

A century ago, the adoption of electrical recording by major labels on both sides of the Atlantic revolutionized the industry. The old method of recording acoustically through a horn-like apparatus had remained fundamentally unchanged since Edison's invention of 1877, nearly 50 years earlier. With electrical recording, the frequency range captured on disc was greatly expanded. Instrumentalists and singers now sounded more realistic, and there was no longer a need to rescore orchestral music in order to reinforce the bass using tubas (although at first this continued to be done to accommodate acoustic reproducers). Full symphony orchestras and choruses of hundreds of singers could now be recorded. Moreover, recordings could now be taken outside small studios and into large concert halls, even into the open air.

To celebrate this sea change in recording history, Pristine presents in this release the landmark discs from 1925 that forever altered the way people listened to records. All of the major discs that appeared during that year and have long been mentioned in books like Roland Gelatt's *The Fabulous Phonograph* (1954; rev. 1977) are here, as well as others that were not recognized at the time of their publication. This development, however, did not come out of nowhere; and our release also features some of the steps that led up to the "electric year". Also included is the first complete release of all that was recorded of Calvin Coolidge's Presidential Inauguration ceremony, transferred from rare test pressings.

Because there is so much more information about each recording than can be presented in this limited space, listeners are encouraged to read an expanded version of these notes available at the webpage for this release on Pristine's website (<https://www.pristineclassical.com/products/pasc734>)

Mark Obert-Thorn, January, 2025



disc one (66:09)

1. **MONK** Abide with me (2:50)
2. **DYKES** Recessional (3:34)
Choir, Congregation and Band of H. M. Grenadier Guards
3. **JONES & KAHN** The one I love belongs to somebody else (3:18)
Jesse Crawford, organ
4. **BERLIN** All alone (2:52)
Dell Lampe Orchestra from the Trianon Ballroom/Al Dodson, vocal chorus
5. **CHOPIN** Waltz No. 14 in E minor, Op. Posth. (2:51)
Mischa Levitzki, piano
6. **CIMARA** Stornello (Son come i chicchi) (3:03)
Giuseppe De Luca, baritone/Orchestra conducted by Rosario Bourdon
7. **SMYTHE & GILLHAM** You may be lonesome (2:56)
8. **STANLEY, HARRIS & DARCEY** I had someone else before I had you (3:18)
Art Gillham, piano and vocal
9. **THE EIGHT POPULAR VICTOR ARTISTS** A miniature concert (9:30)
Frank Banta, piano; Henry Burr, tenor; Albert Campbell, tenor; Frank Croxton, bass; Billy Murray, tenor; Peerless Quartet; Monroe Silver, speaker; Sterling Trio; Rudy Wiedoeft, saxophone
10. **GILPIN** Joan of Arkansas - Medley (3:16)
Mask and Wig Glee Chorus; Orchestra conducted by Nathaniel Shilkret
11. **GILPIN** Joan of Arkansas - Buenos Aires (3:38)
Arthur Hall, tenor; Bernard Baker, cornet solo; International Novelty Orchestra conducted by Nathaniel Shilkret
12. **MEYERBEER** Le prophète - Ah, mon fils! (4:37)
13. **MEXICAN FOLK SONG** Pregúntales á las estrellas (3:24)
Margarete Matzenauer, contralto; Orchestra conducted by Rosario Bourdon
14. **SCHUBERT** (arr. Cortot) Litany (3:30)
15. **CHOPIN** Impromptu No. 2 in F sharp major, Op. 36 (4:42)
Alfred Cortot, piano
- BIZET** Petite suite (from *Jeux d'enfants*)
16. 1st mvt. Marche (2:10)
17. 3rd mvt. - Impromptu (1:04)
Victor Concert Orchestra conducted by Josef Pasternack
18. **METCALFE** (arr. Andrews) John Peel (2:53)
19. **WADE** Adeste fideles (2:44)
Associated Glee Clubs of America

PASC 734

disc two (74:13)

1. **MASCAGNI** Cavalleria rusticana - Prelude (4:45)
Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Gennaro Papi
2. **SAINT-SAËNS** Danse macabre, Op. 40 (7:19)
Thaddeus Rich, solo violin
The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski

TCHAIKOVSKY Symphony No. 4 in F minor, Op. 36

3. 1st mvt. - Andante sostenuto (17:38)
4. 2nd mvt. - Andantino in modo di canzona (7:51)
5. 3rd mvt. - Scherzo: Pizzicato ostinato (5:22)
6. 4th mvt. - Allegro con fuoco (8:46)
Royal Albert Hall Orchestra conducted by Sir Landon Ronald

7-15. **Inauguration of Calvin Coolidge** as President of the United States (22:27)

Producer and Audio Restoration Engineer: **Mark Obert-Thorn**

Special thanks to Gregor Benko, Jim Cartwright's Immortal Performances, Inc., Cate Gasco, Colin Hancock, Ward Marston, David Mason, Dave Schmutz, the collection of the late Don Tait and Lew Williams for providing source material and/or valuable guidance for this project

Cover artwork:

Top (l-r): Art Gillham, Mischa Levitzki, Calvin Coolidge, Margarete Matzenauer
Bottom (l-r): Leopold Stokowski, a carbon microphone, Alfred Cortot

Full discographic information and notes can be found online

Total duration: 2hr 20:22