

V PŘEDNESU I TRVANLIVOSTÍ NEPŘEKONATELNÁ GRAMOFONOVÁ DESKA

MARATON



**RECORDED SOUND
in Czech Lands
1900–1946**

ZNÁMKA
ZÁKONEM



JAKOSTI
CHRÁNĚNÁ

RECORDED SOUND in Czech Lands 1900–1946

Gabriel Gössel and Filip Šír

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Foreword

*"When a new building is built, the city architect office examines whether the general appearance of the city will be affected. In my case, any time I happen to run across this or that, which in my opinion could be useful ... I take it, bring it home, fasten it and repaint it... Then one day I realize that it's dead; that it is but a relic of an artistic movement that is now passé. I leave the thing alone and either partially or completely cover it with something else, thereby making it clear that the original thing was degraded. Along with how the entire structure grows, valleys, cavities and caves begin to appear that are already living their own lives within the overall structure. The whole is covered by a system of strictly geometric cubes, beneath which are other shapes so oddly bent or twisted that in the end they completely disintegrate."*¹

In 1923, Kurt Schwitters began construction of Merzbau (*Merz* – plunder and *bauen* – build). He created an irrational space full of experiences, connotations, potentialities of interpretations and structures. One of the random caves was the *Cave of Unrecognized Heroes*. Merzbau collapsed in 1943 unfinished and unfinishable.

If we allow actualization and put historical events, personalities and documents – both the canonical and completely marginal – behind the found objects, a seductive space opens for us for scepticism and delighting in contemporary society, science and culture. Undoubtedly, some of us knowingly and others quite naturally, we have to cope with a changed attitude toward the world, i.e. in many ways, everything is different than it was for previous generations. Modernistic progress does not exist; what is new is no longer better than what is older and authentic. "The crisis of the idea of history carries within it a crisis of the idea of progress,"² and it is sufficiently clear that the past and the future are no longer what they used to be." *The past no longer stands in the foundation of the society and it is not a determining factor in its organization, but it receives new content and is recycled and adapted to current tastes ...*" and the question is whether it should only be used for business goals,³ or if it should be shown as a decoration or a backdrop, i.e. as an indicator of current quality of life and a sense of security,⁴ or if it has a real opportunity to become a living part of today's society. Now, more than ever, the creation of history, and likely even works of art, is entering into the gear of "perpetual creation", "bricolage", or the formation of something new from randomly selected or assumed parts of the old. It is then the path of defining – although often purely subjectively – the randomness which ceases to be randomness, but rather becomes a concept, an idea, a strategy or a business goal. There is no longer one history, but rather several, often parallel histories, and we do not even know which of them, if any, is the main history. Historiography is a reconstruction and revitalization of the past and present; it is an individual interpretation, the structure of possible networks,

1 SCHWITTERS, Kurt. In. O'DOHERTY, Brian. *Uvnitř bílé krychle. Ideologie galerijního prostoru (Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space)*. Prague: Tranzit, 2014, p. 40–41.

2 VATTIMO, Gianni. *Transparentní společnost (The Transparent Society)*. Prague: Rubato, 2013, p. 18.

3 LIPOVETSKY, Gilles. *Hypermoderní doba. Od požitku k úzkosti (Hypermodern Times)*. Prague: Prostor, 2014, p. 105.

4 Ibid., p. 106.

dialogues, concepts or concerts. It composes “stories”, irrational spaces through assemblages and new “Merzbauen” from the words, works and compositions of someone else. However, the revival of the seemingly antiquated technology apparently has other reasons than just straightforward attractiveness or nostalgia for a past time! Is writing history therefore a creative act, or a “mere” service? It is as if on the one hand, the author recedes into the background and his role becomes the role of an intermediary who submits complete “organic work”, data and facts; a mediator of the informed, whose knowledge and education are applied in either an encyclopaedic manner, or via music theory or other rationalities promoted in creative act. On the other hand, it creates new connections, links and stories. A revitalized abstract poetry of the past and present is created. We are witnesses to a generation fully growing up on the basis of someone else’s experience,⁵ which is equipped with new communications and software qualities, and not only in terms of technological progress. “*Great ideological certainties have disappeared, thereby allowing subjective opinions to flourish that are perhaps not very original, creative and thoughtful, but they are more numerous and more tractable . . .*”⁶ We can surely perceive the homogenization of society, boldly called “hyper-individualism” or even a “revolt”;⁷ but we also significantly feel unprecedented diversity, freedom and tolerance. Let us recall the famous controversy between Geoffrey Elton and Edward Carr in the sixties. While Elton understood historiography as a means to reach the truth about the past stored in source material, Carr perceived the role of a historian as a historically-situated author who writes history from the standpoint of his present.⁸ Adversely, postmodern criticism considers history as a literary representation of the past.⁹ We have abandoned the framework of the heroic model of science, which was characterized by the fact that it “*equated science with reason: in its conception, science was disinterested and impartial, and if man rigorously held on to it, then it was a guarantee of progress in the world.*” In any case, “*history never exists for itself, but always for someone.*”¹⁰ We still usually ask the questions that we know the answer to in advance. It is relatively easy to talk about Beethoven’s time, although at the beginning of the 19th century the proportion of his songs was entirely marginal in terms of music as a whole. Would it really be interesting if not only music historians decided to “*divert their view*” “from the extraordinary to the everyday, from unique events to a huge amount of actual facts?” What kind of music could we find in that “*vast amounts of facts?*”¹¹ Finally, we come to the submitted publication of the *Sound Industry in the Czech Lands from 1900 to 1946*. Not only does this unique study hold up a mirror to modernist constructed history built on the imaginary causality of canonical works, but it primarily opens up space for a better-founded understanding of the historical context of music, the music industry and society during the first half of the twentieth century. In addition, it also presents a challenge to ask a number of questions focused on the interpretation of the chronologically recent past and the real present. Thanks to the extraordinary partiality, patience, diligence and theoretical preparedness of authors, we now have

5 Cf. DENEMARKOVÁ, Radka. *Příspěvek k dějinám radosti (A Contribution to History of Joy)*. Brno: Host, 2014.

6 LIPOVETSKY, Gilles. *Hypermoderní doba: Od požitku k úzkosti (Hypermodern Times)*. Prague: Prostor, 2014, p. 33.

7 Cf. HEATH, Joseph, POTTER, Andrew: *Kup si svou revoltu! (The Nation of Rebels)*. Prague: Rybka publishers, 2012.

8 SOMMER, Vítězslav. *Angažované dějepisceví Stranická historiografie mezi stalinismem a reformním komunismem (The Engaged Historiography)*. Prague: Publisher Lidové noviny / Faculty of Arts of Charles University in Prague, 2011, pp. 42–43.

9 Ibid., p. 43.

10 Ibid., p. 46.

11 MORETTI, Franco. *Grafy, mapy, stromy. Abstraktní modely literární historie (Graphs, Maps, Trees)*. Prague: Karolinum, 2014, p. 2.

a representative answers to the basic questions of when, where and what was recorded and presented in the Czech lands from 1900 to 1946, and now we can begin to ask why, how and what this all means. Let us allow ourselves to play a short intellectual game and submit several research potentialities of discourses, or at least ranges.

It is sad to say that music did not always fulfil only an aesthetic role, as it also very tactlessly entered into ideological, propaganda and manipulative fields. Certainly, many works can have (and this is entirely legitimate) a politically or socially-conscious nature; however, vulgar abuse of artistic creation, which has happened many times in history, is at the least problematic. The task is not the evaluation of the ethical dimension of the examined records, but rather the specific historical context. Sound recordings can thus be analysed as part of the period cultural and social atmosphere, but also to focus on its historical value from the perspective of the history of the recording industry, the relationship between power and art, and also from the perspective of the history and specifics of the interpretational practice of the period. A prime example may be the issue of the power strategy of fascism or socialist realism. The uniqueness of a recording can be determined precisely because it was created for the purpose of propaganda, wherein the artistic content itself plays a secondary role. The officialism of the First Republic was certainly not as aggressive as in the above mentioned period, but a perceivable dictation was definitely present. Fortunately, however, liberal rebellion was not punished – but it was also not supported. In the diction of the recording industry, liberal opposition is manifested more or less exclusively in a straightforwardly political position, as is apparent, for example, from the pamphlets of Karel Hašler. Perhaps even more fundamental is economic manipulation. It goes without saying that the record companies were not interested in the preservation of the cultural and artistic legacy, but they were rather interested in making money quickly and efficiently; after all, the recordings were so modern and seductive, and owning a gramophone was enviable. However, it is possible to see certain proven conventions that still dominate the music industry today.

However, an audio recording is only a medium that is only the carrier of its own content. Can the result of any compositional process be static, or is only the recording static? And is its stopping, conservation and capture actually a graphic recording which is created earlier than the actual sounding structure? From the perspective of graphic records of notes, there is no doubt that the musical notation is a recording of elusive tones for future generations. It is the most accurate capturing of a sound structure so that it can be realized once more. It is a recording that requires an authentic, knowledgeable interpretation based on study and apparent knowledge of fictional ideas about period aural space. But at that moment, sheet music, or graphic notation, ceases to be a mere recording, i.e. something that is captured for future generations, but rather becomes a mnemonic aid. The conventionalized system of characters replaces letters, words and sentences, and it is a description, a narrative and wordplay. It is a scenic and directorial remark; it is everything possible, but not communication itself. We have fixed reference points, but much more important is what remains between the lines, which cannot be taken down and apparently without personal experience, without the presence of a creator, without constant correction: uninterpretable. Even a recording can be misleading; even epigonic imitation of “ideal” artists, the futile search for perfection of earlier recordings or concert performances, vilifies an interpretation into a “mere” reproduction. Despite

the aforementioned, a sound recording is the only possible source for the evaluation and analysis of period musical practice, as well as the own musical ideas of the composers, arrangers and artists. In an era of electronic and digital reproduction, audio recordings become distinctive and unique outputs; artefacts that speak about technological advancement, sociological popularity, historical everyday life and especially about musical, compositional or interpretative uniqueness.

In 1964, important pianist Glenn Gould performed in front of a live audience for the last time. He was convinced that performance excellence can be only achieved in the recording studio. This concept and tendency was nothing exceptional in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and a number of artists using traditional instruments also withdrew from concert performances. However, if we want to consider a sound recording as an actual unique output, a sole actual implementation of work, our attention must shift to electroacoustic music, radio art, or more broadly to more generally-characterized sound art. The studio has become a musical instrument and recording the resulting artefact. From this perspective, in the prehistoric period of the first half of the twentieth century many works originated that were already intended solely for the reproduction from phonograph records. This was reflected not only, but especially in the formal limits of musical production. Can we create a parallel history of unconventional or fixed music?

A comprehensive list of recordings naturally acquires the status of an archive, which then becomes a challenge for creative grasping and postproduction. Fascination with an audio medium in the forms of the development of remixes, plunderphonics, mashups and contemporary DJ Culture, associated both with the conquests of the first avant-gardes and revived by the immeasurable possibilities of today's digital technology, invites us to consider the new value of a reproduced work. This ceases to be perceived as a work of art at the time of its technical reproducibility, but rather becomes its own distinct substance, a source of new sound and cultural connotations which are confronted in a postmodern way and are post-produced into new contexts. We also unconsciously touch upon current issues and trends in contemporary art, dedicated to our own work with an archive as a gathering place, a labyrinth of wanted and unwanted information and documents. We can again return to Kurt Schwitters's Merzbau concept; new "*Caves of Unrecognized Heroes*" are being opened.

Let us try to briefly summarize this. So what can this amazing feat be in the present, transparent and liquid time period defined by constant flexibility, wherein the paradigm of knowledge is often replaced by information, but where cultural history enables numerous methodological formations of parallel history, where the postmodern and post-digital society admits and makes present historical expressions into the maelstrom of the contemporary artistic and economic world? From the perspective of general history, this may be a contribution to the history of the recording industry and the history of everyday life. Within political science, we can follow the theme of the relationship between art and power and examine nationalism and censorship. A reflection of the research of musical tastes, the history of listening and the transformation of listeners is sociologically offered. The study can be viewed as part of the mapping of the creative industries in historical contexts, or as research in the areas of development and transformation of a knowledge-based economy, the economy of culture, marketing and music production and A&R

management. From the perspective of contemporary musicology, the study illustrates the history of recorded music and is able to better define its influence on contemporary compositional practice, and it opens the door for research in the area of musical reception and musical interpretation. Undoubtedly, the submitted study is also an extraordinary source of information about music itself in terms of relevance for musical theory, research of popular music and ethnomusicology, but also acoustics, organology and the history of music, as well as in the issues of cultural/social and functional history. An outstanding contribution to the reception of expatriate cultures is also a cross-cutting interdisciplinary theme. Finally, in the Czech Republic, the submitted study is the first step towards the construction of aural history of Euro-American culture.

Unfortunately, for various reasons, many official sources relating to Czechoslovak culture were lost and destroyed, and thus every more-comprehensive archive or inventory of an organization or individual operating at the given time all have considerable information value and their processing is a necessity in order to create a primary basis for further research. The same is true for sound recordings, which contain not only a testimony about the state of musical culture, but they can also be a unique source replacing or supplementing printed and written media. Even more problematic, and often more urgent, is the processing of the source base for phenomena which were not felt or perceived in their time as immediately relevant – they were seen as marginal and unworthy of attention on a general, academic and ideological level. They were diabolical, consumerist or vulgar. The comprehensive processing of the recording industry in the Czech Republic from 1900 to 1945, unrestricted by value criteria, thus becomes a unique testimony about a specific time period and extraordinary potentiality of countless interpretations.

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This study tries to describe in detail the history of the recording industry in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia (before 1918), as well as in the newly established Czechoslovak Republic (after 1918). The goal of this work is to make the public acquainted with the repertoire of commercial sound recordings on phonograph cylinders and disc records targeted at Czech-speaking markets. This publication does not include recordings made after the date of nationalization of the recording industry in Czechoslovakia, i. e. on January 1, 1947. Also, recordings for Slovakia, made during the existence of Czechoslovakia in 1918–1939, are not discussed in any detail. It is the very first compact study produced so far, thoroughly using all available up-to-date historical sources, commercial catalogues, advertising leaflets, and articles from specialized journals published in the past. Invaluable help came from both Czech and foreign institutions and numerous private collectors.

