

The Great Danish Pianist Victor Schiøler



VOL. 2

Erik Tuxen · Emil Telmányi
Henry Holst · Erling Blöndal Bengtsson

**diana
cord**

Victor Schiøler (1899-1967), piano

Peter Tchaikovsky (1840-1892)

Piano Concerto No 1

in B flat Minor Op. 23 32:19

- [1] Allegro non troppo
e molto maestoso 19:12
- [2] Andante semplice – Prestissimo –
Tempo primo 6:22
- [3] Allegro con spirito 6:40

Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra
Conductor Erik Tuxen

TONO X 25051 – 54, Mtx: 2730.2 – 2737.2 Rec.
September 1950. Mtx 2734.2 and 2737.2 re-recorded
October 1950. Also issued as LPX 35001. Mtx
33016-17.

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

Carnaval Op. 9 27:30

- [4] Preambule 2:26
- [5] Pierrot 0:59
- [6] Arlequin 0:46
- [7] Valse noble 1:09
- [8] Eusebius 2:09
- [9] Florestan 1:03
- [10] Coquette 1:01
- [11] Replique 0:26
- [12] Sphinxes 1:04
- [13] Papillons 0:46

- [14] A.S.C.H. – S.C.H.A. Lettres
dansantes 0:54
- [15] Chiarina 0:58
- [16] Chopin 1:27
- [17] Estrella 0:30
- [18] Reconnaissance 1:45
- [19] Pantalon et Colombine 1:00
- [20] Valse allemande – Intermezzo:
Paganini – Valse allemande 2:00
- [21] Aveu 0:50
- [22] Promenade 1:51
- [23] Pause 0:20
- [24] Marche des Davidsbündler contre les
Philistins 3:59

HMV KBH 1015, Mtx 2XCS 157-1N Rec. 1956

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Three Intermezzi Op. 117 19:56

- [25] Andante moderato 5:20
- [26] Andante non troppo e con molto
espressione 4:45
- [27] Andante con moto 6:58

HMV KBLP 16, Mtx XCS 141-1N. Rec. 1956

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

[1] **Fantasia C Minor K 396** 7:19

HMV KBLP 13, Mtx138-2N. Rec. 1955

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Sonata for Violin and Piano A Major

”Kreutzer” Op. 47 31:49

Emil Telmányi, Violin

[2] **Adagio sostenuto – Presto** 11:26

[3] **Andante con variazioni** 13:18

[4] **Finale: Presto** 6:59

TONO X 25051 – 54. Mtx1769 – 76. Rec. 1942

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Trio for Violin, Cello and Piano

B Flat Major Op. 99 33:04

Henry Holst, Violin,

Erling Blöndal Bengtsson, Cello

[5] **Allegro moderato** 10:54

[6] **Andante un poco mosso** 7:29

[7] **Scherzo, Allegro** 6:01

[8] **Rondo, Allegro vivace** 8:29

HMV BLP 1077. Mtx 0XCS 125-2N - 126-2N.

Rec. 1955

[9] **Impromptu G Major Op 90,3** 5:45

HMV 7EGK 1083. Mtx 7TCS 248-B. Rec. 1957



Henry Holst 90th Birthday with Erling Blöndal Bengtsson

Victor Schiøler was undoubtedly the most recorded Danish pianist in the first half of the twentieth century. His discography is extensive, encompassing solo-works, chamber music, and concertos by Grieg, Beethoven, Liszt, Saint-Saëns, and Tchaikovsky, all recorded with the Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra.

His recording career began in 1924, in the acoustic era, and continued well into the LP era until his premature death shortly before his 68th birthday in 1967. This publication is dedicated to his memory 50 years after his death.

In the early years of the LP record, liner notes on the sleeve were often meagre or absent. However, the sleeves of Schiølers Tono-LPs offer the following biography in English as well as in Danish:

“VICTOR SCHIØLER, professor; pianist and doctor was also decorated by the Danish King. He was born in Copenhagen on 7th of April 1899 and received his first training from his mother; the pianist Augusta Schiøler; studying later on with Ignaz Friedmann and Artur Schnabel. At the age of fifteen in 1914 Victor Schiøler gave his first public concert. In 1917 he became an university student and immediately after the first world war; when he had already won a name as a concert pianist

in Denmark, he started extensive tours and quickly established his name as a Danish piano virtuoso of international standard. Among other countries he toured America in 1948 and 1949, Indochina and Hong Kong in 1952 and 1953, Africa in 1951 and he performed in London in 1954 and 1958. Victor Schiøler first appeared as a conductor in 1923 and in the years 1930-32 he was a conductor and musical adviser at the Royal Opera in Copenhagen.

Among the several honorary offices and tasks of honour only a few can be mentioned here: President of the Danish Concert Ring, member of The Danish Music Board, President of the association for performing artists and Professor at the Royal Danish Academy of Music from 1962.

Parallel with his comprehensive activity as a concert pianist and educationist Victor Schiøler, through broadcasts and TV, brought classical masters to a broad audience. His clear representation and demonstration of famous compositions have been of extraordinary value for the understanding of classical music in Denmark”

(A short biography also accompanies the first Schiøler volume in this series).

The first item of the present CD set is Tchaikovsky's B flat minor Concerto. Schiøler recorded this concerto twice, the first time in December 1945 with the Danish Radio Orchestra conducted by Carl von Garaguly. This recording became immensely popular, selling remarkably well for quite an odd reason: a now long-obsolete brand of razor blades called "BARBETT" used the D flat Major opening in a commercial that was shown for an extended period in cinemas all over the country. The audience invariably left the cinema whistling the theme, and the concerto was soon nicknamed the "Barbett Concerto".

