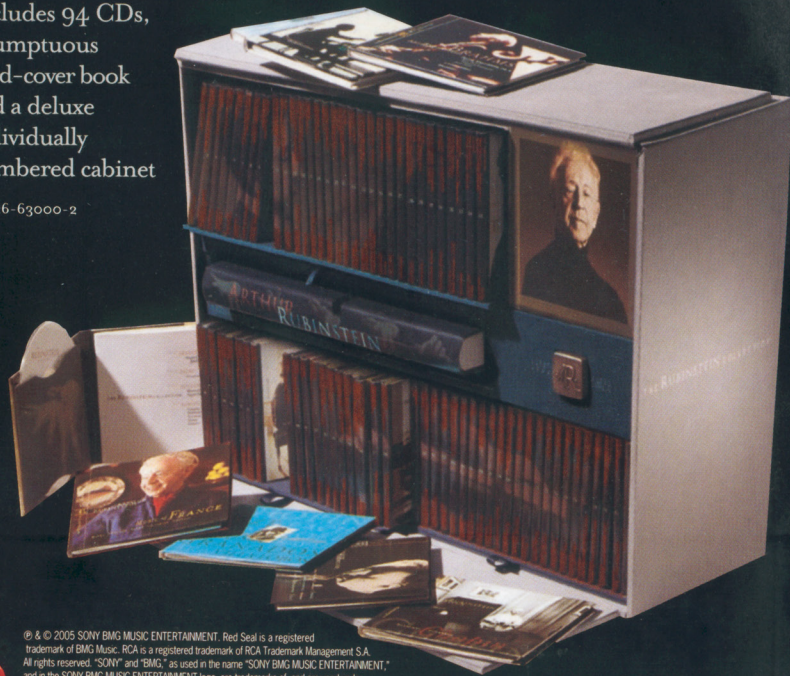


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ARTHUR
RUBINSTEIN

DEBUSSY
LA PLUS
QUE LENTE
MASQUES
IMAGES

FRANCK GRANADOS
PRELUDE,
CHORALE &
FUGUE
LISZT
SCHUBERT

MENDELSSOHN

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Halsman
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César **FRANCK** (1822-1890)
Prélude, Chorale & Fugue

Claude **DEBUSSY** (1862-1918)
La plus que lente
Hommage à Rameau
Poissons d'or
La fille aux
cheveux de lin
La cathédrale engloutie

Minstrels
La terrasse des
audiences du
clair de lune
Ondine
Masques

THE RUBINSTEIN COLLECTION

Enrique **GRANADOS** (1867-1916)
La maja y el ruiseñor

Franz **LISZT** (1811-1886)
Liebestraum no. 3

Franz **SCHUBERT** (1797-1828)
2 Impromptus, Op. 90,
nos. 3 (ed. von Bülow) & 4

Felix **MENDELSSOHN** (1809-1847)
Spinning Song



Franck, Debussy (except La plus que lente)

produced by Robert Armbruster

La plus que lente; Liszt; Mendelssohn; Schubert, Impromptu, Op. 90, no. 4

produced by Henri René

Granados produced by Harry Geller

Schubert, Impromptu, Op. 90, no. 3 produced by Walter Heebner

Recording Engineer: Seth Perkins

Recorded in RCA Studios, Hollywood

Reissue produced by Nathaniel S. Johnson;

Harold Hagopian (*Franck, Liszt*); Edward Houser (*tracks 5-12*)

Engineers: Thomas MacCluskey;

Hsi-Ling Chang (*Franck, Liszt*); Michael Sobol (*tracks 5-12*)

Digitally remastered in BMG / RCA Studios, New York City

Compilation Producer and

Production Supervisor: Nathaniel S. Johnson

Executive Producer: Daniel Guss

Project and Editorial Supervisor: Lynne S. Mazza

Editorial Coordinator: Kathleen Finnegan

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FRANCK

PRÉLUDE, CHORALE & FUGUE (17:56)

- 1 Prélude (4:58)
- 2 Chorale (6:17)
- 3 Fugue (6:42)
Recorded September 8, 10, 1952

DEBUSSY

- 4 La plus que lente (Valse) (4:10)
Recorded December 11, 1950
- 5 Hommage à Rameau
(*Images*, BOOK I: no. 2) (5:58)
- 6 Poissons d'or
(*Images*, BOOK II: no. 3) (3:53)
- 7 La fille aux cheveux de lin
(*Préludes*, BOOK I: no. 8) (2:24)

- 8 La cathédrale engloutie
(*Préludes*, BOOK I: no. 10) (5:51)
- 9 Minstrels
(*Préludes*, BOOK I: no. 12) (1:48)
- 10 La terrasse des audiences du
clair de lune
(*Préludes*, BOOK II: no. 7) (3:57)
- 11 Ondine
(*Préludes*, BOOK II: no. 8) (3:11)
- 12 Masques (5:10)
Recorded May 13, 14, 1952