Until the beginning of the 1930s, all recordings for Czech lands were produced by foreign gramophone companies responding to commercial demands by domestic distributors of both phonograph cylinders and disc records, or on the basis of artistic direction set by head representatives of foreign companies operating in Czech countries. Copyright laws before WWI had not been consistently enforced, while many speculative entrepreneurs took advantage of the situation. That is also the reason why many shady labels published recordings from renumbered matrices, and why there were so many allegedly “exclusive” representatives of gramophone companies, and why so many law suits were filed. This study intentionally does not mention any of the Czech recordings made and published in the USA that were targeted at the Czech immigrant community, although some of those recordings were also pressed on records under different labels in the Czech lands. This is a topic of an upcoming study. Additionally, this publication does not include recordings by numerous artists which were born on the territory of Czech lands, but did not declare their adherence to Czech culture or citizenship.

Authors supplement the text with annex of illustrations documenting various brands of phonographic cylinders and labels of gramophone discs with recordings of Czech artists and bands, produced for both domestic and foreign markets. Also included in this study are recordings by Czech artists, or with participation of Czech artists, made outside Czech lands, reissues of such recordings on various labels and, in some instances, also non-commercial recording foils containing speeches of important figures of Czech political or cultural life – both at home and in exile. Some labels with recordings made after 1946 are also illustrated. References to corresponding pictures appear in the text directly. The authors of this research make the very first steps in the field of discography, that has been neglected and overlooked until now. We believe that this is only the beginning. Other studies in this research area will follow and fill the gap in the scholarship of sound recordings produced for Czech-speaking lands since the beginning of the recorded sound. We hope that prominent names that may have vanished by now, will come to light and re-emerge again, and in this way re-constitute cultural history of Czech lands.

gg + fs

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1891–1914: The sound industry in Bohemia and Moravia

The first time citizens of Czech lands were able to get acquainted with Edison's phonograph and phonograph cylinders¹ was in 1891 at the *Provincial Jubilee Exhibition* in Prague. The demonstration was held at the stand of the Berlin representatives of Edison's company, which was adorned with an American flag (Fig. 01). As they were playing entertaining scenes and patriotic songs, a contemporary photograph² captured, among others, dramatic actor **Rudolf Innemann**, comedian **Josef Šváb-Malostranský** and opera singer **Vilém Heš**, all of whom were accompanied on piano by **Adolf Krössing** (Fig. 2). None of the phonograph cylinders recorded at that time has survived.

In the late nineteenth century the Czech press reported several other domestic events related to recording and reproducing sound. In 1895, *Jandourek and Duffek* company sold Edison's phonograph on a patented mechanical drive (i.e. not powered by electrical articles) at the *Ethnographic Exhibition of Czechs and Slavs*³ in Prague. In December 1896, the *Kinematograph* was showcased in Prague. It enabled the projection of films accompanied by the sound of a phonograph and recordings of well-known (unfortunately unnamed) Prague artists. In 1897 the *Dalibor* magazine reports that the company *Josef Hoffmann, závod elektrotechnický na Smíchově*

(*Josef Hoffmann*, electrical plant in Smíchov) lent a *Graphophone* phonograph to the *Support Units of individual Craftsmen and Tradesmen in Smíchov* for one performance, which was organized in Smíchov on March 25. The evening program included, for example, the Austrian national anthem played by the *C. k. Military Band Infantry Regiment No. 35*, as well as Czech national songs and operatic arias sung by leading singers from Prague's *National Theatre*. There were surely many more such performances, yet in all cases these would have been non-commercial events where recording and reproducing sound was basically just an amusing attraction.

Similar recording of phonograph cylinders as entertaining diversions for people in the audience, where it was enough just to hear their own recorded voices, gradually transformed into a systematic activity of companies in the field focused on more affluent and culturally-oriented layers of the population. A catalyst for this change was undoubtedly the onset of gramophone records as a new carrier enabling the reproduction of recorded sound, and also a format that represented a much more practical recording medium than a phonograph cylinder. Gramophone records were easier to handle and store and were not sensitive to temperature changes; and, unlike phonograph cylinders, they could be easily copied from the

1 **Thomas Alva Edison** (1847–1931) registered his phonograph invention for patenting in 1877.

2 This picture was included in the first book published in the Czech language devoted to the life and work of T. A. Edison "Edison – his life and inventions, American Sketches by Emil Dürer, Chief Engineer". It was published by *Jos. R. Vilímek*, Prague, 1892. This was a supplemented translation of the original French publication from 1889, whose French author was inspired by Edison's exhibition in Paris in 1889.

3 Held from May 15 to October 31, 1895.

matrix via pressing. Since approximately 1900, phonograph cylinders had significant competition in the form of gramophone records, which almost

completely pushed them out of the market in Europe by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century.

Imperial and royal phonograph cylinders

By the end of the nineteenth century, a number of companies, mostly from large cities, began importing phonographs and phonograph cylinders to the Czech lands. In Prague, these included the company of imperial and royal court optician and mechanic **A. Rosenthal** (Fig. 03-a, b, c) with its headquarters on Na příkopěch Street, as well as the wholesale store of **Josef Vrba** (Fig. 04) at address Poříč 6, **Max C. Steiner's** company (Fig. 05) at address Poříč 25, the factory musical instrument warehouse of **Vilém Hoffmann** (Fig. 06-a, 06-b) at Královské Vinohrady, **J. Pöschl** (Fig. 07) at address Karlín, Královská 55, imperial and royal court purveyor **Otto Fischl** on Celetná Street 24, and **Wilhelm Klein** (Fig. 08) on Hybernská Street 7. The wholesale store of **Karel Jarušek et al.** had been headquartered in Brno since 1905 (Fig. 09-a), selling imported *Columbia* brand phonograph cylinders in picturesquely-printed packages and dispatching them under its own brand *Alfa* (Fig. 09-b, 09-c) to places such as Zagreb⁴ in Croatia. The **Josef Král** company at address Nymburk No. 51 (Fig. 10) already advertised a specialized large shop oriented toward selling music machines, gramophones, phonographs, gramophone records, phonograph cylinders and needles.

Individual sellers usually kept imported phonograph cylinders in their original packaging, often adding stickers with the name and address of their businesses to the lids, or placing them into their own neutral packaging decorated with conspicuous paper labels that advertised other articles for sale. **Václav Langmajer** (Fig. 11) at address Královské Vinohrady, Palackého třída No. 7 (factory production of musical instruments) sold phonograph cylinders from the French company *Pathé* in its own packaging. The company labelled itself as a contractor for the Royal Provincial Theatre, civilian and military bands, institutes, etc. Another imperial and royal court supplier, **J. H. Brandeis** (Fig. 12-a) put phonograph cylinders, imported mainly from *Pathé*, into luxury boxes wrapped in velvet with a slightly illogical American flag sticker attached (it had 38 stars), and with the somewhat grammatically dubious title of *The Phonographe Cie. Limited* (Fig. 12-b).

The aforementioned vendors looked for phonograph cylinders with Czech and foreign programs in catalogues of large foreign companies, or they ordered the recording of a Czech program. The recording engineers of the respective parent companies then came to Bohemia and usually

4 In his corporate magazine, Mr Jarušek always published "a few sincere words to the audience". For example, he asked the audience: "Why support Jewish merchants from Vienna or Cracow if we have a good plant here at home which provides the **lowest prices**, receives **directly from the manufacturers** and endeavours that they fully meet everyone's standards? Think about it!" (In: "Jaruškovy besedy" No. 1, 1907).

made the recordings with the requested artists in Prague on a special phonograph⁵ in improvised recording spaces. They took the original recordings to the parent company, which then ensured the reproduction of each recording in the required number of copies and their shipping back to Bohemia. The entire procedure was therefore relatively time-consuming and logistically challenging.

The Berlin branch of the American company *Edison* (Fig. 13-a to 13-c), the Berlin branch of the American company *Columbia* (Fig. 14-a, 14-b), the Vienna branch of the French company *Pathé* (Fig. 15-a, 15-b) and the German company *Excelsior* (Fig. 16), with its headquarters in Cologne, all acquired Czech recordings in the aforementioned manner. Another manufacturer of phonograph cylinders that had advertised recordings in the Czech language since 1908 was the Austrian company *Erste Österreichische Phonographen-Walzen-Fabrik* (Fig. 17-a, 17-b). This company sold its cylinders under the name *Veritas Record* (Fig. 17-c) and recorded them in Vienna. Its Czech program was most likely focused on the local Czech-speaking expatriate minority.

In addition to the phonograph cylinders of the aforementioned manufacturers, the German company *Electra* (Fig. 18-a, 18-b), with its headquarters in the Silesian town Namslau,⁶ also featured a Czech program. It had advertised its

production in the professional press since 1906, and had announced a Czech program since the middle of 1907 (Fig. 18-c). *Electra* records were produced by *Prague's first factory of musical machines and orchestrions* (Fig. 18-d, 18-e) with its headquarters in Vysočany near Prague.⁷ The owner of this affiliate was the well-known Prague wholesaler **Diego Fuchs**, who had devoted his time to doing business in the field of mechanical playing machines, gramophones and gramophone records since the beginning of the twentieth century. The alternate Czech packaging for *Electra* brand phonograph cylinders (Fig. 18-f) included a literal translation of the original German text, with only the designation "Bester Deutscher Hartguss" being replaced by Fuchs's favourite figurative mark of a fox with the gramophone and the slogan *Praecisonocord*.⁸ By 1910, all advertisement of *Electra* brand phonograph cylinders had ceased, and the parent company announced bankruptcy and moved its headquarters to Berlin so that it could focus solely on manufacturing phonograph cylinders for dictaphones.

The last chapter of original phonograph cylinder production in the Czech lands saw the founding of the *Čechie* brand (Fig. 19-a, 19-b, 19-c). *Čechie* cylinders were advertised as the "first factory-produced gold cast cylinders in Prague", and the company was announced by its owner, **Karel Šternvald**, in the daily press for the first time on 12. January 1910. The *Čechie* "factory" was

5 Some companies used special master-cylinders for recordings in the field. These master-cylinders were able to accommodate up to six, roughly two-minute separate recordings.

6 Today Namysłów in Poland in the Opole province.

7 The location of this former factory near Harfa in Vysočany can be localized to this day according to the designation of the "Elektra" electric railway track.

8 **Diego Fuchs** (1981–1941) tirelessly placed foxes by the gramophone on the labels of gramophone records, which he had pressed at the same time with several foreign manufacturers. More about the activities and fate of this entrepreneur, who was there at the birth of the gramophone industry in Bohemia is mentioned, among other places, in the section devoted to the gramophone record pressing plant in Podmokly/Obergrund. In the image section, see for example the *Fox* (Fig. 067) and *Patria* (Fig. 143) labels.

located in an apartment building in Vinohrady on Vocořova Street (Fig. 19-c). Given its name was more or less identical to the Vysočany factory, one can reasonably assume that Karel Šternvald simply took over the fading manufacturing business of *Electra* phonograph cylinders from Diego Fuchs. Although *Čechie* began its production via the recordings of **Robert Polák**⁹, its subsequent Czech program was not particularly interesting or unique. On some of the recordings, Karel Šternvald's piano playing accompanied the performances and recitations of former stars of cabarets, **Růžena Slavínská**, **Mařenka Zeffiová**, or of comic **František Tužimský**. Later, however, only purely orchestral recordings from the productions of foreign companies were published on *Čechie* phonograph cylinders, and in at least in one case also a recording of tenor **Franz Birrenkoven**, the brother of prominent German opera singer **Willi Birrenkoven**. The productions of *Čechie* definitively ended with the onset of the war in 1914. In terms of discography, it was only possible to capture about 50 recordings, less than 10% (according to known order numbers) of the projected cylinder production of this brand.

The first Czech artist whose voice was recorded on commercially-published phonograph cylinders was tenor **Otokar Mařák**.¹⁰ In 1901, the Berlin *Apollo* company published three cylinders containing opera arias performed by Mařák, and in November of the same year, about ten more of his operatic recordings and national songs were

published on cylinders by the Berlin branch of the American *Columbia Graphophone Company*.¹¹

With rare exceptions, Czech cylinder repertoire did not differ at all from the recordings published at the same time on gramophone records. They featured mainly recordings of Prague's *National Theatre* opera singers, as well as marches by various imperial/royal military bands, polkas and waltzes performed by promenade and Sokol brass bands and, most importantly, comics. Many comic scenes on records served as an echo of previous decades where cabaret comedians and soubrettes ruled at the many dance halls and brewery entertainment companies. In the case of *Columbia* and *Pathé*, both companies strongly represented in Bohemia at the time, most recordings originally published on phonograph cylinders were simultaneously or later also released on gramophone records. Therefore, customers had to decide whether it was better for them to purchase a phonograph or a gramophone, i.e. phonograph cylinders or phonograph records – a question that was much discussed at the time.

Most Czech recordings were preserved on *Columbia* phonograph cylinders, and of a total of about five hundred published titles, it was possible to locate about one half. In contrast, very few *Pathé* phonograph cylinders were preserved - their 1906 catalogue lists a total of 77 recordings of Czech artists performing in Vienna at that time. In addition to concert and opera singers **Bohuslav Chmelař**, **Alois Stejskal**, **Oswald Duffek** or **Bronislava**

9 **Robert Polák**, 1866–1926. Opera basso and director of Prague's *National Theatre*. A few of his recordings were also published around 1910 on the gramophone records of brands *Heliophon Record*, *Parlophon Junior*, *Scala* and *Amor Grand Record* (see).

10 **Otokar Mařák**, 1872–1939. He was also listed under the pseudonym **O. Šrám** on the labels of the gramophone records of the *Artiphon group* (see).

