

## **Alexander Murray Vinyl LP Record Collection of Classical Music**

This collection consists of approximately more than 23,000 vinyl records of every type of classical instrumental and vocal music collected over a period of nearly forty years between the late 1940s and the mid 1980s. It is a comprehensive collection of the finest audiophile recordings from the greatest era in recorded classical music, which is unlikely to be found or duplicated in any other place today. Despite the digital age, the cognoscenti know that this was also the greatest era of recorded sound. Although no complete catalogue of the entire collection has been made, it is possible to give a comprehensive description of its content and further details can be supplied on request.

I no longer have room to house this collection personally. Only a small portion of the collection is presently kept in my New York City apartment. The rest is stored a short distance away in the easily accessible house of a friend in Brooklyn in 250 sealed cartons. Rather than to keep it stored, I prefer to sell it to a buyer who is able to arrange for local pickup, preferably to one who appreciates the great artists who populate the collection.

Over the years these records have been well cared for and infrequently played. They were purchased new from retail shops and those selling to collectors as well as from other collectors. They were each carefully selected and examined for condition at the time they were acquired and subsequently played on the best quality audiophile turntables using the finest cartridges having extremely light tracking force.

The first recordings being bought in the late 40s and early 50s were (now extremely rare) mono 12 inch (occasionally 10 inch) 33 rpm discs. Nearly all of which are in: Mint, Near Mint, Very Fine or Fine condition (with the exception of certain extremely rare records which are occasionally at least in Very Good condition). The majority of the original covers are also in similar condition with inner sleeves and many have the original sleeves.

More than half of the collection are of the rare variety in terms of artists, repertory, occasion, record company and commercial availability or a combination of these at the time. The record labels include All Major Recording Companies issuing Classical Records during the Vinyl Era as well as a number of Minor, Obscure or Private Labels (including rare 'pirate' issues). Most are earliest or very early pressings which are marked on the matrixes and the disc labels are usually the first state issued as in: RCA Living Stereo 'Shaded Dogs' & 'White Dogs', Mercury 'Living Presence', London FFSS 'Blue Backs', Columbia

'6 Eyes', DGG 'Tulips' Angel 'Reds', as well as early: Electrola, EMI, Decca, HMV, La Voix de Son Maitre, Lyrita, Melodiya, MRF, Odeon, Pathe, Period, Philips, Polydor, R Remington, Vanguard, Victrola, VOX, Westminster and a great many others.

In certain instances, like the RCA specially issued Soria boxed sets and their special limited private issue of the Metropolitan Opera Broadcast sets (which were never publicly issued but done for the Met as gifts for contributors) special packaging and extra illustrated booklets as well as libretti were included. In many instances the collection has duplications of such rarities and the most desired pressings of particular issues. Many limited edition commemorative or collector's issues of singers from various major opera houses showcasing singers who graced their stages are also included.

The Instrumental recordings consist of: Orchestral Music, including Symphonic Pieces and Concertos, Chamber Music for various instrumental combinations and Music for various Solo instruments. Amongst these are recordings of the most famous orchestras, conductors, soloists and chamber ensembles of their time, including many premiers and live historic performances. A great number of these recordings are audiophile discs and rare collectors performances which have never been reissued in later pressing or in digital format. The scope of the music spans all periods including: Classical, Baroque, Renaissance, Medieval, Romantic, Post Romantic and Modern.

The Vocal recordings themselves consist of: Complete Operas in multiple disc sets, Opera Excerpts on single discs, Operatic Compilations of various artists, Opera Recitals by individual artists, Choral Works with orchestra, A Capella Choral music, Vocal Recitals by individual singers with various instrumental accompaniments and Mixed Vocal Recitals by different singers with various instrumental accompaniments. These recordings include many rare mono recordings and early stereo performances, as well as historic live performances (many of which were privately issued) and have never been reissued in later pressing or in digital format. Complete operas by every famous composer in French, Italian, German, Russian, Czech, English, Spanish opera repertoire as well as other vocal works from 14th to early 20th centuries comprise a significant part of the collection.

Many of the recordings in the collection are of legendary artists who made very few recordings. Most of which were issued for only brief periods during the early days of the vinyl LP era, usually in mono recordings of the late 1940s or the first stereo recordings of the early 1950s. Though not familiar to many people today, recordings by these artists have always been amongst the rarest and most sought after by collectors. What follows is a brief list of some of the more notable ones.

*Conductors:*

E. Ansetmet, A. Argenta, F. Busch, G. Cantelli, A. Cluytens, C. Krauss, F. Fricstay, W. Furtwangler, K. Inglebrecht, I. Kertesz, E. Kleiber, H. von Karajan, H. Knappertsbusch, S. Koussevitzky, C. Krauss, J. Lanchberry, P. Maag, I. Markevitch, J. Martinon, W. Mengleberg, E. Mravinsky, P. Paray, H. Scherchen, C. Shuricht, L. Stokowski, R. Strauss, V. Tallich, A. Toscanini, B. Walter, F. Weingartner.

*Pianists:*

W. Backhaus, A. Cortot, C. Curzon, G. Cziffra, F. Gulda, A. Fischer, E. Freund, W. Gieseking, C. Haskil, M. Hess, V. Horowitz, W. Kapell, W. Kempff, W. Landowska, D. Lipatti, E. Ney, J. Paderewsky, E. Petri, I. Phillip, S. Rachmaninoff, A. Rubenstein, A. Schnabel, Solomon.

