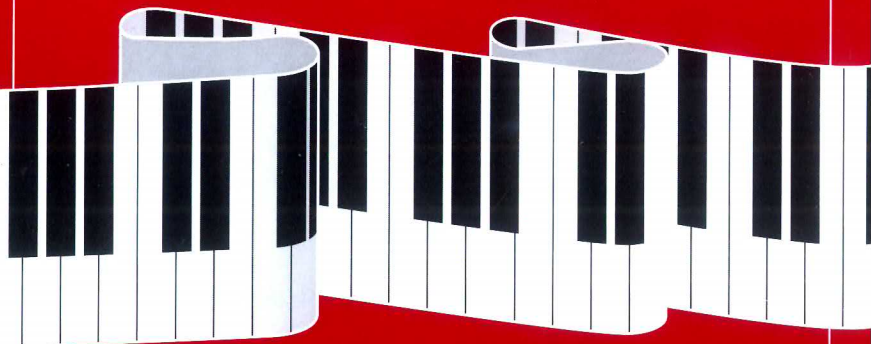


**THE REPRODUCING PIANO - DUO-ART**

**THE GREAT PIANISTS - POLAND**

**IGNACE JAN PADEREWSKI (1860-1941)**

Vol. 1



**FONO  
VITCA**

**THE REPRODUCING PIANO - DUO-ART**  
**THE GREAT PIANISTS - POLAND**  
**IGNACE JAN PADEREWSKI (1860-1941)**

**VOL. 1 - TOTAL PLAYING TIME 62'33"**

**F. CHOPIN**

- 1) Mazurka op. 17, no. 4 in A minor  
(roll 6566 - publ. November 1922) 4'59"
- 2) Valse brillante, op. 34, no. 1 in A flat  
(Version by Paderewski)  
(roll 6551 - publ. September 1922) 4'04"

**F. LISZT**

- 3) "Meine Freuden" (My joys) op. 74, no. 12  
from "Polish Songs" (transcr. by F. Liszt)  
(roll 6567 - publ. November 1922) 5'05"
- 4) "La Campanella" no. 3  
from "Grandes Etudes de Paganini"  
(roll 75098 - publ. prob. November 1936) 4'41"
- 5) "Hungarian Rhapsody" no. 2 in C sharp minor  
(roll 6670 - publ. October 1923) 8'01"

**F. SCHUBERT**

- 6) Impromptu op. 142, no. 3 in A flat  
(roll 7348-8 - publ. October 1929) 8'12"

**I. J. PADEREWSKI**

- 7) Caprice op. 14, no. 3 in G major (genre Scarlatti)  
(roll 6558 - publ. October 1922) 2'52"
- 8) Melodie (melody) op. 8, no. 3  
from "Chants du Voyageur"  
(roll 6681 - publ. November 1923) 2'54"
- 9) Minuet op. 14, no. 1 in G major  
(roll 6100 - publ. ca. April 1919) 4'04"
- 10) "Cracovienne fantastique" op. 12, no. 6  
from "Humoresques de Concert"  
(roll 7446-4 - publ. March 1932) 3'31"

**E. SCHELLING**

- 11) "Nocturne in Ragusa" (Dalmatean Coastal Town)  
(roll 7215-6 - publ. March 1928) 6'02"



**IL PIANOFORTE AUTOMATICO - DUO-ART**

**I GRANDI PIANISTI - POLONIA**

**THE REPRODUCING PIANO - DUO-ART**

**THE GREAT PIANISTS - POLAND**

## INFORMAZIONI TECNICHE

Il pianoforte dal quale sono stati registrati tutti i brani di questa edizione è uno Steinway, modello XR, numero 231496, fabbricato a New York nel 1925. La lunghezza dello strumento è di 6'1" 3/4, una dimensione particolare che la Steinway aveva studiato in accordo con la Aeolian Company per la installazione nel suo interno della meccanica Duo-art con rulli di carta perforata.

Antonio Latanza

## GRANDI ARTISTI DEL PASSATO IN SUONO DIGITALE

È la prima volta in Italia che un progetto di questo tipo viene realizzato. Per la sua vastità, il piano è oggi il più articolato tra tutti quelli che sono stati presentati durante gli anni passati in Germania, nel Regno Unito e negli Stati Uniti.

