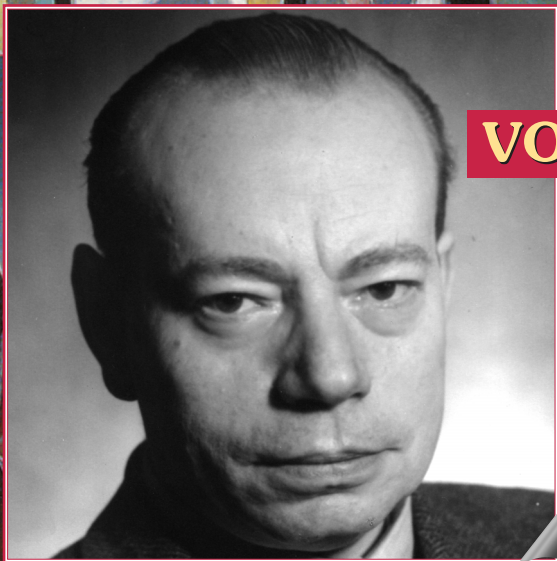


The Great Danish Pianist Victor Schiøler



VOL. 5

Live Tchaikovsky and Grieg Concertos
Haydn and Mozart Piano Trios

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Previous volumes in this Danacord series included studio recordings made by Victor Schiøler of both the piano concertos featured here in live performances. Fourteen years separate the 1948 account of the Grieg in volume 1 from this 1962 Helsinki concert, yet the durations vary by a matter of seconds: 12'00 – 5'47 – 9'23 compared to 11'57 – 5'48 – 9'35 (applause removed). Tchaikovsky's First Concerto tells a similar story: 19'12 for the first movement in the studio recording from 1950 (within volume 2), 19'10 for this concert performance from 1961.

It seems safe to say that Schiøler's interpretative vision prevailed over that of his conductors. There was a pianist colleague of mine at the Royal Academy of Music in Copenhagen who respected but did not share Schiøler's reading of a particular concerto: 'Every note was exactly as Schiøler wanted,' was his view. Schiøler undoubtedly knew exactly what he wanted. No less importantly, he could fulfil his plan for a piece to the letter.

The orchestra for both performances was the Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra, who had begun touring beyond the Nordic countries in the postwar years. They appeared at the 1950 Edinburgh Festival, and then made their London debut in September the following year, with Schiøler as soloist in the Tchaikovsky. 'Its playing was lively, sensitive and luminous in tone,' reported the correspondent of the Musical

Times, who also praised Schiøler's 'commanding' interpretation of the concerto. Long an authoritative presence on the panel of Gramophone, the journalist and broadcaster Trevor Harvey was equally well known in the 40s and 50s as a conductor both in the UK and abroad. He spent a time in Germany after the war where he accompanied Schiøler in two concertos and found him to be 'a virtuoso of the finest calibre, brilliant and with immense power, and guided in everything he does by the most complete artistic integrity.'

Harvey introduced the magazine's readers to some of the TONO recordings reissued in previous volumes of this series, and in reviewing the Grieg, he found 'a most remarkably thoughtful and beautiful performance... the quality which most impresses me is his power of approaching a very familiar work by adding his own imagination to the composer's score, neglecting what other players may have done and, in fact, bringing to the music all the freshness of a first performance.' This unusual attentiveness to the details of the score, enlivened by a true Romantic's shaping of phrase and palette of tone-colours, is also a hallmark of the live recording issued here.

Both these performances, sent to me as flat digital transfers, were recorded in mono. Only in 1968 did Danish radio begin to make live stereo broadcasts of concerts, and prior to 1965 only a fraction of studio recordings were made for later

broadcast in stereo. The same situation held for Finnish radio.

The 1950s studio recordings in this compilation may seem inferior to what could be expected from 78rpm albums of the time. Schiøler had recorded the Brahms Handel Variations (Vol 1) and Beethoven's C minor variations (vol 4) in 1951, and they both sound considerably better than the 1954 versions presented here. Even the TONO records from the 1940s are better. The Danish division of HMV had acquired both a matrix factory and a Danish pressing plant in the interim. The newer records were made locally, and by apparently less experienced workers than the earlier, English-made pressings. The waxes were still cut on cutting machines which dated from the mid-1930s. They were becoming obsolete and were perhaps not properly maintained at a time when interest was irreversibly shifting towards LP. The first Danish LPs appeared in 1951, and shellac production was gradually phased out during the rest of the decade.

At the former State Library in Aarhus, I found several unpublished matrices from the early 1950s which also never appeared as LPs. I have transferred a couple of them and made them available to modern listeners in the CD-set with the French Clarinetist Louis Cahuzac (DACOCD 722-723). They prove, that not lacking artistic quality blocked their issue as records.

