

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO
PASC 392

OSKAR FRIED

PRISTINE
AUDIO

conducts Rimsky-Korsakov, Stravinsky & Liszt

The first record contains the Fire Bird's dance, and that of the princesses; the second, the *Infernal Dance*, *Cradle Song* and *Finale*. Who will write the Russian Ballet music so subtly to the purpose as this? Now that there is so much interest in ballet, so many books about it, we need the composers. All very well to adapt the classics, but where are the Stravinskys of the day? It is difficult to realise that this music is a quarter of a century old. The ogre Kastchei's chromatic growls open: evil shapes lurk in the magic garden, where the firebird flits, pursued by Prince Ivan, we are to understand. Its flame-like feathers, its shining eyes, light up the garden by night. It plucks the golden apples (which, in one version of the legend, bestow youth and beauty). We remember that the bird, in gratitude for Ivan's setting her free, gives him a feather, which shall call her to his aid, at need. The second side shows the captive princesses playing with the apples, forgetting for a while their duration. The record paints their dainty shyness exquisitely: the lightness, and the pastel colouring, are most charming. Ivan falls in love with one of them. On the third side, the princesses have returned to their captivity, and the ghouls and ogres of Kastchei flock around the impudent fellow who has invaded their realm. This is where we need to see the ballet. Ivan calls the firebird by waving its feather, and it begins to dance; mesmerised, the servants of the ogre join in. When they are exhausted, the bird lulls them to sleep with another dance (side 4); and the end comes, we are to imagine, with Ivan's destroying the casket which contains Kastchei's soul. Thereupon his power is dead, and his captives come to free life again; and Ivan marries his princess, who is the Tsar's daughter; and they all live happily. So shall we, whilst we have these ripe memories of Stravinsky at his best. The last record welcomes a steel needle, but the delicacies of the others win me best by fibre.

W.R.A., The Gramophone, July 1936, review of *The Firebird Suite*

Producer's Note

The sources for the present transfers were German Polydors for the Liszt and Stravinsky works and laminated American Brunswicks for *Scheherazade*. The violin soloist in the last work is not identified on the original labels but is probably the Danish-born Henry Holst, who was the BPO's concertmaster from 1923 to 1931 before he emigrated to the UK, where later he became the first violinist in the Philharmonia Quartet.

Mark Obert-Thorn

FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM
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Rimsky-Korsakov
Scheherazade

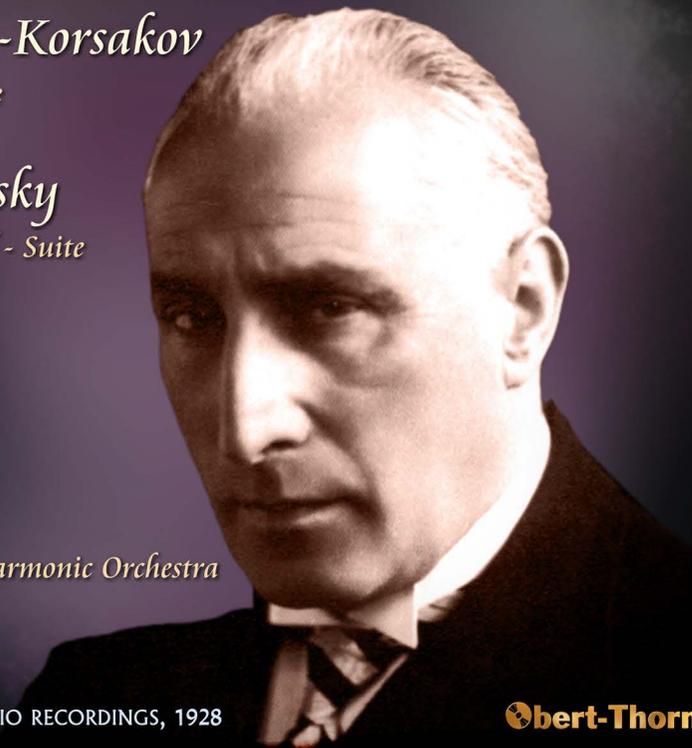
Stravinsky
The Firebird - Suite

Liszt
Les Préludes

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra

POLYDOR STUDIO RECORDINGS, 1928

Obert-Thorn



OSKAR FRIED *conducts*

1 LISZT *Les Préludes*, S97 (15:32)

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV *SCHEHERAZADE*, Op. 35

- 2 1. The Sea and Sinbad's Ship (11:05)
- 3 2. The Tale of the Kalendar Prince (10:52)
- 4 3. The Young Prince and Princess (8:09)
- 5 4. The Festival of Bagdad (12:11)

STRAVINSKY *THE FIREBIRD - Suite* (1919 version)

- 6 1. Introduction (3:15)
- 7 2. Dance of the Firebird (1:10)
- 8 3. Round Dance of the Princesses (4:24)
- 9 4. Infernal Dance of all Kashchei's Subjects (3:40)
- 10 5. Lullaby of the Firebird (Berceuse) (2:35)
- 11 6. Finale (2:23)

Recorded in 1928 in Berlin
Special thanks to Richard Kaplan for providing source material

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra *Oskar Fried*

Producer and Audio Restoration Engineer:
Mark Obert-Thorn

Cover artwork based on a photograph of
Oskar Fried

LISZT *Les Préludes*
Matrix nos.: 1341 bm I, 1342 bm I,
1343 bm I & 1344 bm I
First issued on Polydor 66812 and 66813

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV *Scheherazade*
Matrix nos.: 1359 bm I, 1360½ bm I, 1361 bm I,
1362 bm I, 1363½ bm I, 1364½ bm I, 1365 bm I,
1366 bm I, 1367½ bm I, 1368½ bm I & 1369 bm I
First issued on Polydor 95187 through 95192

STRAVINSKY *The Firebird*
Matrix nos.: 854 bm, 855 bm,
853½ bm & 856 ½ bm
First issued on Polydor 95052 and 95053

Total duration: **75:16**

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