



THE COMPLETE RECORDINGS • 9

CORELLI
SCHUMANN
BIZET
ALBÉNIZ
FALLA
DOHNÁNYI
KREISLER

Fritz Kreisler

Recorded 1927-1928

**Fritz Kreisler (1875–1962):
The Complete Recordings • 9**

	Victor Talking Machine Company (Studio 3, Camden, New Jersey, 1927) with Fritz Kreisler, violin; Carl Lamson, piano		
	Isaac Albéniz (1860–1909)		
1	Malagueña, Op. 165, No. 3 (arr. Kreisler) rec. 25 March 1927; <i>mat. BVE-38220-6; Victor 1244</i>	3:38	
	Fritz Kreisler (1875–1962)		
2	Gipsy Caprice rec. 25 March 1927; <i>mat. CVE-37461-3; Victor 6712</i>	4:30	
	Fritz Kreisler		
3	Schön Rosmarin rec. 25 March 1927; <i>mat. BVE-12730-3; Victor 1386</i>	1:50	
	Manuel de Falla (1876–1946)		
4	Siete canciones populares españolas No. 6. Canción (arr. Paweł Kochoński, 1887–1934) rec. 25 March 1927; <i>mat. BVE-37462-2; Victor 1244</i>	1:44	
	Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904)		
5	Humoresque, Op. 101, B. 187, No. 7 (arr. Kreisler) rec. 26 March 1927; <i>mat. CVE-8941-11; Victor 6692</i>	3:51	
	Electrola-Gesellschaft m.b.H. (Berlin, 1927) with Fritz Kreisler, violin; Hugo Kreisler, cello; Michael Raucheisen, piano		
6	Arcangelo Corelli (1653–1713) O Sanctissima (arr. Kreisler) rec. 13 October 1927; <i>mat. Cw-1237-4; HMV DB 1166</i>	4:09	
	Georges Bizet (1838–1875)		
	L'Arlesienne – Suite No. 2		
	7 II. Intermezzo (arr. Kreisler) rec. 13 October 1927; <i>mat. Cw-1238-2; HMV DB 1166</i>	4:31	
	Fritz Kreisler		
	8 Syncopation (version for piano trio) rec. 13 October 1927; <i>mat. Bw-1239-4; HMV DA 961</i>	1:58	
	Fritz Kreisler		
	9 Marche miniature viennoise (version for piano trio) rec. 13 October 1927; <i>mat. Bw-1240-3; HMV DA 961</i>	2:55	
	with Fritz Kreisler, violin; Michael Raucheisen, piano		
	Robert Schumann (1810–1856)		
	10 Romance in A major, Op. 94, No. 2 (arr. Kreisler) rec. 13 December 1927; <i>mat. Cw-1434-3; HMV DB 1122</i>	3:45	
	Victor Talking Machine Company (Studio 1, Camden, New Jersey, 1928) with Fritz Kreisler, violin; Carl Lamson, piano		
	Claude Debussy (1862–1918)		
	11 Petite Suite I. En bateau (arr. Gaston Choïsnel, 1857–1921) rec. 12 January 1928; <i>mat. BVE-40358-3; Victor 1358</i>	3:11	