11 These phonographic cylinders were published in series of order numbers 53500–53520.

Wolská, who mostly recorded Czech national songs, the Vienna-based **František Šidák Czech Concert Band** has twenty recordings of marches and waltzes listed here. Only a few recordings of comic scenes on the *Excelsior* brand of phonograph cylinders are known, and so far, no *Veritas Records* cylinders with Czech programs have been found. *Electra* published about two hundred Czech recordings, and only about 50 have been captured.

Czech recordings were published on Edison brand phonograph cylinders from 1901 to 1909 in several series or order numbers, and nearly all of its total production of about 100 recordings has been identified. Orchestral recordings were recorded in Berlin by band-leader **Max Buchner** and his orchestra, but the generic “Edison orchestra” appeared on the cylinder lids for his recordings. The first Czech-sung recordings of national songs were made in Berlin in 1902 by average tenor

František Purkrábek. In addition to Mařák, opera singers **Václav Kliment** and **Bohumil Benoni** also recorded for Edison, and comic performances were made by **Josef Sládek**, **Alois Tichý** and **Rudolf Kamenský**. Tenor **Valentin Šindler** was the last singer who recorded Czech and Moravian national songs on Edison cylinders in 1909.

With regard to the technical parameters of phonograph cylinders – the very first examples were manufactured from brown wax, a material which had been made of hard ceresin filled with soot since 1901. Their exterior diameter was ca. 5.5 cm and their length was 10 cm. Phonograph cylinders were played at a speed of 160 rotations per minute, and the length of a standard cylinder recording was 2 minutes. Cylinders of different diameters, or manufactured from different materials were also on the market, but none of these contained Czech programs.¹²

12 You can find more details on the production of phonographic cylinders and detailed discographic data on the Czech repertoire on phonographic cylinders of various brands in study materials by author **Jindřich Meszner** “An overview of the sound industry” and “The history of sound recording”, Prague 1984–1985. Both books are in the funds of the *National Technical Museum* in Prague.

Imperial and royal gramophone records

The Gramophone Company Ltd.

The Czech language was first heard on commercially published gramophone records in 1900. The operatic tenor **František Pácal**,¹³ at that time performing with the Vienna Court Opera, and choirmaster and composer **Jaromír Herle**,¹⁴ engaged there as well, recorded a total of 14 Czech opera arias and national songs on single-sided gramophone records for *E. Berliner's Gramophone* company (Fig. 055) in May of that year. Together with ten more recordings by **František Pácal** from early 1901, these are not only the oldest, but also the only recordings of Czech artists made on gramophone records by gramophone inventor **Emile Berliner**.

The first recording on gramophone records in the Czech territory took place in 1902 when recording technician **Franz Hampe** visited Prague on behalf of the *The Gramophone Co. Ltd.*, the German branch of the English record company. Of the total of 92 recordings he made here, Czech artists performed more than fifty. Hampe made the remaining

recordings with artists from Prague's *German Land Theatre* and these were issued for the German catalogue of the parent company¹⁵.

The Czech catalogue of *The Gramophone Co.* was filled with recordings made by technicians of the parent company during their frequent working visits in Prague (and in 1908, also in Vienna and Brno). The last gramophone recording for this company was made in July 1914, just before the beginning of World War I.¹⁶ Out of hundreds of recordings with Czech artists made from 1902 to 1914, a discography of 99% of the recordings¹⁷ has been captured. The list includes all the best Czech opera singers of the era that were persuaded to perform on gramophone records, as well as two exceptional artists from Prague's *National Theatre*: legendary dramatic actor and singer of small opera parts, **Jindřich Mošna**,¹⁸ and dramatic actor **Rudolf Innemann**. In addition to the voices of artists from the *National Theatre* in Prague, gramophone records of *The Gramophone Co.* also presented performances by the vocal quartets **Kytara**¹⁹ and **Máj**,²⁰ the Pilsen-based **Octet of**

13 **František Pácal**, 1865–1938. Also shown as **Franz Pacal** on the labels of gramophone records.

14 **Jaromír Herle**, 1872–1945. Engaged in Vienna with the Court Opera as a choir member, deputy choirmaster and also as the choirmaster of Austrian expatriate singing associations until 1921.

15 In 1900, the catalogue numbers of gramophone records for the Czech market started with 72,600; the catalogue numbers of gramophone records for the German-speaking markets started with 40,000 in 1898.

16 Changes to the appearance of labels on gramophone records of GC with participation of Czech artists from the time before World War I are documented especially in Fig. 074.

17 The complete discography of Czech gramophone recordings published from the production of England-based *The Gramophone Company Ltd.* from 1902 to 1946, i.e. during the entire time of its presence on the Czech market, is being prepared by *Moravian Land Library* in Brno within the project "Virtual National Phonotheque".

18 **Jindřich Mošna**, 1837–1911. Member of *Provisional Theatre* since 1864, with the *Prague National Theatre* from 1881 to 1909. He made five gramophone recordings in 1902. **Rudolf Innemann**, 1861–1907. Actor, reciter and comedian. A member of Prague's *National Theatre* from 1900 to 1907. In 1902, he made four gramophone recordings.

19 Its members were **Hugo Krtička**, **Eduard Krtička**, **Václav Masopust** and **Karel Ryba**.

20 It consisted of **Josef Drvota**, **Jan Vildner**, **Vilém Petržílka** and **Jaroslav Horný**.

Choral Guild Smetana, and operetta soubrette **Mařenka Zieglerová**²¹. However, a much greater part of the repertoire consisted of comic scenes of variable quality, recordings of military brass bands, and numerous recordings of the renowned Sokol music of bandmaster **Arnošt Herman**, who also made gramophone records under many pseudonyms²².

Czech repertoire from matrices of *The Gramophone Co.* was pressed on gramophone records of varying sizes, and with varying labels. The smallest in diameter (17 cm) were given the label *Gramophone Record* (Fig. 077), while records with a diameter of 25 cm were published with the labels *Gramophone Concert Record* (Fig. 074), *Concert Record Gramophone* (Fig. 032), *Zonophone* or *Zonophone Record* (Fig. 208, 209). Labels of gramophone records with a diameter of 30 cm appeared as *Gramophone "Melba" Record* (Fig. 075), *Gramophone Monarch Record* (Fig. 076) or *Monarch Record Gramophone* (Fig. 119).

Odeon/International Talking Machine Company

A wide Czech repertoire was also published by the Vienna branch of the German-French company *International Talking Machine Co.* on *Odeon* brand gramophone records (Fig. 128). Until 1911,

these had atypical diameters of 19 and 27 cm²³. *Odeons* were the first double-sided gramophone records in the world – the parent company had first presented them to the public at the spring grand fair in Leipzig in 1904. The first recordings of Czech artists were made in Vienna during the fall of that year, and their number reached almost two thousand by 1907. After that time, more Czech recordings were made in Prague – about six hundred had been made there by 1911. The director of the Vienna branch of *ITMC/Odeon*, **Hermann Maassen**,²⁴ was an experienced entrepreneur in the field, and Prague businessman Diego Fuchs became his first representative for the Czech lands. He was followed by Brno-based entrepreneur **Zikmund Geiger**.

During the first years of *ITMC/Odeon's* existence on the Czech market, the Czech repertoire included significant involvement by prominent opera singers of both Vienna's *Court Opera* and Prague's *National Theatre*. Very well-known and successful comedians **Josef Šváb-Malostranský**, **Josef Wanderer** and **František Hlavatý**²⁵ recorded their scenes and cabaret songs exclusively on *Odeon* gramophone records, and the popular soubrette Mařenka Zieglerová debuted with her only recording on this gramophone record label. Of the many outstanding recordings brought out by *Odeon* brand gramophone records at the time,

21 **Mařenka Zieglerová**, 1881–1966. The most famous soubrette of the beginning of the 20th century, a theatre entrepreneur. **Adolf Branald** fictionalized her life in his novel "Golden Shades" (1980).

22 During the entire time of its 30-year existence, this band made an unbelievable 5,000 or so recordings on maybe all of the existing labels of gramophone records ever present on the Czech market.

23 The most frequently-appearing labels of the *Odeon* brand gramophone records with these dimensions, on which we can find recording with Czech artists, are documented in Fig. 128.

24 **Hermann Maassen** (1863–1931). Active in the field in Vienna since 1902, since 1912 an owner of a pressing plant and a company producing gramophone records. Living in Děčín/Tetschen since 1915.

25 **Josef Šváb-Malostranský**, 1860–1932. Cabaret artist, since 1887 publisher of collections of cabaret songs, scenes and other gaieties. He was allegedly the first Czech movie actor and he made cameos in three sound films. **Josef Wanderer**, 1859–1928. Cabaret artist, author and singer of cabaret songs, occasional movie actor and publisher of cabaret songs. **František Hlavatý**, 1873–1952. Actor, director and dramatist, mainly engaged with Prague's *Urania* and with the *City Theatre in Vinohrady*.

we can mention, for example, nine recordings of the **Czech Vocal Quartet** with bass **Antonín B. Svojsík** (the founder of Czech scouting), a series of recordings sung in Hebrew by Prague Jewish cantor **Baruch Guttmann**, the only two recordings of violinist **Marie Heritesová**, and recordings by the **Trombone Quartet of the Prague Conservatoire** conducted by Professor **Josef Hilmer**.²⁶ On the occasion of the imperial jubilee in 1908, *Odeon* published a series of “special recordings” with a unique yellow-black label (Fig. 128-d), including “*Austria Full of Fame*,” “*Our Slogan Is Emperor Franz Joseph I*,” “*The Jubilee March of Emperor Franz Joseph*,” “*Historical Martial and Victorious Sounds*,” “*Jubilee Gavotta*,” and the “*Imperial Birthday*” with a three-part military echoism.

The parent company terminated production of *Odeon* gramophone records with a diameter of 27 cm around 1911 and reoriented itself to the production of gramophone records with standard diameters of 25 and 30 cm. Prior to that, in 1908, it had acquired another Berlin-based gramophone factory *Jumbo Record Fabrik GmbH*. Shortly thereafter it began issuing Czech repertoire on *Jumbo* gramophone records and the cheaper *Jumbola*, which had a diameter of 25 cm (Figs. 096 and 097). Until 1914, the new Czech repertoire was also published on several others varieties of the *Odeon* label. On these labels the *ITMC* name had already disappeared, and etheric fairies with stringed musical instruments found their new home instead (Figs. 128-g to 128-j).

Although recordings of opera arias by major Czech artists were still published on all of the labels of the parent company, the greatest part of the repertoire had now been taken over by marches, polkas and walzes played by period brass orchestras, and relatively humorless comic scenes. Just before 1914 there also appeared recordings of melodies from popular operettas performed mainly in Prague’s *Vinohrady Singspiel* theatre. Very few recordings differed from this standard repertoire – perhaps the recitations of three poems are worth mentioning. These were recorded for the VI. *All-Sokol Festival* by **Karel Želenský**²⁷ on *Jumbo-Record* brand gramophone records: “*Falcon’s Feather*” by **Svatopluk Čech**, “*Poem about the Chod Region*” by **Eliška Krásnohorská** and “*Love*” by **Jan Neruda**. A series of Czech and Moravian folk songs by soprano **Berta Foersterová-Lautererová**,²⁸ unique at that time, was published on the same label.

No new Czech recordings were pressed on the *Odeon* label after 1914, but the company returned to the domestic market with a wide Czech repertoire immediately after the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic.

Columbia/ Graphophone

The American *Columbia* company maintained strong representation in Europe, originally through its phonograph cylinders, and, since the beginning of the century, also through its

26 **Baruch Guttmann**, 1863–1950. The former head cantor of the *Pinkas Synagogue* in Prague. **Marie Heritesová**, 1881–1970. Student of O. Ševčík, in 1905 she married to the USA, often visited the Czechoslovak Republic. **Josef Hilmer**, 1872–1930. A trombone professor at Prague Conservatoire since 1903 until his death.

27 **Karel Želenský** (1865–1935). His real name was **Karel Drápal**. Actor, theatre director and dramatist. Member of the drama department of Prague’s *National Theatre* from 1896 to 1927. In 1929, actor and director **Josef Rovenský** parodied the typical style of Želenský’s theatre diction on a *Parlophon* gramophone record.

28 **Berta Foersterová-Lautererová** (1869–1936). At the turn of the century she was a star of major European opera scenes. The wife of composer **J. B. Foerster**.

gramophone records. In 1902, Vienna-based company *R. E. Thalhammer* took over the regional representation of the company in Bohemia and in the Balkan countries. The Czech repertoire was published by businessman and representative of the Berlin branch of the parent company, **Josef Pacovský**, from about 1902. Recordings were issued on single-sided gramophone records with the labels *Columbia Disc Record* (Fig. 028) and *Columbia Phonograph Co.* (Figs. 029), and since 1906, on double-sided gramophone records with the label *Columbia Graphophone Record* (Fig. 030). Most recordings were made in Prague, though some were recorded in Berlin. The gramophone records labels of this brand underwent several more changes before 1914. In 1908 the English branch of the company introduced budget labels *Rena* (Fig. 158) and *Parlophon Junior Record* (Fig. 139), on which it also placed Czech repertoire.²⁹ From 1910 the recordings of the parent company were also published on the secondary label *Deska Harmonie* (Fig. 041).

The first recordings of **Kmoch's Kolin Band** with bandmaster **František Kmoch** were published on gramophone records produced by *Columbia* in 1904. Otherwise the Czech repertoire consisted of the standard mix of opera singers' recordings, cabaret comedians and brass bands. **Emma Destinová** made a series of recordings on *Columbia* brand gramophone records, and **Jaroslav Kocian**³⁰ recorded his sole three gramophone records for this company's American catalogue during his concert tour throughout the USA.

