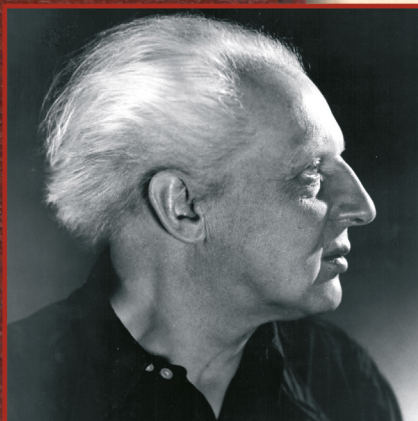


GuildGuild GmbH
Switzerland

GHCD 2428

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© 2015 Guild GmbH**Jean SIBELIUS (1865-1957)**

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|--|---|-------|
| 1 | Finlandia, Op.26
PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA
Recorded: 28 April 1930 (Victor 7412 and HMV DB1584; Camden LP CAL-120 and RCA LP VCM-7101) | 6:50 |
| 2 | The Swan of Tuonela, Op.22 No.2 ('Lemminkäinen Legend' No.3)
Marcel Tabuteau, cor anglais
PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA
Recorded: 2 & 3 May 1929 (Victor 7380 and HMV DB1997; RCA LP VCM-7101) | 8:33 |
| Violin Concerto in D minor, Op.47 | | |
| 3 | I. Allegro moderato | 14:34 |
| 4 | II. Adagio di molto | 7:05 |
| 5 | III. Allegro, ma non tanto
JASCHA HEIFETZ violin
PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA
Recorded: 24 December 1934 (Victor Recording unpublished on 78s; private collection) | 6:26 |
| 6 | Valse Triste, Op.44 No.1 (from 'Kuolema')
PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA
Recorded: 15 January 1936 (Victor 14726 and HMV DB6009; Camden LP CAL-123) | 4:29 |
| 7 | Berceuse, Op.109, No.8 (from 'The Tempest')
PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA
Recorded: 7 November 1937 (Victor 14726 and HMV DB6009; Camden LP CAL-123) | 2:36 |
| 8 | Symphony No.7 in C major, Op.105
ALL-AMERICAN YOUTH ORCHESTRA
Recorded: 22 September 1940 (Columbia Recording unpublished on 78s; LP LSSA-6) | 22:01 |

**Guild**
HISTORICAL

LEOPOLD STOKOWSKI

JASCHA HEIFETZ

SIBELIUS

Violin Concerto

Finlandia

The Swan of Tuonela

Valse Triste

Berceuse

Symphony No.7

PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA
ALL-AMERICAN YOUTH
ORCHESTRA

Recorded 1929 - 1940



SIBELIUS AND STOKOWSKI, 1953

A GUILD HISTORICAL RELEASE

- Recordings from the collection of Edward Johnson and the British Library
- Remastering: Peter Reynolds
- Final master preparation: Reynolds Mastering, Colchester, England
- Design: Paul Brooks, paulmbrooks@virginmedia.com
- Art direction: Guild GmbH
- Executive co-ordination: Guild GmbH

- **Guild GmbH, Bärenholzstrasse 8, 8537 Nussbaumen/TG, Switzerland**
Tel: +41 (0) 52 742 85 00 Fax: +41 (0) 52 742 85 09 (Head Office)
- **Guild GmbH, PO Box 5092, Colchester, Essex CO1 1FN, Great Britain**
- **e-mail: info@guildmusic.com World WideWeb-Site: <http://www.guildmusic.com>**

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as one of the great recordings of the century, but the Heifetz-Stokowski Sibelius Concerto went unheard for over sixty years.

Our collection concludes with Stokowski's only studio recording of Sibelius's Seventh Symphony, in which he conducts the All-American Youth Orchestra. Stokowski's contract with the Philadelphia Orchestra finally expired in 1940, whereupon he immediately formed the All-American Youth Orchestra, one of the first (if not *the* first) such organizations in the world, the ages of the members ranging from 18 to 25. Almost at once, Stokowski took the new Orchestra on tour, to South America in 1940 and across North America the following year, but the AAYO was obliged to disband when America entered the war in December 1941 and the young men became eligible for military conscription. However, such was the very high standard to which Stokowski had already raised the AAYO that they were considered more than good enough to make several commercial recordings for RCA-Victor's great rival Columbia Records.

The Symphony's first recording – a live version by the BBC Symphony under Serge Koussevitsky from May 1933 – had set an impressive standard, but Stokowski's was the first to have been made in the United States. However, like the 1934 Heifetz-Stokowski recording, the All-American Youth Orchestra 78s remained unissued at the time, also for reasons unknown, though they appeared on LP some decades later. Columbia re-recorded the work in 1942 with Sir Thomas Beecham and the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York and RCA responded that same year with a rival version from the St. Louis Symphony under Vladimir Golschmann.

Stokowski's pioneering (in every sense) recording has a lithe and supple character, presenting this astonishing masterpiece in a fresh and vivid light. Although Columbia's recording quality was not as consistently fine as RCA achieved at the time, there is no doubt that modern technology has improved the original sound immeasurably, so that this performance undoubtedly enters the 'masterful' class to which Sibelius had referred in his letter to Stokowski twelve years later.

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In December 1951, the 69-year-old British-born conductor Leopold Stokowski wrote to the 86-year-old Finnish composer Jean Sibelius regarding the difficulty he had had in obtaining the score of *Lemminkäinen's Return*. Sibelius, assisting the conductor as best he could, ended his reply thus:

'I have not forgotten the happy hours we spent together. I remember them always when I hear some of your masterful performances through the radio or the gramophone.

