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FELIX SALMOND

Beethoven Cello Sonatas

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Producer's Note

On March 29, 1947, Felix Salmond gave a recital at the Juilliard School commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of his American debut. The program was one he had played on more than one occasion over the years: the five Beethoven Cello Sonatas. The following year, Salmond and his performing partner, fellow Juilliard faculty member Leonid Hambro, returned to the school's Concert Hall to make a private recording of the sonatas, three of which were issued in 1960 on a private LP as a fund-raiser to help establish a scholarship in his name.

These recordings are revelations in several ways. First, they show that Salmond maintained his technique even in his sixtieth year. His last commercial recordings were made in 1930, when he was forty-two; and although he continued to concertize and appear on broadcasts, these Beethoven sonatas are the only published documents of his playing after that.

But more importantly, they present Salmond in the finest recorded sound he ever received. Except for some occasional surface noise from the original acetate discs, they have the presence, and nearly the frequency range, of high fidelity mono tape recordings. The difference is most striking going from the last sonata to the 1928 recording of the "Magic Flute" Variations which follow it. Here is the Salmond with which most listeners are familiar – a figure from a shadowy past, heard dimly through a haze of surface hiss on even the best of American Columbia's "Viva-Tonal" pressings.

All of which raises the question: Why did the record companies ignore Salmond after 1930, when he continued to play at such a high level? The Depression surely had something to do with it. For much of the 1930s, Classical instrumentalists either recorded in Europe or not at all. (Casals, for example, cut his last disc for Victor in 1928; but HMV was happy to keep him busy after that.) Due to his teaching positions both at Juilliard and the Curtis Institute, Salmond's career by this time was largely based in the U.S. By the time American labels began recording cellists again, a new generation had appeared, including Feuermann and Piatigorsky. Though still active, Salmond was largely forgotten.

It is posterity's loss. As critics noted when the first volume of this series came out (Pristine PACM 095), Salmond's playing has a decidedly modern feel, in contrast to the sentimental, portamento-laden performances of his elder British countryman W. H. Squire. It was an approach he passed on to his many pupils, including Leonard Rose, Bernard Greenhouse and Frank Miller, and it can be heard even on the earliest of the recordings presented here. We are fortunate to be able to hear him at last not "through a glass darkly" but, in these late recordings, nearly "face to face".

Mark Obert-Thorn

FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM
SARL Pristine Audio, 144 Rue de l'Eglise, 24610 St. Méard de Gurçon, France

Felix Salmond

PRISTINE
AUDIO

PACM 099

BEETHOVEN

Cello Sonatas Nos. 1, 4 & 5 7 Variations on "Bei Männern"

Encores by Bizet, Chopin, Fauré,
Pianelli and Pierné

with Leonid Hambro &
Simeon Rumschisky, piano

Studio recordings, 1926 - 1948



Obert-Thorn

Felix Salmond *Volume Two*

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BEETHOVEN Cello Sonata No. 1 in F major, Op. 5, No. 1

- 1 1st Mvt. - Adagio sostenuto - Allegro (13:12)
- 2 2nd Mvt. - Rondo (Allegro vivace) (6:38)

BEETHOVEN Cello Sonata No. 4 in C major, Op. 102, No. 1

- 3 1st Mvt. - Andante - Allegro vivace (7:28)
- 4 2nd Mvt.: Adagio - Tempo d'andante - Allegro vivace (6:16)

BEETHOVEN Cello Sonata No. 5 in D major, Op. 102, No. 2

- 5 1st Mvt. - Allegro con brio (6:34)
- 6 2nd Mvt. - Adagio con molto sentimento d'affetto (7:39)
- 7 3rd Mvt. - Allegro - Allegro fugato (4:31)

Leonid Hambro *piano*

Recorded in 1948 in the Juilliard Concert Hall, New York City
First released in 1960 on an unnumbered private LP issued by Juilliard

8 BEETHOVEN - 7 Variations on "Bei Männern" from Die Zauberflöte (9:46)

Recorded 4 June 1928 in New York City
Matrix nos.: W 14386-1, 14387-4, 14388-4 & 14389-4 (Columbia 179-M/180-M)

9 PIANELLI (arr. Joseph Salmon) - Villanelle (3:45)

Recorded 19 April 1926 in New York City
Matrix no.: W 98241-2 (Columbia 7117-M)

10 CHOPIN - Largo from Cello Sonata in G minor, Op. 65 (3:33)

Recorded 5 June 1928 in New York City
Matrix no.: W 146391-3 (Columbia 169-M)

11 FAURÉ - Berceuse (Cradle Song), Op. 16 (3:42)

Recorded 4 June 1928 in New York City
Matrix no.: W 146390-4 (Columbia 169-M)

12 BIZET - Adagietto from L'Arlesienne (2:47)

Recorded 29 April 1927 in New York City
Matrix no.: W 143184-7 (Columbia 2054-M)

13 PIERNÉ - Serenade, Op. 7 (3:18)

Recorded 29 April 1927 in New York City
Matrix no.: W 144032-6 (Columbia 2054-M)

Simeon Rumschisky *piano*

Producer and Audio
Restoration Engineer:
Mark Obert-Thorn

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providing source material

Total duration: 79:09

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