

**1. Carl Reinecke** was a formidable pianist, and he was conductor of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra from 1860 to 1895. He was born in 1824 and is the earliest born pianist to have made recordings of any kind.

The only examples of Carl Reinecke's playing are recordings in the form of piano rolls he made around 1905-7, but these nonetheless give us a glimpse of his style of playing.

Reinecke was considered a classicist, belonging more to the the end of the Mozart/ Clementi era than to the beginning of the modern romantic style of piano playing of Liszt. Having said this, Reinecke's playing of the Mozart examples may well come as a shock. His rolling of chords, his dislocation of melody and accompaniment, the sheer rhythmic freedom of his playing all stand in sharp contrast to today's even style of playing the classics.

[Reinecke plays Mozart Piano Concertos 23 & 26 \(Fragments\) Roll recordings C.1905](#)

**2. Willy Rehberg** was a pupil of Reinecke, but also a peripheral member of the Brahms circle; he gave some of the Berlin premieres of Brahms chamber works and took part in a series of concerts with Joachim's wife Amalie. This recording is a remarkable example of disciplined but very un-modern rhythmic freedom in Romantic repertoire. I recommend listening to it first without and then with the sheet music. It always strikes me how different the experience of listening with and without the text can be.

Willy Rehberg's roll of 'Davidsbündler Tänze' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JTZwHrtnasQ>

A link to the first edition at IMSLP:

[http://ks4.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/c/c4/IMSLP54411-PMLP02774-Schumann\\_Werke\\_Breitkopf\\_Serie\\_7\\_No\\_44\\_Op\\_6\\_1.pdf](http://ks4.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/c/c4/IMSLP54411-PMLP02774-Schumann_Werke_Breitkopf_Serie_7_No_44_Op_6_1.pdf)

**3. Marie Soldat-Roeger** (1863-1955) studied with Joseph Joachim in Berlin. She performed as a soloist, orchestral and chamber music player mainly in Vienna. She was born 'Marie Soldat', but in 1889 married a lawyer named Roeger. Marie Soldat-Roeger was discovered by Brahms when she was a girl of 15; for many years she was the only woman to play his violin concerto. Brahms is reported to have said that she played his concerto "better than 10 men". In 1895 she founded the celebrated, all-female Soldat-Roeger quartet.

Here you can hear her play the slow movement of the ninth Spohr concerto. Comparing what she does with vibrato and portamento in this recording to Spohr's very specific instructions in the score, tells us something about the kind of liberties and individual choices performers - even this considered to be part of the German classical school- took when performing this repertoire.

[YouTube](#)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_dFHKL5E0TY&feature=share](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_dFHKL5E0TY&feature=share)

**4. The Klingler Quartet** was founded in 1905 with the express purpose of recreating and preserving the tone quality and musical style of the legendary Joachim quartet. Karl Klingler, who had studied with Joseph Joachim in Berlin and had played the viola in the Joachim quartet, played first violin. The cellist was the Welshman Arthur Williams. Williams' teacher, Robert Hausmann, who had for many years played in the Joachim Quartet was also recruited as an advisor, ensuring, with Klingler himself, that the quartet's approach remained true to that of the Joachim Quartet, down to the tiniest detail. During the First World War the quartet had to be dissolved because two of its four members were from countries that were at war with Germany.

#### **Klingler Quartet plays Beethoven opus 127**

[YouTube](#)

#### **5. Sir John Barbirolli, LSO, 1933 Tchaikovsky, Swan Lake Suite**

I find this recording remarkable for mainly two reasons: the freedom and rhythmic flexibility notably in the oboe solo in the opening scene and the extremely nuanced and imaginative use of dynamics.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_5PmTrOjLKY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_5PmTrOjLKY)

**6. Sir George Henschel**, knew Brahms personally. Henschel wrote a short book titled; "Personal Recollections of Johannes Brahms" He write about such subjects as, how to avoid certain high notes in the Requiem at a time that Henschel was recovering from a flew when he was engaged as a soloist to sing the baritone part, to discussions of a possible seating arrangement for performances of symphonies, when Henschel had become the first chief conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

In this recording Henschel accompanies himself at the piano singing Schubert and Schumann. The recording is a wonderful example of a lost aesthetic when it comes to expressive use of the voice. Much less vibrato, much less polished sound and an abundance of dramatic text expression. To me it feels at times almost embarrassingly personal.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uXfuSACOQXw>

#### **6. Bruno Walter, Vladimir Horowitz, Concertgebouw Orchestra, Brahms First Piano Concerto opus 15 Live recording 1936**

For me this is a sensational and truly inspiring recording.

The overwhelming impression is one of huge contrasts drama, seemingly unrestrained by considerations of togetherness, intonation and general tidiness.

The portamenti in bars 26 and following, at 0:55 on the other hand, are examples of very disciplined and coordinated ensemble playing. I intend to strive for exactly this effect in

our project, knowing full well that the Concertgebouw Orchestra of the 1930s was not representative of main stream orchestral performance practices of the time, as it was heavily influenced by it's chief conductor Willem Mengelberg, who's use of very explicit portamento playing remains exceptional.

**Bruno Walter** (1875-1962) had heard Von Bülow conduct all Brahms symphonies in his youth in Berlin.

Jed Distler writes about this recording:

**Vladimir Horowitz** preferred Bruno Walter as an accompanist in concerto's to his father-in-law Arturo Toscanini.

Tempos in this recording are 20 percent faster than the norm today, yet nothing ever sounds scrambled, as it did in the 1935 Horowitz/Toscanini/New York Philharmonic broadcast.

The latter is drawn upon to fill in three minutes missing from the Amsterdam broadcast (the cascading octaves in the first movement).

Walter provides an incisive framework for his fiery soloist, who sings as much as he thunders here. Though not state-of-the-art for its time, the sound is certainly listenable.

[YouTube](#)