In altissima fedeltà digitale la Fonoteca propone le interpretazioni dei più grandi compositori e pianisti che operarono negli anni 1915-1936, una grande stagione per la musica nella quale agli echi ancora vivissimi della grande tradizione pianistica ottocentesca si univano le tendenze (più o meno di avanguardia) della musica nuova e le diverse suggestioni che venivano dal nuovo mondo.

Questo prezioso momento fu documentato, con notevole fedeltà, dai pianoforti automatici. La denominazione italiana del tempo era "autopiano", ed era assai generica perché non distingueva tra "player piano" (semplice pianoforte pneumatico destinato ad essere manovrato da un operatore) e "reproducing piano" (nel quale l'espressione era del tutto automatica). Dei due soltanto l'ultimo è oggetto di questa iniziativa; ecco perché d'ora in poi lo strumento automatico espressivo dal quale sono tratte le registrazioni sarà definito "reproducing piano".

Quasi del tutto sconosciuti in Italia, essi costituirono un autentico rompicapo per i loro inventori e - nella ormai appropriata prospettiva storica - giudichiamo il "reproducing piano" come un vero e proprio monumento al genio meccanico del tempo, nato appena sul finire dell'era della pneumatica e della ruota dentata.

Questo strumento si inquadra storicamente come l'estremo capitolo di un plurimillenario fervore nella meccanizzazione della musica, un divenire che oggi sembra ormai concluso (o forse radicalmente modificato) sotto la spinta delle nuove scienze elettroniche e computerizzate.

Quel lungo cammino partì dall'antichità classica, ma le prime realizzazioni di rilievo sono ascrivibili alla fine del XV secolo, mentre le più prestigiose (tra cui il "reproducing piano") vanno annoverate tra le creazioni più sbalorditive che la mente umana abbia potuto concepire: esse apparvero nei primi anni del XX secolo.

Le ragioni di quell'incessante macerarsi intorno al problema degli strumenti musicali automatici possono sfuggire a chi - come noi oggi - è avvezzo alla musica riprodotta. Ma fino a 100 anni or sono la musica non si riproduceva; semplicemente si produceva, manualmente o meccanicamente.

## TECHNICAL INFORMATION

*The piano from which all the excerpts in this compilation were recorded is a Steinway XR Nr. 231496, made in New York in 1925. The length of this instrument is 6'1" 3/4, a special dimension studied by Steinway in agreement with Aeolian Company, so that it was possible to instal the reproducing mechanism "Duo-Art" with perforated paper rolls in its inside.*

Antonio Latanza

## GREAT ARTISTS OF THE PAST IN DIGITAL SOUND

*It is the first time in Italy that a project of this kind is being carried out. In its scope, this plan is nowadays the most articulate among all those which have been introduced to Germany, United Kingdom and United States in the past years.*

*The Fonoteca presents the interpretations of the greatest composers and pianists who were active in the years 1915-1936 in digital highest fidelity. It was a golden age for music: echoes of the glorious piano tradition of the nineteenth century were still vivid, joined to the trends (more or less avant-garde) of new music and various suggestions coming from the New World.*

*Such a crucial moment was evidenced, with remarkable fidelity, by automatic pianos.*

*The reproducing pianos were a regular conundrum to their inventors; from our modern, appropriate point of view we deem the "reproducing piano" as a real monument to the mechanical genius of its time, right at the end of the era of pneumatics and cog-wheel.*

*Historically this instrument must be considered as the last chapter in the millennial enthusiastic history of mechanization of music. Nowadays this history seems to be over - or perhaps radically altered - under the pressure of the new electronic and computerized sciences.*

*A long way which began in the classical times; but the first noteworthy realizations came at the end of the XV century; the most prestigious ones - the "reproducing piano" among them - must be listed among the most astonishing creations the human mind has conceived. They appeared in the early years of the 20th century.*

*Today we are used to reproduced music and the reasons for such an incessant meditation upon the problem of automatic musical instruments may well elude us. But until 100 years ago music was not reproduced; it was simply produced, manually or mechanically.*

*The serious limitations of the phonograph and of the gramophone gave the "reproducing piano" a central status between 1904 (when it was first created) and 1929 (the year of the great Wall Street crisis); it was forced to disappear solely because of its excessive costs - truly enormous if compared to the modest price of gramophone - and, secondarily, owing to the progressive technical refinements of sound reproductions, i.e. the coming of the electric recording system around 1925.*

I gravi limiti del fonografo e del grammofofono fecero del "reproducing piano" un grande protagonista tra gli anni 1904 (data dalla sua realizzazione) - 1929 (data della crisi di Wall Street); esso dovette soccombere soltanto a causa dei suoi costi, davvero enormi rispetto a quelli modestissimi dei grammofoni e, secondariamente, a causa del progressivo affinarsi tecnico del nuovo mezzo di riproduzione sonora, verificatosi intorno al 1925 con l'avvento della incisione elettrica.