GRANADOS

- 13 The Maiden and the Nightingale
(*Goyescas*, no. 4) (6:03)
Recorded October 22, 1953

LISZT

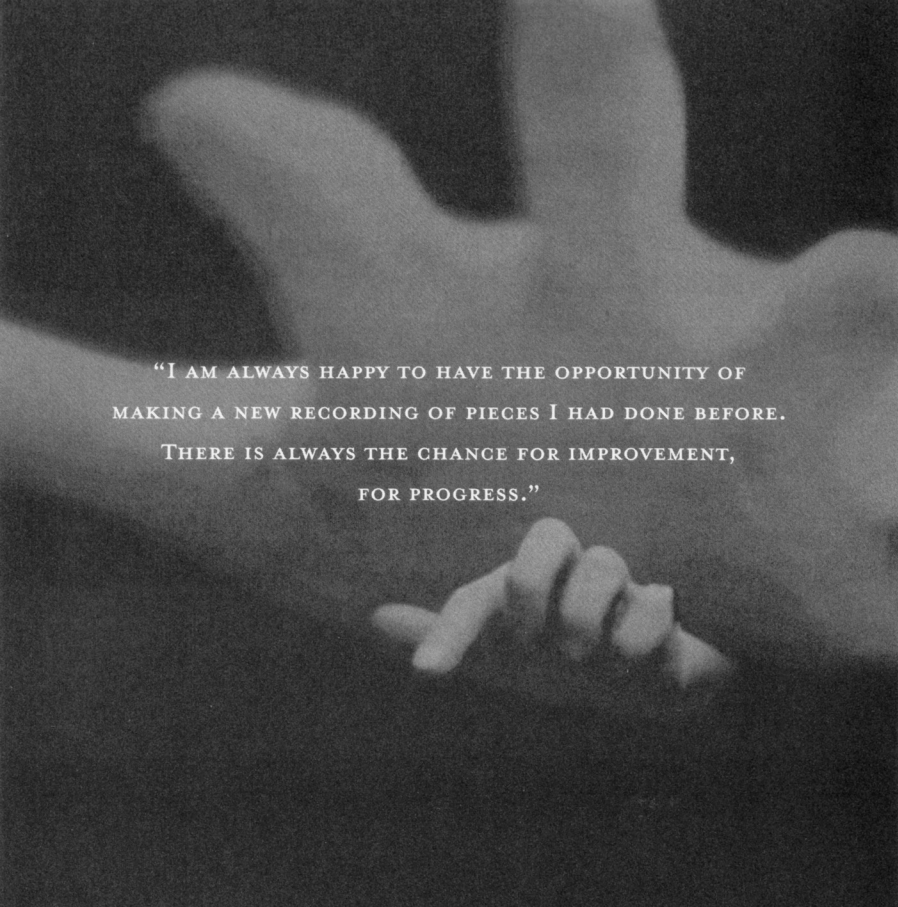
- 14 Liebestraum no. 3
in A-flat / As-dur / la bémol
majeur (4:32)
Recorded December 12, 1950

SCHUBERT

- 15 Impromptu, Op. 90, no. 3
in G-flat / Ges-dur /
sol bémol majeur
(*ed. von Bülow, in G / G-dur /
sol majeur*) (4:27)
Recorded July 29, 1949
- 16 Impromptu, Op. 90, no. 4
in A-flat / As-dur /
la bémol majeur (5:20)
Recorded December 11, 1950

MENDELSSOHN

- 17 Spinning Song, Op. 67, no. 4
(*Songs without Words*) (1:40)
Recorded December 12, 1950



“I AM ALWAYS HAPPY TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY OF
MAKING A NEW RECORDING OF PIECES I HAD DONE BEFORE.
THERE IS ALWAYS THE CHANCE FOR IMPROVEMENT,
FOR PROGRESS.”

FOR THE RECORDING INDUSTRY THE LATE
1940S AND EARLY 50S WITNESSED THE ARRIVAL OF THE LONG-
PLAYING RECORD AND A GREAT BURGEONING OF ARTISTS
AND REPERTOIRE FROM PRODUCERS BOTH LARGE AND SMALL,
NEW AND OLD. The advent of magnetic tape as a viable recording medium
allowed performers the freedom of extended takes and the option of
extensive editing. Neither advantage had existed during the 78 rpm era
with its four-and-a-half-minute per side time limitations and lack of
editing capability. It was not long before the significant sonic improvements
of the LP generated the catch phrase “high fidelity,” together with its
various derivations and allied slogans.

