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DIGITAL AUDIO  
PASC 439

## BRONISLAW HUBERMAN *Tchaikovsky and Lalo*

Pristine  
XR

### Producer's Note

Bronislaw Huberman's 36-year recording career began with four sides for Berliner in 1899 and continued in a series of piano-accompanied acoustics for American Brunswick (1921 - 1925). But it was not until he started making electrical recordings for Columbia in Europe (1928 - 1935) that he was first heard on disc with orchestra. The Tchaikovsky Concerto presented here comes from his first session for the label; but there would be a hiatus of six years before he would record any more concertos, and the rest were all done in a group of concentrated sessions in a single month.

During a ten-day period from June 13th through the 22nd in 1934, Huberman recorded the two Bach violin concertos and the Mozart 3rd under Issay Dobrowen (all on Pristine PASC 397), followed by the Beethoven (PASC 421) and the present Lalo *Symphonie espagnole* with George Szell. The sessions were a logistical nightmare: the hall was often in use for other functions; the orchestra was playing at a special festival every night; and Szell had to commute between Vienna and Prague, where he conducted evening performances after spending the days recording.

Added to this was Huberman's own highly-strung temperament. As Columbia A&R rep Rex Palmer wrote to his London home office at the time, the violinist "broke down in the middle of a record on innumerable occasions, and even after obtaining a [completed] master he needed 5 or 10 minutes rest before anything further could be done." Despite the various tribulations, Huberman produced classic accounts of all the works recorded, not the least of which was the Lalo. Through the rather over-reverberant hall sound and occasional technical imperfections of the original recording, we hear a performance of great panache and dazzling, insouciant virtuosity.

The Tchaikovsky Concerto shows another aspect of Huberman's art. Critic Hans Keller famously called the violinist "part gypsy, part saint"; and while the Bach concertos embody the latter quality, the Tchaikovsky is perhaps the best example of the former. No soloist today would dare to play the work with the kind of rough-hewn individuality and disciplined abandon that Huberman brings to it. When we hear it, we are reminded anew why we listen to historical recordings. Huberman is partnered here with the conductor then known as Hans Wilhelm Steinberg, with whom he would go on to co-found the Palestine Symphony Orchestra (later to become the Israel Philharmonic) some eight years later.

After his recording career reached a premature end, Huberman would continue to play the concerto repertoire in concerts, some of which were broadcast and preserved on disc. A Mozart 4th under Bruno Walter survives (PASC 397), as does the Brahms with Rodzinski (PASC 421), another Beethoven with Leon Barzin and, just a year before his death, another Tchaikovsky with Ormandy. Unlike those performances, fine as they are, the recordings on this collection catch him at the height of his powers, before the 1937 plane crash that injured his hands. They stand as a testament to one of the greatest of all violinists and recreative artists.

Mark Obert-Thorn

Bronislaw  
Huberman

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TCHAIKOVSKY Violin Concerto  
LALO Symphonie Espagnole

Encores by Brahms, Chopin, Sarasate, Tchaikovsky and Zarzycki

Columbia Studio Recordings · 1928 - 1934

Obert-Thorn

**TCHAIKOVSKY Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 35**

1 1st Mvt. - Allegro moderato – Cadenza (16:04)

2 2nd Mvt. - Canzonetta: Andante (6:06)

3 3rd Mvt. - Finale: Allegro vivacissimo (6:00)

Recorded 28 &amp; 30 December 1928 in the Beethovensaal, Berlin

Matrix nos.: WAX 4509-2, 4510-1, 4511-1, 4512-2, 4513-2, 4514-1 &amp; 4515-2

First issued on Columbia L 2335 through 2338

Staatskapelle Berlin *William Steinberg*

4 TCHAIKOVSKY Mélodie, Op. 42, No. 3 (3:29)

Recorded 22 February 1929 in the Columbia Petty France Studio, London

Matrix no.: WAX 4671-1. First issued on Columbia L 2338

5 CHOPIN (arr. Huberman) Waltz in C-sharp minor, Op 64, No. 2 (3:15)

Recorded 22 February 1929 in the Columbia Petty France Studio, London

Matrix no.: WAX 4672-2. First issued on Columbia LX 137

6 BRAHMS (arr. Joachim) Hungarian Dance No. 1 in G minor (3:01)

Recorded 7 February 1932. Matrix no.: IDWA 9155-5. First issued on Columbia LB 8

7 SARASATE Romanza andaluza (No. 1 from Danzas españolas, Op. 22) (4:39)

Recorded 10 June 1929 in the Columbia Petty France Studio, London

Matrix no.: WAX 5006-1. First issued on Columbia L 2332

8 ZARZYCKI Mazurka in G major, Op. 26 (4:22)

Recorded 11 June 1929 in the Columbia Petty France Studio, London

Matrix no.: WAX 5011-1. First issued on Columbia L 2332

Siegfried Schultze *piano***LALO Symphonie espagnole, Op. 21**

9 1st Mvt. - Allegro non troppo (7:22)

10 2nd Mvt. - Scherzando: Allego molto (3:49)

11 4th Mvt. - Andante (6:02)

12 5th Mvt. - Rondo: Allegro (7:54)

Recorded 20 &amp; 22 June 1934 in the Mittlerer Konzerthausaal, Vienna

Matrix nos.: WHAX 39-3, 40-2, 41-2, 42-1, 43-3 &amp; 44-1

First issued on Columbia LX 347 through 349

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra *George Szell*Bronislaw Huberman *violin*Producer and Audio Restoration  
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