#### COME È POSSIBILE

L'artista suonava un pianoforte collegato a intricati congegni elettropneumatici e meccanici che erano in grado di fissare su una striscia di carta non soltanto le note che il pianista suonava, ma anche tutta la dinamica interpretativa inclusi gli effetti più sottili, il tocco, il gioco dei pedali, etc.

La striscia di carta che si otteneva (il cosiddetto master) veniva sottoposta al riascolto del pianista e, dopo le eventuali correzioni, veniva diffusa commercialmente tra quanti avessero nelle proprie abitazioni un "reproducing piano", attraverso il quale si potevano ricreare tra le mura domestiche le esecuzioni dei grandi del tempo.

La Fonoteca non ha fatto altro che registrare il suono di uno di questi strumenti.

#### LA AEOLIAN COMPANY E IL DUO-ART

Prima di addentrarci nell'esame del Duo-art, congegno che è al centro di questa edizione, ritengo opportuno ricordare che il primo "reproducing piano" fu inventato nel 1904 in Germania.

La storia di questo meccanismo coinvolge quella della tecnica e della musica: centinaia furono i musicisti che prestarono collaborazioni con Edwin Welte, l'inventore del congegno.

Dopo aver costruito per trent'anni strumenti meccanici, la Aeolian Company coronò la sua attività con la introduzione, nel 1913, del Duo-art che fu prodotto in migliaia di esemplari fino alla fine degli anni venti per poi declinare ed essere definitivamente coinvolto nella crisi che colpì il pianoforte pneumatico.

Una caratteristica del Duo-art, d'altronde comune anche ad altri "reproducing-piano", è l'impiego di due regolatori dell'espressione separati, uno per i bassi, l'altro per gli acuti. I regolatori agiscono automaticamente sull'espressione secondo le informazioni codificate nel rullo e trasmesse per via pneumatica ai martelli e ai pedali. Le note relative ai bassi sono dotate di una gamma di 16 livelli sonori, di altri 16 livelli sono dotate le note degli acuti.

#### PERCHÉ IL REPRODUCING PIANO OGGI

Se il caucciù fosse stato conosciuto nell'Europa del Settecento, avremmo

#### HOW IT IS POSSIBLE

*The artist played a piano which was connected to a complex electro-pneumatic mechanism, which managed to establish on a strip of paper not only the notes played by the pianist, but also all the interpreter's dynamic features, including the subtlest effects, the pedals' play, etc.*

*The strip of paper obtained in this way - the so-called "master" - was listened to by the pianist and, after all possible corrections, was commercially distributed among all those who had a "reproducing piano" in their own home and could therefore re-create the performances of the great artists of their time within four walls.*

*The Fonoteca has simply recorded the play of one of these instruments.*

#### THE AEOLIAN COMPANY AND THE DUO-ART

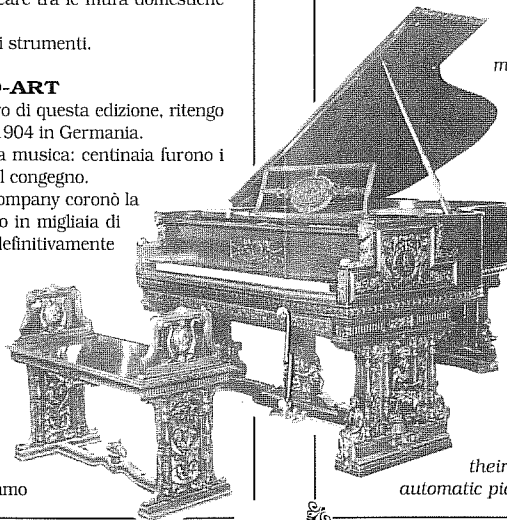
*Before tackling an examination of the Duo-art I want to remind the reader that the first reproducing piano was created in Germany in 1904. The history of this machine is related to the history of technique and music: hundreds of musicians collaborated with Edwin Welte, the inventor of this machine.*

