



A Selection Of His US Victor Recordings 1914-1941

**BEETHOVEN
CHOPIN
LISZT
SCHUBERT
RACHMANINOV**

**Ignacy Jan
Paderewski**

Ignacy Jan Paderewski: A Selection of his US Victor Recordings Recorded in Camden, New Jersey and New York City 1914-1941

Paderewski was born in Kuryłówka, Poland, in 1860. He received his first piano lessons from Piotr Sowinski, but was apparently mainly self-taught during his formative years, having a natural talent for the piano and improvisation. When he was twelve, however, he joined the Warsaw Conservatory, where he studied the piano with Julian Janotha and Pavel Schlözer. After graduating at eighteen he made a meagre living by composing and giving piano lessons, and married at the age of twenty. His wife died in childbirth, and the son she bore was disabled. Two years later, in 1882, Paderewski went to Berlin to study composition with Friedrich Kiel. Here he met Richard Strauss, and having received enthusiastic encouragement from Anton Rubinstein to pursue a career as a pianist and composer, he returned to Berlin in 1884 to study orchestration with Heinrich Urban.

Throughout the early 1880s Paderewski practised and worked very hard at the piano and resolved to improve himself by studying various subjects, including Latin, mathematics, history and Polish literature. By October 1884 he made the decision to approach the great piano pedagogue Theodor Leschetizky in Vienna, although by this time Paderewski was almost twenty-four and perhaps too set in his ways to benefit from Leschetizky's teaching. The irascible Leschetizky, however, obviously saw something in the young man and took him on as a student. After a period teaching at the Strasbourg Conservatory, Paderewski returned to Vienna in 1887 for sixteen more lessons with Leschetizky.

After finishing his studies with Leschetizky, Paderewski was ready to make his début, albeit at the advanced age of twenty-eight. Paris was the chosen city and at the Salle Erard he gave a recital of his own works and performed the *Piano Concerto No. 4 in C minor, Op. 44*, by Saint-Saëns. The Paris audiences witnessed

what every other audience would experience: the extraordinary stage presence and magnetism of Paderewski. After Liszt and Anton Rubinstein, he was to become the most famous pianist in the world, sharing with these two artists alone the ability to cast a certain kind of spell over his listeners. Finding instant success, he had to work even harder to prepare new programmes and learn new repertoire. He played in Vienna and toured through Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Germany, Hungary, Bohemia and Poland before returning to Paris where he prepared for his first appearance in London. Paderewski's London début in 1890 was an enormous success and he then embarked upon a tour of America during 1891-1892. His Carnegie Hall début caused a sensation and from then on he became the most sought-after pianist in the world. He toured America every year and by the early years of the twentieth century was reputed to be earning a million dollars for each American tour.

Paderewski began to take an interest in the politics of his homeland, but in the decade that followed his London début worked very hard touring the world, continuously visiting such places as North and South America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand and South Africa. In 1898 he married for the second time and his new wife cared for his afflicted son, Alfred, although the young man died at the age of twenty-one, not long after his father's second marriage. Paderewski settled at Villa Riond-Bosson at Morges near Lausanne but had to take a break from performing in 1907 and 1908 as he was suffering from nervous exhaustion and overwork. He had success with his opera *Manru* in 1902 and during this forced period of rest worked on his *Symphony*, but returned to the concert stage in 1909.

When World War I broke out, Paderewski set up relief committees in Vévry, Paris and London and went to America to raise funds for the Polish war effort. After

the war he served as the first Premier of Poland and represented Poland at the Paris Peace Conference. As his dreams of an independent Poland faded, however, he resigned from the Conference in 1920, but by 1922 had spent so much of his vast income that he had to return to the concert stage. He decided to tour America again and his private railway carriage complete with piano, cook, secretary, piano-tuner and tour manager became a thing of legend. He toured less in the 1930s, and his final tour of America, his twentieth, in 1939 was cut short when he suffered a heart attack. Paderewski returned to Switzerland, but at the outbreak of World War II travelled to America to help once again the Polish cause by giving speeches and radio broadcasts. By now, nearly 80 years old, he was a frail old man. He died in June 1941, and after lying in state in St Patrick's Cathedral in New York City, was buried in the Arlington National Cemetery. His remains were returned to Poland in 1992 when they were interred at St John's Cathedral in Warsaw.