Here was an unprecedented opportunity for record companies to
re-record their best-selling material in up-to-the-minute sound, and
their major artists were enlisted in numerous projects to accomplish

that objective. For Arthur Rubinstein, who had been recording seriously since 1928, there was a further incentive: the documentation of artistic growth. In a 1956 statement, Rubinstein observed: “I am always happy to have the opportunity of making a new recording of pieces I had done before. There is always the chance for improvement, for progress.” Thus the 1950s saw the appearance of new Rubinstein editions of the Chopin Concertos, Scherzos, Polonaises, Nocturnes and Mazurkas, and numerous additional works that he first put on disc during the 30s.

This volume brings us the first CD release of Rubinstein performances recorded between 1950 and 1952. It concentrates on Rubinstein’s Debussy repertoire alongside a major César Franck composition, plus four pieces that were among the pianist’s favorite encores. Debussy’s *Cathédrale engloutie*, *Hommage à Rameau*, *Plus que lente* and *Poissons d’or*, Franck’s *Prélude, Chorale et Fugue*, Liszt’s *Liebestraum* and Schubert’s *Impromptu* all appear in the second of three published Rubinstein performances. Granados’s *Maiden and the Nightingale* is the third of three approved recordings.

In assembling the works on his recital programs, Rubinstein generally placed two substantial items—sonatas or other works of similar scope—

on the first half, then turned to a selection of shorter pieces by a variety of composers for the remaining portion. Franck’s *Prélude, Chorale et Fugue* could frequently be found as a program-opener for a typical Rubinstein recital. Its seriousness of purpose, rich piano writing, and triumphant conclusion fulfill that purpose admirably. Written in 1884, and designed in three linked and closely related sections, the piece is generally regarded as its composer’s masterwork for the piano. The influences of Bach and Liszt can be felt, but Franck’s harmonic idiom (partly derived from his many years as an organist) and his technique of thematic transformation stamp it with distinctive qualities that have not dimmed with time. Rubinstein, incidentally, kept two other major Franck works in his active repertoire: the *Variations symphoniques* for piano and orchestra, and the Sonata in A Major for violin and piano, in which he collaborated with Paul Kochanski and Jascha Heifetz (among others) on various occasions.

Rubinstein began performing the music of Debussy while the composer was still alive. In his memoirs Rubinstein reveals that it was a performance of Debussy’s “beautiful” String Quartet that was his first acquaintance with this music. His early advocacy of Debussy did not always



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win complete audience approval; since the music was considered ultra-modern at the time, Rubinstein occasionally had to endure hissing from the audience, especially in Germany. As might be expected, Rubinstein had definite ideas about the interpretation of Debussy, as he revealed when describing his reaction to another pianist closely identified with Debussy: "A German pianist, Walter Giesekeing, made a sensation in Paris with his very personal approach to Debussy and the critics unanimously proclaimed him the ideal interpreter of the French master. The bitter pill that a German should deserve this honor was swallowed more easily thanks to the fact that his mother was French. I went to one of his concerts and was enchanted by the unearthly, delicate climate he created in his treatment of this impressionist music. My own conception, however, demanded more meat, if I may express myself in this crude way. He evoked invariably a magic background, but the action was missing."

Rubinstein selected his Debussy repertoire with fine discrimination, avoiding the more hackneyed items like *Clair de lune* and *Rêverie* and preferring pieces from the major Debussy groups such as *Estampes*,

Images and the two books of *Préludes*. The nine items offered on this disc all date from 1905 to 1913, which were the years of Debussy's maturity and ever-increasing acclaim as a composer.

Finally, the individual pieces by Liszt, Schubert and Chopin now reappear after their long-ago inclusion in one of Rubinstein's early LPs devoted to favorite encores. The Granados' *Maiden and the Nightingale*, one of the pianist's specialties, originally graced a slightly later LP recital of Spanish works. It serves as a reminder of Rubinstein's lifelong affinity for the Spanish repertoire, and of the country that gave him many of his most memorable artistic successes.

—Donald Manildi

Donald Manildi is Curator of the International Piano Archives (University of Maryland) and Consulting Editor of the International Piano Quarterly. He has also contributed a Rubinstein discography to Harvey Sachs' biography Rubinstein: A Life.



THE ARTHUR RUBINSTEIN COLLECTION

brings together all of his approved, commercially released recordings made between 1928 and 1976. They progress in approximate chronological order, with the earliest recordings appearing in volumes 1-9, and the last in volume 81. All of the albums in The Arthur Rubinstein Collection were compiled from original sources. Disc-to-digital transfers were made, whenever possible, directly from metal stampers. Tape sources were transferred through CELLO playback electronics and remastered in 20-bit technology using universally compatible UV22™ Super CD Encoding.