The recording took up all 8 sides of four records; these could be obtained separately, with the result that the first record, containing the opening on side 1 (ending strangely, and the three last minutes of the finale on the other side (side 8), was sold in about ten times as many copies as the complete set. Then something happened: the recording was apparently no longer available.

I cannot be absolutely sure but I believe that the metal used for the original father matrix and the mother on whom pressing matrices were grown had been recycled due to copper and nickel shortage in the post-war years. So when the pressing matrix for side one was either worn-out or accidentally destroyed in

1949, the life of the recording ended. The concerto was still in strong demand, however, so in 1950 Tono asked Schiøler to re-record it with the same orchestra, now conducted by Erik Tuxen, however. The recording was given high priority: most of the sides were recorded several times – one even nine times over – before the result was accepted. Furthermore, two of the sides were re-done a month later (the recording was made by directly cutting a lacquer disc for each side – tape was introduced in Danish studios only in 1951).

The new recording – the one heard here – also sold well and was a couple of years later transferred from the metal mothers to LP, resulting in much lower noise and distortion. Joining the sides smoothly in this transfer was a problem for Tono's technicians. One cannot help noticing some rather unsuccessful joins in the first, and – particularly – in the last movement.

In the present issue, based on the LP version, the bad joins have been repaired by combining a tiny bit from the end of one 78 rpm side with a bit from the beginning of the next – the attentive listener may in a couple of places notice a slight increase in noise stemming from these 78rpm bits.

Unlike the old matrices, the popularity of the recording was not subject to wear; Tono even

issued a 7" 45 rpm record extract of the LP version containing, as the sleeve says, "part of the first movement of the Tchaikovsky piano concerto". The other side held Liszt's *Liebstraum No. 3* and Grieg's *To The Spring*.

Finally the abridged first movement, performed by Schiøler and the Royal Orchestra conducted by Arne Hammelboe, was recorded on film. Needless to say: this film – vividly displaying Schiøler's artistry – was produced by "BARBETT".

As with the Tchaikovsky concerto, Schiøler recorded Schumann's Carnival twice. His 1952 recording was issued on a 10" LP record, KBLP 2. Unfortunately it had a somewhat unstable pitch, also known as 'wow'. Even though it was issued as part of the international series, it did not sell well, so that it is hard to find today. Schiøler's 1956 recording is immaculate, issued as side A of a 12" LP, side B holding his interpretation of Schumann's Kinderszenen. This second recording of Carnival is the one used here. The duration (more than 27 minutes) was at that time not common for an LP side, so also from a technical point of view the record is notable.

The three Brahms Intermezzi Op. 117 were also recorded in 1956. Here the quality is excellent, which also applies to the Mozart

Fantasy. Both items were issued internationally.

The four-record set of Beethoven's Kreutzer sonata dates from 1942. Until then only very few four-record sets were released in Denmark; they were expensive items targeting only a small segment of buyers; hence this set too is rare today. Near the end of the first movement a slight increase of noise is heard, a flaw present on all of the three sets I had at my disposal. However, the enthusiasm of both players is evident throughout. (Information about Emil Telmányi, Carl Nielsen's son-in-law, can be found in the booklet that comes with his recording of the Brahms violin sonatas with the pianist Georgy Vasarhelyi, DACOCD 343).

The Schubert Trio features three of most distinguished Danish musicians at that time (1958). Henry Holst (1899 – 1991) began his career in Berlin early in the century. He appeared as soloist with The Philharmonic Orchestra, and also gave chamber performances – with Schiøler among others – and in 1923 he became leader of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, playing under Furtwängler until 1931. He then immigrated to England for political reasons. There he took up the post of Professor at The Royal Manchester College of Music. In 1948 an article said:

"On that memorable occasion in 1933 with the Hallé orchestra under Sir Thomas Beecham, he [Holst] gave one of the finest performances of the Sibelius Concerto we have been privileged to hear. Then there was the first European performance of the Walton concerto in 1941, which he gave with The Royal Philharmonic Society. This concerto, by the way, he has now played over twenty-five times".

Holst also led the Philharmonia Quartet, formed to make recordings for Columbia.

In 1945 Holst moved to London and took up a professorship at the Royal College of Music. Then in 1954 he returned to Denmark. Later he gave master classes in Tokyo and around 1963 he became a teacher and soon after a professor at The Royal Danish Academy of Music.

Erling Blöndal Bengtsson (1932 – 2013) had already established himself as cellist of international reputation by the time of this recording. For more information see the Danacord double CD, DACOCD 738, presenting his early Danish recordings.

The fine recording re-issued here is unfortunately the only performance of this exceptional ensemble that has been preserved.

Strange as it may seem, Victor Schiøler is almost forgotten today. Even young pianists have never heard of him. But some time ago we could listen to a concert in the radio with the Danish Radio Orchestra from a tour to Finland in 1962. Schiøler was the soloist in the Grieg concerto and the applause was overwhelming. May that and this issue begin to restore his reputation.

Aarhus in April 2017,

Claus Byrith.



TONO 1

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Klaverkoncert nr. 1, b-moll, op. 23 (1)

1. sats: Allegro ben troppo e molto maestoso, 1. del
Tschaikowsky

Victor Schiøler

med Statsradiofoniens symfoniorkester

Dirigent: Erik Tuxen

Flygel: Hindsberg

X 25051-1

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DACOCD 781
DACOCD 782

2 CD

MONO ADD

Total playing time

CD 1 77:35

CD 2 78:18

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Claus ByrithDigital sound restoration
by CEDARExecutive producer:
Jesper BuhlDANACORD
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DACOCD 782 CD 2

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Cover painting: "La Cathédrale Engloutie"

by Birger Carlstedt, courtesy of Amos Andersens Art Museum, Helsinki.