Pathé

Gramophone records of large French company *Pathé Frères* held an extraordinary position on the Czech market (Fig. 140). They were exceptional because of their non-standard parameters, including a playing speed of 90–100 rotations per minute and hill-and-dale recording starting at the centre of the record. They could also only be played on a gramophone equipped with a special sound box containing a sapphire needle, one which never had to be changed. The parent company had manufactured these gramophone records since 1906, pressing them from matrices that were made via a hectograph transfer of the original recording on a special master cylinder. At the beginning, *Pathé* brand gramophone records did not have paper labels – the data on the recording was pressed directly into the central part of the gramophone record and highlighted by a white filler. Some of these non-standard parameters were originally chosen to allow the manufacturer to avoid numerous patent protections that applied both to the hill-and-dale recording on Edison's cylinders, and to the lateral recording of Berliner's gramophone records. The centre of the gramophone record was chosen as the starting point so that the centrifugal force affecting the sound pick-up arm as the record played would help keep the round point of the sapphire in a relatively shallow groove. With this method the needle just "swam" – i.e. was not so firmly routed by the groove, as in lateral recording. The *Pathé* brand gramophone records were pressed in various

29 Gramophone records of this brand were also pressed in the factory of the former director of the Vienna branch of *ITMC/Odeon* owned by Hermann Maassen in Podmokly/Bodenbach. We will describe the activities of this entrepreneur in more detail mainly in the part dedicated to the *Artiphon* group.

30 **Jaroslav Kocian** (1883–1950). Violin virtuoso, composer and pedagogue at Prague Conservatoire. His art was also captured on the first Czech sound film "When the strings weep" (1930).

sizes – the smallest had a diameter of 17 cm, and the largest a diameter of 50 cm.³¹

Czech repertoire on Pathé brand gramophone records can be traced back to 1909, and publication of discs with diameters of 24 cm and 29.5 cm was relatively extensive. In the beginning, Pathé issued Viennese pressings³² of transcriptions from cylinders recorded since 1904 with Czech artists who were active on Vienna's theatre and opera stages. Later – until 1914 – a Viennese technician made new recordings in a studio in Prague's district of Smíchov near the Anděl locality. Of the brass bands, the Arnošt Herman band (sometimes also known as the *Sokol Music*, *Prague Sokol Music*, *Exhibition Band...*) made the majority of recordings for this company; of cabaret artists, popular folk comedian **Alois Tichý**³³ has the most recordings on the *Pathé* label, some also issued under the pseudonym **Josef Novotný**. Naturally, recordings of Czech opera singers, mostly arias from Smetana's and Dvořák's operas, were also included. After 1910, the repertoire was enriched with songs from operettas popular at the time – "The Divorced Lady", "Dollar Princesses", etc. **František Bohuslav** who was disabled later,³⁴ made several recordings for this label. In 1912, tenor **Karel Burian**³⁵ recorded four opera arias in Vienna (in German) for the German catalogue of *Pathé* gramophone records. These had a diameter

of 35 cm. During the years of the First World War, the U.S. branch of *Pathé Frères Phonograph Co.* (Fig. 140-c) released several recordings by **František Ondříček**³⁶ in the USA.

Although the number of Czech records pressed on Pathé brand gramophone records was relatively high, today it is difficult to determine the circumstances under which they were recorded. In this regard, the recollections of **Václav Podrabský**, the former archivist and chronicler at Prague's *National Theatre* are somewhat confusing. He claimed³⁷ that he had been present forty years earlier at the recordings on *Pathé* gramophone records in Prague's Anděl recording studio (unfortunately, he did not specify the locality). He says he accompanied "...the famous old guard of the National Theatre: Maturova, Slavíkova, Bobkova, Mařák, Benoni, Kliment, Viktorin, but mainly Karel Burian. Before every recording – says Mr. Podrabský – the Prague agent of the record companies jumped in front of a huge funnel and exclaimed: 'Hello, hello, Pathé record!' and only then could the famous artist start singing the composition." If recordings really were made for *Pathé*, they may have been recorded sometime around 1910 (i.e. rather thirty, not forty years before this recollection was published). In addition, the quoted announcement was never heard on any *Pathé* gramophone record (only the name of the artist is sometimes announced,

31 These gramophone records, largest in terms of diameter, were played at a speed of 120–130 rotations per minute.

32 They were offered to our compatriots by *Saphir, spol. pro mluvící stroje s o. r., (company for speaking machines, Ltd.)* Vienna VI., *Köstlergasse*. ("A new invention! Removes the needle and the wear it causes! The latest triumph of knowledge!")

33 **Alois Tichý** (1875–1922). The most popular and most prolific cabaret artist from the turn of the 20th century. He recorded several thousand of his shows on phonographic cylinders and gramophone records of various brands. The uncle of bandmaster and composer **F. A. Tichý**.

34 **František Bohuslav** (1882–1953). Actor and writer who went blind during World War I. In addition to recordings for *Pathé*, he only made two more recordings in 1932 on *Ultraphon* gramophone records.

35 **Karel Burian** (1870–1924). A significant Czech opera singer, known abroad as **Carl Burrian**. Brother to baritone **Emil Burian**.

36 **František Ondříček** (1857–1922). Violin virtuoso, composer and pedagogue.

37 *Ultraphon* printed an interview with him in one of its promotional leaflets in 1941.

followed by the words "*Pathé record*"). But the most important issue is that the majority of the artists mentioned are not known to have ever made recordings for *Pathé*. It is therefore quite possible that Mr. Podrabský was present with those artists at an earlier recording on the gramophone records of another company.

In its promotional materials, Brno-based company *Jarušek et al.*³⁸ claimed to be the first general representative of *Pathé* for the Czech lands and an importer of the phonograph cylinders of this brand. However, since 1911 at the very latest, the exclusive representative for the Czech lands, Moravia and Silesia had been **J. Neville's** company at the address Jungmannová třída No. 17, Prague II.

After 1918, *Pathé* did not renew its representation in the Czechoslovak Republic, and no more reissues of pre-war Czech recordings were published on this label. We encounter the custom-made non-commercial gramophone records of this brand with the Czech programme again at the beginning of the 1930s.

Other record companies on the Czech market

Before 1914, the four aforementioned record companies – *The Gramophone Co.*, *Odeon/ITMC*, *Columbia* and *Pathé* – controlled the largest part of the gramophone records market in the Czech lands. But other, smaller foreign companies were present here as well. Close behind the major gramophone companies, the Berlin-based *Homophon Company G. m. b. H.* established itself on the domestic market with a Czech programme on several custom-made labels beginning in 1908. The first

Czech recordings were issued on the *Homokord* label with the depiction of a beautiful harpist by the gramophone (Fig. 090). These "musical sound plates recognized as a first-class product" came on the market in packaging carrying the slogan "pure in sound and word", i.e. the literal translation of the original German "rein in Ton und Wort". From 1909, we can also find Czech repertoire on two types of secondary custom-made *Rubin-Record* labels (Fig. 162) marked by the parent company as the "cheapest export labels." Since 1913, the almost identical Czech repertoire was also published on its other, reportedly even cheaper *Homphon* label (Fig. 091).

The Czech programme on gramophone records of the *Homophon Co.* was completely average. Here we cannot find any recordings of prominent Czech opera singers, perhaps with the exception of universal vocalists of the Moravian **Axman Brothers** type, and the omnipresent **Valentin Šindler** in recordings of Czech and Moravian folk and art songs. The majority of orchestral recordings for these labels were made by the Herman band; the rest of the repertoire was frequently filled with comic scenes by cabaret artists known from earlier gramophone records of other companies. Since 1912, the parent company had its gramophone records with a Czech programme pressed by the Podmokly/Bodenbach factory of Hermann Maassen, who renumbered some of the recordings with the supplied matrices and pressed them on gramophone records with his own labels.

Since 1905, likely the most extensive and best programme was conducted by the German *Favorite* (Figs. 064 and 166) label, thanks to its Vienna branch managed by *Hartkopp & Fischer*.³⁹ In addition to

38 In occasional magazine "Jaruška's Talks", 1908, No. 2.

39 More on John Hartkopp in the part dealing with *Odeon* after 1918.

the recordings of important opera singers such as František Pácal (see Fig. 059-a), which are relatively rare today, opera baritone and collector of sound recordings **Štěpán Chodounský**⁴⁰ made several recordings on test gramophone records for this brand (see Fig. 059-c). Of the other exceptional acts, worth mentioning is a recording from 1910 (published on a special label with patriotically-toned colours (see Fig. 064-d), on which Senator **Václav Klofáč**⁴¹ presents a rousing speech entitled “For national and social justice”. A recording of national songs from the Chodsko region with the following text on the label: “*Original chodsko songs performed by chodsko women accompanied by bagpipers. Recorded in Domažlice*” (see Fig. 064-b) is no less interesting.

Since 1906, the German companies *Lyrophon* (Fig. 110) and *Kalliope* (Fig. 098) were also publishing Czech recordings. After 1907, dozens of German record companies, and even one from Hungary (*Premier Record*, Fig. 148), supplied the Czech market with Czech recordings. A touch of curiosity undoubtedly accompanies the filial “factory” of the Berlin-based *Vereinigte Schallplattenfabrik Janus-Minerva*, which produced gramophone records of the *Janus Record* brand (Fig. 094-b). Since 1909 that factory had been

located in Střední Smržovka in North-Bohemia – at that time called Morchenstern in Böhmen – in the timbered cottage of company owner **Erhardt Jäckel**.⁴² Although the workshop must have been very small (judging from the size of the cottage), repeated notices in the *Phonographische Zeitschrift* evaluated its production as very good, even labelling it one of the largest pressing plants in the Austrian-Hungarian Empire or in Bohemia.

Since 1908, domestic entrepreneurs joined the competition for a place in the sun by introducing their own cheap labels, pressed to order by these entrepreneurs – in fact, often pirates – who had the materials and the necessary machinery available.⁴³ A champion in these activities was the aforementioned Hermann Maassen, whose factory supplied the Czech market with cheap gramophone records pressed from the renumbered matrices of various record companies until the middle of the 1930s, including the years 1914–1918. The repertoire of recordings on these gramophone records was exclusively folksy – recordings of brass orchestras, cabaret songs and comic scenes of meagre quality prevailed. In a few cases brewery companies tried, in a kind of naive public awareness effort, to record “pictures from the history of the Czech nation” (*Jan Hus before the Konstanz council*,

40 **Štěpán Chodounský** (1886–1954). An important Czech baritone, before World War I performing mostly abroad. Historically, he was the first collector of early sound carriers. His collection had at least 50 thousand of phonographic cylinders and gramophone records, including first-class rarities. After the end of his singing career, Chodounský managed his family detective agency, which found its place in Czech literature: the logo of his company “With the eye as the Holy Trinity” is mentioned by Švejk in the third volume of the book by Jaroslav Hašek, adding a few hilarious stories from its alleged activities.

41 **Václav Klofáč** (1868–1942). A significant Czech politician, the founder and chairman of the *Czech National-Social Party*, member of imperial and land parliaments and one of the “October Men”, i.e. personalities involved in the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic.

42 **Erhardt Jäckel** (1874–1923). The owner of glassworks and custom jewellery exporter from Smržovka/Morchenstern. This name of the owner of a gramophone factory is shown in the 1910 Jablonec/Gablonz district address book; however, the Smržovka pressing plant still operated in 1913, as it is documented in repeated advertisements in the professional monthly *Phonographische Zeitschrift*, where the owners’ name is consistently shown as **Sigmund Jackel**.

43 In particular Prague businessman Diego Fuchs, who was involved in the production of maybe ten such “parasite” labels, (*Patria, Omega, Alfa...*) was very enterprising in the area.

Jan Žižka and Korybut), but they usually worked more as parodies on the given theme.

In general, it can be said that the repertoire of gramophone records introduced on the market before 1914 faithfully reflects the intoxication that came from the stunning possibilities of this new technical product (compared to the music automatons that were only able to reproduce mechanical music). But more importantly, it accommodates the desire of the wider public for popular music – i.e. the genre that rules the world of entertainment and consumption even today. Edison's original ideas about using the phonograph for the purposes of public education

soon proved to be unrealistic; we know today that similarly idealistic ideas were also behind the forming of the contents of the Czechoslovak Radio (*Radiojournal*) broadcasting in the 1920s. Due to pressure from audiences, this idea was forgotten a few years later.⁴⁴

It would thus be fitting to thank our ancestors for those few actual values preserved on the waxen phonograph cylinders and shellac gramophone records from the era of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. Many sound recordings from much later periods did not pass the test of time, even though they were made under more enlightened establishments than the hated Hapsburg regime.

44 And let us remember the relatively recent origin of the first commercial television channel in the Czech Republic - how did they declare the contents of their programme with which the project presenters won and what remained from it after the license was granted...

1918–1946: The sound industry in Czechoslovakia

Although the creation of the new independent state in the economic and political spheres was slow and difficult, the entertainment industry enjoyed a golden era in the years immediately after 1918. Many entertainment venues and political cabarets saw an upsurge of enthusiastic interest from audiences. These venues at first rode the wave of themes à la “how we demolished Austria” (*Červená sedma* /Red Seven/of **Dr. Jiří Červený**) but their protagonists quickly began to castigate the shortcomings of the new state establishment (political cabaret songs by **Karel Hašler**).

After the wartime break, when most factories had to transform their production to manufacture military materials, the gramophone industry also recovered slowly. Raw materials of all kinds were scarce, and the renovation of the damaged machinery also went at a slow pace. Only the sellers of gramophone

records did not complain: they utilized the situation and gradually sold off the supplies of gramophone records with recordings from the time before 1914. At the beginning of the 1920s, the catalogues of some record companies thus still offered recording of the former imperial/royal military bands with titles such as “*Fame of the Hapsburgs*” or “*Under the two-headed eagle*”.

The sound industry in the Czechoslovak Republic definitely began to flourish between 1921 and 1922. Of the big companies, the English company *Gramophone Co. Ltd.* renewed its representation on the domestic market with the label *Gramophone Concert Record*,⁴⁵ the German *Lindström's Group* with the *Odeon* label, the Berlin company *Homophon Co.* with the *Homokord* label, and in the meantime, newly-established companies with a Czech programme joined them.