The LP records were still cut from the Danish tape recordings in England and the records were manufactured there too, and, as the listener will experience by listening to the two trios here in Volume 5, of superior quality.

Volume 1 of the series also presented Schiøler's very first recording, from 1924, and one side of his second, HMV M95, recorded the following year. These were made using acoustic technology: the energy of the sound itself cut the wax without intervention of a microphone or other electrical devices. These records are very rare and the other side of the only sample I could obtain was damaged beyond repair.

Schiøler made his third recording (M96) the same day. In 2019 my friend and fellow collector Niels Ravn found it in a flea market: I am indebted to his kindness in making it available to me for transfer and release. Since the series began, I have also come across a better preserved copy of M95, and so the side missing from volume 1 is reissued here for the first time in almost a century. Remarkably, his performance of Chopin's Berceuse differs by just three seconds in duration from 1924 to 1954.

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DACOCD 872
DACOCD 873

2 CD

MONO ADD

Total playing time

CD 1 77:49

CD 2 77:48

Compilation &
transfers
Claus Børith

Digital sound restoration
by CEDAR

Executive producer:
Jesper Buhl

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DACOCD 872 CD 1

Victor Schiøler (1899-1967), piano

Peter Tchaikovsky (1840-1892)

Piano Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor, Op. 23 32:51

[1] Allegro non troppe e molto maestoso 19:10

[2] Andante semplice - Prestissimo - Tempo primo 6:42

[3] Allegro con spirito 6:59

Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra

Conductor Carl von Garaguly

Live concert, Copenhagen, September 23, 1961

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 16 27:26

[4] Allegro molto moderato 11:57

[5] Adagio 5:48

[6] Allegro moderato molto e marcato 9:41

Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra

Conductor Thomas Jensen

Live concert, Helsinki, 1962

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)

[7] Nocturne No. 2 in E flat Major, Op. 9 No. 2 4:17

HMV M 96, mtx Cc 5872, rec. 1925, England

[8] Étude Op. 10 No 12 in C minor 2:33

[9] Étude Op. 10 No. 7 in C major 1:31

HMV M96, mtx Cc 5875, rec. 1925 England

Eduard Gärtner (1801-1877)/

Ignaz Friedman (1882-1948)

[10] Wienertanz No. 1 3:47

HMV M95, mtx Cc 5876, rec. 1925

Edvard Grieg

[11] Halling Op. 70 2:09

HMV DA5284, mtx OCS 3388, rec. 1953

Christian Sinding (1856-1941)

[12] Frühlingsrauschen, Op. 32 No. 3 2:22

HMV DA 5284, mtx OCS 3387, rec. 1953

DACOCD 873 CD 2

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Piano Trio No. 39 in G major, Hob.XV:25 16:07

[1] I. Andante 7:40

[2] II. Poco adagio. Cantabile 5:23

[3] III. Rondo all'Ongarese (Presto) 3:04

HMV KBLP9, mtx OXCS 17-3N

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Piano Trio No. 4 in E major K542 16:56

[4] I. Allegro 5:25

[5] II. Andante grazioso 4:38

[6] III. Allegro 6:53

Charles Senderovitz, violin

Erling Blöndal Bengtsson, cello

HMV KBLP9, mtx OXCS 18-5N, rec. 1952

Frédéric Chopin

[7] Nocturne No. 5 in F sharp minor, Op. 15 No. 2 3:48

HMV DB5294, mtx 2CS 2846, rec. 1950

[8] Nocturne No. 19 in E minor, Op. 72 No. 1 4:07

HMV DB5294, mtx 2CS 2847, rec. 1950

[9] Impromptu No. 1 in A flat major, Op. 29 3:54

HMV 10522, mtx 2CS 348 , rec. 1954

[10] Berceuse in D flat major, Op. 57 4:10

HMV DB10522, mtx 2CS 3487, rec. 1954

[11] Étude Op. 10 No. 3 in E major 4:35

HMV 10518, mtx 2CS 3363, rec. 1954

[12] Étude Op. 10 No. 4 in C sharp minor 2:11

[13] Étude Op. 10 No. 5 in G flat major 1:37

HMV 10518, mtx 2CS 3362, rec. 1954

[14] Ballade No. 1 in G minor Op. 23 8:04

TONO A 103, mtx 1550-51, rec. 1942

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

[15] Rondo capriccioso in E major, Op. 14 6:58

TONO A 132, mtx 3064-65, rec. 1947

Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943)

[16] Prelude Op. 3 No 2 in C sharp minor 3:54

TONO A 131, mtx 3061, rec. 1947