

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO
PASC 285

MARGUERITE LONG

PLAYS RAVEL, MILHAUD AND DEBUSSY

PRISTINE
AUDIO
XR

"Long made two recordings of the G major Concerto. The first one was recorded by Columbia on three 78 rpm records shortly after the January 1932 premiere. René Dumesnil reviewed it in Eve:

The recording of the Concerto pour piano by Maurice Ravel ... is quite worthy of the new work, whose success this winter in Paris, and later in all of Europe's capitals, was resounding. It is Mme. Marguerite Long, dedicatee of the Concerto, whom we hear again at the piano with the same delight as we did at the work's premiere. Her interpretation can be regarded as a model of intelligence, of finesse and of technical perfection. . . . And one must praise equally the orchestra under the direction of the composer. [August 28, 1932.]

The recording was advertised as being conducted by Ravel, but that was not quite the truth. It was actually under the baton of Pedro de Freitas-Branco, who had conducted most of the program on January 14, 1932. But, Long insisted, Ravel was present in the recording booth during the whole session, which lasted well into the night. He attentively followed every minute, voicing his opinion over the smallest details, and demanding that the performers start over until he was completely satisfied. And in the early morning hours he finally was.

Twenty years later, in 1954 [sic], with the advent of long-playing records, Long recorded the G major Concerto again, with the Orchestre de la Société du Conservatoire under Georges Tzipine. On the flip-side was a new performance of Fauré's Ballade, conducted by André Cluytens. The 1954 Ravel recording was criticized by many for its stylistic looseness, particularly in the slow movement. At 80, Long chose a more sentimental rendition, as opposed to the classical sobriety of her earlier version. Whether a matter of taste or not, the later performance contradicted Ravel's intentions, as Long herself described them."

from *Marguerite Long: a life in French music, 1874-1966*
by Cecilia Dunoyer

Recording and restoration notes

The first recording of Ravel's Piano Concerto in G, allegedly with the composer conducting, took place exactly three months after its première in Paris - which he did conduct, and where most of the rest of the program had been conducted by de Freitas Branco. It is the latter who conducts the 1932 recording here, despite continued and repeated billing both by HMV and EMI, and more recently other labels, of Ravel himself.

It does seem far more likely that, by contrast, it is the composer who conducts Milhaud's Piano Concerto here - as with Ravel, and also Debussy, Fauré and other French composers of the era, Marguerite Long had a close and fruitful working relationship with Darius Milhaud.

Naturally the 1920s and 30s recordings frequently betray their age sonically, though often - particularly in the Milhaud - we are treated to clear upper frequencies, particularly in the brass, which offer a brightness which, if occasionally a little harsh, suggests a far more recent recording. The Ravel concerto - in its 1932 recording - suffered considerable swish, particularly during the quieter second movement, and a lot of effort has been expended in trying to reduce or eliminate this.

Naturally the 1952 recording of the concerto is of considerably higher fidelity - it was included here both to bring together Long's only studio recordings of the concerto, and also to offer the chance to contrast and compare the two quite different interpretations by someone who perhaps knew the both work and its composer's intentions better than any other pianist. **AR**

FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM

SARL Pristine Audio, Le Bourg, 24610 St. Méard de Gurçon, France - Tel. (00) 33 53 53 821857
Internet: www.pristineclassical.com



COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO
PASC 285

MARGUERITE LONG

RAVEL PIANO CONCERTO

(1932 & 1952 RECORDINGS)

MILHAUD PIANO CONCERTO No. 1

SOLO PIANO WORKS

(1935 RECORDINGS)

DEBUSSY SOLO PIANO WORKS

(1929 & 1930 RECORDINGS)

PRISTINE
AUDIO
XR

Long plays Ravel, Milhaud & Debussy**RAVEL Piano Concerto in G major (REC 1932)**

- 1 1st mvt. - *Allegrement* (7:29)
- 2 2nd mvt. - *Adagio assai* (8:47)
- 3 3rd mvt. - *Presto* (4:11)

Orchestre Symphonique

conducted by **Pedro de Freitas Branco**Recorded under the supervision of **Maurice Ravel****MILHAUD Piano Concerto No. 1 OP 127**

- 4 1st mvt. - *Très vif* (3:43)
- 5 2nd mvt. - *Mouvement de barcarolle* (4:33)
- 6 3rd mvt. - *Finale (Animé)* (4:09)

Orchestre Symphonique

conducted by **Darius Milhaud**

- 7 MILHAUD *Automne, Op. 115 - 2. Alfama* (2:38)
- 8 MILHAUD *Saudades do Brazil, Op. 67 - 12. Paysandu* (1:46)
- 9 DEBUSSY *Arabesques - 1. Andantino con moto* (3:21)
- 10 DEBUSSY *Arabesques - 2. Allegretto scherzando* (3:12)
- 11 DEBUSSY *Estampes - 3. Jardins sous la pluie* (3:08)
- 12 DEBUSSY - *La plus que lente (Valse)* (3:38)

RAVEL Piano Concerto in G major (REC 1952)

- 13 1st mvt. - *Allegrement* (8:14)
- 14 2nd mvt. - *Adagio assai* (10:00)
- 15 3rd mvt. - *Presto* (4:07)

Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire

conducted by **Georges Tzipine****Marguerite Long** piano

PASC 285

XR remastering by **Andrew Rose**Cover artwork based on a photograph of
Marguerite Long**Ravel** (1932) recorded 14 April, 1932

Issued as Columbia LFX 257-259

Matrix numbers WLX 1593-7, takes 2, 1, 1, 2, 1

Ravel (1952) recorded Théâtre des Champs-

Elysées, Paris, 12 June, 1952

Issued as Columbia FCX 169

Milhaud Concerto recorded 5 April, 1935

Issued as Columbia LFX 375/6

Matrix numbers CLX 1835-37, takes 1, 1, 2

Milhaud solo works recorded 10 May, 1935

Issued as Columbia LFX 375

Matrix number CLX 1851, take 1

Debussy Arabesques recorded 10 July, 1930

Issued as Columbia LF 55, matrix nos. WL 2392/3

Debussy Jardins recorded 12 November, 1929

Issued as Columbia LFX 24, matrix no. WLX 1165

Debussy La Plus recorded 6 November, 1929

Issued as Columbia LFX 24, matrix no. WLX 1149

Total duration: **72:56**For a full catalogue visit
www.pristineclassical.com
or call : (00) 33 979 622713© 2011 **Pristine Audio**