**Victor Talking Machine Company
(New York, 1928)
with Fritz Kreisler, violin; Carl Lamson, piano**

	Ernő Dohnányi (1877–1960)		
	Ruralia hungarica, Op. 32c		
	12 I. Presto rec. 1 February 1928; <i>mat. BVE-41598-3; Victor 1428</i>	3:36	
	13 II. Andante rubato, alla zingaresca 'Gipsy Andante' rec. 1 February 1928; <i>mat. BVE-41599-4 & BVE-42400-2; Victor 1429</i>	5:57	
	14 III. Molto vivace rec. 1 February 1928; <i>mat. BVE-42401-1; Victor 1428</i>	2:08	
	Jules Massenet (1842–1912)		
	Thaïs		
	15 Act II: Méditation (arr. Martin Pierre Marsick, 1847–1924) rec. 2 February 1928; <i>mat. CVE-8944-8; Victor 6844</i>	4:03	
	16 Act II: Méditation (arr. Marsick) rec. 2 February 1928; <i>mat. CVE-8944-10; Victor 6844</i>	4:03	
	František Alois Drdla (1868–1944)		
	17 Souvenir rec. 2 February 1928; <i>mat. BVE-25134-4; Victor 1325</i>	2:57	
	Claude Debussy		
	Préludes, Book I		
	18 No. 8. The Girl with the Flaxen Hair (arr. Arthur Hartmann, 1881–1956) rec. 2 February 1928; <i>mat. BVE-31939-25; Victor 1358</i>	2:30	
	Victor Talking Machine Company (Studio 1, Camden, New Jersey, 1928) with Fritz Kreisler, violin; Carl Lamson, piano		
	Ethelbert Nevin (1862–1901)		
	19 Mighty Lak' a Rose (arr. Kreisler) rec. 7 February 1928; <i>mat. BVE-35126-11; Victor 1320</i>	2:12	
	20 The Rosary (arr. Kreisler) rec. 7 February 1928; <i>mat. BVE-15937-6; Victor 1320</i>	2:02	
	Stephen Foster (1826–1864)		
	21 Old Folks at Home (arr. Kreisler) rec. 27 February 1928; <i>mat. BVE-8939-8; Victor 1325</i>	3:28	
	Manuel de Falla		
	La vida breve		
	22 Act II: Danse espagnole No. 1 (arr. Kreisler) rec. 27 February 1928; <i>mat. BVE-40359-7; Victor 1339</i>	3:20	
	Isaac Albéniz		
	23 Tango, Op. 165, No. 2 (arr. Kreisler) rec. 27 February 1928; <i>mat. BVE-38221-19; Victor 1339</i>	2:17	
	Fritz Kreisler		
	24 Tambourin chinois, Op. 3 rec. 27 February 1928; <i>mat. CVE-15743-8; Victor 6844</i>	3:29	

Thanks to John Bolig, Mark Stehle and Richard Harris

Fritz Kreisler (1875-1962)

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During the year covered by these recordings, Fritz Kreisler bestrode the Atlantic like a violinistic colossus, with one foot in North America and the other in Europe. As far as the studios of the Victor Talking Machine Company and His Master's Voice/Electrola were concerned, the 52-year-old concentrated on continuing two projects, setting down the standard electric versions of his most popular pieces for the Americans and his most important concertos for the Europeans.

During Kreisler's sojourn in America in the spring of 1927, there was some discussion in the press about why he did not broadcast. One of the few remaining dissenters, Amelita Galli-Curci, was quoted as saying: 'Throwing your voice into the air on a radio reminds me of having a picture developed before you have looked at the proof. I refuse to be sandwiched in between a bedtime story and jazz.' That year the great diva succumbed to the blandishments of the broadcasting companies, but Kreisler and his friend Sergey Rachmaninov held firm. If a concert featuring Rachmaninov playing a concerto was broadcast, the radio people had to switch to one of his recordings when his turn came to play: thus posterity missed out on his interpretations of such works as Beethoven's *C minor* and Tchaikovsky's *B flat minor*. Kreisler stated his attitude forthrightly in 1926: 'I have never broadcast, because I think broadcasting may do an artist a great deal of harm.' Not until the mid-1940s, when he was past his best, would he relent and appear on such programmes as the Bell Telephone Hour.

The last major event of his American stay was an afternoon recital at the Metropolitan Opera House on 27 March, in aid of the American Society for the Control of Cancer. His wife Harriet headed a committee of New York *grandes dames* of music, including Mrs Vincent Astor and Mrs Walter Damrosch; among the box-holders paying up to \$500 were Mrs Vanderbilt and Mrs Henry Goldman; and the concert raised some \$32,000. Then Fritz and Harriet Kreisler took ship for Europe and their new house in Berlin. By mid-May they were in London, where Kreisler gave a Sunday-afternoon recital on the 15th at the Royal Albert Hall (RAH) and an orchestral concert on the 20th at Queen's Hall for the Royal Philharmonic Society: he and

the conductor Sir Landon Ronald donated their fees to the Society's Foundation Fund. On 9 June Kreisler was back at the RAH for a recital in aid of Queen Mary's Hospital for the East End: the Queen and King George V were present with Prince Henry, president of the hospital.