*After building mechanical instruments for thirty years, the Aeolian Company crowned its activity by introducing the Duo-art in 1913. It was produced in thousands of specimens up to the late 'Twenties, but it later declined and was involved in the crisis which struck the pneumatic piano.*

*A feature of "Duo-art" - common to other "reproducing pianos" anyway - is the use of two separated regulators or controlling levers for musical expression, one for the bass register, one for the high register. The regulators are automatically activated according to the information which is coded on the paper roll and sent - through pneumatic system - to the hammers and pedals. The bass notes are equipped with a range of 16 sound levels, and the high notes are equipped with the same range.*

#### WHY THE REPRODUCING PIANO TODAY

*If rubber had been known in Europe in the XVIII century, maybe now we would have the chance of listening to Mozart and Cimarosa playing their own music... But then somebody should have invented the expressive automatic piano, maybe replacing (as Jacquard suggested in the first years of the XIX*



forse oggi la possibilità di ascoltare delle esecuzioni di Mozart, di Cimarosa... Ma allora qualcuno avrebbe dovuto inventare il pianoforte automatico espressivo, magari sostituendo (come suggerì Jacquard nei primi anni dell'Ottocento) il cilindro chiodato con la carta perforata, cioè sostituendo la meccanica pura con la pneumatica ad aspirazione....

Se... Se... Ma la storia non si traccia con i "se", soprattutto quella tecnica; assai reale è il rischio di perdersi in un vuoto ipotizzare.

Mi ritengo quindi pago del privilegio di poter ascoltare in suono digitale alcune delle più celebri glorie pianistiche del XX secolo, oltre ai grandi compositori che eseguono le musiche proprie o di altri. Infatti questa prima emissione sarà seguita da alcune decine di CD in un progetto vasto e articolato "à la recherche du temps perdu".

Queste considerazioni da sole dichiarano la grande importanza e la portata di questa operazione.

Nulla importa se l'arte pianistica ha imboccato strade divergenti da quelle che qui la storia ci indica. Molto invece rileva che la standardizzazione del suonare moderno può indurci a curiosità per una gloriosa stagione musicale, che - sebbene tramontata - riesce ancora vitalissima e capace di affascinare.

Grande stupore desta oggi il "reproducing piano" sia nell'uomo della strada sia nello scienziato cibernetico. Ciononostante, il suo meccanismo è una macchina semplice, costruita con materiali oggi definiti - con alterigia - poveri: pelli, tele gommate, condotti flessibili, alberi a camme, ingranaggi; tutto azionato da una pompa aspirante.

Stiamo parlando di un autentico miracolo di ingegneria.

Il grande pianista Josef Hofmann così scriveva nell'aprile 1919:

"The making of these rolls has required hard and painstaking work and I have spent many hours on each different composition, but I am quite confident you will agree with me that the results justify all the efforts made. These rolls correctly reproduce phrasing, accent, pedaling, and, what is more, they are endowed with my personality. Yes, incredible as it may seem, I have succeeded in actually embodying in these rolls that subtle something which, for want of a better terms, we call personality. They are indeed my actual interpretation with all that implies."

*Josef Hofmann*

#### TESTI SELEZIONATI PER LA PRESENTAZIONE DEI SINGOLI ARTISTI

Invece di formulare nuove biografie, ho scelto di riprodurre pagine e fotografie tratte dal grande catalogo Duo-art, pubblicato in America dalla Aeolian Company nel 1927. Per ogni rullo riporto la data di pubblicazione, che ho tratto dalla grande compilazione sui rulli Duo-art scritta da Charles Davis Smith ("Duo-art Piano Music" - The Player Shop, Monrovia, California - 1987).

*Antonio Latanza  
Roma, 1996*

century) the cog-cylinder with perforated paper; that is, replacing pure mechanics with aspiration pneumatics...

If... if... But history is not written with "if"s, especially technical history; one runs a very real risk of getting lost in a maze of dreams.