Paderewski's recordings present something of a problem in that they often fail to transmit the art that brought him universal fame and acclaim during his lifetime. The casual listener will hear 'old-fashioned' piano-playing, in which Paderewski often does not play with hands together, employs an excessive use of *rubato* which will be classed as 'bad taste', and exhibits a 'weak technique'. Nevertheless, if listened to with an educated ear, many subtleties of tone and pedal effects will be heard, and a style of playing that is often understated and chaste. What the recordings do not convey is Paderewski's indisputable stage presence and magnetic personality, his ability to hold his audience enthralled, even before he began to play. There is much to offer in these recordings, however, and repeated hearings disclose many wonderful subtleties and some sublime pianism.

Paderewski's first recordings were made for HMV in 1911 at his home in Switzerland. Sessions followed in Paris and London during 1912 but from 1914

Paderewski recorded for Victor in Camden, New Jersey and New York City on his visits to America. On resuming his career after the First World War he returned to America in 1922, recording 28 sides over the next two years. Many of those sides are heard here – indeed seven come from one very productive session of 12th May 1924. Included on this compact disc is a side unpublished on 78 rpm disc from this session containing two *Etudes* by Chopin while one of the best discs from the same session heard here is of Liszt's arrangement of the *Spinning Chorus* from Wagner's *Der fliegende Holländer*. It shows Paderewski's clarity of detail and intelligent use of the pedal and at just over five minutes (although very long for a single twelve inch side) was issued from a first take. Equally fluent is the Schubert *Impromptu in B flat, D. 935, No. 3*.

These recordings were made right at the end of the acoustic era, and in May 1926 Paderewski began to make electrical recordings for Victor. Not surprisingly, one of the first works to be recorded by the new process was his own *Minuet in G, Op. 14 No. 1*, (track 20) whilst a few months later he recorded another favourite, the first movement of Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* (track 1). These were the first recordings truly to capture Paderewski's range of tone - he was already sixty-six - and by the time he made some of his final American recordings in the autumn of 1930, he was seventy years of age. Three sessions of three hours each took place on 13th, 14th and 16th October when he recorded 'contemporary' music by Debussy in the form of four of his *Préludes (Minstrels)* is heard here in the second of four takes) while two *Préludes* by Rachmaninov were not issued at the time - Paderewski recorded one take of the *C sharp minor Prelude* and two of the *G sharp minor*. It is in the opening section of the *Prelude in C sharp minor* that Paderewski's splitting of the hands is most noticeable, but this does not detract from a performance that is a noble one of fire and grace from an elder statesman. One of the highlights from these 1930 sessions is a transcription for piano solo of

the *Prelude* to Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* by American pianist Ernest Schelling (1876-1939). Paderewski recorded one take of each side on 13th October and then two more of each side on the following day. There may have been some time left at the end of the third session as he recorded two Chopin *Etudes* that he had not played at these sessions before – the *Etude in C minor* and the *Etude in F minor* from *Op. 10*. Neither of these sides were issued.

By 1941 Paderewski was eighty years old and very frail. In January mayor La Guardia gave a luncheon in his honour in New York. Paderewski was unable to attend, but his sister Mme Antonia Wilkonska, who was visiting America for the first time, did. At the end of the month he was honoured again at a private musicale hosted by Mrs. Andrew Carnegie where Artur Schnabel was one of the contributing artists, and on 31st January

Paderewski went to Victor Studio No. 1 in New York where he recorded an address on the occasion of his Golden Jubilee – he had first appeared in America in 1891. A special concert was given at Carnegie Hall on 4th April to celebrate this event although Paderewski himself did not perform. Less than three months later Paderewski died of pneumonia in New York City.

We can never experience what audiences did at Paderewski's live recitals, but to have a representation of his art on record is both educational and edifying. Not only can we hear the composer in his own work, but also one of the greatest of patriotic Poles playing Chopin, and a pianist who was a legend in his own lifetime.

