



Stravinsky

Rarities



Producer's Note

The present program brings together several première recordings of works by Stravinsky as well as some first releases, including the composer's earliest extant discs and the first attempt to record *The Rite of Spring*. Along with other recordings which have already appeared on Pristine, this release also completes the reissue of all acoustically-recorded Stravinsky orchestral works.

Early in his career, Sir Thomas Beecham was noted for his championing of such cutting-edge music as Strauss' *Salome*. It is not surprising in this context that he recorded excerpts from Stravinsky's *Firebird* a mere six years after its première. As in all of the acoustic recordings presented here, the reduced forces and balance dictated by distance from the recording horn allow us to hear, intentionally or not, inner voices that are not generally noticeable. The sound on the original disc has a remarkable amount of detail for a recording that is now over a century old.

At a time when even major symphonies were still being recorded in heavily cut versions, it is remarkable that Eugene Goossens was allowed to record *Petrushka* complete. The sequence of matrix numbers suggests that originally, only four sides comprising Tableaux 1 and 4, concluding with the concert ending, were contemplated, but that another four were added to complete the set a month after the initial session.

Further acoustic versions of the *Firebird* Suite followed Beecham's – first, from Albert Coates (of the 1911 arrangement, on PASC 303), then from Leopold Stokowski (the familiar 1919 version, on PASC 192). Oskar Fried's late acoustic version from 1925 differs from his electrical remake of three years later (PASC 392) by a much faster tempo taken in the Introduction – a choice not dictated by 78 rpm side timing limitations, as the final side, running over four and a half minutes, proves.

Philip Stuart's Stravinsky discography mentions that the composer's first recording was of his Octet, made privately in 1923; it was never released, and all test pressings are lost. His next attempt was made for the Brunswick company two years later during an American tour. Four sides were recorded of Stravinsky playing his solo piano works; but, coming at the very end of the acoustic era, they were never released.

Stravinsky kept his test pressings, and a tape copy of them has circulated which was the basis of this restoration. Some of the originals are in fairly good condition, but others are dire, indeed (particularly Side 3). The fourth side must have had a chip broken off affecting half of the disc; it fades up on the second of three selections. They are presented for the sake of archival completeness. Brunswick allotted a separate matrix number for each take; and since we do not know the take used for each transfer, all of them have been listed on the webpage for this release.

Stokowski made the first attempt at recording *The Rite of Spring* in April, 1927. Three sides were taken down, and the recording ledgers indicate these were done for test purposes only and not intended to be released. The differences with his 1929/30 issued recording are striking, with much faster tempos being favored here.

The final selection shows Stravinsky in a rare role as interpreter of another composer's music. This Mozart duet with his son, Soulima, the filler side to their set of Stravinsky's Concerto for Two Solo Pianos, was recorded in 1938 but not released until 1951 and never "officially" reissued on CD.

Mark Obert-Thorn

PRISTINE AUDIO
PASC 496

stravinsky rarities

including the première recordings of music from
the firebird · petrushka · the rite of spring

and the world première release of
the composer's own first recordings

beecham · goossens · fried · stokowski · stravinsky

Obert-Thorn

studio recordings · 1916-1938

STRAVINSKY The Firebird – Suite (1911 version – excerpts)

- 1 Dance of the Firebird (1:07)
- 2 Game of the Princesses with the Golden Apples (2:28)
- 3 Infernal Dance of all Kaschei's Subjects (3:47)

Beecham Symphony Orchestra *Sir Thomas Beecham* (r. 1916)

STRAVINSKY Petrushka

- 4 First Tableau: The Shrovetide Fair (8:18)
- 5 Second Tableau: Petrushka's Room (3:30)
- 6 Third Tableau: The Moor's Room (6:19)
- 7 Fourth Tableau: The Shrovetide Fair (Toward Evening) (12:10)

Royal Albert Hall Orchestra *Sir Eugene Goossens* (r. 1923/24)

STRAVINSKY The Firebird – Suite (1919 version)

- 8 Introduction (2:07)
- 9 Dance of the Firebird (1:06)
- 10 Round Dance of the Princesses (4:09)
- 11 Infernal Dance of all Kaschei's Subjects (3:45)
- 12 Lullaby of the Firebird (Berceuse) (2:34)
- 13 Finale (2:12)

Berlin State Opera Orchestra *Oscar Fried* (r. 1925)

- 14 STRAVINSKY Andantino (No. 1 from Les cinq doigts) (0:52)
- 15 STRAVINSKY Moderato (No. 5 from Les cinq doigts) (0:44)
- 16 STRAVINSKY Allegro (No. 2 from Les cinq doigts) (1:14)
- 17 STRAVINSKY Larghetto (No. 4 from Les cinq doigts) (1:25)
- 18 STRAVINSKY Lento (No. 6 from Les cinq doigts) (0:52)
- 19 STRAVINSKY Vivo (No. 7 from Les cinq doigts) (0:53)
- 20 STRAVINSKY Pesante (No. 8 from Les cinq doigts) (1:13)
- 21 STRAVINSKY Valse (No. 2 from Three Easy Pieces) (1:44)
- 22 STRAVINSKY Valse pour les enfants (fragment) (0:26)
- 23 STRAVINSKY Polka (No. 3 from Three Easy Pieces) (1:01)

Igor Stravinsky *piano* (r. 1925)

- 24 STRAVINSKY The Rite of Spring - Part I: The Adoration of the Earth (beginning) (9:22)

The Philadelphia Orchestra *Leopold Stokowski* (r. 1927)

- 25 MOZART Fugue in C minor, K426 (4:39)

Igor Stravinsky & Soulima Stravinsky *pianos* (r. 1938)



PASC 496

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Pitch stabilisation (tracks 14-23) by
Andrew Rose

Cover artwork based on photographs
of Stravinsky, Beecham, Goossens,
Fried and Stokowski

Special thanks to Peter Bay, Michael
Gartz, Edward Johnson, Richard
Kaplan and David Schmutz for
providing source material

Full discographic information can be
found online at [Pristine Classical](http://PristineClassical.com)

Total duration: 77:57

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