



THOMAS JENSEN LEGACY

VOLUME 21



TCHAIKOVSKY VIOLIN CONCERTO *WITH* JANINE ANDRADE
LANDRÉ CLARINET CONCERTO • KARKOFF SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRAL MUSIC *BY*
SCHUBERT • ADAM • SIBELIUS • GRAINGER • CHABRIER

CD 1

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

Violin Concerto in D, Op. 35 33:48

[1] I. Allegro moderato 18:06

[2] II. Canzonetta, Andante 6:16

[3] III. Finale: Allegro vivacissimo 9:27

Janine Andrade, Violin

Live broadcast, April 8, 1962

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)

King Kristian II Suite Op. 27

[4] I. Nocturne 7:21

Live broadcast, October 14, 1962

Paul Hindemith (1895-1963)

Symphonic Metamorphosis on Themes of Carl Maria von Weber (1943) 19:40

[5] I. Allegro 3:50

[6] II. Scherzo (Turandot): Moderato 7:28

[7] III. Andantino 3:55

[8] IV. Marsch 4:22

Live broadcast, October 11, 1961

Guillaume Landré (1905-1968)

[9] Clarinet Concerto (1957/58) 17:50

Molto tranquillo - Con moto e molto rubato - Lento molto - Vivo -

Molto lento - Vivace

Arne Møller, Clarinet

Live broadcast, November 11, 1961

CD 2

Jørgen Bentzon (1897-1951)

[1] **Variations Op. 28 for Small Orchestra** (1936) *10:52*

Live broadcast, November 19, 1962

Maurice Karkoff (1927-2013)

[2] **Symphony No. 3 Op. 38 'Sinfonia breve'** (1958-59) *13:56*

Adagio – Allegro moderato – Andante

Live broadcast, November 11, 1961

Geirr Tveitt (1908-1981)

Hardanger Suite No. 1, Op. 151 (1950/1954) *25:57*

[3] I. Velkommen med æra (Welcome) *3:25*

[4] II. Flyteljod (Flute Melody) *0:32*

[5] III. Fagraste viso pao Joræ (The Most Beautiful Song in the World) *2:39*

[6] IV. Moltor og myrabaæ (Mulberries and Blackberries) *1:26*

[7] V. Stavkyrkjesteve (Stave Church Song) *1:26*

[8] VI. A naoe meg no fø mi tusta (Save me for my beloved) *0:59*

[9] VII. Uppskoka (Toast to the New Beer) *2:03*

[10] VIII. Syrgjeleg song um ein tom brennevinsskunk
(Sad Song about an Empty Brandy Glass) *1:08*

[11] IX. Langeleiklat (Langeleik's Melody) *0:45*

[12] X. Stølstone (Echo Song from the Mountains) *2:47*

[13] XI. Hastverksbrudlaup (Hasty Wedding) *1:05*

[14] XII. Guds Godhet og Guds Storhet (God's Goodness and Greatness) *2:24*

[15] XIII. Vise folks folkevisa um visse folk (Wise People's Gossip) *1:43*

[16] XIV. Storkrytarstev (The Big Boaster) *1:59*

Live broadcast, April 8, 1962

Emmanuel Chabrier (1841-1894)

[17] **España (1883)** 6:47

Live broadcast, April 8, 1962

Adolphe Adam (1803-1856)

La poupée de Nuremberg (1852)

[18] Overture 5:54

Live broadcast, April 8, 1962

Trad. arr. **Percy Grainger** (1882-1961)

[19] **Country Gardens (1918)** 2:27

Live broadcast, April 8, 1962

Eric Coates (1886-1957)

London Suite (1933)

[20] III. Knightsbridge March 3:59

Tono X25009 Rec. September 1942

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

[21] **Marche Militaire No. 1, D733** 4:49

Live broadcast, October 8, 1962

Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra

(except for track 20, CD 2, which is with the Tivoli Symphony Orchestra)

Thomas Jensen, conductor

Born on 25 October 1898 in Copenhagen, Thomas Jensen entered the Royal Danish Conservatoire of Music in 1913 where he studied with, among others, Carl Nielsen. Between 1917 and 1919 he was a solo cellist of the Northwest Skåne Orchestra in Helsingborg in Sweden. From 1920 to 1927 he played in the Tivoli Symphony Orchestra in Copenhagen, first as 3rd, then 2nd cellist.

