



# JULIUS KATCHEN



Born in Long Branch, New Jersey, August 15th, 1926, Mr. Katchen comes from a family of musicians. He began his piano studies at the age of five with his grandmother, Mrs. Mandell Svet, who remained his teacher for the next ten years.

In 1937 he played for Eugene Ormandy who was so impressed with the young prodigy that he promptly engaged him to play with the Philadelphia Orchestra. The story of his debut on October 21st, 1937, now belongs to history. The performance was such an overwhelming success that the New York Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra immediately invited him to be the soloist in their annual "Pension Fund Concert" the following month. Again he scored a triumph. The famous critic Lawrence Gilman wrote about "an ease and musicianship which astonished those oldsters in the audience who remembered the debut of another boy prodigy named Joseph Hofman, fifty years ago."

The rave reviews which greeted his first New York recital which was given on November 13, 1938, when the young musician was only twelve years old, confirmed the impression that an important new star had appeared on the musical horizon. Despite his early success young Mr. Katchen's parents wisely insisted that he lead as nearly normal a childhood as possible for a musical genius. Consequently they decided to interrupt his brilliant concert career temporarily in favor of a broad general education. Privately tutored until 1941, he was sent to the local high school after which he was enrolled at Haverford College where he majored in philosophy and English literature. Top man in his class, Mr. Katchen on his graduation in 1946, was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and was one of five Americans awarded Fellowships by the French Government in recognition of outstanding scholastic achievement.

Using his Fellowship for music instead of philosophy, it was not long before Mr. Katchen was back on the stage. Playing seven times in eleven days with the Conservatory Orchestra and the National Orchestra during the first international UNESCO Festival, in November, 1946, Mr. Katchen took Paris by storm and became the most talked about musical personality of the season.

In the years since his sensational European debut Mr. Katchen established himself throughout Europe as one of the public's great favorites. Each year his annual appearances in the various European countries are awaited with the keenest anticipation, as one of the highlights of the musical season. His extraordinary energy has enabled him to give over a hundred concerts per season in South America, and the Middle East.

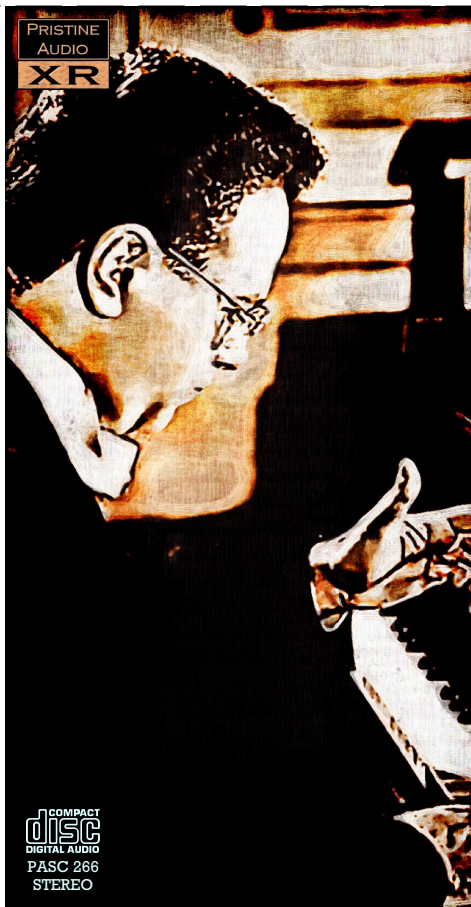
*Biographical notes from original 1960 London tape sleeves.*

#### Restoration notes

These stereo recordings were made in London by Decca for issue domestically in the UK in May 1960, a few short months after London Records issued them in the USA. At the time there were four release formats - the 33rpm long playing vinyl record, in mono or stereo, and the quarter-inch open reel tape, likewise available in mono and stereo formats. Both had their merits and their shortcomings - LPs may suffer from surface noise, clicks, ticks, crackle and so forth, as well as end of side distortion, swish, off-centre pressings and so on. Tape would therefore, on the face of it, have a number of advantages, with none of the above being an issue. However, in the pre-Dolby days tape hiss was a perennial issue, frequency range was sometimes slightly less than that of the LP, magnetic drop-out was a risk, as was tape flutter and - as with the LP - simple wear of the magnetic surface. The present recordings were transferred from quarter-track stereo open reel Ampex tape at 7.5 inches per second, issued commercially by London in the USA. A Revox B77 quarter-track machine was used for the transfer, perhaps the highest quality tape deck ever made for this format. Beyond the aforementioned tape hiss, which has been gently tamed using digital noise reduction, the tape also suffered from a surprising amount of very-low-end rumble and a tendency to mild distortion during brass peaks, all of which have been dealt with during restoration. Frequency response generally was excellent, and the overall tonal balance remains largely faithful to the original. **AR**

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# KATCHEN

DOHNÁNYI

VARIATIONS ON A  
NURSERY TUNE

RACHMANINOV  
RHAPSODY ON A  
THEME OF PAGANINI

LONDON PHILHARMONIC  
ORCHESTRA  
CONDUCTED BY  
SIR ADRIAN BOULT

STEREO STUDIO RECORDINGS, 1959

## Julius Katchen - Stereo Variations, 1959

### 1 DOHNANYI Variations on a Nursery Tune, Op. 25 (23:34)

Recorded by Decca, 12th January, 1959, Kingsway Hall, London

Produced by Michael Williamson

Engineered by Kenneth Wilkinson

### 2 RACHMANINOV Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Op. 43 (22:15)

Recorded by Decca, 1st May, 1959, Kingsway Hall, London

Stereo recording produced by Erik Smith

Stereo recording engineered by Alan Reeve

(A separate engineer and producer recorded this piece for the mono issue.)

**Julius Katchen, piano**

**London Philharmonic Orchestra**

**conducted by Sir Adrian Boult**



PASC 266

XR remastering by **Andrew Rose**

Transfers taken from London "Full Frequency Stereo Tape" (first LCL-80036, 1/4-track at 7.5IPS)

Cover artwork based on a photograph of **Julius Katchen**

These recordings were first issued on LP in the USA as London CS6153 (and in mono as CM9262) in February 1960, and in the UK as Decca SXL2176 (and in mono as LXT5550) in May 1960.

Total duration: **45:49**

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