HEIFETZ ENCORES
Volume 1

BRAHMS • DEBUSSY • KHACHATURIAN • DINICU

Jascha Heifetz
Brooks Smith, Piano
Emanuel Bay, Piano

NAXOS

Jascha Heifetz (1900-1987)
Encores • 1
Original 1946-1956 Recordings

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897):
Hungarian Dances

1 No. 11 in D minor (arr. Joachim) 2:14
2 No. 17 in F minor (arr. Kreisler) 3:36
3 No. 20 in D minor (arr. Joachim) 2:24
Matrix nos.: G2-RB-2999, 3000 and 2998
First issued as RCA Victor LM-2382
Recorded 14th April 1956

Robert Russell Bennett (1894-1981):
A Song Sonata

4 II. Belligerent 2:27
5 III. Slow and Lonely 3:05
6 IV. Madly Dancing 2:11
Matrix nos.: F2-RB-8365 through 8367
First issued as RCA Victor LM-2382
Recorded 17th December, 1955

Alan Shulman (1915-2002):

7 **Cod Liver 'Ile** 1:17
(from *Suite Based on American Folk Songs*)
Matrix no.: F2-RB-8362
First issued as RCA Victor LM-2382
Recorded 16th December, 1955

Aram Khachaturian (1903-1978):

8 **Sabre Dance (arr. Heifetz)** 2:18
(from *Gayaneh*)
Matrix no.: E4-RC-0699
First issued as RCA Victor LM-2382
Recorded 8th December, 1954

Niccolò Paganini (1782-1840):
Caprices

9 No. 13 in G minor (arr. Kreisler) 2:55
10 No. 20 in D major (arr. Kreisler) 2:37
Matrix nos.: F2-RB-8358-1 and 8359-1
First issued as RCA Victor LM-2382
Recorded 14th April, 1956

Giovanni Sgambati (1841-1914):

11 **Serenata napoletana, Op. 24, No. 2** 3:08
Matrix no.: E4-RC-0698
First issued as RCA Victor LM-2382
Recorded 10th December, 1954

William Kroll (1901-1980):

12 **Banjo and Fiddle** 2:38
Matrix no.: D7-RC-6984-2
First issued as RCA Victor 12-0430
Recorded 17th December, 1947

Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971):

13 **Berceuse (arr. Dushkin)** 2:13
(from *The Firebird*)
Matrix no.: D7-RB-2199-1A [part]
First issued as RCA Victor 10-1457
Recorded 18th December, 1947

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937):

14 **Menuet (arr. Roques)** 2:24
(from *Sonatine*)
Matrix no.: D7-RC-6982-1 [part]
First issued as RCA Victor 12-0765
Recorded 18th December, 1947

Dmitry Shostakovich (1906-1975):

15 **Danse Fantastique No. 2**
(arr. Harry Glickman) 1:10
(from *Fantastic Dances, Op. 5*)
Matrix no.: D7-RB-2199-1A [part]
First issued as RCA Victor 10-1457
Recorded 18th December, 1947

Claude Debussy (1862-1918):

16 **The Girl with the Flaxen Hair**
(arr. Arthur Hartmann) 2:35
(from *Preludes, Book I*)
Matrix no.: E0-RB-6209-1
First issued as RCA Victor LM-2382
Recorded in 1950

Grigoraș Dinicu (1889-1949):
17 **Hora Staccato (arr. Heifetz)** 2:35
Matrix no.: E0-RB-6208-1
First issued as RCA Victor LM-2382
Recorded in 1950

Sergey Prokofiev (1891-1953):
18 **Gavotte, Op. 32, No. 3 (arr. Heifetz)** 1:10
19 **March in F minor, Op. 12, No. 1 (arr. Heifetz)** 1:32
Matrix no.: D6-RB-2182-1
First issued as RCA Victor 10-1355
Recorded 16th October, 1946

Sergey Rachmaninov (1873-1943):
20 **Étude-tableau, Op. 39, No. 2 (arr. Heifetz)** 2:11
Matrix no.: D6-RB-2184-1
First issued as RCA Victor 10-1296
Recorded 16th October, 1946

Sergey Rachmaninov:
21 **Daisies, Op. 30, No. 3 (arr. Heifetz)** 2:01
(from *6 Romances, Op. 38, No. 2*)
22 **Oriental Sketch, Op. 2, No. 2 (arr. Heifetz)** 1:33
Matrix no.: D6-RB-2183-3A
First issued as RCA Victor 10-1355
Recorded 16th October, 1946