The cellist Jensen nurtured ambitions as a conductor which he began to fulfil in 1923, as conductor of the amateur Euphrosyne orchestra. Two years later, his conducting of Stravinsky's *L'histoire du soldat* at Det Ny Theater (The New Theatre) attracted attention, and he decided to further his conducting career with periods of study in Paris and Dresden, returning once in a while to conduct at the Nørrebro Theatre, and at the Tivoli in the event of its permanent conductor Frederik Schnedler-Petersen being indisposed.

When Johan Hye-Knudsen left the Scala Theatre in 1925 to join the more prestigious Royal Theatre, Jensen was encouraged to apply for the vacancy. He chose instead to become conductor of the Philharmonic Society in Aarhus. The post enabled him to take on more purely orchestral repertoire, even when coupled with work at the Aarhus Theatre, but he probably also saw the opportunities afforded by the city's cultural potential. Plans were afoot for a university (founded in 1928) and even a permanent symphony orchestra. This ambition took another decade to bear fruit with the Aarhus Civic Orchestra, founded and named in January 1935 by Jensen himself.

In the meanwhile, Jensen did not restrict his work to the relatively provincial Aarhus. In 1931 he was invited by the head of Danish radio, Emil Holm, to apply for a new post as a second conductor to the radio's symphony orchestra, assisting the work of Launy Grøndahl and Emil Reesen (and from 1936 Erik Tuxen). Even though several board members suggested hiring him without further ado, the management (mostly Holm) insisted on an open audition. Jensen came third, and the post went instead to the Austrian conductor Fritz Mahler, whose father was a cousin of the composer Gustav Mahler. Jensen's reputation had preceded him, however, so that he nevertheless returned to the DRSO as a guest conductor.

1935 was a watershed year for Jensen. As well as founding the Aarhus City Orchestra he made his debut with the DRSO in November with a programme of light popular

music. The two ensembles continued to lie at the centre of his work for the next two decades. With 26 permanent members, the Aarhus Civic Orchestra was a Classically constituted ensemble, whereas the radio orchestra was more than twice as large, expanding from 55 musicians in the 30s to an 'international standard of 92 musicians in 1948. From 1936 to 1948 he also led regular concerts with the Tivoli Orchestra, acting as deputy to Svend Christian Felumb during the Aarhus orchestra's annual summer break.

Jensen's background as a cellist surely influenced his repertoire choices as a conductor. He had played in the Danish premieres of Beethoven's Ninth and Mahler's Fourth and Ninth symphonies, given by the Tivoli Orchestra with Schnedler-Petersen. He had also played in the first performances of Nielsen's Fourth and Fifth symphonies, as well as most of the symphonies by Sibelius, under the baton of the composers. From 1937 onwards he gave only symphonic concerts with the DRSO, declining invitations to take on light-music programmes. His debut in the DRSO's regular Thursday concert series, the most prestigious of their engagements, took place on 2 December 1937 with a programme including the First Cello Concerto of Saint-Saëns and the Symphony by César Franck, and thereafter he gave one or two concerts in the series each season.

Jensen's connection with the DRSO deepened during the early 50s. The orchestra had come to international attention in concerts led by Fritz Busch at the 1950 Edinburgh Festival, and given a critically acclaimed account of Nielsen's Fourth in London under Launy Grøndahl the following year. In 1952 they embarked on an ambitious tour of the US, giving 39 concerts in 38 cities over 47 days. The punishing schedule did not suit the ageing Grøndahl, and the orchestra's members petitioned for Jensen to replace him. Sharing duties with Erik Tuxen, Jensen conducted 20 performances of Nielsen's Fourth Symphony, as well as works by Dvořák, Grieg and Richard Strauss. This led to a part-time post with the orchestra in 1953, and when Grøndahl retired in 1956 and Tuxen died the following year, Jensen was finally offered the coveted chair of permanent conductor in the autumn of 1957.

The offer came at a propitious time for Jensen. His relations with the management of the Aarhus Civic Orchestra had become frosty over time, and he departed in

anger in the spring of 1957. Standing in front of the DRSO musicians for his first rehearsal as permanent conductor a few months later, he was welcomed with applause. However, Jensen, now close to 60, was not the conductor he had been a quarter of a century earlier at that unsuccessful audition. He had begun to suffer from progressive deafness, and he quietly remarked to the musicians that his appointment with them might have come a little too late. The orchestra itself was beginning to feel the pressure of success, which demanded both more concerts and a more challenging repertoire, leaving its musicians less time to rehearse and perform the international repertoire that had made them renowned both in Denmark and beyond.