The Gramophone Co. Ltd. (Czechoslovakia)

GC renewed its activities in Czechoslovakia in February 1922 by passing the press plant of the former *Österreichische Grammophon-Gesellschaft GmbH* to English hands, and by establishing *The Gramophone Co. (Czechoslov.) Ltd.* Due to inertia, the continental management of GC maintained its office in Vienna until 1923 when it was transferred to Prague. In May 1930, the English headquarters decided to return the management to Vienna again,

from where it would have a better connection with the countries for which the factory in Ústí nad Labem/Aussig pressed gramophone records – i.e. with Albania, Romania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Austria and to some extent, Poland.

Composer and cabaret owner Karel Hašler,⁴⁶ at that time already a very popular personality of public life thanks to his appearances in silent movies,

45 In 1921, the English management also tried unsuccessfully to introduce the *Gramola* export label of the Ústí nad Labem/Aussig pressing plant.

46 The fact that he was the brother-in-law of the successful operetta composer **Rudolf Friml** may have helped Hašler acquire the representation of what was then the biggest Anglo-American gramophone company in the world. Friml undoubtedly spoke in his favour at the American headquarters of its sister company *Victor*.

cabarets and the success of his *Old Prague Songs*, which had been recorded on many phonograph records since 1912, and newly also thanks to his offensive political cabaret songs, became the business director of the renewed GC representation in the Czechoslovak Republic.⁴⁷ In the same year the factory in Ustí nad Labem/Aussig began pressing recordings for the countries of former Austrian-Hungarian Empire on the labels of *Concert Record Gramophone* (Fig. 032-g) in a series of order numbers with the AM prefix for records with a diameter of 25 cm, and with the AN prefix for records with a diameter of 30 cm. Among the first recordings to be published for the Czech catalogue were reissues of the pre-war recordings of Czech opera singers and brass bands.⁴⁸ Early examples of modern dances and jazz were brought to Europe by American soldiers at the end World War I on gramophone records of the *Victor* and *Columbia* labels, and due to the fact that the first echoes of their onset had already begun to penetrate into Central Europe, many recordings of prominent American, and shortly after also English, dance orchestras were soon included in the Czech catalogues.

In November 1922, the English technician **A. Skelson** visited Prague during his first recording mission in the Czechoslovak Republic to make new Czech and German recordings. In one of the

rooms of the “Modrá hvězda” (“Blue Star”) hotel,⁴⁹ he made a total of 73 recordings from November 9 to November 22. Ten of the recordings were for the German catalogue, and the remaining recordings were for the Czech catalogue. It were mostly contemporary cabaret stars who participated in the recording – Karel Hašler with **Slávka Grohmannová** and, most importantly, **Vlasta Burian**, whose piano accompaniment was provided by **R. A. Dvorský** and **Eman Fiala**. Several dozen recordings were made by the military band of bandmaster **Jan Gottwald** (some of them were labelled as the **Czech rural music**), and by an instrumental ensemble labelled on gramophone records as the **Artistic Quartet of Willy Bass**.⁵⁰ However, only the violin of Willy Bass and piano of R. A. Dvorský can be heard from all twelve of the recordings of this ensemble.

Shortly thereafter, the Czech repertoire was complemented by orchestral recordings by the London-based **Mayfair Dance Orchestra**. About twenty popular songs (mostly by Hašler) including three early compositions by R. A. Dvorský (*Shimmy Ballad*, *Java* and *Souvenir de Capri*) were recorded.

Another recording in the Czechoslovak Republic took place in the summer of 1924. The recording technician first visited Mariánské Lázně/Marienbad,

47 Very soon the target of Hašler's cabaret songs became the political and economic situation of the young republic. The increasing anti-government aggressiveness of some texts of some such tunes considerably irritated the Ministry of the Interior. Therefore, under the threat of removing his license the Ministry implemented a strict censorship of all cabaret and theatre texts. However, Hašler easily avoided this regulation when he sung on the gramophone records of the company of which he was the director. Several of his politically very offensive songs including a strongly anti-establishment cabaret song “We are not a nation of Fascists” (... *those with big mouths will enthral people, those who seem to be dissatisfied will be beaten at once...*).

48 The former *Military Band of the Imperial and Royal Infantry Regiment No. 28* was now designated on the labels of gramophone records as the *Military Band of Czechoslovak Infantry Regiment No. 28*.

49 It was located at the location of the current building of the *Czech National Bank*.

50 **Willy Bass** (1880–1929). Austrian violinist – globetrotter. Before 1914, he became popular in Vienna, and after the war he left Austria. In 1920, he performed in Paris, in 1921 in Berlin and Karlovy Vary/Karlsbad and from 1922 to 1924 he performed with pianist R. A. Dvorský in Prague, in the bar of the *Central* hotel.

where he made more than 30 recordings of a salon orchestra conducted by violinist **Dol Dauber**,⁵¹ who was staying in one of the chic hotels in Mariánské Lázně. They then moved with their recording equipment to Prague, where he made about twenty more recordings, again mostly of Hašler's songs, this time with Herman's band and an unidentified ensemble called the **Bekeffy Men's Quartet**. The only recordings outside the normal repertoire of popular songs were two fairy tales by Czech writer **Božena Němcová** – *How an egg wandered* and the *Fairy tale on Smolíček* recited by **Marie Hübnerová**.⁵² During that year, the written trademark on the labels of gramophone records also underwent a change from *Concert Record Gramophone* to the well-known *His Master's Voice* (Fig. 084-c).

Every year the Czech catalogue expanded with new recordings of leading popular artists. They were made in Prague, and the underground hall of the *House of Unions* at Na Perštýně Street⁵³ was usually used as a recording studio, whilst sometimes Czech vocalists also went to make recordings in Vienna. In 1930, a number of Slovak recordings were made in Bratislava and Košice. However, the recordings for Slovakia were pressed mainly from masters produced in the USA by expatriate Slovak ensembles. The artistic direction of the parent company also applied a similar practice

for recordings of the Czech repertoire, where it had many recordings of expatriate orchestras and soloists, usually made in New York, pressed on the *HMV* brand of gramophone records. In contrast, Czech orchestras made recordings for Hungary and Poland in Prague.

In the second half of the 1920s, most record companies switched to the electric recording method. On *HMV* gramophone records, recordings made via this new method since 1925 were marked with a triangle punched in the shellack mass right behind the matrix number of the recording. The first gramophone recording of the later famous soprano **Jarmila Novotná**⁵⁴ was still made in the mechanical way in 1926, but a year later tenor **Richard Kubla**⁵⁵ made opera recordings using the electric method already. In 1926, eight recordings were published of **Jazz Band Thönnessen**, consisting of musicians who were part of the Prague *German Theatre*, and the quartet of male singers from this theatre presented German versions of the Czechoslovak state anthem *Wo ist mein Heim* and *Hoch der Tatra*. In 1929 **Josef Skupa** debuted on the *HMV* label with his characters Spejbl and Hurvínek, and at the same time gramophone records also recorded the voice of the later operetta star **Jára Pospíšil** as a soloist and the first tenor of the **New Revellers** singers' ensemble, put together by

51 **Dolfi Dauber** (1894–1950). Born in the territory of the former Roumanian Bukovina, studied violin with Professor O. Ševčík in Brno, during World War I he was a member of military bands. From the beginning of the 1920s he performed and made many recordings on gramophone records with his salon dance orchestra throughout Europe. In 1936, he moved to Prague, where he later died.

52 **Marie Hübnerová**, birth name **Rufferová** (1865–1931). Theatre actress and pedagogue, since 1896 she was a member of the drama ensemble of Prague's *National Theatre*.

53 This building was used by the infamous *Czechoslovak State Security Service* since the 1950s.

54 **Jarmila Novotná** (1907–1994). Opera singer and film actress, in the USA since 1939. A star of *Metropolitan Opera* in New York.

55 **Richard Kubla** (1890–1964). Studied at the Vienna Conservatoire, in the Czechoslovak Republic he performed as a guest at the Prague *National Theatre* until 1945. He often gave guest performances at important world opera scenes.

prolific composer and conductor **John Gollwell**.⁵⁶ In 1931 two gramophone records were published with a recording of speeches of President **T. G. Masaryk**, which had been made three years before on the occasion of the celebrations of the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Czechoslovak Republic.

Karel Hašler was the director of the Czechoslovak representation of GC for ten years, and it is therefore no wonder that during this time period he mainly promoted recording of his own compositions. He sung about forty of them, but the Czech catalogue of the parent company offered many dozens of his songs by many other vocalists, dance or brass orchestras. The end of Hašler's involvement with the company was the result of the merger of gramophone companies *Columbia* and *CG* when the *Electric and Musical Instruments (EMI)* group was created in 1931. At that time the Vienna headquarters decided that the artistic direction of the Czech programme would be conducted directly by the management of the press plant in Ústí nad Labem. However, the reason for this decision was in fact the effort to primarily promote to the Czechoslovak market sales of classical music by prominent world artists who had exclusive contracts with the parent company. Since the beginning of the 1930s, the Czech programme was irregularly supplemented with recordings of songs from the first sound films, and with versions of foreign hits sung in the Czech language. **Anny Ondra**, at that time already a big

star of German film, recorded several film songs for the Czech catalogue. In 1935, a more extensive series of dance songs was published presenting the R. A. Dvorský orchestra and vocalists from the *Uranie* theatre. In view of the contractual obligations of Dvorský's orchestra to the *Ultraphon* gramophone company, his ensemble was shown on the labels only as a "salon orchestra" or a "jazz-orchestra".

However, it was mostly recordings of important world opera singers and symphonic and chamber music recordings which were published on *HMV* gramophone records. Some acts of the domestic artistic ensembles include the recordings of chamber ensemble **Ševčík-Lhotský Quartet**,⁵⁷ a recording of the symphonic poem "*My Country*" made in 1929 by the **Czech Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Václav Talich**, the first complete recording of the opera "*The Bartered Bride*" in 1933 by soloists, a choir and the orchestra of the *National Theatre* conducted by **Otakar Ostrčil**,⁵⁸ as well as a recording of the *Slavic Dances* cycle from 1935 by **Czech Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Václav Talich**.

At the beginning of 1937, the English headquarters decided to liquidate the business office of the factory in Ústí nad Labem and grant the business representation and administration of the central company warehouse to a private entrepreneur. Thanks to the significant help of gramophone records entrepreneur **Vladimír Chmel**, the

56 **John Gollwell** (1893–1953), his real name was **Jan Borůvka**. Pianist and conductor of dance orchestras, composer and publisher of sheet music. Among other things, he composed the evergreen titled "I love only you and your grey eyes". The model for his **New Revellers** was the multi-voice singing of the American popular ensemble **The Revellers**.

57 **Ševčík-Lhotský Quartet**, originally just the **Ševčík Quartet**. It was founded at the beginning of the 20th century in Lvov/Lwów. Its founding members were **B. Lhotský**, **K. Procházka**, **K. Moravec** and **B. Váška**. The first gramophone recordings of this ensemble were made around 1917 in Kiev (see the label in Fig. 016).

58 The period critics did not overly praise this act - the recording of the complete piece was done gradually and in turns, and thus the performances of individual soloists were relatively uneven.

musically-talented businessman **Rudolf Pollert**⁵⁹ eventually won the tender. The first important success of this pair was the organizing of the recording of cello concerto of **A. Dvořák** by the *Czech Philharmonic Orchestra* conducted by **G. Szél** with soloist **Pablo Casals** in 1937. Casals flew to Prague from Barcelona still suffering from the emotional stress caused by his terrifying experiences of the Spanish revolution.⁶⁰

Chmel and Pollert tried to resolve their dissatisfaction with the fulfilment of the Czech repertoire due to the non-existence of a permanent recording studio, mainly due to the insufficient availability of mobile recording equipment, by doing the recordings in Vienna where the English headquarters had two permanent recording machines. From the fall of 1937, Chmel was bringing musicians and vocalists to Vienna to record popular music. The English management supplied modern recording equipment for Prague in the summer of 1938, but the untrained technician was unable to make many recordings with it, and almost none of the recordings made at that time were pressed on gramophone records due to their poor quality.

Midway through 1937, Chmel and Pollert introduced a new yellow *HMV* label (Fig. 084-e), on which “hot jazz” recordings were first published in the *Super Swing Music* series by English and American orchestras. Later, recordings of opera singing and classical music by Czech artists were also placed on the label in this form. In 1939 the written trademark *His Master's Voice* was replaced by its Czech equivalent *Hlas jeho pána*, both on the yellow and the usual red label (Figs. 085-a, 085-b). In the meantime, Rudolf Pollert transferred the management of the branch to Vl. Chmel and retreated into the background, as he sensed that he would have to resign sooner or later anyway due to his Jewish origins.

In October 1938 the English parent company recommended to the management of the Ustí nad Labem press plant to move its warehouse and machinery from Ústí n./L. and prepare conditions for the pressing of gramophone records in Prague in the *Radioslavia* factory.⁶¹ The Ustí nad Labem press plant terminated its activities in December 1938, but Vl. Chmel was still able to transport some masters and presses to the Prague *Baklax* factory in Vysočany.

59 **Vladimír Chmel** (1901–1957). One of his five uncles, **Václav Chmel** was the owner of the Prague sausage *Zvonářka* wholesaler. Another of his uncles was concert singer and baritone **Váša Chmel** (1871–1942). His third uncle was baritone **Otakar Chmel** (1879–1957). His sister **Marie Balabánová** was an opera singer. **Rudolf Pollert** was a nephew of an important Czech opera singer, basso **Emil Pollert** (1877–1935), a long-time member of Prague's *National Theatre*. His wife **Anna Pollertová**, birth name **Baumová** (1899–1945) was a significant member of anti-Nazi resistance movement. Both husband and wife were deported to a concentration camp in 1942. The chapter titled “Gramophone record entrepreneur Vladimír Chmel” in the book *Fonogram 2* by G. Gössel (*Radioservis*, 2006) contains a detailed history of activities of Vl. Chmel and R. Pollert when representing the *Columbia* and *HMV* gramophone records in the Czechoslovak Republic, including the story of their later fates.