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895-1968):
23 **Tango (arr. Heifetz)** 1:53
(Adaptation of *Two Maids Wooing a Man,*
No. 3 from *Songs of Shakespeare*)
Matrix no.: D6-RB-2185-2
First issued as RCA Victor 10-1293
Recorded 16th October, 1946

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937):
Valses nobles et sentimentales
24 No. 6 (arr. Heifetz) 0:46
25 No. 7 (arr. Heifetz) 2:35
Matrix no.: D6-RB-2186-2A
First issued as RCA Victor 10-1294
Recorded 16th October, 1946

Nikolay Medtner (1880-1951):
26 **Fairy Tale in B flat minor, Op. 20, No. 1 (arr. Heifetz)** 2:28
Matrix no.: D6-RB-2187-1
First issued as RCA Victor 10-1295
Recorded 16th October, 1946

Claude Debussy:
27 **La Chevelure** 2:47
(No. 2 from *Chansons de Bilitis*)
Matrix no.: D6-RB-2189-2
First issued as RCA Victor 10-1295
Recorded 16th October, 1946

Manuel de Falla (1876-1946):
28 **Pantomime (arr. Kochanski)** 3:11
(from *El Amor Brujo*)
Matrix no.: D6-RB-2195-2
First issued as RCA Victor 10-1343
Recorded 17th October, 1946

Tracks 1-11: **Brooks Smith, Piano**
Tracks 12-28: **Emanuel Bay, Piano**
All tracks were recorded in the
RCA Studios, Hollywood

Jascha Heifetz (1900-1987)
Encores · 1 (Original 1946-56 recordings)

The most genial, approachable aspect of Jascha Heifetz's art was the pleasure he took in playing short pieces. He included them in his actual recital programmes; he reeled off strings of them as encores to satisfy his public; and he recorded many of them; in fact all his records up to 1934 were of short pieces. He made six ten-inch single-sided discs for a new St Petersburg label, Zvukopis, in 1911; and six years later, within a month of his American début, he began his long series of double-sided discs for the Victor Talking Machine Company. At first he made use of other violinists' transcriptions, or original violin pieces by such composers as Elgar, Bazzini, Wieniawski, d'Ambrosio and Sarasate; but in 1927 he found himself on tour in Mexico without any local music to play. Hearing Manuel Ponce's popular song *Estrellita*, he immediately made a transcription (and this version became so well known that when, in 1943, Ponce composed a violin concerto for Henryk Szeryng, the song was incorporated into the slow movement). Thus was initiated Heifetz's superb series of arrangements or transcriptions for violin and piano. Like his colleague Fritz Kreisler, the most famous exponent of the transcriber's art, Heifetz was an excellent pianist – to the end of his life, he liked nothing better than playing piano duets at home – and so he could retain the essence of a composer's sound world in the accompaniment, while giving the violin free rein. The three Rachmaninov transcriptions here testify to this skill. In choosing which pieces to arrange, Heifetz was extremely discriminating and showed his innate good taste. He polished each transcription until it was perfect and played it with the same care, making a little gem out of it. But these short items also served the function of keeping his recital programmes up to date: he might not play the concertos by Khachaturian, Stravinsky and Shostakovich, the *First Concerto* by Prokofiev or the sonatas by Ravel, but he could make little nods to these composers in his encore repertoire.

Heifetz was born in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 2nd February 1900. His father Rubin started him on the violin when he was three before passing him on to the Auer pupil Ilya Malkin. At six Jascha made his début and a year later he played the Mendelssohn *Concerto* in Kovno. To enable him to stay with his family when he entered the St Petersburg Conservatory in 1910, his father was enrolled too. After a preliminary course under Auer's assistant, the fine Armenian violinist I. R. Nalbandian, Heifetz moved into the great pedagogue's own class; he soon became Auer's favourite student and made his St Petersburg début on 30th April 1911. On 24th May 1912, still using a three-quarter-sized instrument, he played the Mendelssohn *Concerto* (with piano), Wieniawski's *Souvenir de Moscou* and short pieces at the Berlin Hochschule; and on 28th October 1912 he replaced the indisposed Pablo Casals in a Berlin Philharmonic subscription concert, playing the Tchaikovsky *Concerto* under Arthur Nikisch. He gave a further Berlin concert and Nikisch invited him to Leipzig, where he performed Bruch's *G minor Concerto* on 12th February 1914. In Vienna he played the Mendelssohn under Vassily Safonov and he developed steadily through the early years of the Great War. He missed the chaos of 1917 but caused his own October Revolution that year with his historic New York début at Carnegie Hall. In 1920 he made his London bow with two Queen's Hall concerts which were so successful that he returned the same year – playing the Elgar *Concerto* with the composer present. He also visited Paris and Berlin; and in 1921 he toured Australia. In 1925 he took U.S. citizenship and in 1926 he played in Palestine. In 1939 he gave the première of the Walton *Concerto* in Cleveland; and after America had entered World War II he gave innumerable recitals for the forces, at home and overseas. In 1947 he reintroduced himself to London with the Beethoven and Tchaikovsky *Concertos* at the Royal Albert Hall, before the Queen and an audience exceeding 6,000. After the 1946-47 season, he took a twenty-month break from the concert hall. In 1949 he played for President Truman and President Chaim Weizmann of Israel in New York and again offered Londoners the

