entire area of historical recordings of "classical" music, and it is to be hoped that in the future they will be inspired to seek even further knowledge in this area.

No course of this nature could be given without assistance from many people in obtaining both information and copies of needed recordings. I would like especially to express my indebtedness to Professor Walter Welch of the

³⁵ Richard Strauss, "Notes on the Interpretation of Beethoven's Symphonies," Journal of the British Institute of Recorded Sound, No. 24.

The next three citations refer to various recordings of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony:

³⁶ Recorded in Berlin, 1913, with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra (G-D89/92). Long play reissue (Perennial 2002).

³⁷ Recorded in London, 1926, with the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra (V-M-5).

³⁸ Recorded in Berlin, 1928, with the Berlin State Opera Orchestra (Brunswick 90172).

³⁹ Mahler, Adagio from the Ninth Symphony (VM-726).

Syracuse University Audio Archives; Richard Warren, Curator of the Yale University Historical Sound recordings Collection; Thomas L. Clear; David Quackenbush; Henry Fogel of Station WONO, Syracuse; Donald Seibert, Music Librarian of Syracuse University; and, last but not least, to Dean Howard Boatwright of the Syracuse University School of Music who first proposed that I undertake such a course and processed it through the formalities of approval by the faculty of the School of Music (who were all most encouraging) and the University Senate.

Sources of Additional Information

- Barnes, Harold M., and Girard, Victor. Vertical-Cut Cylinders and Discs. London: The British Institute of Recorded Sound, 1971. 196 p.
A catalog of all "Hill-and-Dale" recordings of serious worth--1897-1932. The most frustrating of all discographical publications, as it lists so many records no longer known to exist.
- Batten, Joseph. The Story of Sound Recording. London: Rockliff, 1956.
The story of record making as seen from the inside, anecdotal in style. Batten was a recording director from the early years of this century.
- Bauer, Robert. Historical Records, 1898-1908/9. London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1947. Reprinted--Westport, Conn.: The Greenwood Press, 1970.
Recordings listed by artist, mostly singers. No commentary.
- Clough, Francis F., and Cuming, G.J. The World's Encyclopedia of Recorded Music. 3 vols. London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1952, 1953, 1957. 890 p. Reprinted--Westport, Conn.: The Greenwood Press.
Lists mostly electrically recorded 78's and LP's to 1955. Recordings listed by composer. No commentary. To the best of my knowledge the compilation of this encyclopedia continues, but the compilers have been unable to find a publisher.
- Gaisberg, Frederick W. The Music Goes Round. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1942.
Like Joseph Batten (see above), Gaisberg was also a recording director from the early years of this century.
- Gelatt, Roland. The Fabulous Phonograph. London: Cassell & Co., Ltd., 1956. 250 p.

Grand Voci, Le. Dizionario Critico-Biografico dei Cantanti con Discografia Operistica. Rome: Istituto per la Collaborazione Culturale, 1964.

A remarkable work covering most of the very greatest opera singers to make records. Discusses the career of the artist, commenting on his or her voice and major roles. Also discusses the recordings and lists all of the operatic recordings of the singer both in their original form (with year of recording) and on long play reissues. Books of this sort are badly needed for pianists, string players, and conductors.

Hurst, P.G. The Golden Age Recorded. Lingfield, Surrey: The Oakwood Press, 1963. 187 p.

Interesting discussion of some of the "Golden Age" singers and their records.

Journal of the British Institute of Recorded Sound, The. Published by the British Institute of Recorded Sound, 29 Exhibition Rd., London, SW 7.

Much biographical and discographical material.

Kutsch, K.J., and Riemens, Leo. A Concise Biographical Dictionary of Singers. Translated, expanded and annotated by Harry Earl Jones. Philadelphia: Chilton Book Co., 1969.

Biographies of almost every significant opera and lieder singer to make records. Lists labels they recorded for.

Record Collector, The. Published by J.F. Dennis, 61 Fore St., Ipswich, Suffolk, England.

Biographical and discographical material. Vocal records only.

Read, Oliver, and Welch, Walter. From Tinfoil to Stereo. Indianapolis: Howard W. Sams, 1959.

Deals with the involved history of the phonograph, its development, patent litigation, etc. in much greater depth than any other source.

Schonberg, Harold C. The Great Pianists. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963.

Some discussion of recordings by historical pianists.

Voices of the Past. Lingfield, Surrey: The Oakwood Press.

A continuing series of books listing records by manufacturer's catalogue number. Now up to its 9th vol.