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- Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827):**
Piano Sonata No. 14 in C sharp minor,
Op. 27, No. 2, 'Moonlight'
- ① I. Adagio sostenuto 5:03
 Recorded on 16th December 1926
 Matrix: CVE 37140-1; First issued on Victor 6690
- Franz Schubert (1797-1828):**
4 Impromptus, Op. 142, D. 935
- ② No. 3 in B flat major 9:06
 Recorded on 12th May 1924
 Matrix: C29984-2 and 29985-2;
 First issued on Victor 6482
- Franz Liszt (1811-1886):**
Lieder von Schubert, S558/R243
- ③ No. 9. Standchen (Horch, horch! die Lerch) 3:18
 Recorded on 12th May 1924
 Matrix: C19979-3; First issued on Victor 6470
- Fryderyk Chopin (1810-1849):**
- ④ **Waltz No. 5 in A flat major, Op. 42** 3:51
 Recorded on 26th June 1922
 Matrix: C26397-4; First issued on Victor 74796
- ⑤ **Nocturne No. 5 in F sharp major,**
Op. 15, No. 2 3:53
 Recorded on 14th May 1917
 Matrix: C19781-1; First issued on Victor 74529
- ⑥ **Mazurka No. 37 in A flat major,**
Op. 59, No. 2 2:39
 Recorded on 12th May 1924
 Matrix: B29990-2; First issued on Victor 1027
- ⑦ **Mazurka No. 38 in F sharp minor,**
Op. 59, No. 3 3:28
 Recorded on 12th May 1924
 Matrix: B29991-1; First issued on Victor 1027
- ⑧ **Etude No. 19 in C sharp minor,**
Op. 25, No. 7 4:27
 Recorded on 4th May 1923
 Matrix: C27919-1; First issued on Victor 6448
- ⑨ **Etude No. 20 in D flat major,**
Op. 25, No. 8 1:20
 Recorded on 12th May 1924
 Matrix: B29981-1; Unpublished on 78rpm
- ⑩ **Etude No. 21 in G flat major, Op. 25 No. 9,**
'Butterfly's Wings' 1:16
 Recorded on 12th May 1924
 Matrix: B29981-1; Unpublished on 78rpm
- Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847):**
Lieder ohne Worte (Songs without Words)
Book 6, Op. 67
- ⑪ No. 4 in C major, 'Spinnerlied' 1:51
 Recorded on 4th May 1923
 Matrix: B26393-6; First issued on Victor 66150
- Robert Schumann (1810-1856):**
Fantasiestücke, Op. 12
- ⑫ No. 3: Warum? 2:56
 Recorded on 30th April 1914
 Matrix: C14778-3; First issued on Victor 88494
- Franz Liszt (1811-1886):**
3 Etudes de concert, S144/R5
- ⑬ No. 2 in F minor, 'La Leggierezza' 5:02
 Recorded on 4th May 1923
 Matrix: C27921-2; First issued on Victor 6438
- ⑭ **'Spinnerlied' From Wagner's**
Fliegenden Hollander, S440/R273 5:05
 Recorded on 12th May 1924
 Matrix: C29992-1; First issued on Victor 6538

- Richard Wagner (1813-1883)**
(arr. by E. Schelling for piano):
Tristan und Isolde
- 15 Act I: Prelude 7:38
Recorded on 14th October 1930
Matrix: CVE 64331-2 and 64332-3;
First issued on Victor 7324
- Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943):**
Morceaux de fantaisie, Op. 3
- 16 No. 2: Prelude in C sharp minor 2:51
Recorded on 13th October 1930
Matrix: BVE 64329-1;
Unpublished on 78rpm
- 13 Preludes, Op. 32**
- 17 No. 12 in G sharp minor 2:15
Recorded on 13th October 1930
Matrix: BVE 64330-2;
Unpublished on 78rpm
- Claude Debussy (1862-1918):**
Preludes, Book 1
- 18 No. 12: Minstrels 2:32
Recorded on 13th October 1930
Matrix: BVE 64328-2; First issued on Victor 1499
- Ignacy Jan Paderewski (1860-1941):**
Chants du voyageur, Op. 8
- 19 No. 3. Melody in B major 2:52
Recorded on 4th May 1923
Matrix: B27914-1; First issued on Victor 917
- Humoresques de concert, Op. 14**
- 20 Minuet in G, Op. 14, No. 1 'Menuet célèbre' 3:52
Recorded on 20th May 1926
Matrix: CVE 19783-2; First issued on Victor 6690
- 21 **Recorded address on the observance
of the golden anniversary of
Ignacy Jan Paderewski's American debut 3:50**
Recorded on 31st January 1941
Mat. CS060450-1; unpublished on 78rpm
- Tracks 1, 5, 15-18 and 20-21:
recorded in New York City
Tracks 2-4, 6-14 and 19:
recorded in Camden, New Jersey