60 This recording was made in the rooms of the former *German House* in Prague's Příkopy Street. English professional magazine *The Voice* printed a very complimentary review with photographs of Pollert and Chmel written by the legendary recording technician **F. W. Gaisberg** (“A Wonderful Recording”, *The Voice*, Vol. XXII, No. 2, February 1938).

In addition: sixty years later the photograph of Rudolf Pollert made during the aforementioned recording was reproduced in the luxury publication “Since Records Began: EMI, the First 100 Years” by P. Martland (*Amadeus Press* Portland, Ore., USA, 1997). However, a caption saying that this was the inventor of television, British technician **Alan D. Blumlein**, was erroneously assigned to the photograph of Pollert (sic!).

61 *Radioslavia*, a joint stock company for wireless telegraphy and telephony. Established in 1922, since 1932 it cooperated with English company *Marconi Wireless Telegraph Co.* Its headquarters were in Prague II, Soukenická 25, factory in Prague-Vršovice (later *Tesla Vršovice*). However, it is not known whether this company ever had anything to do with the production of gramophone records.

Based on a contract from November 1940, the Vienna GC headquarters sold the Ustí nad Labem press plant with adjacent land lots for 450,000 Reichsmarks to German company *Siemens-Halske*. Until the end of war this company produced electrical, mechanical and optical instruments for military use. At the same time, at the *Baklax* factory, Vladimír Chmel pressed a limited number of gramophone records of the *Hlas jeho pána* and *Columbia* labels, with a Czech repertoire recorded in Berlin and in Prague. He also pressed *Columbia* and *Electrola* gramophone records with a German repertoire for the German Lindström's group as their subcontractor.⁶²

After the end of World War II, it was not possible to renew the production in the Ustí nad Labem press plant – the machinery was partially damaged due to its unsuitable storage on a land lot next to the former press plant. Immediately after May 1945,

more damage was caused in the building by vandals and thieves. In spite of this, Vl. Chmel managed to revive the *HMV* label (Fig. 084-g) for almost two years through reissues of older successful recordings pressed in Prague's *Baklax* factory. Meanwhile, the gramophone industry, the *Baklax* factory and all of the assets of the English company GC were nationalized. The complicated and messy negotiations on conditions for the further presence of GC in the Czechoslovak Republic, between the English parent company, its representative and distributor in the Czechoslovak Republic, Vladimír Chmel, the Ministry of Industry, the Communist-controlled Ministry of Information, and representatives of the state-owned *Gramofonové závody*⁶³ (established in the meantime), which took place from 1945 to 1948 and which each involved party interpreted in its own way, were resolutely terminated by the communist's coup d'état in Czechoslovakia.⁶⁴

International Talking Machine Co./Odeon

The post-war presence of the *Odeon* label with a Czech repertoire on the Czechoslovak market should be preceded by a brief history of this leading brand of the German group of mechanic **Carl Lindström**.⁶⁵ His imperium impressively expanded over a short period of time after its

establishment and gradually became the second-largest gramophone company in Europe.

In 1904, with the help of strong financial partners, Lindström founded *Carl Lindström GmbH*, which was focusing on mass production of phonographs,

62 Due to the fact that their property was confiscated as English property, the Lindström factories in Germany were not allowed to press gramophone records during the war and were only licensed to distribute them.

63 This theme is dealt with in more detail in the chapter "How the gramophone industry was nationalized in the Czechoslovak Republic" in the *Fonogram 2* book by G. Gössel (*Radioservis* 2006).

64 A detailed description of the situation in the gramophone industry in the post-war Czechoslovak Republic can be found in the comprehensive report of the former CG employee **J. P. Jones**, who was sent by the parent company's management to the Czechoslovak Republic immediately after the issuance of nationalizing decrees of President Beneš in November 1945. See the *Report on the activities of The Gramophone Company (Czechoslov.) Ltd. spol. s r. o. (situated officially at Aussig, Czechoslovakia) in Czechoslovakia in connection with the Decree of Nationalisation of almost all commodities in Czechoslovakia signed by president Beneš on 25th October 1945*. Source: EMI Music Archives.

65 **Carl Elof Lindström** (1869–1932). Moved from Sweden to Germany in 1892, established his first company manufacturing simple phonographs in 1897.

dictation phonographs (so-called *parlographs*) and gramophones. In 1908 the company transformed to a joint stock company and in 1910 it purchased the shares of *Beka Record*, and later, it introduced its first *Parlophon* brand gramophone records on the German market. In 1911, it bought the shares of *ITMC/Odeon Werke* and in 1913 it swallowed the gramophone company *Lyrophon*. During the years of World War I it founded its subsidiary and press plant *Okeh Company* in the USA, and in 1917 it established film company *Ufa*. Gradually, *Odeon* gained exclusive ownership of record companies *Favorite Record*, *Beka Record* and *ITMC*. The expansion of Lindström's group continued in the post-war years by taking gradual control over English company *Columbia Graphophone Co.* in 1926 and absorbing *Homophon Co. AG* in 1928. In 1931, after the merger of English companies *Columbia Graphophone Co.* and *The Gramophone Co. Ltd.* and establishment of *EMI*, Lindström acquired gramophone company *Electrola GmbH*. From 1932, Lindström's group pressed gramophone records of its main labels in Germany in the same factory on Schlesische Strasse in the Berlin district of Kreuzberg.

Since the beginning of the 1920s, new Czech programme was pressed on gramophone records with a significantly simplified label (Fig. 128-L). Most of the early post-war recordings were made by Brno-based **Czechoslovak Garrison Band No. 1**, and German conductor **Carl Woitschach** made trips to Brno to conduct the band for

recording purposes. Hašler's cabaret songs and Czech, Moravian, and Slovak folk songs, as well as songs from the East-Moravian region of Slovacko, all with singer Valentin Šindler,⁶⁶ were the dominant repertoire. These compositions recorded in Brno were soon replaced by Prague recordings of Herman's band, until 1926. The Czech programme was then recorded exclusively in Berlin by a universal orchestra conducted by Carl Woitschach, which was written on the gramophone record labels only as the generic **Odeon orchestra**.

The company catalogues still offered recordings pressed before 1910 on gramophone records, with a diameter of 27 cm but the sales of such recordings were rather slow. In order to revive the languishing sales, German businessman **John Hartkopp**⁶⁷ (involved in the sound industry since 1898) took over the general representation of *Odeon* gramophone records for Czechoslovakia in 1925. From 1926, the new recordings were pressed on gramophone records with a new, dark blue label (Fig. 128-m), and a partial modernization of the Czech programme also began: polkas and waltzes were complemented by songs from operettas featured in Prague's *Vinohrady Theatre*. The brass music of bandmaster Herman, the Prague orchestra of bandmaster **Alois Aust** with singer **Boža Wronský**⁶⁸ also made several recordings for *Odeon*. From the middle of 1927, new recordings for the Czech catalogue were mainly recorded in Berlin – in the recordings of comedy and cabaret songs, the C. Woitschach orchestra gradually

66 In these recordings he often used the pseudonym of **Jarka Cholínský**, derived from his home village Cholín near the town of Litovel.

67 **Johann Berthold Hermann ("John") Hartkopp** (? – 1942). One of the pioneers of the recording industry. Since 1898 an exporter of gramophones and records of German company *DGG* to South America, in the years 1906–1913 a partner in *Favorite Hartkopp&Fischer* in Vienna, since 1914 the owner of the Austrian branch of *Odeon*. He died in Vienna during an air crash. The office of his Czechoslovak representation of *Odeon* was on Lipová Street 12 in Prague 2, later in hotel *Graf* on the square now called I. P. Pavlova.

68 **Boža Wronský** (1887–1955), his real name was **Bohumil Tlučoř**. Operetta singer, performed for gramophone records from 1925 to 1932.

accompanied such artists as vocalist **Otto Fassel**, humourist **Ferda Kohout**, comedian **Jára Kohout**, entertainer and humourist **Sláva Grossmann** and tenor **Karel Hruška**. In 1928, **Hans Seifert**, a tenor from Prague's *German Theatre*, made a series of recordings of songs sung in the Eger dialect. In 1929, the first recordings of violinist **Ervína Brokešová**⁶⁹ were published on *Odeon* gramophone records with piano accompaniment by **Dr. Jindřich Pihert**.⁷⁰ From 1929 to 1933, **Béla Dajos**⁷¹ and his orchestra accompanied Czech vocalists on their Berlin recordings; after its departure from Germany his band was replaced by the universal dance orchestra of bandmaster **Otto Dobrindt**.⁷² Gramophone records with a diameter of 15 cm with the *Odeonette* label (Fig. 129) were made for use on children's gramophones.

At the beginning of the 1930s, the Czech repertoire on *Odeon* gramophone records was very wide and varied. In addition to recordings of the usual popular music, this label contained both the recordings of the original Czech tramping ensembles, as well as classical Czech composers

performed by the **Berlin Symphonic Orchestra** (conducted by **Otakar Jeremiáš**) and also leading Czech opera singers **J. O. Masák** or **Nadja Kejřová** (Fig. 128-n) accompanied by the **Radiojournal Orchestra**. At the beginning of 1930, the first recordings of the **Liberated Theatre Orchestra** conducted by **Jaroslav Ježek** with singing by the Prague *National Theatre* tenor **Jaroslav Gleich** were published on the *Odeon* label. In the fall of 1931, a series of recordings of the **Cascade Band** orchestra conducted by R. A. Dvorský, featured several vocalists using the pseudonyms **Jan Malík**, **Jan Podolský** and **Jan Lenský**,⁷³ and in February of 1930, a Gipsy orchestra conducted by first violinist **Jojo Galbavý** featured Slovak tenor **Fraňo Devínský** singing a series of recordings of folk songs intended for Slovakia. Slovak singers **Štefan Hoza** and **Štefan Munk** also later recorded several popular songs on *Odeon* gramophone records.

The largest and oldest Prague-based professional grand factory of the radio-gramophone industry of **Jan Kettner** also contributed to the category of curiosities. In the spring of 1932, its owner⁷⁴

69 **Ervína Brokešová** (1900–1987). Student of **Otakar Ševčík**, the wife of writer **K. J. Beneš**.

Note: Husband and wife Beneš bequeathed their family property and inheritance amounting to 1,660,000 Czech crowns to the Communist *Association of Czech Writers*. It should have been used to establish the *Award of K. J. Beneš* supporting young authors. The award was never granted and the money disappeared.

70 **Jindřich Pihert** (1874–1939). Music publicist, promoter of composition of songs and skilled piano accompanier.

71 **Dajos Béla** (1897–1978), his real name was **Leon Holzmänn**. Since the 1920s he conducted the company recording orchestra of the Lindström group. After 1933 he left Germany. He died in Argentina.

72 **Otto Dobrindt** (1886–1963). German bandmaster and composer of film music. He was recording on gramophone records for the Lindström group with various orchestras and under various pseudonyms since 1925.

73 At that time, most of the participating artists had valid recording contracts with competing gramophone companies; specifically R. A. Dvorský was committed to *Ultraphon* at that time. The name **Jan Podolský** belonged to Ferdinand Kohout, Jaroslav Gleich was hiding under the pseudonym of **Jan Lenský** and **Jan Malík** was in fact **Jindra Lázníčka**.

74 Businessman **Jan Kettner** was active in the gramophone industry since 1905. The original address of his "first Czech professional business with musical machines and gramophones *Kettner a Riedl*, wholesale warehouse of *Homokord* and *Rubin* records" was Purkyňovo Square No. 16 (near the city theatre), Prague-Královské Vinohrady. After the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic, Jan Kettner became independent. Until the beginning of the 1950s the address of the office of his wholesale business was Vinohrady, Karlova třída 12 (closer to hotel Beránek), later in Královské Vinohrady, Jugoslávská třída (next to cinema Beránek). In addition to gramophones, Kettner's range of products included all music instruments and pianos. He had gramophone records pressed with his own label *Rubinton – The Voice of Artistic World* from the matrices of German *Homokord* and in addition to various brands of gramophone records he also imported gramophone records of the French *Pathé* ("records playing without needles"). After 1948 his wholesale business was nationalized and Jan Kettner immigrated to Australia.

had recorded two gramophone records in Berlin (Fig. 181), which reportedly should have been an ideal aid for those who wished – as the brochure inserted in the set claimed – “to again control themselves and their organisms, achieve life ideals, health, work efficiency and joy from life...” All this and much more was to have been ensured for potential customers via suggestive gramophone records narrated according to the system of a certain **Dr. Radwan** by a subject put into a deep hypnotic sleep by the doctor. Dr. Radwan called his method *psychophony* and promised listeners of these gramophone records that they would help them to “...achieve complete self-control, inner disengagement, liberation from harmful addictions (smoking, alcohol, etc.), strengthening of their efficiency and improving their abilities (removal of psychic uneasiness, for instance stage fright).” Those who wanted all this could purchase a “sealed, elegant album with illustrated descriptions” and an attached photograph of the mysterious Dr. Radwan, guarding the contents of two “suggestive” gramophone records with his piercing eyes, as well as a relatively extensive brochure with instructions for their correct use, available in a Czech or German version⁷⁵ for just 96 CZK (i.e. at that time the price of seven normal gramophone records). But it was not that simple to use the sealed gramophone records: if customers wanted to return any of the suggestive gramophone records for any reason – meaning if they found them ineffective – and requested their money back, their returns would only be accepted if the album’s seal was unbroken, and thus the product exactly fit the definition of commodity popularly known as “pig in a poke.”⁷⁶

The accompanying brochure offered information on how long and strenuous Dr. Radwan’s path had been before his experiments were finally crowned with success. Allegedly, everything had to be done on the basis of long-term experiments, knowledge and experience. In order to transmit not only his words but the actual suggestions, Dr. Radwan allegedly prepared a special method through which the gramophone record influenced people. He personally checked every gramophone record and many of them were wasted before they achieved the correct effect. It took several weeks before the subject managed to correctly respond to Dr. Radwan’s instructions. The last page of the accompanying brochure showed numerous testimonials of grateful users dated from February to December 1931. For example, a letter from thankful correspondent S. B. dated 16th February 1931 says that just after two-month of using Dr. Radwan’s system, his entire work efficiency improved. User W. H. states that he stopped smoking “very easily” by using the psychophonic gramophone records. Another user literally says: “I suffered from a very severe neurosis and my own speaking was bringing me into a state of great exasperation. Everything improved with the use of psychophony – after a short time I feel inner certainty and calmness and strength which increases every day...” However, it is necessary herein to bring attention to a minor time discrepancy: it results from the matrix numbers of both gramophone records that they were recorded at the end of spring 1932 – what caused their contents to beneficially influence Mr. S. B. at the end of 1930 will likely remain a secret to us forever.

