

## SYMPOSIUM RECORDS CD 1172

The Harold Wayne Collection – Volume 21

### The Paris Fonotipias - Volume I

Ada Adini née Adele Chapman was born in Boston, Massachusetts in 1858 and died there in 1924. She made her début at the Opéra in Paris as Chimène in *Le Cid* on the 6th of May, 1887 and remained with the Opéra for some years, creating roles in Samara's *Histoire d'amour* and Saint-Saëns' *Ascanio*. She sang at Covent Garden during the 1894 and 1895 seasons, and during the latter she sang Donna Anna to Patti's Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*. The Fonotipia discs give her name as Adini but in the biographical notes to the *Mapleson Memoirs*, [revised edition, editor Harold Rosenthal] it is stated that Ada Adini was an Italian soprano who toured in America with her husband, the tenor Aramburo, and should not be confused with the American soprano Ada Adiny who married the librettist Paul Milliet and was a leading soprano in Paris from 1888. This merely adds to the confusion but the Fonotipia discs were certainly made by the American soprano.

Pericles Aramis. Virtually nothing is known of this singer. He apparently made concert appearances in Paris but certainly never sang at the Opera or Opera Comique.

Victor Capoul was born in Toulouse in 1839 and died in Pujaudran in 1924. He entered the Paris Conservatoire in 1859 to study with Reviel. He made his début at the Opéra Comique as Daniel in *Le Chalet* (Adam) in 1861 and remained at the theatre until 1870. He appeared at Drury Lane in 1871 as Faust and returned there every year until 1875. He was engaged at Covent Garden from 1877 to 1879. In 1888 he sang the role of Jocelyn in Godard's opera of that name in Paris, shortly after its first performance in Brussels, and then obtained an administrative post at the Paris Opéra, where he remained for many years.

Rose Caron (nee Meuniez) was born in Monerville on the 17th November, 1857 and studied at the Paris Conservatoire from 1880 to 1882. She made her début at the Theatre de la Monnaie in Brussels in 1882 and created the role of Brunehild in Reyer's *Sigurd* there in 1884. In 1885 she first appeared at the Paris Opéra, again in *Sigurd*, and returned to Brussels in 1887 where she created the soprano roles in Godard's *Jocelyn* and Reyer's *Salammbô*. From 1890 onwards she sang mostly in concerts and became a professor of singing at the Paris Conservatoire in 1902, where she remained until her death in 1930. Apparently her voice was already declining by 1901. Mathilde Marchesi in her *Ten Singing Lessons*, published in 1901, remarks that 'Although Mme. Caron, who represented Iphigenie, possesses now but little voice, she charmed the audience through her noble song and expressive declamation. . . her talent is doubly great in that it gathers no aid from her voice'. It is not surprising that her recordings made in 1902 for Zonophone and

in 1904 for Fonotipia are best regarded as precious mementoes of a great artist of the past.

Léon David was born in 1869 and made his début at the Monte Carlo Opéra singing the role of Euxenos in Desjoyeaux's opera, *Gyptis* and later in the season he sang the Duke in *Rigoletto*. He first sang at the Opéra Comique in *Les Troyens* on the 9th June, 1892, and created the role of René in *Le Follet* (Lefevre-Derode) on the 1st May, 1900. Other roles he sang there included Almaviva, Don José, des Grieux, Nadir, Rodolphe (*La Bohème*) and Werther. His career also extended to the principal theatres in the provinces. To a certain extent he was handicapped since his repertoire was similar to that of Clément who was better known.

Jean-François Delmas was born in Lyon in 1861 and died in 1933 in St. Alban de Montbel. He was for many years one of the leading bass-baritones at the Opéra. Following his début in 1886 as St. Bris in *Les Huguenots*, he became a dominating figure and created leading roles in *Le Mage* (Massenet), *Zaire* (Veronge de la Nux), *Thaïs*, *La Légende de St. Christophe* (D'Indy) and *Les Burgraves* (Sachs) as late as 1924. He was the first French Wotan in Wagner's Ring at the Opéra and was immensely popular with his voice of stentorian power. He was a prolific recorder for G & T, Fonotipia and Pathé.

Marie de Reszke. I have been unable to find any details of Marie de Reszke except that before her marriage to Jean de Reszke she was La Comtesse de Mailly-Nesle. Dr. Wayne has described how she recorded in 1905 and how the recording was preserved. We know that her adored only son was killed in the first world war in 1918 and that she suffered a breakdown as a result, from which she never really recovered. Jean was enthusiastic about her voice. She sang privately amongst friends but never in public.

