



The Great Clarinettist LOUIS CAHUZAC

The complete Danish
studio recordings
1947 - 1952, featuring
never-released Brahms
and Schumann

**Jana
cord**

Few musicians have commanded both the attention and the respect of their colleagues as did the French clarinetist **Louis Cahuzac**. “A clarinetist’s clarinetist” and “A player for *the* connoisseur” are two accolades given him. He was born Louis Jean Baptiste Cahuzac on 12 July 1880 in Quarante. His early training came from his father who played in the local amateur band. He subsequently studied at the Toulouse Conservatoire and then at the Paris Conservatoire where his professor was Cyrille Rose (1830 – 1902). In 1899 Cahuzac achieved the coveted *premier prix* at the Conservatoire in 1899, following his professor’s earlier example of 1847.

In his early career, Cahuzac did much to popularise the works of Brahms in France and he later worked closely with Stravinsky on the interpretation of his *Trois Pieces* and Debussy with the composer playing the piano reduction to his *Rapsodie* before they performed the work in public with Debussy conducting the orchestra. Cahuzac also premiered the *Concerto* of Jean Rivier and the *Sonatinas* of Arthur Honegger and Darius Milhaud who dedicated his work to Cahuzac.

In 1901 Cahuzac joined the Paris Opera Orchestra and until 1920 he played first clarinet with the Théâtre Colonne, the Concerts Symphoniques Touche and the Luchon Casino concerts. After 1920 Cahuzac gave up orchestral playing to travel as both soloist and conductor. Some of his engagements included a tour of the Rhineland in 1921 with d’Indy playing the *Trios* of Brahms and d’Indy; in 1923 he played the Stravinsky *Trois Pieces* at the Paris Stravinsky Festival and they were very well received and five years later he played them at Berne for the Society of New Music and it was reported that such an “ultra modern” work would not have been such a success had not such an artist played them. Cahuzac made a speciality of the Mozart *Concerto* and played it many times during his long career.

After making a recording of the *Concerto* in 1929 he toured the work in Europe during the following years; in December 1931 at the Concerts Colonne and La Société d’Études Mozartiennes, January 1933 at Basle (at this concert he played the Stravinsky *Trois Pieces* as an encore) and later that year at Saint-Gall and Zurich. In January 1934 Cahuzac played

the *Concerto* at the St. Cecilia Academy in Rome and at Salzburg and in December he played it in the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels.

In 1947 he travelled to Denmark and whilst there he recorded both the *Concerto* of Carl Nielsen conducted by John Frandsen and the Mozart *Quintet* and on a subsequent visit in 1952 he made the present recording of the Mozart *Concerto*.

He was still a marvelous performer after the age of 70 and in 1956 he performed the Hindemith *Concerto* (a work originally written for Benny Goodman) in Frankfurt under the composers baton whereupon Hindemith exclaimed "Where has this clarinet virtuoso been hiding that I have not met him before!" and invited Cahuzac to record the work with him in London in November 1956.

Cahuzac worked as both teacher at his home in Bagnères-de-Luchon where pupils came from all over the world and were accommodated there and composed and wrote many pieces for his instrument including *Arlequin*, *Fantasie sur un viel air champêtre*, *Pastorale cévenole* and the *Variations sur un Air du Pays d'Oc*.

He died in Bagnères-de-Luchon 9 August 1960 following an accident whilst riding his moped in the Champs Elysées.

Cahuzac was short of stature and his life blessed with good health. His playing was sensitive and strong and imbued with intelligence. He played Boehm clarinets.

© Robert Anthony Briggs.

Louis Cahuzac came to Denmark on several occasions in the post-war years. He performed as a soloist and recorded with the Royal Orchestra and the Danish Radio Orchestra as well as with the Koppel Quartet and the pianist Folmer Jensen. He was the first to record Carl Nielsen's Clarinet Concerto, a recording very well received by Danish record-buyers.

Apart from the Mozart concerto, all his recordings were made by Danish Columbia. For some reason, the three Schumann pieces and the Brahms sonata were never issued. A note in the Danish Musical Journal – Dansk Musik Tidsskrift – from 1949 stated that the recordings were to take place that autumn. Although they did, no actual records were produced. The reason could very well have been a shortage of raw materials. Today many people believe that Europe returned to normal soon after the war. It is not true. Shortages and import restrictions were major obstacles to the record industry until after 1950, and the advent of the LP record – 1951 in Denmark – meant that several recordings from the late 1940s were never issued because it was feared that they would become obsolete even before they reached the market. This was

not to be the case. The 78rpm record survived for almost another decade, and only around 1960 did LP become the sole format. As Cahuzac had committed himself to introduce German chamber-music to France where, for example, such works by Brahms were virtually unknown, his recordings are of great interest. They can be heard and enjoyed here for the first time.

