

Eugene Ormandy

Pristinc's release of this collection, on the heels of its CD featuring Ormandy's 1954 recordings of Shebias's Fourth and Fifth symphonies (reviewed in the March/April issue), is a most fediction event. Ormandy recorded these four tone poems in 1955, the year of Shebias's 90th brithday; for some reason, however, they were not released until early 1958, when Columbia issued them on a single stereo for Columbia (En Saga, 1963), and by the time he revisited them all in the 1970s for RCA he was quite a different conductor; second, in three out of four instances at least, these are vital, compelling performances in their own right. I believe this is their first LP, ML-5249. The record quickly became a casualty of the changeover to stereo, and was out of print by the end of 1963; it has never been one of the easiest to find of Ormandy's LPs. This is doubly unfortunater first, Ormandy remade only one of the four works in **Grieg Sibelius**

repetitious and everlong, never loses momentum here; Pohjoda's Daughter features some lovely woocwind solos and powerful brass closedes. Ommardy's 1953 Tapiola may not be as measuremental as some later versions, including his own RCA ternate, but it is still spellibinding, with a terrifically farce storm episode. Only The Oceanides is less than satisfactory; everything here sounds just a bit too than this one; its duration is 10:23, almost exactly two minutes lorger than Ormandy's 8:24. fast for comfort, undercutting the tranquility of the opening section's nature portrait and undermining the force of the climax. Interestingly, one of the finest versions of The Oceanides on disc, that of Sir Thomas Beechann, was raped precisely five days earlier The chief characteristics of these Sibelius performances, like many of Ormandy's finest recordings, are an ideal sense of pacing and an impression of natural unfolding of the music, free of mannerism or italicization. The early En Saga, which can sometimes sound

Hugo Alfvén's Swedish Rhapsody No. 1, recorded in 1953, became an Ormancy specialty; folksy and colorful, it's an ideal showpiece for virtuoso orchestra. It makes a deligniful filler for this CD, but it does sounc a bit disconcerting coming as it does directly following

The best news may be that Obert-Thorn plans to issue Ormandy's riveting 1951 reading of the complete Lemminkäinen Sute—its first recording. I believe, and possibly still the most exciting. Meanwhile, this present collection warrants the highest recommendation.

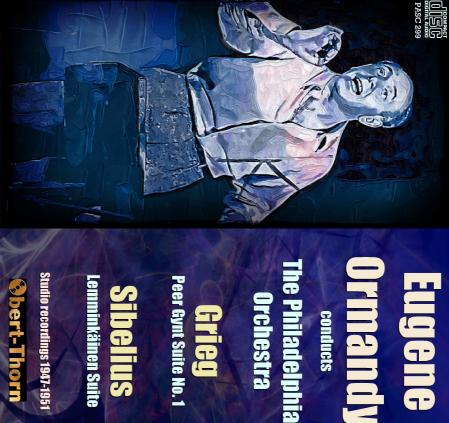
From a review of PASC 205, "Ormandy conducts Sibelius & Alfren", by Richard A. Kaplan in FANFARE, May/June 2010

Producer's Note

Ormandy's recording the Gring's Percent Surface was depended sounded on wide forgulatery angle ealer transfer, from which the original issue on shellac 78 mig of Sirieg's Percent Surface was degraded sound. The original lacy parage talequer masters, from which the original issue on shellac 78 mig of the Sirieg's Percent of the Sirieg's Percent of the Sirieg's Percent of Sirieg's Perc engineers were able to accomplish years before magnetic tape was available.

later, with almost sup Mark Obert-Thorn The recording of the Shibius suite has an interesting history. In 1930, The Swan of Tucnela was recorded and released on a 10-inch LP (ML-2158), coupled with Finlandia (both previous issued on Pristine PASC 177). Some twenty months later, Columbia taped the other movements and repackaged the existing recording of Swan into the new LP issue. The resulting hybrid release remains one of Ormandy's greatest and most exciting recordings, more intense even than his critically-acclaimed stereo remake for EMI from 27 years with almost superhuman playing by the Philadelphia Orchestra in the final movement

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