Pedro Gailhard was born in Toulouse on August 1st, 1848 and died in Paris in 1918. He received his first singing lessons in Toulouse and then continued at the Paris Conservatoire. He made his début in 1867 at the Opéra Comique as Falstaff in Thomas's *Le Songe d'une Nuit d'Ete* and continued to sing there until 1870. On November 3rd 1871 he made his début at the Opéra as Méphistophélès in *Faust* and continued there until 1884 when he became joint manager with M. Ritt. He made a highly successful début at Covent Garden in 1879, again as Méphistophélès. In 1891 the Ritt-Gailhard management of the Opéra finished, but in 1893 he joined M. Bertrand again as joint manager. He was responsible for some notable productions at the Opéra, particularly of Wagner, and many famous artists including Caron, Melba, Eames, Bréval, Ackté, Alvarez, Salaza, Renaud, Delmas and the de Reszke brothers began their careers at the Opéra under his management.

Ernest van Dÿck (van Dijck) was born in Antwerp in 1861 and died in Berlaer-lez-Lierre in 1923. His parents wished him to become a lawyer, but their opposition to his adopting a musical career was eventually overcome when he sang as an

amateur and was heard by Gounod who was enthusiastic in his praise. He was taken up by the famous conductor Charles Lamoureux who gave him instruction in Paris but he appears to have had little formal teaching as the voice was naturally placed. He made a concert début in Paris in 1883 and sang in concerts for several years. His operatic début was in Paris in 1887 in the Théâtre Eden as Lohengrin. He was immediately recognised as a great operatic artist. Within the next few years he appeared in a number of very important operatic centres, including Covent Garden, the Metropolitan Opera, New York and the Vienna State Opera. He sang in Bayreuth for twenty-four seasons from 1888 to 1912 and created the role of *Werther* in Vienna in 1892. His last appearances were as Parsifal in Antwerp in 1914.

Jean-François Delmas

1 *Les deux Grenadiers* (Schumann)

This sounds a little strange in French translation, but what a voice Delmas had! He sings with great conviction and his enunciation is really superb.

2 *Les Huguenots*-Bénédiction des poignards

In this famous passage St. Bris, a Catholic nobleman, asks the assembled company to join him in exterminating the hated Huguenots. Delmas is in his element using his splendid voice with great authority.

3 *Patrie!*-Pauvre martyr obscur

This is an aria sung by Rysor, is soliloquizing over the body of a poor and unknown martyr. Delmas sings with great feeling, a wonderful sense of dignity and a superb legato line.

Pedro Gailhard

4 *La Paloma* (Yradier)

Gailhard had retired for some years before he made his Fonotipia records but the voice is still steady and warm in tone. Yradier wrote 'La Paloma' especially for him, and so the disc has special significance.

5 *L'Africaine*-Hollah matelots

This is sung unaccompanied by Nelusko calling upon the sailors to hurry to change the sails as the wind has veered to the North. It contains some awkward intervals and is a good test of the singer's intonation. Gailhard concludes the passage with an excellent trill as marked in the score.

Jean-François Delmas

6 *Le Soir* (Gounod)

The first words of the song set the mood - 'Le soir remene le silence, assis sur ces rochers deserts' - 'Evening brings back silence, seated on these deserted rocks'. Delmas sings the song simply with a lovely legato line and superb diction. This is one of his finest records.

Rose Caron

7 Prière (Gounod) \*

8 *Hellé-Cantilène* \*\*

9 *Sigurd*-Des présents de Gunther \*

I have decided to list the three incredibly rare Fonotipia records of Rose Caron together, because the recording is so poor that individual criticisms of interpretations and of technique are virtually impossible. Of course the excerpts from *Hellé* and *Sigurd* are important creators' records, but in any case Rose Caron was such an imposing figure in the operatic world of her day that her records, imperfect as they are, must be made available to collectors who would otherwise have no opportunity of hearing them.

Ernest van Dÿck

10 Dichterliebe-Ich grolle nicht (Schumann)

11 *Die Walküre*-Lied au printemps (Wagner)

12 *Werther*-Stances d'Ossian

13 Du bist wie eine Blume (Schumann)

14 Een Bloemken (Nicolai) and Frühlingsnacht (Schumann) \*\*

The same applies to van Dÿck's Fonotipias as to those of Rose Caron. Something was radically wrong with the recording apparatus or the manner in which it was being used when these were made. Most of the other early Paris artists such as Litvinne and Delmas recorded well, but these records unfortunately give little idea of the voice or artistry of van Dÿck. They are included here because, apart from some Pathé cylinders and discs, and two Homophone records of uncertain date and origin, they are the only recordings of van Dÿck and they include a creator's record from *Werther*. They are all extremely rare and this compact disc represents the only chance most collectors will ever have of hearing them.