75 The matrix numbers of Czech recordings are Ze 3016-Ze 3019, order numbers R 51-52. The German versions have matrix numbers Be 9862-Be 9865, order numbers R 1-2. Recorded on 30th May 1932 in the Lindström group’s Berlin recording studio.

76 Records could not be taken out of packaging until the sealing string was removed. This was possible only when the seal was broken.

An interesting part of this story is mainly the fact that this Doctor Radwan was in fact **Břetislav Kafka**, a legendary Czech scientist in the field of experimental psychology and one of founders of the world psychotronics.⁷⁷ A newspaper advertisement in the Swedish and Norwegian press also states at the beginning of the 1930s, an institution called **Radwan-Instituttet** had its office at a prestigious address in the centre of the Norwegian capital.⁷⁸ Its business activities primarily consisted of publishing brochures on the topic of “Psychic self-treatment using technical means”, and of pressing gramophone records with “psychophonic” contents in the Norwegian and Swedish languages (undoubtedly identical to their later Czech and German versions). The director of this public education institute was **Dr. Casimir Radwan de Praglowski**, the founder of psychophony – as the caption under the photograph identical to the photograph on the recordings of Doctor Radwan on the front pages of the Czech and German versions of the packaging of the above psychophonic gramophone records proudly states.⁷⁹

In addition to the overflow of usual recordings of popular hits and popular Czech brass orchestras, only a few more gramophone records with artists other than the customary singing duo **Tino Muff**

and **Vašek Zeman** were published on the *Odeon* label in the 1930s. Actress **Antonie Nedošínská** made her only two recordings for this label, soprano **Jarmila Novotná** (Fig. 128-o) has several lighter-genre recordings, and soubrette **Alena Frimlová** only recorded one song for *Odeon* in 1936.

Since 1932 the recordings from *Odeon* matrices were also pressed on the gramophone records of sister brand *Parlophon*, while reissues of Czech recordings originally published on the other Lindström’s label, *Homocord*, were pressed on the *Odeon* label. The Lindström group pulled out of the Czechoslovak market in 1936 as a result of the state policy of repeated increasing of prices of imported gramophone records, and thus favouring the domestic records of companies *Esta* and *Ultraphon*, to which most of the Czech artists originally recording for the Lindström group switched in the meantime, and last but not least, also due to worsening relationships between the Czechoslovak Republic and Germany.

However, the departure of this label was not definitive, as more new Czech recordings were published on this label at the beginning of 1941. After the establishment of Protectorate, Vladimír Chmel, the director of the domestic representation

77 **Břetislav Kafka** (1891–1967). Available biographical sources mark Kafka as an autodidact: he reportedly already discovered in himself the ability to hypnotize in elementary school when he quite accidentally and inadvertently hypnotized his schoolmate. Later, he was allegedly able to bring the subject into the fourth, i.e. deepest degree of hypnosis, could read what other persons thought, find missing persons and he said that he could even remotely kill a dog. But he used his hypnotic and other abilities mainly to cure his own serious diseases or maladies of many patients who came to him. The best known books by Břetislav Kafka include *Dawn in Your Soul*, *Culture of Reason and Will* and *Parapsychology*, published posthumously.

78 Karl Johansgate 16, Oslo.

79 The post-war life of Břetislav Kafka is described on the website established by his fans, which says the following: in 1947 Kafka reportedly received an invitation to appear as a guest at a certain US university, another offer of scientific research came from a university in Melbourne, Australia. But before Kafka could decide on some of these offers, February 1948 communists’ coup had come. The new establishment did not prevent Kafka from leaving under the condition that in overseas he would use his abilities to acquire information that the Communists were interested in. Kafka refused, which led to him being prohibited from all scientific activities, repeated house searches and long-time bullying by the establishment. He supported himself through manual work until his death.

of all of the labels of the EMI group, made use of the possibility to record the Czech programme and produce matrices in the Berlin factory of the Lindström group. From the end of 1940 to the spring of 1943, he had recorded more than 150 recordings, which he pressed into synthetic shellac in the *Baklax* plastics press plant in Prague-Vysočany. In August of 1941, he recorded *The Fairy Tale About Jack* by **Oskar Nedbal** in the *National Theatre* building with the theatre orchestra conducted by **František Škvor**. On the same day

they recorded *Sonatine for violin and piano op. 100* by **Antonín Dvořák** with **Vladimír Polívka**.

After 1945, Chmel still pressed some of the recordings published during the Protectorate on labels with a somewhat changed appearance (Fig. 128-p), but he was unable to continue with these activities for long, as the end of *Odeon* brand in the Czechoslovak Republic was caused due to reasons identical to those that caused the end of the *HMV* label described above.

Lindström's group: Beka, Parlophon and others

German company *Beka* – whose name was compiled from the phonetically pronounced initials of both its founding fathers, Mr. **Bumb** and Mr. **König** – was present on the Czech market from at latest 1908 through its numerous secondary or order labels *A. B. C. Grand Record* (Fig. 002), *Amor Record* (Fig. 003), *Alfa* (Fig. 006), *Deský Svatopluk* (Fig. 044), *Fox Record* (Fig. 067), *Heliophon-Record* (Fig. 083), *Koncertní desky Lucerna* (Fig. 101), *Scala Record* (Fig. 165), *Telra-Record* (Fig. 184), *Veni Vidi Vici* (Fig. 197) or *Vindobona Record* (Fig. 200). After 1918, when the parent company was already a part of the Lindström empire, several Czech recordings were published on a picturesque label with Three Graces (Fig. 022-a). A relatively extensive Czech programme recorded in Berlin was published from 1924 on the label from Fig. 022-b. They mostly began with recordings of Hašler's songs by an unidentified "Czechoslovak orchestra" conducted by a certain Mr. Chládek. The choruses of most of the popular songs were

at first sung exclusively by Prague *National Theatre* baritone **Jan Fífka**⁸⁰ (Fig. 022-d). **Karel Hruška**⁸¹ joined him in the recordings of popular music for the *Beka* label from 1927.

Of the total of nearly five hundred order numbers of the gramophone records included in the Czech catalogues of *Beka* gramophone records, more than one half consisted of German recordings. The Czech programme was also complemented with many re-pressings of recordings made before 1914 by the *Favorite* company, which had been a part of Lindström's group since 1910. There are therefore only about three hundred newly-recorded Czech recordings on the *Beka* label from the entire period of 1924 to 1930. In 1928, the original yellow label of the *Beka* gramophone records received red colour (Fig. 022-e) and its appearance came closer to the that of the label of the *Parlophon* brand gramophone records, which replaced it about a year later. At that time

80 **Jan Fífka** (1889–1970). Opera baritone, movie actor and lyricist of popular songs. He was a member of the opera ensemble of Prague's *National Theatre* in 1916–1926.

81 **Karel Hruška** (1891–1966). Opera tenor, member of Prague's *National Theatre* from 1919 to 1955. He recorded hundreds of popular songs on gramophone records of various brands. In the 1920s and 1930s he performed in Prague's *Radiojournal* in his own entertainment shows.

the company recording body for recordings of popular music was the German orchestra of bandmaster Otto Dobrindt.

The Lindström group began manufacturing gramophone records on its own brand *Parlophon* immediately after the takeover of *Beka* in 1910. At first it produced only gramophone records with a diameter of 30 cm (Fig. 138-a), but from the 1920s it switched also to pressing gramophone records with smaller diameters. In 1929, a series of order numbers starting with the value of 13,500 was selected for the Czech programme, but it was at first filled with the recordings from 1927, which were originally published on the *Beka* label. The company *Novitas* of director Diego Fuchs, the Czech representative of the Lindström group, had the new Czech recordings made in Berlin and in Prague from 1929 to 1932.

The catalogue of original Czech recordings published during this period on *Parlophon* gramophone records shows the names of dozens of artists and ensembles representing the best of the cultural environment of that time: **Symphonic orchestra of Prague's Radiojournal; Prague's Hlahol; Prague Wind Quintet; Prague Chamber Association of Singers; Choir of Vysehrad Cyrillic Union; Tambourine Ensemble of Prague I Sokol.** Opera recordings made in Prague with singers **Ota Horáková**, Otakar Mařák or **Božena Petanová** were complemented by recordings of bass **Vilém Zítek** or tenor **Jan Berlík**, which are rare nowadays. In terms of popular music, the first recordings made by the new generation of comedians, actors and singers

Karel Faltys, Fanda Mrázek, Jára Kohout, **Béda Bozděch, Jindřich Plachta, Voskovec & Werich, Josef Rovenský, Karel Lamač** or Anny Ondra, and **Mařenka Grossová-Sedláčková** enjoyed great success. Czech tramping choirs **Club of Old Friends, The Ztracenka Fellows**, and **Ingriš choir Melody Boys** made their first and only recordings for this label. Actress **Olga Scheinpflugová** recited several "funny poems" and fairy tales for children. In September 1930, lyricist **Ruda Jurist** brought Adolf Krössing⁸² to the recording studio, who was a legendary member of the old guard of Prague's *National Theatre*. Adolf Krössing was already 82 years old at that time, and **Ruda Jurist** let him sing the aria of Vašek from *The Bartered Bride*. The accompanying text to this recording says that it is the only recording that captures Krössing's voice. In fact, Krössing made three recordings for *Odeon* gramophone records around 1908 – and at that time this label was represented by the same Diego Fuchs who represented *Parlophon* in 1930 and also organized this reportedly "single" recording of Krössing's voice.

A new series of order numbers starting with 84,000 was reserved for Czech recordings from 1931. The last original Czech recordings for this label were made in the summer of 1932; in order to maintain this successful label on the market, the Czech programme was later filled with recordings from the *Odeon*⁸³ matrices.

Customers paid 40–66 CZK for a *Parlophon* gramophone record with a diameter of 30 cm, while standard recordings of popular music on the red label of gramophone records with a diameter

82 **Adolf Krössing** (1848–1933). Opera singer and director. In 1870, he performed the role of Vašek at the premiere of "*The Bartered Bride*" in the *Provisional Theatre*. He sang this role more than 600 times during his engagement at the *National Theatre* from 1871 to 1923. He also played the Vašek character in the silent movie "*The Bartered Bride*" in 1913.

83 Some identical recordings were published both on *Odeon* and *Parlophon*.

of 25 cm cost 27 CZK. Parents had to pay 11 CZK for a *Lindex* children's gramophone record (Fig. 105) with a diameter of 15 cm. On them, children could for example listen to fairy tales narrated by Marie Grossová or folk tunes sung by Jan Fífka.

In the 1920s, the parent group produced a few more gramophone record labels with Czech or Slovak programmes. From 1925, the *Lindström American Record* label (Fig. 106) offered a Czech repertoire recorded in the USA and pressed in Berlin. At the same time, gramophone records of another important label, *Kismet* (Fig. 100), were reserved for recordings destined for the eastern part of Slovakia and Ruthenia, again with recordings pressed exclusively from American matrices.

The *Parlophon* label with Czech programme came to an end in 1936 as a result of the decision of the Lindström group to cancel its representation in Czechoslovakia for the same reason that applied to the aforementioned *Odeon* label.

It is worth mentioning that in 1933 the Lindström group made a rather unsuccessful attempt to penetrate the cheap gramophone record market with recording of popular music through the *Dixi* brand (Fig. 049). From January of that year it recorded its gramophone records with this

label in Berlin and had pressed them in Ústí nad Labem by company *Jentsch & Pachner*, which operated individual retail department stores.⁸⁴ To the great displeasure of competing gramophone companies, these gramophone records were sold for a dumping price of 10 CZK, i.e. for less than half of the price usual at that time for the gramophone records of other brands. Professional magazine *Gramotechnika* also strongly protested against the introduction of these gramophone records.

Two tenors, whose names were written on the labels of gramophone records under pseudonyms Pepa Adnanžin and Niki Němec, were hired as company singers for the *Dixi* label. The first pseudonym belonged to a certain **Josef Nižnanský**, and the second one to musician and composer **Bedřich Nikodem**.⁸⁵ According to the data on the gramophone records labels they were both accompanied by the generic “Dixi Dance Orchestra” – however, this was in fact one of Berlin's many dance orchestras at that time recording gramophone records of various brands for the Lindström group. Until the end of 1933, about sixty Czech popular songs and melodies from Czech sound films were published on the *Dixi* label, and then this brand died out. The cause was likely general disinterest in gramophone records with a dull repertoire performed by unknown vocalists...

84 The first department store of this company was established in 1931 in Ústí n./L. More of them were later opened in Prague, Teplice-Schönau and Brno. According to a notice publicized in the *Gramotechnika* magazine, this department store was founded with a capital of 3 million Czech crowns by Zurich factory owners **Julius Braun** and **Edward Brauchbar**, private entrepreneur **Hugo Melzer** from Lovosice and Brno-based wholesale businessmen **Jindřich** and **Robert Plaček**.

85 No information is available about **Josef Nižnanský**. **Bedřich Nikodem** (1909–1970) came to Prague from Austria at the end of the 1920s, and from 1930 to 1933 he worked as the pianist of the YMCA dance orchestra. From 1937, he was employed with the music publishing house of **Mojmír Urbánek**.