*Violinists:*

M. Auclair, R. Barchet, W. Barylli, A. Campoli, M. Elman, B. Gimpel, S. Goldberg, J. Heifetz, C. Ferras, B. Huberman, J. Martzy, Y. Menuhin, N. Milstein, E. Morini, G. Neveu, J. Olevsky, R. Ricci, M. Rabin, P. Rybar, A. Schneider, A. Spalding, H. Szeryng, J. Szigeti, J. Thibaud, W. Wilkomirska.

*Violists:* P. Doktor, W. Primrose, L. Tertis, W. Trampler, E. Vardy.

*Cellists:* P. Casals, E. Feuerman, G. Cassado, A. Janigro, E. Mainardi, A. Navara, Z. Nelsova, G. Piatagorsky, M. Rostropovich, J. Starker.

*Double Bass:* S. Koussevitzky

*Harpists:* M. Grandjany, C. Salzedo and E. Vito.

*Guitarists:* The Romeros, J Bream, A Segovia

*Woodwinds:* L. Wlach

*Organist:* M. Dupre

*Chamber:*

Barylli Quartet, Griller Quartet, Hollywood Quartet, Julliard String Quartet, Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet, Amadeus String Quartet, Budapest String Quartet

*Singers:*

Singers from the dawn of recorded sound to the 1980s are very well represented, among them: E. Berger, E. Caruso, M. Callas, M. Caniglia, F. Chaliapin, H. Cuenod, C. Deutekom, K. Flagstad, K. Ferrier, R. Gorr, H. Hotter, G. Janowitz, M. Jeritza, L. Lehmann, G. Martinelli, N. Melba, C. Muzio, J. Novotna, M. Olivero, L. Pons, R. Ponselle, E. Rethberg, H. Roswaenge, T. Ruffo, B. Sayao, T. Schipa, J. Schmidt, H. Schlusnus, L. Simoneau, G. Souzay, E. Steber, E. Stignani, R.

Streich, R. Tauber, R. Tebaldi, L. Tetrazzini, M. Teyte, G. Thill, L. Tibbett, H. Traubel, A. Vanzo, C. Valetti, L. Warren, L. Welitch, V. Zeani.

An example of rare elements in the vocal music part of the collection are the opera singers and operas performed on stage or not at all. Although most of them have their own individual recital records or are part of complete opera recordings and excerpts, they are also in some very rare collection of singers through the years:

1) *100 Years Of Great Artists at The Metropolitan Opera* in 7 albums each with 2 LPs (all but one still in shrink wrap). The first three albums span 1883 to 1935 and present the following great singers.

Album 1 The Early Years, 1883 - 1908 singers: ANCONA, BISPHAM, BURRIAN, CALVE, CAMPANARI, CARUSO, CHALIAPIN, DE LUCIA, DE LUSSAN, EDOUARD DE RESZKE, EAMES, FARRAR, GADSKI, HOMER, JOURNET, LILLI LEHMANN, MANTELLI, MAUREL, MELBA, NORDICA, PATTI, PLANCON, SCHUMANN-HEINK SCOTTI, SEMBRICH, TAMAGNO, VAN ROOY, WITHERSPOON.

Album 2 The Gatti-Casazza Years, 1908 - 1921 singers: ALDA, AMATO, BONCI, BORI, CARUSO, CLEMENT, DELUCA DESTINN, DIDUR, EASTON, FARRAR, FREMSTAD, GADSKI, GIGLI, HEMPEL, HOMER, JADLOWKER, MARDONES, MARTINELLI, McCormack, MUZIO, OBER, PONSELLE, SCHUMANN, SLEZAK, TETRAZZINI, URLUS, WHITEHILL

Album 3 The Gatti-Casazza Years - 2, 1921- 1935 SINGERS: BOHNEN, BORI, BRANZELL, CHALIAPIN, CROOKS, DE LUCA, FLAGSTAD, GALLI-CURCI, GIGLI, JERITZA, JOHNSON, LAURI-VOLPI, MARTINELLI, MATZENAUER, MELCHIOR, MOORE, PINZA, PONS, PONSELLE, RETHBERG, RUFFO, SCHIPA, SCHORR, SWARTHOUT, TIBBETT

2) *L'Age d'Or de L'Opera Comique*: A rare collection of singers in the golden age of Opera Comique, Paris which includes singers who preferred not to travel to perform overseas.

3 Discs In Deluxe presentation album with bound in notes and photos. Singers: Maurel/Landouzy, Lise/Clement/Belhomme/Vix, Genevive/David, Leon/Brejan-Silver/Soulacroix, Valentin/Bressler-Gianoli, Clotilde/Vieuille, Felix/Merey, Jeanne/Francell, Fernand/Azema, Louis/Vezzani/Payan

3) *L'Age d'Or de L'Opera*:

3 Discs in Deluxe presentation album with bound in notes and photos. Singers: Gailhard, Pedro/Caron/Maurel/Litvinne/Lasalle/Ackte/Scaramberg, Emile/Demas/Melchisedec, Leon/Deschamps-Jehin,

Blanche/Albers/Escalais/Nivette, Just/Kousnezoff, Maria/Gilly/Gilion,  
Mario/Affre/Note/Demougeot

**For any questions about the collection or serious inquiry, please contact:**

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