Léon David

15 *Mignon*-Elle ne croyait pas

Happily these recordings are technically much better than those of Rose Caron and van Dÿck and we are given a good idea of the lyric tenor voice of Léon David. The poet Wilhelm watches over Mignon, who is ill, and prays that she will one day recover her health and return his love. David sings elegantly with lovely phrasing in the style of the best French school.

16 La véritable Manola (E. Bourgeois)

This is a delightful record, again with excellent style and great flexibility, whilst the decorations are all given with an easy grace and perfect control.

17 *Carmen*-La fleur que tu m'avais jetée

It is a pleasure to listen to David's version of the famous 'Flower Song', Don José's passionate avowal of his love for Carmen. There is a slight cut before the end, but

David sings the phrase 'et j'étais une chose a toi' finishing as Bizet marked it in the score with a lovely piano B flat.

Jean-François Delmas

18 *La Damnation de Faust*-Voici des roses

Faust is again a young man and is overwhelmed by the beauty of the meadows on the banks of the Elbe. Méphistophélès lulls him to sleep with the seductive charm of this aria. Delmas sums up all the richness and warmth of his voice to create the nostalgic atmosphere of the scene.

19 *Die Walküre*-Les adieux de Wotan

Delmas was the first French Wotan when *Die Walküre* was first given at the Paris Opéra on the 12th May, 1893 with a stupendous cast: Lucienne Bréval: Brunehild, Rose Caron: Sieglinde, Deschamps-Jehin: Fricka and van Dÿck: Siegmund. The conductor was Édouard Colonne. Over thirty years later, in 1925, Delmas was again the Wotan in the 300th performance at the Opéra. His recording shows him as an imposing and towering figure using his magnificent voice to great effect.

Victor Capoul

20 *Jocelyn*-Cachés dans cet asile

When *Jocelyn* was first given in Paris in 1888 Capoul sang the title role, for which, together with M. Silvestre, he had written the libretto. It is based on a poem by Lamartine. Capoul was 65 or 66 when this record of the famous 'Berceuse' was made and by then he had little voice left, but the style is there and it is an interesting souvenir of the artist. Only two copies of the record are known to exist and Dr. Wayne has the only one in good condition.

Marie de Reszke

21 *Au Rossignol* (Gounod)

Although, like the previous item, the record was given a catalogue number it is believed never to have been released. Fortunately this surviving copy is in first class condition and the artist sings with great beauty of tone and lovely phrasing. The first words of the song 'Quand ta voix celeste prelude au silence des belles nuits' - 'When your heavenly voice is a prelude to the silence of the beautiful nights' serve to create an atmosphere of peace maintained by the singer and her accompanist-husband, Jean de Reszke.

Ada Adini

22 *La Serenata* (Braga)

In this rather ordinary song Adini reveals a typically French style of singing and a soprano voice well under control.

23 *Hérodiade*-Il est doux \* \*

In this aria Salomé recalls the fact that John the Baptist saved her life when she was lost in the desert as a child. He found her and looked after her for some years. This

aria gives a much better idea of Adini's powers. She sings with well controlled tone and the high notes are well placed and produced with ease and security.

Pericles Aramis

24 *T'amo ancora* (Tosti)

It is difficult to understand why so many records of Aramis were issued but easy to understand why they are all so rare. The singer's voice as recorded sounds dry and uninteresting and there is little to suggest his involvement when he sings 'Io t'amo ancora' (I still love you).

25 *L'âme des fleurs* (Massenet)

There is little to add to my criticism of the previous recording except to say that there is some doubtful intonation in all three of the discs included here.

26 *Le champs des pavots* (Isadore de Lara)

This song 'The field of poppies' is sung in the same manner. It may well be that the rather woolly tone makes the voice sound flat but certainly there is little attempt to colour the voice in any way. It is possible that in the flesh he was an interesting recitalist, but as recorded there is little evidence of this.

Pedro Gailhard

27 *Faust-Sérénade*

This is certainly the best of the Gailhard records. Although the voice sounds older, there is something a little reminiscent of the smooth voice production of Plançon, and he certainly manages to sound sufficiently malevolent in his final scornful laughter as he mocks the unfortunate Marguérite.

28 *Faust-Serenate*

This is really just a curiosity. Why Gailhard, a typical French bass, should sing this piece in Italian as 'Serenata' is something of a mystery, especially as he only sings one verse. Here, too, the voice sounds lighter and less smooth. Certainly it was less value for money for the contemporary music lover.

Georgette Bréjean-Silver

29 *La Traviata-Cabaletta*

Bréjean-Silver had a typical French light soprano voice and she was much admired by Massenet who wrote the Fabliau in his *Manon* especially for her. She makes light of the technical difficulties of the cabaletta, where Violetta resolves to continue her life as a courtesan, but the voice as recorded sounds rather hard at the extreme top.