As far as I know no test pressings exist so the material has been transferred direct from the father-matrices. These matrices are negatives so the record grooves are like miniature mountain ridges on a nickel-plated copper matrix. They cannot be played with a normal pickup so they were played instead with a "bi-point" stylus with an incision in the shape of an inverted 'V' that can ride on the ridge during playback. In another sense too the matrices are negatives; they would have to be played anticlockwise to recreate the performance. Instead they were played clockwise on a normal turntable and the result recorded. The recording, played in the reverse direction finally restored the music. From all this comes, independently, an advantage. Since most of the noise of 78rpm records comes from the

grainy nature of the material of the pressings, the noise level from the father-matrices is significantly lower than when the normal records are played.

The Mozart concerto was recorded for the American Haydn Society company in the Large Concert Hall of the Danish Radio together with the Symphony No 61 by Haydn and issued in the USA as HSLP-1047. That record is rare here in Europe and I am indebted to the State Library for providing it for this compilation together with the unissued matrices. The Symphony is issued with other Haydn symphonies and the D major Cello Concerto on Danacord DACOCD 703-704 where in-depth articles on Mogens Wöldike can be found.

Brief sketches:

Mogens Wöldike (1897-1988) occupied a central position in Danish musical life for more than half a century. He prevailed in many areas of church music both as organist – he was appointed organist of the Copenhagen Cathedral in 1959 – and especially as a choral conductor. He introduced the music of Renaissance and early Baroque composers never before heard in Denmark and at the same time did extensive work as an orchestral conductor, especially of the Radio Chamber Orchestra. His Haydn performances were of the most exquisite elegance. Some can be heard on DACOCD 703-704. He had worked with Carl Nielsen and conducted many of his works. Together with Yehudi Menuhin and the Radio Symphony Orchestra, he recorded Nielsen's Violin Concerto.

John Frandsen (1918-96) graduated as an organist from the Royal Danish Academy of Music. He worked at the Cathedral of Copenhagen. Gradually, conducting became his main interest and he was appointed a conductor of the Radio Orchestra in 1945. Soon after, he became the leading conductor at the Royal

Theatre and Opera. In 1980 he was again attached to the Radio Orchestra while continuing his work with the Royal Orchestra. He was a great interpreter of Nielsen's music and received the Carl Nielsen Prize in 1981. He was also Principal of the Opera Academy from 1950-80. He recorded only a little; this Nielsen is among his few major projects.

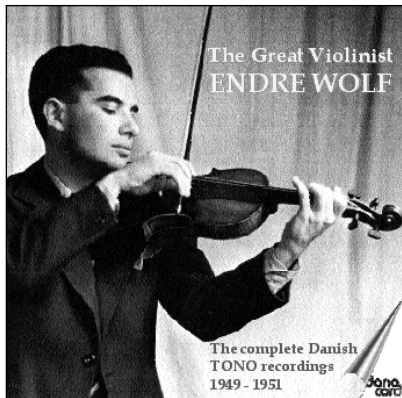
Folmer Jensen (1902-66) graduated from the Royal Academy of Music in 1922. He made his debut in Grieg's Piano Concerto at Tivoli in 1923. Shortly afterwards the legendary Court Singer, Emil Holm, Head of Broadcasting, became aware of the beauty of his piano tone, considering it "eminently suited to the microphone" and linked him to the then new medium. He was permanently employed in 1929 and work in broadcasting was his main occupation for the rest of his life. As an artist he may be described as a lyricist. His playing was sensitive and committed, always restrained and never blurring the formal outlines. He was much sought as an accompanist and worked with many Danish singers. He can be heard as a soloist on DACOCD 521-522 where the reader will find a more comprehensive article.

The Koppel Quartet was a leading Danish quartet for more than 30 years. Founded in 1945 by Julius Koppel (1910-2007) and his wife Elsemarie Bruun (1911-2007) – both members of the Royal Orchestra – it became a cornerstone in Danish chamber music. Carl Nielsen's quartets were central to its repertoire but it played music from Haydn to contemporary composers. The Primaria was also leader in Mogens Wöldike's Palace Chapel Orchestra which could be heard at his Friday concerts performing with the Copenhagen Boys' Choir. The quartet can be heard on DACOCD 360-362; "Carl Nielsen – Chamber Music" playing three of the quartets.

