

**Subject:** PRISTINE NEWS 13th August 2010: Berg's Lulu - plus the Great Lyrita LP auction  
**From:** Pristine Classical <music@pristineclassical.com>  
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## Pristine News: Friday 13th August, 2010



Poster for Lulu  
by Franciszek Starowieyski, Poland, 1933

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## Editorial - What does radio mean to you?

For the first 14 years of my working life, I worked in radio. I began as the most junior of BBC trainees at Broadcasting House in London, where one of the most menial tasks given to new recruits was the transfer of 78rpm records to tape at the corporation's Gram Library – the discs were considered too precious and breakable to be sent out to individual programmes when requested, as an LP might. Funny how I'm still doing that kind of thing today, isn't it?

Over the years that followed, my job led me in a wide variety of directions. My first live broadcast sitting at the mixing desk controls was to perhaps the BBC's biggest audience anywhere (or so my senior colleagues teased me) – the World Service's broadcasts to China in Mandarin. It was a terrifying experience, though one which would soon become routine. As my career progressed, I went on to meet the great and good of politics, theatre, movies, TV, music, literature and more. From attaching a microphone to the Prime Ministerial tie, to ushering Nigel Kennedy into a live broadcast with 30 seconds to soundcheck his Stradivarius, to playing the wrong movement out on CD Review (and nobody noticed!), the magic of radio gradually got lodged permanently under my skin.

All of that's still going on, though I dare say things are changing back in London, as new technology alters the nature of the job. The days when being both lightning quick and deadly accurate with a razor blade when editing tape for immediate broadcast on the 6 o'clock news was vital are behind us, along with the accurate cueing up of sound effects discs so the bell chime on a 45rpm BBC FX disc came in at just the right point in a drama, or the permanent chinagraph pencil lodged behind the ear so you were always prepared for the unexpected death of a minor royal, or the leader of the opposition.

Digital technology has changed almost everything, and I was lucky to be there as it began. Our early CD players were notoriously difficult to cue and start with accuracy, though Studer eventually came up with a player that fixed that (no doubt at great expense to the broadcasters). We

listened with great disbelief to the first generation of MiniDisc recorders, astonished at our inability to hear the data compression working, little realising they'd soon be replacing the trusty tape cartridge machines we'd been playing radio jingles and theme music out on for 30 years.

The first generation of eye-wateringly expensive digital audio editors came along at about the same time as I did. At first they were dedicated hardware tools, kept virtually under armed guard and only available to the hallowed few. But soon something cheaper, built initially around a 386 PC with 4MB of RAM on board and a box of audio converters and replay hardware brought the price down by almost a factor of ten. Then in the late 1990s I volunteered to set up the first programme on national radio to be edited and mixed on regular office desktop PCs, with programme inserts played from CD-R. Despite initial cynicism and misgivings, this became the norm - until the internal computer network was able to cope with the speed and storage issues surrounding raw CD-quality audio.

Which kind of leads to today, in way. My little network here at Pristine, which covers home and work, is vastly bigger and faster than the one which ran entire buildings at the BBC in 2000. Things have changed very quickly in a shockingly short space of time, and though I still record and edit today on a very recognisable descendent of the software used to create that programme back in 1998, in many ways my use of radio is subtly but crucially different.

This morning I took a long, relaxing bath, listening on my FM radio to one of the news programmes I regularly worked on, Radio Four's venerable 'Today' programme, just as I used to when I lived in the UK. But as with the internal mechanisms of radio production, the external process of actually getting it to my radio has changed immeasurably, and in a manner unthinkable when I began my first day of BBC training, exactly 20 years ago today. The radio broadcast I heard this morning arrived here not across the airwaves, but by Internet. I then used my own short-range transmitter, a snip at €20 from a local supermarket, to send it the distance from my living room to the bathroom. Later on I'll be listen to the radio again, in the same way, whilst chopping onions in the kitchen.

Meanwhile, right now it's just after lunchtime. I'm sitting outside in the shade of our open barn typing this and listening to Haydn string quartets. The music data is sitting on a server in the office at the top of the house. This is connected to a wi-fi transmitter, which sends a signal to a wi-fi repeater carefully positioned to then send the signal out to a notebook PC, on which I'm typing these words, and which is also playing the music. (Wi-fi doesn't travel well through several two-foot-thick stone walls, hence the repeater.) Wi-fi, of course, is a kind of radio transmission system.

Meanwhile, despite leaving the employ of a radio broadcaster six years ago, radio broadcasts remain vital to my life and well-being – our recent Toscanini stereo Verdi *Requiem*, which has outsold everything else we've released this year by a factor of several times, only exists as a result of radio, for reasons too obvious to need spelling out. I've even got an FM

radio receiving device in my car attached to the GPS, ready to re-route my journey in case of traffic congestion (not something we see much of around here).