John Freestone

Dr. Wayne writes:

"As a group the Paris Fonotipias are the rarest of any gramophone records. Even considered piece by piece each commands indisputable respect in every collection which boasts an example. Of Ackté's few Fonotipia titles, I have never seen an original copy. If it were not for a single re-issue on PO93, very few collectors would every have heard her. 39059 'Si j'avais vos ailes' of Messenger, which graced the reverse of the Adini IRCC re-issue, claims similar rarity. As for 'Je t'aime' I have never heard of an original Fonotipia, although it has been known as the Odeon 36868. As such I found it in André Vernon's collection in Paris. \* \*

The only Adini I ever came upon was 'La Serenata/Hérodiade'. Her output is as untraceable as the rest of the series, although my dear friend Jack Freestone had a mint copy of 39121/39125 which he found in Brussels. \*

Aramis is possibly the most obscure of any of these singers; all the titles came into my possession in 1966 as a simple acquisition from the de Bry collection. Two of his records appeared on a 'Winston' list around 1962 but were snapped up before I could speak. Apart from this I have not seen or heard of one in any collection, but suspect that some French archives contain examples as also, no doubt, does Yale University Library. (Since writing these notes I have heard that Harold Barnes who lives in Paris has two double-sided discs).

Bréjean-Silver Fonotipias. There must be at least 100 Odeons to every one of the former; 69012 eluded me altogether. \*

The legendary Capoul exists in two copies with a unique label - silver in place of the usual green, the catalogue and pressing numbers being in the usual red and black respectively. These extraordinary records, numbered 1 and 2 respectively were both from de Bry. No. 1 was in fine condition but No. 2 was very badly cracked, at least 2/3 across, and had been heavily burned, presumably in an attempt to seal the damage; it was unplayable so I rejected it. Three dubbings were made from copy No.1 and these reproductions were in the possession of Colin Shreve in the late '50s. One of these went to Dick Alexander and was used for the 'In Memoriam' L.P. after his tragic death from a heart attack at the age of 48 in 1968.

I have located altogether four examples of the 39096/7 coupling of Rose Caron, mainly in France, but only one of 39114 Hellé is known to me. \*

Cornubert's three double-sided discs are all of similar ilk. I can report, however, two examples of the 'Walküre/Sigurd'. Bauer could only boast one disc, the 'Werther/Huguenots' coupling and that was not in top condition. The others I found singly in the environs of Paris. \*

Léon David's delightful Odéons were seen occasionally in France, but his Fonotipias virtually never. 39069 'La véritable Manola', of infinite charm, is on a single sided gold label copy, as well as double-sided, but I have never seen 39220 'La Muette de Portici'. \*

De Guerne's solitary disc is also a Paris Fonotipia but of 1906/7 vintage, and of course is a major rarity.

The great bass Pedro Gailhard, who created 'La Paloma', made four titles. Dick Alexander had a beaten-up copy of 'L'Africaine' and Bauer the 'Faust' in Italian

which I found again in the de Bry collection, together with the other three, to make up a set. Incidentally, the 'L'Africaine' is literally mint.

The sole record of Marie de Reszke was preserved by the greatest of good fortune: the original recordist in the Paris studio explained, "Jean de Reszke listened to test pressings of his two recordings and to those of his wife. He would not pass his own discs for publication (as is well known) and was quite distressed with envy at the beautiful sound of Marie's records which he then ordered to be destroyed with his own. However, I could not bear to break all of Marie's tests. I secreted copy No. 11 of her 'Rossignol' by Gounod, which played exquisitely". The No. 11 on the label of 39104 bears out the truth of this extraordinary anecdote.

Six titles credited to Jerome exist in equal paucity in comparison with David, Cornubert etc. Roberto Bauer had the 'Rigoletto' arias; the others emanated from French gramophiles.

Anita Kinen deserves special mention as her output was thought by most of us to be limited to the double-sided 'Barbier' solo, a beautifully sung version, until 39290/39291 turned up from the relative obscurity of South America. Bauer makes no mention of it in 'Historical Records' neither does 'Dischi Fonotopia' by Bennett (1953) although the latter leaves the appropriate numbers 39290/39291 blank.

Van Dÿck's output is just about known - all the titles coming into my possession in the 1960s. Unfortunately I allowed the Faure/Huberty songs to slip through my fingers. Hence their absence from these comprehensive CD's. The only disc to appear more than once is the 'Walküre/Werther' coupling. \* \*?

I am truly proud to be able to present this rare group for re-recording by Symposium Records."

Symposium Records thanks Paul Lewis and David Mason for their help in the preparation of this record.

Copyright notice: This record with its notes is copyright. It may not be broadcast, copied, hired out or publicly performed without permission.