Elgar, also recording it. When he played the Tchaikovsky at Lewisohn Stadium in July that year, 20,000 people were in the audience and 1,000 had to be turned away. Heifetz became one of the first soloists to play at the new Royal Festival Hall in London, in May 1951, and visited London again in June 1953 and November 1954. In April 1953 he made his second tour of Israel but insisted on breaking a twenty-year ban on German music by programming Richard Strauss's *Sonata*, saying: 'There are only two kinds of music – good music and bad music.' Some Israelis disagreed and following his Jerusalem recital, a fanatical young man attacked him with an iron bar, injuring his right arm. Heifetz then toured Italy and Europe, shrugging off his pain. In 1959 he performed for the United Nations General Assembly but in the 1960s he began to confine himself mainly to the West Coast of America; chamber music also loomed larger in his life, through the Heifetz-Piatigorsky Concerts. Having given his last recital in 1972, he grew increasingly reclusive; and he died in Los Angeles on 10th December 1987.

Thirteen of our tracks were first heard on one of the violinist's most celebrated LPs, issued in 1960 and entitled simply 'Heifetz'. Although Brahms's *Hungarian Dances* are staple violin-and-piano fare, coming closer to the composer's original inspiration when heard in this form, Heifetz recorded just five of them: the popular *No. 1* in 1920, *No. 7* in 1945 (repeated in 1953 with orchestra) and then these three, opting for Kreisler's version of *No. 17* in F minor rather than Joachim's in F sharp minor. Incidentally, whereas Brahms generally used existing melodies in the dances, *No. 11* was all his own work. Having recorded *Hexopeda* by Gershwin's former assistant Robert Russell Bennett in 1945 (see Naxos 8.111379), Heifetz programmed the three central movements of Bennett's 1947 opus *A Song Sonata* in his Carnegie Hall recital on 16th February 1955 and recorded them ten months later. The first of these agreeable snippets, in which Heifetz shows terrific virtuosity, is surely the only piece in the violin literature marked 'Belligerent'. The next item also derives from a multi-movement work, the 1944 *Suite on American Folk Songs* by Alan Shulman (1915–2002), a fairly prolific composer best known as a cellist. Heifetz was alerted to the excitements of Aram Khachaturian's music in 1948, when the *Sabre Dance* from the 1942 ballet *Gayaneh* became a hit for Woody Herman's band. Ironically, at that very time the Armenian composer was being singled out by Stalin's cultural bulldog Andrey Zhdanov for his 'formalism'. Heifetz slightly redressed the balance by making a pair of transcriptions, including *Sabre Dance*. The two Paganini *Caprices* suffer from Kreisler's superfluous piano accompaniments but are very well played, especially *No. 20*: its opening section can sound strained in lesser hands – and hearing Heifetz's pinpoint staccato in the second section, it is surprising to know that he sought advice on this aspect of his playing from Erica Morini. The next two tracks are violin originals, one a typical production of the Neapolitan pianist-composer Luigi Sgambati, with guitar-like pizzicati, the other an American classic by the quartet leader William Kroll, with the pizzicati more redolent of a banjo. The Stravinsky transcription by the Polish-born American violinist Samuel Dushkin came about because after the composer had written his *Violin Concerto* for Dushkin, the two toured as a duo and needed recital repertoire. Dare one suggest that their 1933 record is eclipsed by this 1947 Heifetz-Bay version? Three piano pieces next, transcribed by various hands, the Ravel by Léon Roques, the piquant Shostakovich not by the composer's friend Isaak Glickman but by Harry Glickman, assistant concertmaster of Toscanini's NBC SO and longtime leader of the WQXR Radio Quartet, the Debussy by the Hungarian-American violinist Arthur Hartmann, who knew the composer well and gave concerts with him (this gorgeous performance was the third of four recordings made by Heifetz between 1926 and 1970). *Hora Staccato*, written in 1906 by the Bucharest gipsy fiddler and bandleader Grigoraș Dinicu, was transcribed in 1930 after Heifetz had heard Dinicu play it. Although Heifetz rather domesticated this wild music, he did give it more rhythmic subtlety than Dinicu – who was, after all, playing for dancing – and his version took the Romanian's name round the