After a relaxing summer in Berlin, Kreisler resumed touring Europe in the new season: an undoubted highlight was the event in the Concerts Ysaÿe series at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels on 30 October, billed as a 'Concert Extraordinaire'. Eugène Ysaÿe, Maître de Chapelle to the King of the Belgians, conducted and Kreisler started the proceedings by playing the *Concerto in C major* which was alleged to be by Vivaldi – in 1935 it would be revealed as one of his own concoctions; then came his favourite Mozart D major *K218*, and finally the Beethoven *Concerto*. Kreisler and Ysaÿe went back a long way: they loved playing chamber music together, Ysaÿe often playing viola, and the Belgian was Kreisler's beau idéal of the violin. On 1 November 1901, when Ysaÿe was suddenly indisposed and unable to play the Beethoven with the Berlin Philharmonic under Arthur Nikisch, Kreisler took over the performance without rehearsal and using a borrowed violin. The resulting triumph sealed his reputation with the Berlin audience. 'He has a rare nature, perfect tact and also great sincerity', Ysaÿe wrote of Kreisler to his wife Louise in 1912. Eleven years later Ysaÿe dedicated the fourth of his *Six Sonatas for solo violin* to Kreisler; and as the older man declined into ill health, the younger treasured every chance to make music with him.

On 4 January 1928, having spent Christmas in Berlin, the Kreislers arrived back in New York on the SS Aquitania, with Sir Thomas Beecham and other musicians (the SS France delivered Maurice Ravel the same day). Typically, Kreisler had hardly touched his violin on the voyage, except in a shipboard concert with Johanna Gadske, Andrés Segovia and Elly Ney – he blamed bad weather for his lack of practice but he was notorious for not opening his violin case from one week to the next. On the 18th he and Carl Lamson began a Carnegie Hall recital with Bach's E major *Partita*, for which he had written a piano part. Olin Downes of *The New York Times* wrote of 'the innate, natural, simple

but profound musicality of the man; the extraordinary charm which emanates from his personality and his art; the sense of clarity, ease, balance and unforced expressiveness which make him great whether he is playing a big piece or a small one.' Kreisler also played his arrangement of Tartini's *Devil's Trill*, Schumann's C major *Fantasia, Op. 131*, Ernest Schelling's *Irlandaise*, Albéniz's *Malagueña*, Falla's *Spanish Dance* and his own *Shepherd's Madrigal* and *Gipsy Caprice*, as well as four encores. On 4 February he was back at the Hall with Lamson: hundreds of paying customers thronged the stage and many in the hall found 'standing room only'. He played two concertos, Bach's *A minor* and Vieuxtemps's *Fourth; Chanson Louis XIII et Pavane*, attributed to Couperin (it was another fake); his own *Recitativo and Scherzo* for solo violin; and Dohnányi's *Ruralia hungarica*, as well as encores: his *Gipsy Caprice*, Chaminade's *Spanish Serenade*, the *Spanish Dance, Malagueña* and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Song of India*. On 24 January the Kreislers, who were on the organising committee, attended the first US concert by Louis Theremin, Russian inventor of the eponymous electronic instrument, in the Hotel Plaza ballroom; Rachmaninov, Toscanini, Szigeti and Rethberg were also there.

In *Volume 8* we left Kreisler and Lamson alternating between two Camden recording venues, Victor Studio 3 and Trinity Church, on 17 March 1927. On 25 March they were back in Studio 3 to make 24 matrices of eight pieces, of which four attained publishable sides. Albéniz's *Tango*, Friml's *Dance of the Maidens*, Brandl's *The Old Refrain* and the violinist's own *Tambourin chinois* were the unlucky numbers. Albéniz's *Malagueña*, unsuccessful on five previous attempts, came off well on a seductively played Take 6, showing off Kreisler's silky middle register; and a new piece for him, Falla's *Canción* arranged by his Russian-Polish colleague Paweł Kochański, hit the jackpot at the second attempt – note the *parlando* bowing for a vocal effect, the fine double-stopping and a well-handled change of register. Most important, Kreisler's *Gipsy Caprice*, never previously attempted, was conquered on the third of six takes and his ever-popular *Schön Rosmarin* achieved an electric replacement for the 1912 acoustic version. Alas, a baker's dozen of sides recorded the following day were largely wasted: they included unnecessary further takes of *Gipsy Caprice* and *Malagueña* and abortive attempts at *Tango*, *Tambourin chinois* and Irving Berlin's *Blue Skies*. The one bright spark was Dvořák's *Humoresque*, needing a

replacement for the 1912 version: the first of three takes was deemed perfect. When Kreisler named the *Humoresque* as one of his favourite records, he was probably thinking of this beautiful account with its teasing *rubato*.