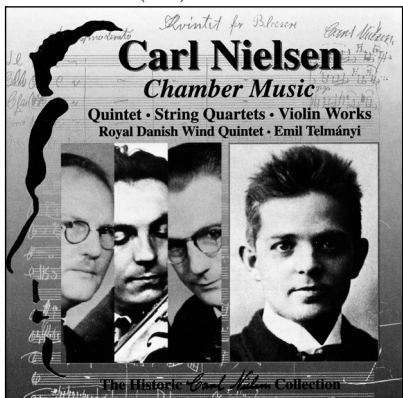
Risskov , February 2012
Claus Byrith



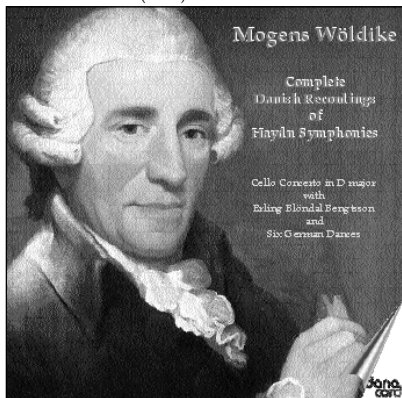
DACOCD 521-522 (2 CD)



DACOCD 714-715 (2 CD)



DACOCD 360-362 (3 CD)



DACOCD 703-704 (2 CD)





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DACOCD 722
DACOCD 723

2 CD

MONO ADD
Total playing time
65:11 / 65:39

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CD 1

W. A. Mozart (1756 – 91):

**Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra,
A Major K.622** 30:42

The Danish Radio Chamber Orchestra,
Cond. Mogens Wöldike

[1] Allegro 12:53

[2] Adagio 7:30

[3] Rondo, allegro 10:16

Haydn Society LP, HSL-1047, rec. 1952

Carl Nielsen (1865 – 1931):

[4] **Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra,
Op. 57** 24:06

The Royal Orchestra, Cond. John Frandsen

Columbia LDX 7000 – 02, Mtx. CCX 1267 – 72, rec. 1947, 1st recording

Robert Schumann (1810 – 1856):

Fantasiestücke Op. 73 10:33

[5] Zart und mit Ausdruck 2:48

[6] Lebhaft, leicht 3:34

[7] Rasch und mit Feuer 4:03

Columbia Matrices CCX 1368 -70, rec. Oct. 31st 1949. Not issued.

CD 2

W. A. Mozart (1756 – 91):

**Quintet for Clarinet and Strings,
A Major K.581** 26:47

[1] Allegro 6:27

[2] Larghetto 6:46

[3] Menuetto 4:37

[4] Allegretto con variazioni 8:42

The Koppel Quartet

Elsemarie Bruun, Andreas Thyregod, vl. Julius
Koppel, vla. Torben Anton Svendsen, vcl.

Columbia LDX 7003 – 05, Mtx. CCX 1303 – 08, rec. Oct 31st 1948

Johannes Brahms (1833 – 97):

**Sonata for Clarinet and Piano,
F Minor Op. 120/1** 20:08

[5] Allegro appassionato 6:31

[6] Andante un poco adagio 4:43

[7] Allegretto grazioso 4:04

[8] Vivace 4:37

Columbia matrices CCX 1363 – 67, rec Oct 29th 1949. Not issued

Louis Cahuzac (1880 – 1960):

[9] **Cantilene** 4:27

Paul Jeanjean (1874 – 1928):

[10] **Arabesques** 4:01

Columbia LDX 6, mtx CCX 1309 – 1310, rec. Nov. 14th 1948

Arthur Honegger (1892 – 1955):

Sonatine for Clarinet and Piano 5:55

[11] Modéré 2:29

[12] Lent et soutenu 2:15

[13] Vif et rythmique 1:11

Gabriel Pierné (1863 – 1937):

[14] **Canzonetta** 3:18

Columbia LDX3, mtx CCX 1273 – 74 rec. Nov. 7th 1947

Folmer Jensen, Piano. CD 1 [5] - [7] CD 2 [5] - [14]

Louis Cahuzac, Clarinet