However, until Jensen's sudden and early death on November 13, 1963, he and the orchestra made a heroic effort to preserve and pass on a fast-vanishing heritage. They were the guardians of a performing culture derived from Nielsen, and from the orchestra's distinguished early conductors. After 1963, years passed without the DRSO engaging a permanent conductor, and both its playing and *esprit de corps* suffered accordingly. Thus the recordings in this series represent something of a last gasp of a lost tradition.

Presenting performances from the last two years of Jensen's life, this collection demonstrates the breadth of his repertoire, and also the adaptability of his orchestra, capable as it was of moulding itself to the interpretative personalities of different conductors in canon repertoire, giving dedicate and accurate accounts of new music, and turning to rarities such as the suite by Geir Tveitt. The series of Sunday Concerts was programmed as a lighter alternative to the Thursday Concerts, although there was a good deal of repertoire common to both series, such as the Violin Concerto by Tchaikovsky, heard in this broadcast from April 1962. The French violinist Janine Andrade (1918-97) is almost forgotten today, though as a pupil of Carl Flesch and Jacques Thibaud at the Paris Conservatoire she had the kind of top-rank training that developed her as a musically sensitive

virtuoso with an individual timbre bearing comparison with the many other, more celebrated products of the Flesch/Thibaud stable. Her career had to wait until after the war, and centred on her native France, before it was tragically cut short by a stroke in 1972. Andrade recorded the Tchaikovsky Concerto in the mid-60s with a pick-up band (the 'Hamburg Pro Musica' Orchestra) led by Hans-Jürgen Walthert, reissued on CD with the Brahms Concerto from the same source, and this live concert performance presents a strikingly more spontaneous if uneven interpretation. Andrade also recorded the Sibelius Concerto for Decca; this collection continues with the Nocturne from the composer's incidental music for *King Kristian II*, which became one of his most popular early pieces, quickly outgrowing its theatrical context. Indeed Adolf Paul's play (centred on the historical king's illicit love-affair rather than his notorious role in executing 80 members of the Swedish aristocracy) is remembered today entirely through Sibelius's contribution. First heard in February 1898 and then given in concert later the same year, the score prompted Sibelius to remark: "This is the first time I have managed to make something complete!" Not for nothing did Hindemith give the title of Symphonic Metamorphosis rather than Variations to the orchestral work he wrote while in wartime exile in the US. A ballet project with Léonide Massine fell through, and Hindemith treated his chosen themes from Weber's music with an extreme virtuosity of invention, perhaps with the technical polish and finesse of US orchestras in mind (though, ironically, many of their members were European emigres too). Hindemith and his wife liked playing through scores of Weber at home, and he chose lesser-known pieces from incidental music which Weber had supplied for a production of *Turandot*, in a German version of its original form as a commedia dell'arte entertainment by the Italian dramatist Gozzi. The metamorphosis is thus a daringly free fusion of styles and eras, from Italian-accented chinoiserie to US-style brass and string writing for updated-German romanticism, cast in four movements and ending with an uproarious march.

Hindemith's *Metamorphosis* was less than 20 years old when Jensen conducted this performance, but a DRSO concert in November 1961 presented even more recent music, including the Clarinet Concerto by the Dutch composer Guillaume Landré.

Learning first of all from his father, Willem Landré, and then the distinguished composer and pedagogue Willem Pijper. Landré wrote in a chromatic-tonal idiom, including a set of *Symphonic Permutations* bearing less of a resemblance to Hindemith (in terms both of form and harmony) than to the more austere contrapuntal 'metamorphosis' techniques of Vagn Holmboe and Niels Viggo Bentzon, as heard in previous instalments of this Jensen series.

Landré's Fourth Symphony was performed by the Concertgebouw Orchestra under Bernard Haitink, and he began writing the Clarinet Concerto with Benny Goodman in mind for a planned premiere at the Holland Festival. What transpired, however, was a single-movement work of contrasting episodes (and no especially jazzy character) in the mould of Nielsen's concerto for the same instrument. Premiered by the Concertgebouw's principal clarinetist, Bram de Wilde, in 1958, Landré's concerto is played here by the clarinetist of the Royal Orchestra, Arne Møller (1919-2007). In the same concert as Landré's Clarinet Concerto, Jensen conducted the Third Symphony of Maurice Karkoff, another figure now almost completely forgotten. Born in Stockholm, Karkoff studied with Lars-Eric Larsson (a Swedish counterpart to Pijper, more influential as a teacher than a composer) and then farther afield with figures as diverse as Luigi Dallapiccola, André Jolivet and Max Deutsch. According to a survey of postwar Scandinavian music by Bo Wallner, published in 1965, 'it is characteristic of [Karkoff] that he swings between such a "ball-dribbling" piano piece as his *Capriccio on Football* (1960) and his Fourth Symphony (1963), a heavy, rhythmically intricate work with certain rhythmic motifs taken from Israeli folk dance and tragic accents.'

