

COMPACT  
disc  
DIGITAL AUDIO  
PASC 375

# Fabien Sevitzyky

## Philadelphia Chamber String Simfonietta

PRISTINE  
AUDIO

### Producer's Note

This release presents for the first time in any extended-play format the complete issued 78 rpm recordings\* of a pioneering ensemble under its enterprising founder and conductor. Fabien Sevitzyky (1893–1967), a nephew of Serge Koussevitzky, was perhaps best known as the music director of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra from 1937 to 1955. Prior to that, however, he founded what was claimed to be the first permanent string orchestra ensemble in the world.

Drawing seventeen players from the ranks of Stokowski's Philadelphia Orchestra (of which he himself was a bass player from 1923 to 1930), Sevitzyky presented the first concert of his Philadelphia Chamber String Simfonietta in 1925. Within two years, they made their first recordings for Victor, following up with another series two years later. Eleven years were to pass before they stood before the microphone again for their last session. They disbanded as Sevitzyky's involvement in Indianapolis increased.

The novelty of the ensemble, a wide-ranging repertoire, and a high level of playing from what was then arguably the finest orchestral string section in the world, led to high praise from contemporary critics. Herbert Peyser of the New York *Telegram* wrote in 1929, "Orchestral or chamber music have brought few things outside Toscanini's works of wonder to exceed them."

The sources for the transfers were American Victor editions: Orthophonic pressings for the Bossi *Burlesca*, the two Grieg pieces and the Tchaikovsky; wartime "Silver" label copies for the Arensky; and prewar "Gold" label pressings for the remainder. The earlier recordings were made in Victor's Camden Church Studio, a small, unreverberant venue that tended to give an edge to violin tone and boominess to the lower strings.

The first two sides of the Bloch (the world-première recording of the work) were originally recorded on 10-inch matrices and then dubbed to 12-inch sides, with a resulting degradation in sound. For the last session, the ensemble recorded in the warmer, more expansive acoustic of the Academy of Music, but was hampered, in the case of the Arensky, by substandard wartime pressings made from recycled shellac.

Mark Obert-Thorn

\* One further recording, a 1940 *Corelli Suite* on two 12" 78rpm sides, remained unissued until a 1977 Neiman-Marcus LP set.

FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT [WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM](http://WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM)  
SARL Pristine Audio, 144 Rue de l'Eglise, 24610 St. Méard de Gurçon, France - Tel. (00) 33 553 821857  
[www.pristineclassical.com](http://www.pristineclassical.com)

COMPACT  
disc  
DIGITAL AUDIO  
PASC 375

# FABIEN SEVITZYKY

PRISTINE  
AUDIO

## and the PHILADELPHIA CHAMBER STRING SIMFONIETTA

### ARENSKY

Variations on a Theme of Tchaikovsky

### BLOCH

Concerto Grosso No. 1

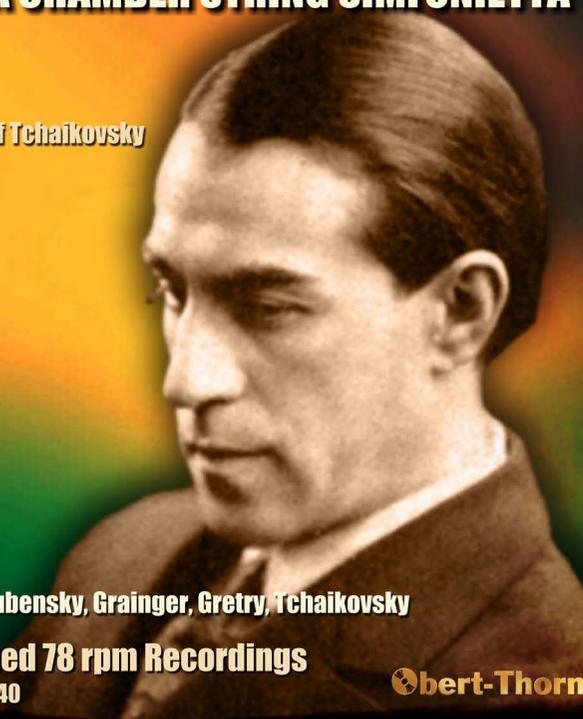
### GRIEG

Two Elegiac Melodies

Works by Bach, Bossi, Dubensky, Grainger, Gretry, Tchaikovsky

The Complete Issued 78 rpm Recordings  
Studio recordings, 1927-1940

bert-Thorn



**BOSSI Intermezzi goldoniani, Op. 127**

- 1. Preludio and Minuetto (4:14)
- 2. Burlesca (3:01)

**GRIEG Two Elegiac Melodies, Op. 34**

- 1. Heartwounds (3:26)
- 2. The Last Spring (4:17)

5 J. S. BACH (arr. Sam Franko) Sinfonia from Cantata No. 156 ("Arioso") (3:53)

6 DUBENSKY Gossips (2:34)

7 TCHAIKOVSKY Elegie from Serenade for Strings, Op. 48 (6:25)

8 GRAINGER Londonderry Air (2:56)

9 GRAINGER Molly on the Shore (3:58)

**BLOCH Concerto Grosso No. 1**

10 1st Mvt. - Prelude (2:28)

11 2nd Mvt. - Dirge (4:56)

12 3rd Mvt. - Pastorale and Rustic Dances (6:44)

13 4th Mvt. - Fugue (4:44)

Charles Linton, piano obbligato

14 GRÉTRY Pantomime (from *Zemire et Azor*) (3:50)

15 GRÉTRY Marche (from *La caravane du Caïre*) (1:44)

16 GRÉTRY Tambourin (from *Denys le tyran*) (1:17)

**ARENSKY Variations on a Theme of Tchaikovsky, Op. 35a**

17 Theme *Moderato* (1:26)

18 Variation I *Un poco più mosso* (1:39)

19 Variation II *Allegro non troppo* (1:13)

20 Variation III *Andantino tranquillo* (2:23)

21 Variation IV *Vivace* (1:26)

22 Variation V *Andante* (3:17)

23 Variation VI *Allegro con spirito* (1:18)

24 Variation VII *Andante con moto* (1:42)

25 Coda *Moderato* (2:26)

**Philadelphia Chamber String Simfonietta Fabien Sevitzky**



THE COMPLETE ISSUED 78 RPM RECORDINGS  
SEVITZKY, PHILADELPHIA CHAMBER STRING SIMFONIETTA

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

Cover artwork based on a photograph of  
**Fabien Sevitzky**

**Bossi, Grieg**  
Recorded 12 February 1927 in Church Studio No. 1,  
Camden, New Jersey

**Bach, Dubensky, Tchaikovsky, Grainger**  
Recorded 25 April 1929 in Church Studio No. 1,  
Camden, New Jersey

**Bloch**  
Recorded 9 May 1929 in Church Studio No. 1,  
Camden, New Jersey

**Grétry, Arensky**  
19 October 1940 in the Academy of Music,  
Philadelphia

Full details of the catalogue and matrix numbers  
for these recordings are available on our website

Special thanks to Bill Anderson, Nathan Brown,  
Richard Kaplan, Charles Niss and Don Tait

Total duration: **77:17**

For a full catalogue visit  
[www.pristineclassical.com](http://www.pristineclassical.com)  
or call : (00) 33 979 622713

© 2013 Pristine Audio