Special thanks to Donald Manildi, Lawrence Holdridge and John Bolig.

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ADD

IGNACY JAN PADEREWSKI (1860-1941)

A Selection of his

US Victor Recordings 1914-1941

 Playing
Time
79:08

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PADEREWSKI: US Victor Recordings (1914-1941)

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PADEREWSKI: US Victor Recordings (1914-1941)

NAXOS Historical

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MADE IN
GERMANY

1	Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827): Piano Sonata No. 14 in C sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2, 'Moonlight' I Adagio sostenuto	5:03
2	Franz Schubert (1797-1828): 4 Impromptus, Op. 142, D. 935 No. 3 in B flat major	9:06
3	Franz Liszt (1811-1886): Lieder von Schubert, S558/R243 No. 9, Standchen (Horch, horch! die Lerch)	3:18
4	Fryderyk Chopin (1810-1849): Waltz No. 5 in A flat major, Op. 42	3:51
5	Nocturne No. 5 in F sharp major, Op. 15, No. 2	3:53
6	Mazurka No. 37 in A flat major, Op. 59, No. 2	2:39
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8	Etude No. 19 in C sharp minor, Op. 25, No. 7	4:27
9	Etude No. 20 in D flat major, Op. 25, No. 8	1:20
10	Etude No. 21 in G flat major, Op. 25 No. 9, 'Butterfly's Wings' Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847):	1:16
11	Lieder ohne Worte (Songs without Words) Book 6, Op. 67 No. 4 in C major, 'Spinnerlied' Robert Schumann (1810-1856): Fantasiestücke, Op. 12	1:51
12	No. 3: Warum? Franz Liszt (1811-1886): 3 Etudes de concert, S144/R5	2:56
13	No. 2 in F minor, 'La leggierezza'	5:02
14	Spinnerlied aus dem Fliegenden Hollander, S440/R273 Richard Wagner (1813-1883) (arr. by E. Schelling): Tristan und Isolde:	5:05
15	Act I: Prelude Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943): Morceaux de fantaisie, Op. 3	7:38
16	No. 2 Prelude in C sharp minor	2:51
17	13 Preludes, Op. 32 No. 12 in G sharp minor	2:15
18	Claude Debussy (1862-1918): Preludes, Book 1 No. 12: Minstrels	2:32
19	Ignacy Jan Paderewski (1860-1941): Chants du voyageur, Op. 8 No. 3: Melody in B major	2:52
20	Humoresques de concert, Op. 14 Minuet in G, Op. 14, No. 1 'Menuet célèbre'	3:52
21	Recorded address on the observance of the golden anniversary of Ignacy Jan Paderewski's American début	3:50

Ignacy Jan Paderewski enthralled the world with his artistry for more than half a century. Immensely popular as a recitalist (he played in Madison Square Garden to 20,000 people), he came to recording as late as 1911, leaving an important legacy. These recordings, mostly from the 1920s and some unpublished on 78rpm, show Paderewski as a uniquely eloquent interpreter of Beethoven, his compatriot Chopin, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Liszt, Wagner, Rachmaninov, Debussy and his own compositions. Whether performing in grand Romantic style, with scintillating virtuosity yet many wonderful subtleties, or as if confiding intimate secrets, Paderewski possessed what Henry James memorably described as "exhilarating goodness".

A detailed track list can be found in the booklet.

Producer: Jonathan Summers · Audio Restoration Engineer: Ward Marston

Special thanks: Donald Manildi, Lawrence Holdridge and John Bolig.

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