In fact the one thing I almost never do these days, radio-wise, is switch on a set and listen to real, live radio broadcasts, on air. I'll admit Radio Bergerac is just about OK in a local news and pop music kind of way, though reception of almost any FM station out here can be rather hit and miss; I did enjoy a lovely performance of de Falla's *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* on a French classical station during a long drive a month or so ago; but normally everything that has anything to do with radio comes to me today via a computer.

And when I look back over the last two decades I guess there's perhaps a certain inevitability about that, really.

P.S. Thanks to those who wrote about their own experiences with audio data storage after last week's editorial. I'm pleased to report that my own storage system worked just as advertised – I pulled out the broken drive, slid in the new one and plugged it back in. With no further intervention the drive sorted it self out, formatting the new drive and making a copy of the existing one onto it. What could have been a catastrophic loss of a music collection was saved with the minimum of fuss and trouble, and once again I have two copies of every tune, photo and video in my collection – just in case...

*Andrew Rose*

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## New release today:

### **BERG Lulu**

Pristine Audio PACO 049



**Ilona Steingruber - Lulu**  
**Maria Cerny - Gräfin Geschwitz**  
**Otto Wiener - Dr. Schön**  
**Hans Libert - Alwa**  
**Emil Sieger - Schigolch**  
**Waldemar Kmentt - Maler**

Full list of soloists below



Vienna Symphony Orchestra, conducted by  
Herbert Häfner

Transfer from Philips Modern Music Series LPs A01496L -  
A01498L  
XR remastering by Andrew Rose at Pristine Audio, August 2010  
Cover artwork based on a photograph of Alban Berg

Total duration: 121:22 - ©2010 Pristine Audio.

For more download and CD options, see our [website](#)

The FLAC downloads:



## *The world première recording of Berg's classic opera*

*A real sonic transformation in this new XR-remastered transfer*

- **BERG** - Lulu [[notes](#)]

**Cast** (in order of singing)

**Karl Loida**, bass - Animal trainer  
**Hans Libert**, tenor - Alwa  
**Otto Wiener**, baritone - Dr. Schön  
**Ilona Steingruber**, soprano - Lulu  
**Waldemar Kmentt**, tenor - The Painter  
**Claus Logau**, speaker - The Doctor  
**Emil Siegert**, bass - Schigolch  
**Waldemar Kmentt**, tenor - The Prince  
**Hilde Matheis**, contralto - Dressing-room attendant  
**Hans Wild**, bass - Manager  
**Maria Cerny**, mezzo-soprano - Countess Geschitz  
**Karl Loida**, bass - Rodrigo  
**Friedl Riegler**, contralto - Schoolboy  
**Willy Bacher**, tenor - Servant

**Vienna Symphony Orchestra**  
conducted by **Herbert Häfner**

This is the original unfinished version of the opera, with the orchestral music Berg had written for the finale. A "completion" of the opera by Friedrich Cerha was published in 1979, following the death in 1976 of Berg's widow, Helene, who had forbidden a completion during her lifetime.

Source information:

**World première recording, Vienna, Spring 1951 (some sources suggest 1949)**

**Originally issued as Columbia Masterworks SC-121**

**Transfer from Philips Modern Music Series LPs A01496L - A01498L**

CD, MP3 and FLAC information:

**CDs:** Double set - Each act occupies a single disc.

**FLACs:** Continuous tracks with a short pause between acts.

**MP3:** Two MP3s in a Zip file which correspond to the two CDs as outlined above, complete with individual cue sheets

Please check our help section for help with FLAC, MP3, Cue and Zip files. Downloads also include PDF files with printable covers and JPG files with front cover artwork, which is also embedded into individual music files.

## BERG Lulu

Despite being unfinished, and despite (for some) its modernity, Berg's opera Lulu is widely regarded as his masterpiece, and stage performances draw enthusiastic full houses today.

Things may have been a little different when this recording was made in 1951 - the opera had yet to receive a US performance, and nobody expected to see another recording for a very long time.

This new transfer has benefited from a remarkable XR-remastered sonic transformation, revealing a recording far more exciting, vivid and vital than anyone might have expected. Truly a twentieth century classic, it's definitely something worth investigating!



**Lulu: Act I, Scene 1**

*(Ambient Stereo version)*

### Notes on the recordings:

The first recording of Berg's Lulu was made either in 1949 or in the spring of 1951, either way, the original shows its age and was rightly criticised for sonic shortcomings when eventually reviewed in its Philips release in Britain in 1962 (the reviewer also lamented that the opera was unlikely to receive another recording, let alone in stereo, in 'our lifetimes' - I hope he lived another 6 years and long enough to listen to the follow-up!).