In the autumn Kreisler spent time in the Electrola Berlin Studios, starting on 13 October with 14 takes of four pieces, arranged for piano trio so that he could once again work with his younger brother Hugo (1884–1929), a distinguished orchestral and quartet cellist profiled in more detail in *Volume 7*. Two of Kreisler's catchiest compositions were replacements for acoustic versions; but he also arranged the Roman Catholic hymn *O Sanctissima*, which he had set to a melody by Arcangelo Corelli, and the *Intermezzo* from the *L'Arlésienne Suite No. 2* that Ernest Guiraud had conjured up from Bizet's incidental music: it was best known in 78rpm days from the *Agnus Dei* which Guiraud fashioned out of it – Beniamino Gigli made a famous recording. Hugo Kreisler's fine cello tone comes across particularly well in this piece. The Berlin sessions were mainly devoted to the November recording of the Brahms *Concerto* with Leo Blech and the Staatskapelle (Naxos 8.110921). A filler was needed for the final side, so on 13 December Kreisler and Raucheisen made four takes of Schumann's *Romance in A*, playing it quite briskly without lingering except at the very end.

Victor Studio 1 was the scene of Kreisler's rather wasteful next New York session on 12 January 1928, in which 18 out of 19 takes were squandered, including six of *Tango*, five of Falla's *Spanish Dance* and Nos. 22 to 24 of Debussy's *The Girl with the Flaxen Hair*, an ongoing saga. The one success was this composer's *En bateau*: Kreisler's musical imagination was clearly aroused and it gained from sensitive use of the mute. Much more productive was the session on 1 February, delivering a complete work by Kreisler's respected former sonata partner Ernő Dohnányi. In 1924 the Hungarian had published four works entitled *Ruralia hungarica*, for different instrumental combinations, based on folk music: the violin work had three movements, the outer ones related to other movements in the cycle while the superb central *Andante*, marked *alla Zingaresca*, was new. Kreisler turns in his best playing, really exerting himself for a fellow musician in the *Presto*; the *Andante* is spontaneous despite the side break; and in a virtuoso reading he weaves magic out of the slightly banal tune of the *Molto vivace*. From the following day, two lovely takes of Massenet's *Méditation* were eventually issued: perhaps

the tone is fractionally more focused in the second. In the celebrated *Souvenir* by his Czech colleague Drdla he has the style off pat; note the beautiful *portamenti* and double-stops. As for *The Girl with the Flaxen Hair*, which ran to 27 takes for Victor and four for HMV, the trouble was worth it: this is exquisite, musical playing with inimitable tonal variety. Only three takes, of Foster's *Swanee River*, were wasted. On the 7th Kreisler lavished all his art on two songs by Ethelbert Nevin: to *Mighty Lak' a Rose*, which he had recorded acoustically with Geraldine Farrar, he brought

wonderful double-stopping; and he gave *The Rosary*, which his friend John McCormack had recorded four months earlier, the full treatment with more double-stops. Finally, on the 27th he laid four ghosts, achieving standard versions of *Spanish Dance* and *Tambourin chinois*, phrasing gorgeously in the Foster song and at last getting Albéniz's *Tango* right on Take 19: you could hardly wish for more insinuating rhythm and tone.