With gratitude and admiration,

Jean Sibelius'

More than six years after the end of World War II, classical music publishing remained a low priority. Great German publishing houses such as Peters Edition – based in Leipzig, in Eastern Germany – had been rendered impotent by the anti-Jewish pogroms of the Nazis and the economic fragility of the post-war years, so that by 1951-2 the music of a world-famous composer such as Sibelius, and the requirements of a world-famous conductor such as Stokowski, reflected the shortages of the times.

It was very different twenty or thirty years before, when Leopold Stokowski had been one of Sibelius's most ardent champions in the United States, alongside Frederick Stock in Chicago and Serge Koussevitsky in Boston. But it was Stokowski's astonishingly successful recording career – initially with the Philadelphia Orchestra, to which he had been appointed in 1912 – that was to make him a truly international figure.

It was Stokowski who led the way in the United States with performances of Sibelius's orchestral music in the decade following World War I. He gave the American premieres of the composer's last three symphonies with the Philadelphia Orchestra: No. 5 (21 October 1921), No. 6 (23 April 1926), and No. 7 (3 April 1926), and performed music by Sibelius on no fewer than 42 occasions in the 1920s, compared with Koussevitsky's 36 performances and Stock's 26.

It was only to be expected, therefore, that with electrical recording having been universally established by the late 1920s and Sibelius's music consistently forming an integral part of the Stokowski-Philadelphia repertoire, conductor and orchestra should make the first recording, in May 1929, of Sibelius's 'The Swan of Tuonela', the third of four orchestral 'Legends' from the Kalevala Opus 22.

It appears Stokowski's decision to record 'The Swan' was taken at the last minute. He informed the Orchestra's principal oboist, Marcel Tabuteau, of his decision the day before the recording. Tabuteau, who did not possess a cor anglais (the solo instrument throughout the work), borrowed an instrument and studied the part overnight. The following day's result was one of the era's classic recordings – a combination of Stokowski's magical evocation of atmosphere (one of the conductor's greatest qualities) with the flexibility of allowing the soloist – in this case, a trusted long-term colleague – the relative freedom to phrase within the overall pulse, although, in the case of this score, the 'pulse' as such remains very slow-moving.

The recording's impact led to demands for more Sibelius from Stokowski and the Philadelphians who in 1930 put down their first complete recording of 'Finlandia'. In 1921, conductor and orchestra had made the first ever recording of this music – in the acoustic process – when the score was heavily edited and occasionally re-orchestrated to fit one side of a 12" 78rpm disc, making 3'50" in total duration.

One of the more fascinating aspects of Stokowski's conducting genius was his ability to create the proper musical atmosphere relevant to the work in question, resulting from detailed orchestral balance and an intense rehearsal technique. Sibelius's 'Swan of Tuonela' requires a darker, more intense concentration than the more public 'Finlandia', the latter being less concentrated and more open, with a greater variety of texture, all brought to bear on the unfolding of this relatively brief drama as an exposition followed by a counter-exposition.

Stokowski is quite masterly here, and in the concluding pages his few subtle changes reinforce the impact of this call to nationalism. 'Finlandia' comes from some relatively early incidental music, of which – throughout his career – Sibelius composed a great deal: so much so, in fact, that away from the productions for which they had been composed, many individual movements became well-known in the concert hall.

In the 'Valse triste', and the 'Berceuse' from music for 'The Tempest', Stokowski once again shows his ability at creating atmosphere from the opening bars. The 'Valse triste' dates from 1903; the 'Tempest' music comes from 1926. Sibelius made two suites from his 'Tempest' music: the 'Berceuse' is heard towards the conclusion of the first suite, although in the play it appears early, accompanying Miranda falling asleep and her subsequent rest. Stokowski's delicacy in phrasing this performance is quite magical.

There are two major works in our collection, each being a great rarity in Stokowski's discography. In 1932, Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra had made the first recording of Sibelius's Fourth Symphony, and in December 1934 they made the first recording of the Violin Concerto, with Jascha Heifetz as soloist.

This transpired to be the only time Heifetz and Stokowski worked together, so this recording documents a great musical rarity, although for reasons which may or may not be apparent, Heifetz refused to allow the recording to be issued. Perhaps their personal chemistry did not gel. Heifetz went on to record the Concerto again the following year with the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Sir Thomas Beecham – a performance which *was* issued.

Whatever Heifetz's reasons were for banning the release of this recording, it deserves to be heard – if only for the stature of those taking part. Various aspects of this performance are worthy of study: the sense of tension running through the first movement imparts an intensity which some may feel is foreign to the music but which is surely valid. The recording was also made direct to disc, Heifetz's performance of the long cadenza in the first movement being one complete take, recorded then and there in the presence of orchestra and conductor. Here the intensity is undoubtedly of a live performance, which is also felt in the slow movement: not a relaxation as such, but as if a pause to gather breath before the finale's genuine relief. Here is a reading such as Heifetz may not have wholly intended to give, but which the circumstances obliged him to deliver. The Heifetz-Stokowski version may not be one to satisfy the majority, but it remains a valid account of the music, a corrective to those who imagine only one approach to this masterpiece is acceptable, a reading deserving to be heard by admirers of these great artists and by music-lovers everywhere.

There is another aspect regarding the circumstances of this recording. It was made in the morning and early afternoon of Christmas Eve, 1934, in the presence of Rachmaninoff, who was scheduled to record his new Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini following the Concerto. With Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra Rachmaninoff had premiered the Rhapsody almost seven weeks before. The planned recording would be Rachmaninoff's first for RCA since early 1930, and the Sibelius was Heifetz's first Concerto recording in the USA – so there may very well have been unaccustomed pressure on violinist and conductor to complete the Violin Concerto sooner than either would have ideally wished. Rachmaninoff's recording *was* issued, of course, and is recognised