Sources of LP Reissues of Historical Recordings

The releases by the original manufacturers (EMI, RCA, Columbia, Deutsche Grammophon, etc.) are likely to be of the best quality, since they frequently can work from

metal parts, have an expert engineering capability, and are more likely to be meticulous about reproduction at correct pitch. Also, their jacket notes are frequently more informative regarding recording dates, etc. Unfortunately, re-releases are usually kept in the catalog for only a few years before disappearing into some strange limbo from whence they may re-emerge in a foreign land or under some different label a dozen years later.

The Arturo Toscanini Society--812 Dumas Ave., Dumas, Texas, 72029.

Literature about Toscanini. LP's of Toscanini never commercially available.

Belcantodisc--Bel Canto Records, 815 Broadway, New York, N.Y., 10003.

Vocal reissues. Notes negligible. Documentation nil. Some have excessive artificial reverberation.

The Bruno Walter Society and Sound Archive--P.O. Box 921 Berkeley, California 94701

Literature, radio programs, tapes of Bruno Walter performances. Copies can be purchased.

Club 99--4239 81st St., Elmhurst, N.Y., 11373.

Vocal reissues. Over 100 LP's, well engineered. Good notes and documentation (recording dates, matrix numbers).

EJS--New York, N.Y.

An incredible catalog of opera broadcasts and vocal reissues on LP. Sound quality ranges from serviceable to atrocious.

Eterna--Lyrichord Discs, Inc., 141 Perry St., New York, N.Y., 10014.

Vocal reissues. Documentation nil.

International Piano Library--219 W. 91st St., New York, N.Y., 10024.

Piano recordings and literature about pianists. Reissues of historical piano recordings. Excellent notes and documentation.

Keyboard Immortals--Sony Superscope, 8150 Vineland Ave., Sun Valley, California, 91353.

Radio programs of reproducing piano performances on stereo tapes. Many extraordinary performances otherwise unavailable. Also, some discs issued. Only documentation may be identification as to whether piano roll is Welte Mignon or Ampico.

Klavier Record Co.--5652 Willowcrest Ave., North Hollywood, California, 91601.

A small catalogue of stereo records of reproducing

piano performances, well produced. Identification as to whether rolls are Ampico or Duo Art; otherwise no documentation.

Lebendige Vergnagenheit and Court Opera Classics--
Preisner, Vienna, Austria.

A large catalog of vocal reissues, most by Austro-German singers. Well engineered. Good notes on L.V., none on Court Classics. Good documentation on both.

Olympus Historical Series--Olympus Records, London, England.

Vocal reissues. Notes negligible. Documentation nil.

Parnassus Records--P.O. Box 281, Phoenicia, N.Y., 12464.

Reissues of orchestral and instrumental recordings.

Good engineering.

Pearl Records--56 Hopwood Gardens, Royal Turnbridge Wells, Kent. Instrumental and orchestral reissues. Engineering variable. Notes and documentation excellent.

Perennial Records--P.O. Box 437, New York, N.Y., 10023.

Reissues of orchestral and instrumental recordings.

Good engineering. Excellent notes.

Rococo Records; Cantilena Records--3244 Younge St., Toronto, 319, Ontario, Canada.

Many extremely important vocal reissues unavailable from any other source. Also some instrumental and orchestral reissues. Many wonderful notes by Max de Schauensee. Documentation varies from good to uncertain.

Rubini Records--Woodbridge Record Shop, 4A Cumberland St., Woodbridge, Suffolk.

Vocal reissues. Generally good engineering. Some have good documentation.

Scala--Everest Records, 10920 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 410, Los Angeles, California, 90024.

Vocal reissues. Documentation nil.

The Sir Thomas Beecham Society--664 South Irena Ave., Redondo Beach, California, 90277.

Literature and discographies about Beecham and other important musicians. LP's of Beecham broadcasts otherwise unobtainable.

Western Sound Archive--P.O. Box 1423, New Haven, Conn. 06506.

A large collection of orchestral and instrumental performances on tape. Many from broadcasts and otherwise unavailable. Copies of most items can be acquired by purchase or exchange.

The Wilhelm Furtwängler Society--"Tanneck," 5 Evington Lane, Leicester LE5 5P2, England.

Discographical material about Furtwangler. Information about Furtwangler reissues, some purchasable from the Society.

Richard C. Burns is the audio engineer of the Syracuse University School of Music, as well as the producer of Overtone Records. He is a member of several professional organizations including ARSC, the AES Society, and IEEE.