Between these two poles, stylistically speaking, falls the Third Symphony of 1958-9. The dryly percussive introduction might initially raise anticipations of a gestural commentary on symphonic form and tradition in the mould of Nielsen's far-from-'semplique' Sixth. Karkoff's operation of an angular main theme (outlined on lower strings at the outset) is more traditionally contrapuntal through the course of three linked movements. Nielsen's thumbprints linger over orchestral touches such as a lugubrious trombone solo, but the brittle energy of the central Scherzo, and arch-like return to bare elegy towards the close, have a Russian-Soviet flavour.

An older cousin of Niels Viggo Bentzon, and pupil of Nielsen, was Jørgen Bentzon, whose *Variations Op.28* open CD2. After Nielsen's death in 1931, he paid tribute to his teacher: 'He was too obstinate in his own ways for the older generation, and not "modern" enough for the younger. Nor did his simple and restrained music provide conductors with possibilities for the much-vaunted "self-expression"'. These qualities made their mark on the concise set of orchestral variations which Bentzon composed five years later.

The original theme, as introduced on the horn, is strong and straightforward, forgoing the tonal insecurity of Landré and Karkoff. Its intrinsic, purposeful nobility is underlined by the first few variations, which move from a brass group to flute and strings, then winds, before swelling to a lyrical climax on cellos. A caesura brings more syncopated treatment of the theme (still recognisable in its original format), and it undergoes a Nielsen-like spiritual crisis around the halfway point, winding up to a passionate restatement of the theme on the violins, not so much punctuated by as under attack from brass and percussion. Crisis brings resolution, and new-found strength.

Returning to the Sunday-series concert which featured Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto, Geir Tveit himself presented the first of his suites of Hardanger Folk Tunes, with explanation and demonstrations of the original songs much to the amusement of the studio audience. With these suites, Tveit aimed to preserve a Norwegian tradition of singing and storytelling in the mould of Bartók in Hungary and Bulgaria, Launy Grøndahl in Denmark and Percy Grainger in England. The suite sketches everyday life in homes, churches and fields, through vignettes of a wedding, a drinking song, blackberry-picking and so on.

The concert also featured Grainger's best-known free arrangement of a folk song, *Country Gardens*, alongside a trio of lighter works beginning with the brilliant rhapsody-evocation of Spain by Chabrier. The music of Adolphe Adam was once no less ubiquitous on orchestral programmes of 'light music', such as this overture to his 1852 opera based on ETA Hoffmann's tale of the Sandman ('a whole emporium of waltzes, galops, potpourris,' remarked Berlioz in typically double-edged fashion, 'worthy of the Nuremberg fair').

The Marche Militaire No.1 of Schubert was no less of a pops favourite on both sides of the Atlantic, heard in an orchestration that would likely have taken its composer by surprise (having written it for four-hands piano, for the instruction of his aristocratic young pupils in a country estate in Hungary) no less than its fleeting appearance in Stravinsky's *Circus Polka*.

Remastered here from a 1942 recording which has never been reissued since its original publication on 78s, the *Knightsbridge March* was written by Eric Coates in 1933 as the last movement of his London Suite: perfect for the four-minute duration of a 78rpm side, and as music to whistle while its listeners worked, whether in London or Copenhagen, Rotherham or Ribe. This was not the only piece of English music to be recorded by Jensen during the German occupation of Denmark, but in August 1943 the control held by the occupying power over such cultural activity was not yet as strict as it became, especially during the last year of the war.

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The Thomas Jensen Legacy, Volume 21

Significant new additions to the recorded catalogue of this most broad-minded of Danish conductors, working in the last two years of his life and featuring several composers of his own time who were writing in their own post-Nielsen styles. Hardly less novel is the wartime recording of Coates's Knightsbridge March, never reissued since first appearing on 78s. Several other light-orchestral classics are complemented by spontaneous-sounding live Tchaikovsky in the hands of a little-known French violinist.

CD 1

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

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Janine Andrade, Violin

Live broadcast, April 8, 1962

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)

[4] King Kristian II Suite - Nocturne 7:21

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[1] Variations Op. 28 10:52

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[2] Symphony No. 3 Op. 38 13:56

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