

**Brahms** Piano Concerto No. 1 in D minor, Op. 15.  
**Peter Katin** (pf); **BBC Scottish Orchestra** /  
**Ian Whyte**.

Pristine Audio mono (M) (D) PASC 140 (47mins;  
ADD); rec. BBC Glasgow Studios, 2/6/58.

Pristine Audio has for some time listed Peter Katin's 1954 Decca recordings of Mendelssohn and Liszt. "XR" remastered by Andrew Rose, this Brahms tape is from the pianist's own archive – he made no complete recording of the D minor, only excerpts for Bryan Forbes's 1962 film *The L-Shaped Room*. His distinctive sensitivity in more intimately scaled pieces marked his later solo recitals but as a young man he was playing the big Romantic concertos. Here, Katin is partnered by the Scottish composer-conductor (1901-60) who founded the orchestra pre-war.

Peter Katin's fingerwork is impressively accurate and there are accompaniment passages of considerable intensity, but I feel that solo passages in the Adagio do rather slow the pulse of the music. The disc has distant, murky orchestral sound and variable piano quality – at times with a watery discoloration and, at some production stage, apparently boosted in presence at crescendos, e.g. around 4'40" in (ii). There's a curious "lurch" at 16'42" in (i); pitching problems at 2'28" and 5'59" in (ii); and the horn parts are awry in (iii), at 4'40", just before Brahms's *fugato*. Pristine's "Ambient Stereo" processing means that the disc is intended to be played as stereo – it will sound slightly different if switched to mono.

The flaws of a 50-year old tape may be excused, yet Pristine boasts "a very short instance of mild tape drop-out... at one point during the recording, [yet] the open-reel tape remains in excellent condition". The cover artwork is ghastly and there is a glaring unrelated clause at the start of the biographical note, taken from the pianist's own website.

**Christopher Breunig**

---

**Dvorak** 16 Slavonic Dances, Opp. 46 & 72;  
Carnival Overture.

**Czech Philharmonic Orchestra** / **Vaclav Talich**.  
Naxos mono (B) (D) 8.111331 (75mins; ADD); rec.  
EMI Studio No. 1, London, 27-28/1/35.