Well it turns out that this is one of those happy occasions where XR remastering can utterly transform a recording, not only cleaning up the murk of the original (and fortunately we had near-mint Philips pressings to work from), but doing away completely with the dim and ill-balanced original tone to reveal a wonderful, multi-faceted, well-balanced and exceptionally listenable recording underneath. It is also as if one were to take a murky brown canvas of indeterminate origins and, through appropriately careful restoration, reveal a fine and vivid Van Gogh beneath.

The reminders of vintage are few and far between - a very occasional edge to the louder vocal notes may be perceived by the careful listener, for example. Other than this, the obvious shortcoming of this, as with any other recording of this opera before 1979, is the lack of a complete third act. Berg's failure to complete the sketches he'd made for the final act prior to his death, and his wife's insistence that (after an abortive effort by Schoenberg) nobody else should do so, means that the recording here presents merely the orchestral music which would have finished the opera.

Overall, a powerful rehabilitation of this first recording - and one which, as a result, deserves hearing again with fresh ears!

*Technical notes by Andrew Rose*

Available as **320kbps mono MP3, 16-bit mono & Ambient Stereo FLAC, 24-bit mono FLAC, Mono & Ambient Stereo CD**  
or listen on demand with [Pristine Audio Direct Access](#) (PADA)

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## New MP3 transfers at PADA Exclusives

by **Dr. John Duffy**  
in Ambient Stereo

Hallis premières Debussy Etudes



Adolph Hallis

**Etudes**  
Debussy

**Adolph Hallis, piano**  
**rec. 193-5 Feb, 1938**  
**from Decca 78s K891-896**

Adolph Hallis was the first pianist ever to make a commercial recording of Debussy's Etudes. Recorded at Thames Street Studios, London at the beginning of February, 1938, they were issued on six 78rpm discs in the November of that same year.

This transfer is presented with Ambient Stereo remastering by Dr. John Duffy.

Over 400 PADA Exclusives recordings are available for high-quality streamed listening and free 224kbps MP3 download to all subscribers.

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Dr John Duffy  
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## **Lyrita LP Auction**

I was asked to pass this on to our readers - please use the contact details below for all further information:

## **PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 12TH AUGUST 2010**

Mint Condition Lyrita LPs

>From the private archive of Lyrita Proprietor Richard Itter

As a part of the label's 50th Anniversary celebration year Lyrita Recorded Edition in conjunction with Wyastone Estate Limited are pleased to make available for sale by auction 97 titles from the original Lyrita LP catalogue. All copies come from the private archive of Lyrita's founder and proprietor, Richard Itter. The LPs, which are all original 'Nimbus' pressings, were manufactured in the company's Monmouth premises during the mid 1980s. Every LP is in its original sleeve.

These examples have never been shipped for sale and have been stored upright in their factory boxes in dry, dark, temperate conditions since manufacture. This release of 1,987 LPs constitutes the entire remaining contents of the Lyrita LP archive.

Simon Heffer, The Daily Telegraph "From the 1960s to the 1990s, those with a taste for obscure English classical composers, or for the obscure works of the well-known ones, needed only one port of call: Lyrita Records. It is like coming across long-buried treasure, and represents perhaps the finest exhibition our music has ever had."

### **Operation of the Auction**

The auction will open at 09.00 GMT on 1 September 2010 and will close at 24.00 GMT on 5 December 2010. Details of each LP are available in a printed catalogue and also on the Lyrita website. Bids will only be accepted if made by post, fax or e-mail using the order form provided. LPs will be allocated solely on the highest value bid. Successful bidders will be contacted after the auction has closed at which time we will confirm the allocation, calculate postage and collect payment details.

Lyrita wishes to make these LPs widely available so will only allocate 1 example of any title per bid. Any LPs which fail to reach their minimum bid, and which are unsold at the close will be returned to the Lyrita archive.

Bidders will be informed of a bid reference number. They may revise this bid at any time. We will give periodic bulletins of the status and value of bids for each title via the Lyrita website.

Copies of the LP auction catalogue can be obtained by calling 01600 892 747, emailing: [sales@wyastone.co.uk](mailto:sales@wyastone.co.uk), writing to Lyrita Recorded Edition, PO Box 87, Monmouth, NP25 3WX or downloading the catalogue from the web site [www.lyrita.co.uk](http://www.lyrita.co.uk)

Edward Greenfield "One point to emphasise is the quality of sound that Richard Itter always insisted on. Ambitiously he employed some of the finest engineers in the recording business, notably those from the Decca company under Kenneth Wilkinson. That means that even Lyrita recordings over 30 years old rival and even outshine many of the latest digital recordings."

For more information regarding this press release and the Lyrita LP Auction contact Adrian Farmer or Antony Smith by phone 01600 890 007 or email [sales@wyastone.co.uk](mailto:sales@wyastone.co.uk).

Antony Smith  
Business Director  
Wyastone Estate Limited  
Nimbus Records

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