I am therefore satisfied with the privilege of being able to listen to some of the most glorious piano artists of the century in digital sound - and to great composers who perform their own or other artists' music. This first issue is to be followed by many more CDs, in a vast and articulated project "à la recherche du temps perdu".

The above considerations are meant to explain the vast importance of this enterprise.

It does not matter that the art of piano playing has taken different paths from the ones which history points to us here.

It does matter that the standardizing of modern playing can make us curious about that glorious musical season, now disappeared for ever, but still vital and fascinating.

Today the "reproducing piano" can still astonish both the man in the street and the cybernetic scientist. In spite of this, its mechanism is a very simple device, built with materials that today we call - rather haughtily - "poor": leather, rubberized canvas, pipes, camshafts, cog-wheels; everything operated by a suction pump.

We are talking about a regular wonder of engineering.

The great pianist Josef Hofmann wrote in April 1919:

"The making of these rolls required hard and painstaking work and I have spent many hours on each different composition, but I am quite confident you will agree with me that the results justify all the efforts made. These rolls correctly reproduce phrasing, accent, pedaling, and, what is more, they are endowed with my personality. Yes, incredible as it may seem, I have succeeded in actually embodying in these rolls that subtle something which, for want of better terms, we call personality. They are indeed my actual interpretation with all that implies".

*Josef Hofmann*

#### SELECTED TEXTS FOR THE PRESENTATION OF EACH SINGLE ARTIST

Instead of composing new biographies I have chosen to reproduce texts and pictures taken from the great Duo-Art catalogue, published in America by Aeolian Company in 1927. For each roll I state the date of publication, which I have taken from Charles Davis Smith's great compendium of Duo-Art rolls (Duo-Art Piano Music, The Player Shop, Monrovia, California - 1987).

*Antonio Latanza  
Roma, 1996*

Design: Progetto Idea Communication s.r.l. - Roma  
Art direction and texts by Antonio Lanza  
Sound engineering: Nando D'Eramo  
Recording musical supervision: Antonio Lanza  
Coordination: Antonio Lanza  
Production by Fonoteca  
Digital mastering by Optimes  
Digital Recording DDD

## IGNACE JAN PADEREWSKI (1860-1941)

*By the plaudits of the civilized world for more than a quarter of a century crowned monarch of living pianists and at the close of the Great War chosen, as a Premier, to direct the destiny and the fortunes of his native land, now transformed into the new Republic of Poland - no other pianist who ever lived has had such a career as has been Paderewski's. His musical powers developed comparatively slowly, but once they had reached full maturity he dominated the music-loving world and received tribute from it as non pianist before him had ever done. With only his piano, Paderewski repeated the Liszt miracle, and besides triumphing in the old-world capitals where Liszt had triumphed, he conquered vast new territories greater than Liszt had ever known. Never, either in Europe or in America, has the public been so insatiable in its desire to hear a pianist. His playing fascinates not only those who have the most highly cultivated taste for music, but also those to whom the art is usually a sealed book.*

*Ignace J Paderewski was born on November 6, 1860, in Podolia. In Warsaw, he had studied piano with Janotha, but for a long time his lack of early training remained a disadvantage. When he attempted his first concert tour in Russia, in 1876, his technique was still so faulty that he had to improvise to fill in difficult places in the music which he could not play. Two years later however, he had made such progress that he was appointed a professor at the Warsaw Conservatory. It is said to have been owing largely to the sympathetic encouragement of the famous Polish actress, Mme. Modjeska, that Paderewski gave up the drudgery of teaching, and went to Vienna (in 1884) to prepare himself for the career of a concert pianist under the guidance of his famous countryman, Leschetizky. From 1887 onwards, from the time of his débuts in Vienna and Paris, his career has been one continuous triumph. After extraordinary success in England in 1890, he made his first American tour in 1891-92, giving one hundred and seventeen concerts in less than six months. He has returned many times since, his fame growing all the time like an avalanche. Despite his strenuous career as a virtuoso, Paderewski has found time to compose many beautiful works of a very distinct character of their own. These include two operas "Manru" and "Sakuntala", two symphonies, a sonata for piano and violin, a concerto, a monumental "Fantasie Polonoise" for piano and orchestra, songs, and many pieces for piano. Mr. Paderewski records his interpretations for the Duo-Art Piano exclusively.*

*The Aeolian Company - 1927*