Tully Potter

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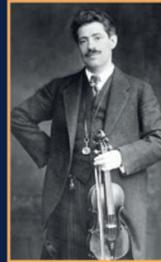
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CHOPIN
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DVOŘÁK
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KREISLER

Fritz Kreisler
Recorded 1919-1924

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HANDEL
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TCHAIKOVSKY
MASSENET
DVOŘÁK
KREISLER

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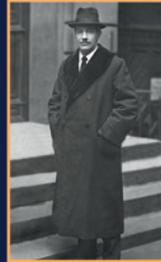
THE COMPLETE RECORDINGS • 7

BACH
BEETHOVEN
KOŽELUCH
WAGNER
DVOŘÁK
KREISLER

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Recorded 1921-1925

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THE COMPLETE RECORDINGS • 8

BACH
MENDELSSOHN
BRAHMS
TCHAIKOVSKY
DEBUSSY
FALLA
KREISLER

Fritz Kreisler
Recorded 1926-1927

8.111409

8.111410

ADD

FRITZ KREISLER (1875–1962)

THE COMPLETE RECORDINGS • 9

Playing
Time
79:33

Victor Talking Machine Company (Studio 3, Camden, New Jersey, 1927) with Fritz Kreisler, violin; Carl Lamson, piano	
1	Albéniz, arr. Kreisler: Malagueña, Op. 165, No. 3 3:38
2	Kreisler: Gipsy Caprice 4:30
3	Kreisler: Schön Rosmarin 1:50
4	Falla, arr. Kočański: Canción (No. 6 from Siete canciones populares españolas) 1:44
5	Dvořák, arr. Kreisler: Humoresque, Op. 101, B. 187, No. 7 3:51
Electrola-Gesellschaft m.b.H. (Berlin, 1927) with Fritz Kreisler, violin; Hugo Kreisler, cello; Michael Raucheisen, piano	
6	Corelli, arr. Kreisler: O Sanctissima 4:09
7	Bizet, arr. Kreisler: Intermezzo (from L'Arlésienne, Suite No. 2) 4:31
8	Kreisler: Syncopation 1:58
9	Kreisler: Marche miniature viennoise 2:55
with Fritz Kreisler, violin; Michael Raucheisen, piano	
10	Schumann, arr. Kreisler: Romance in A, Op. 94, No. 2 3:45
Victor Talking Machine Company (Studio 1, Camden, New Jersey, 1928) with Fritz Kreisler, violin; Carl Lamson, piano	
11	Debussy, arr. Choisnel: En bateau (No. 1 from Petite Suite) 3:11
Victor Talking Machine Company (New York, 1928) with Fritz Kreisler, violin; Carl Lamson, piano	
12	Dohnányi: Presto (from Ruralia hungarica, Op. 32c) 3:36
13	Dohnányi: Gipsy Andante (from Ruralia hungarica, Op. 32c) 5:57
14	Dohnányi: Molto vivace (from Ruralia hungarica, Op. 32c) 2:08
15	Massenet, arr. Marsick: Méditation (from Thaïs) 4:03
16	Massenet, arr. Marsick: Méditation (from Thaïs) 4:03
17	Drdla: Souvenir 2:57
18	Debussy, arr. A. Hartmann: The Girl with the Flaxen Hair (from Préludes, Book I) 2:30
Victor Talking Machine Company (Studio 1, Camden, New Jersey, 1928) with Fritz Kreisler, violin; Carl Lamson, piano	
19	Nevin, arr. Kreisler: Mighty Lak' a Rose 2:12
20	Nevin, arr. Kreisler: The Rosary 2:02
21	Foster, arr. Kreisler: Old Folks at Home 3:28
22	Falla, arr. Kreisler: Danse espagnole No. 1 (from La vida breve) 3:20
23	Albéniz, arr. Kreisler: Tango, Op. 165, No. 2 2:17
24	Kreisler: Tambourin chinois, Op. 3 3:29

Over the course of the twelve months charted in this ninth volume, the 52-year-old Fritz Kreisler made a series of recordings where he set down the standard electric versions of many of his most popular pieces. They include his first ever recording of his own *Gipsy Caprice* and of Falla's *Canción* as well as a replacement for his acoustic 1912 recording of *Schön Rosmarin*. Four pieces with his cellist brother Hugo were made in Berlin, whilst some of his greatest playing comes in the *Ruralia hungarica* by his former sonata partner Dohnányi. All preserve the inimitable tonal and expressive beauties of which he was a master.

Producer and Audio Restoration Producer: Ward Marston
Thanks to John Bolig, Mark Stehle and Richard Harris
Booklet notes: Tully Potter
Cover Image: Fritz Kreisler (early 1930s) [Private collection]
A complete track list can be found inside the booklet.

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