world. The Prokofiev and Rachmaninov numbers were all originally for piano except *Daisies*, a song which Rachmaninov himself transcribed as a piano solo. Likewise the *Tango* by Heifetz's Italian friend Castelnuovo-Tedesco was a song, while the Ravel fragments were for piano, as was the *Fairy Tale* by Nikolay Medtner, one of many works to which the Russian pianist-composer gave this title. Debussy's *La Chevelure* was one of his most successful songs. Finally Heifetz's plays a transcription by the Russian-born Polish violinist Pawel Kochanski, of a movement from Manuel de Falla's ballet *Love the Magician*.

Tully Potter

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ADD

Jascha Heifetz (1901-1987)

Encores • 1

(Original 1946-56 recordings)

Playing Time 63:30

1-3	BRAHMS: Hungarian Dances: *Nos. 11, 17 and 20* *(14th April 1956)*	8:14
4-6	BENNETT: A Song Sonata (excerpts) *(17th December, 1955)*	7:43
7	SHULMAN: Cod Liver 'lle (from *Suite Based on American Folk Songs*) *(16th December, 1955)*	1:17
8	KHACHATURIAN: Sabre Dance (from *Gayaneh*) *(8th December, 1954)*	2:18
9-10	PAGANINI: Caprices: *Nos. 13 and 20* *(14th April, 1956)*	5:32
11	SGAMBATI: Serenata napoletana, Op. 24, No. 2 *(10th December, 1954)*	3:08
12	KROLL: Banjo and Fiddle *(17th December, 1947)*	2:38
13	STRAVINSKY: Berceuse (from *The Firebird*)	2:13
14	RAVEL: Menuet (from *Sonatine*)	2:24
15	SHOSTAKOVICH: Danse Fantastique No. 2 (from *Fantastic Dances, Op. 5*) *(18th December, 1947)*	1:10
16	DEBUSSY: The Girl with the Flaxen Hair (from *Preludes, Book I*)	2:35
17	DINICU: Hora Staccato *(Recorded in 1950)*	2:35
18	PROKOFIEV: Gavotte, Op. 32, No. 3	1:10
19	PROKOFIEV: March in F minor, Op. 12, No. 1	1:32
20	RACHMANINOV: Étude-tableau, Op. 39, No. 2	2:11
21	RACHMANINOV: Daisies, Op. 30, No. 3 (from *6 Romances, Op. 38, No. 2*)	2:01
22	RACHMANINOV: Oriental Sketch, Op. 2, No. 2	1:33
23	CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO: Tango (No. 3 from *Shakespeare Songs*)	1:53
24-25	RAVEL: Valses nobles et sentimentales: *Nos. 6 and 7*	3:21
26	MEDTNER: Fairy Tale in B flat minor, Op. 20, No. 1	2:28
27	DEBUSSY: La Chevelure (No. 2 from *Chansons de Bilitis*) *(16th October, 1946)*	2:47
28	DE FALLA: Pantomime (from *El Amor Brujo*) *(17th October, 1946)*	3:11

Heifetz's series of arrangements and transcriptions for violin and piano reveal just how tasteful and refined a musician he was. Crafted with precision, and played with passion, they are alive with his stylistic awareness. Whether in his Rachmaninov transcriptions or in Robert Russell Bennett's *A Song Sonata*, Heifetz lavished equal care on these gems and they enriched his concert programmes. They also proved hugely popular on disc – thirteen pieces come from a 1960 LP famously called 'Heifetz' – and their variety, virtuosity and sheer beauty remain imperishable examples of the art of the violin.

All tracks were recorded in the RCA Studios, Hollywood
Reissue Producer and Audio Restoration Engineer: Mark Obert-Thorn
Cover image: Jascha Heifetz, ca. 1954 (Private Collection)

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