Homophon Company GmbH

A relatively unpopular Czech repertoire was published on several various labels of this German company's gramophone records in the years before World War I. The parent company renewed its representation on the Czechoslovak Republic through its business representative **Otto Fischl** in 1922, and a new Czech repertoire appeared on the labels of *Homokord* gramophone records (Fig. 090-c) in 1923. Recordings of Herman's band were pressed first on this brand's gramophone records. Shortly after followed the debut of the Dol Dauber orchestra with the recording of modern dances and singing by **Ivo Rubín**,⁸⁶ a former member of the *Červená sedma* cabaret, as well with Dauber's own arrangements of potpourries from Dvořák's and Smetana's operas on gramophone records with a diameter of 30 cm. Until 1927, the repertoire was generally rather undistinguished and numerous editions of pre-war Czech recordings were complemented by repressed orchestral recordings originally intended for the German market. The parent company also provided its matrices for pressings on a series of cheap "parasite" brands of domestic wholesale customers – e.g. the *Heliofon* (Fig. 082), *Maraton Rekord* (Fig. 113) or *Rubinton* (Fig. 163) labels. The company singer for the *Homokord* label was universal tenor Valentin Šindler, who also managed to record dozens of recordings for other companies at the same time.

Homophon Co. AG definitively switched to electric recording in 1927 when its shares were bought by English company *Columbia*, which had available the patented technology of *Western Electric*. At that time, recordings of popular songs with vocalists **Jarka Budil**, **František Kreutzmann** and composer and lyricist **Jiří Voldán** were published on labels with a slightly altered appearance (Fig. 090-d). Several recordings of the **Typografia** choir with conductor **V. B. Aim**, recorded in Berlin during the concert tour of this ensemble in Germany⁸⁷ were published on the *Homocord* label in another colour version (Fig. 087).

In 1929, **Emil Schmelkes**, an entrepreneur of Austrian origin,⁸⁸ became the new general representative and distributor of the parent company's gramophone records. He appointed comedians Jára Kohout and Ferenc Futurista as his music counsellors, began cooperating with composer and conductor John Gollwell and significantly expanded the Czech repertoire of what were now electrically-recorded gramophone records with modernized black-purple and later black-golden *Homocord* labels (Figs. 087-c, 087-d). All of the new recordings of popular music with Czech vocalists – mostly Jára Pospíšil, **František Smolík**, Ferenc Futurista, Karel Hruška or lyrical tenor **Tonek Š. Sentenský**⁸⁹ – were recorded in Berlin with the company orchestra **Fred Bird**

86 **Ivo Rubín** (1892–1965). His real name was **Ivo Burin**. Composer of cabaret songs, popular singer and actor. His everyday job was a bank clerk. His recordings are on *HMV*, *Polydor*, *Homokord* and *Ultraphon* gramophone records.

87 Some of these recordings were apparently made "live". For example, a relatively short recording of **Leoš Janáček's** composition "Perina" is complemented with repeatedly weakening and again strengthening applause, almost a minute and half long.

88 **Emil Schmelkes** traded in electro-technical, radio-telegraphic and radio devices and gramophones. From 1924 to 1928, he also managed the Czechoslovak representation of German gramophone company *Vox* (see).

89 **Tonek Š. Sentenský** (1886–1972). His real name was **Antonín Šindler**, brother to Valentin and Václav Šindler. He was recommended to record for the *Homocord* label by his brother Valentin, former company singer for *Homokord* who quit recording for it in 1928.

Rhythmicians conducted by John Gollwell. The New Revellers singer quartet, put together by Goldwell, also made its first recording for this label, followed later by the very popular **Settler's Club** choir. Czech tramping songs for this label were also recorded by the **Camp Boys** choir in recordings of mixes of folk melodies and tunes also described on the labels as **The Merry Seven** or the **Czech Choir**. At the same time, **Lev Uhlíř**, **Janko Blaho**, his wife **Helena Bartošová** and mezzosoprano of German origin **Hilda Raave**⁹⁰ all made opera recordings for the *Homocord* label. From 1930, tenor **Tino Muff**⁹¹ was the universal company singer for recordings of popular music published on the *Homocord* label. In addition to solo recordings, he also recorded duets with his wife **Anna Gromwellová**, lyricist and composer **Vášek Zeman** or the Settler's Club Czech tramping choir.

In 1930, a selection of the repertoire of Prague's *Vinohrady Theatre* recorded in the recording studio of the Lindström group in the nearby *National House* in Vinohrady neighbourhood, was published on *Homocord* gramophone records. **Libuše Freslová**, **Zdeněk Stěpánek** and František Kreutzmann recorded, with **Erno Košťál**⁹² conducting the theatre orchestra, songs from the Prague premiere of *"The Beggar's Opera"*. In addition, Z. Stěpánek recited monologues from *Jan Hus* and *Hamlet* and recorded a dialogue from *"Cyrano de Bergerac"* with L. Freslová.

Since 1923, *Homokord* gramophone records were pressed in one of entrepreneur **Rudolf Kubík's** factories on what is today Papírenská Street in the Bubeneč district in Prague. The pressing plant was closed at the beginning of 1930 due to its obsolete machinery, and other Czech recordings were pressed in Berlin. At the end of 1932, the last new recordings of the Czech repertoire for the *Homocord* label were made in Berlin. Reissues of some older Czech recordings were then published until 1936 under original order numbers on the *Odeon* label. The *Homocord* label was officially deleted from the commercial register in 1935; its former director, Emil Schmelkes, was immediately hired as its artistic manager by Czechoslovak gramophone company *Está*.

The Czech programme on the *Homocord* label was relatively interesting during the period of electric recording from 1929 to 1932, and many recording artists who later did not do many more recordings were published on the gramophone records of this brand. However, Emil Schmelkes was considerably disadvantaged in his effort to improve the prestige of this label, due to the fact that the majority of domestic artists already had recording contracts with some of the other record companies active on the Czechoslovak market. In additions, since 1930 the newly established "purely Czech" domestic record companies *Está* and *Ultrapphon*⁹³ successfully stole Czech artists who had not yet been committed.

90 **Hilda (Hilde) Raave**, born in 1895. Concert, opera and operetta singer. From 1925 to 1928, she was involved with theatres in Brno and Ústí n. /L., and from 1929 to 1930 with the *German Land Theatre* in Prague. From 1930 to 1934, she gave guest performances in the Netherlands, and from 1934 again in the Czechoslovak Republic in German theatres in Opava and Teplice. All traces of her disappear under unknown circumstances during the years of the Protectorate when she was persecuted for her Jewish origin.

91 **Tino Muff** (1904–1974). His real name was **Antonín Mach**. He recorded hundreds popular songs on gramophone records, mainly for the Lindström group. He also performed in several Czech movies as a singer.

92 **Erno (Arnošt) Košťál** (1889–1957). Music composer, pedagogue and bandmaster, author of music for many Czech films.

93 However, as we shall see later, both of these Czechoslovak gramophone companies were established with significant support of German capital, although in their promotional materials and declarations they repeatedly and ostentatiously dissociated themselves from foreign gramophone companies.

Columbia

In the years before World War I the *Columbia* label had a relatively strong position on the Czech phonograph cylinder and gramophone record market mainly due to the production of the Vienna branch of its parent American company. After 1918 the parent company underwent a number of ownership changes. In 1925 its British branch became independent and began publishing its recordings on a simplified label (Fig. 030-d, 030-e). In the same year, *Columbia* began experimenting with electric recording on gramophone records using the *Western Electric* system. In 1931 the English company *Columbia Phonograph Co.* joined *The Gramophone Co. Ltd.*, and thus the *EMI Group* was established.

Entrepreneur Josef Vrba⁹⁴ managed the representation of this brand in the Czechoslovak Republic until 1934. Vrba's *Columbia* records catalogues presented a Czech and Slovak repertoire since 1926, but it consisted exclusively of older recordings made by various ensembles of Czech expatriates in America, originally pressed in the USA in a series of ethnic recordings of the parent company (Fig. 030-b). The **Charleston Serenaders** ensemble contributed with several recordings of (among others) Kmoch's and Hašler's marches in a modern arrangement, but the repertoire of popular music consisted mostly of recordings of American and English dance orchestras. Josef Vrba had the *Columbia*

brand gramophone records with their green label pressed in Hermann Maassen's factory in Podmokly until the end of the 1920s – however, the quality of these gramophone records, manufactured using the sandwich method, was meagre.

In addition to recordings of foreign symphonic orchestras, recordings of members of the Prague *National Theatre's* orchestra and opera, artists Lev Uhlíř, Jarmila Novotná, Ota Horáková and **Kristina Morfová**⁹⁵ were published on gramophone records with a diameter of 30 cm with black and purple labels (Fig. 030-c).

At the beginning of the 1930s, Vrba succeeded in getting several artists who were not bound by exclusive recording contracts with other gramophone companies for his recordings of popular music, mainly songs from the first sound movies. For instance, recordings of Czech tramping choir **Samotáři**, accordion player **Franta Poupě**, comedian Jára Kohout or dance orchestra **Smiling Boys** conducted by pianist and arranger **Ladislav Vachulka**, who accompanied the female **Bajo-trio**, and men's singers quartet **"FAT" singing Four** were all published on *Columbia* gramophone records with a blue-and-black label. The Czech programme was complemented with recordings of the **Frank Fox**⁹⁶ orchestra with vocalist Karel Hruška recorded in Vienna, and with recordings of

94 Since 1925, Vladimír Chmel, later the last director of the Czechoslovak representation of GC, worked for him as the business department manager.

95 **Kristina (Christina) Morfová** (1889–1936). Bulgarian soprano and pedagogue. Since 1920 involved with the Brno *State Theatre*, from 1920 to 1930 a member of the opera ensemble of Prague's *National Theatre*. After 1930 she was a member of opera in Sofia and professor at the conservatory.

96 **Frank Fox**, his real name was **Franz Fux** (1902–?). Dance orchestra bandmaster. Born in Bystřice in Moravia, resided in Vienna since the 1920s. From 1936, his official permanent residence was in Ústí n./L.

an ensemble shown on the gramophone records labels as the “Columbia Dance Orchestra London” recorded in Berlin; in fact, these were performed by the Berlin universal orchestras of bandmasters Otto Dobrindt and Carl Woitschach. From 1932 the new Czech recordings were pressed on an orange label (Fig. 030-f) together with reissues of successful older titles in the Oč series of order numbers. The last Czech recordings in this series were published in 1935, and later the series was only sporadically replenished with recording of foreign artists. About five hundred recordings of foreign artists taken over from the matrices of the parent company were published on the label of the same colour in a simultaneously-published series of OD order numbers. Some of them were later published in reissues on the *Columbia* grey-blue label (Fig. 030-g).

From 1932, within the *EMI* group the *Columbia* label was a secondary or auxiliary version of the primary *HMV* label. From 1933 the new recordings on *Columbia* gramophone records were mentioned in the catalogues of *HMV* gramophone records. Their sale prices were also set identically – 15 CZK for records with diameter of 25 cm and 22.50 CZK for gramophone records with a diameter of 30 cm.

Czech recordings of popular music were also published on the *Columbia* label during the short period from 1941 to 1943 care of Vladimír Chmel. Similarly to the way he had with the gramophone records of the *Hlas jeho pána* brand, Chmel pressed (Fig. 030-h) nearly twenty swing-style songs recorded in Berlin by vocalists **Karel Ctibor** and Vašek Zeman and accompanied by the German dance orchestra of **Hans Rehmstedt** on this label.

Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft/Polydor

After the end of World War I, a paradoxical situation set in for English company *GC*: according to the peace treaty, all of the assets of its pre-war Hannover branch were to stay in the German territory and the English parent company would be adequately compensated. Full independence was granted to *Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft*, as well as the right to use a large pressing plant for gramophone records in Hannover with the matrices stored there, and the right to use the trademark depicting Nipper the Dog by a gramophone on gramophone records for the domestic market. *DGG* did not waste any time and also immediately began pressing for export recordings from the original English and American matrices located and detained in Germany at the moment when the war broke out in 1914. This situation wherein Germany, defeated in the war, was using the property of the victorious allies was resolved by the

governments of both countries after many protests on the part of *GC* management. The result of these negotiations was that *DGG* lost the right to use the *His Master's Voice* slogan on its labels, and the pictorial trademark of the dog by the gramophone. Therefore, since 1922 *DGG* introduced a new export label “Gramophone=Record” reflecting both of these requirements. Soon after, reissues of Czech pre-war recordings made for English company *GC* (Fig. 079-a) appeared on this label with the deserted gramophone (the dog had to be removed) in the T 40 000 series of order numbers. They were joined by German recordings made during the war, as well as new post-war recordings made in Berlin (Fig. 079-b) with the mediocre singing of tenors **Josef Sládek** and **Jan Barton** with their bland repertoire of popular tunes and comic shows, written by authors favoured at the beginning of the century. In 1923, similarly “cold”

orchestral recordings made in Prague were added performed by the Music of Žižkov Sokol conducted by bandmaster Arnošt Herman. Several older recordings of outstanding foreign violinists and violoncellists appeared in this Czech series. At the beginning of 1924 a more modern Czech repertoire of popular songs and foxtrots was brought to this label by singer František Kreuzmann⁹⁷ in a series of recordings of songs by Karel Hašler and authors from the circle of the *Red Seven* cabaret, as well as the Czech versions of world hits.

The disputes between English company GC and German company DGG were finally settled in 1926 when GC established its German branch in the town of Nowa Wes near Potsdam, and the branch began producing *Electrola* gramophone records. A little earlier, German company DGG established its own export label *Polydor* (Fig. 145), to which it mainly transferred recordings from its own production, but it also pressed on it recordings for the neighbouring countries, primarily Austria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

From 1926 a relatively wide Czech and Slovak repertoire was published on the *Polydor* label in several waves care of *Gramophone Import Company K. Adler et al.*⁹⁸ Reissues of the aforementioned recordings from the "*Gramophon=Record*" label with singer František Kreuzmann were published during the first wave on this label, then, from 1927 to 1929, an entire series of his new recordings.

In 1929 the Gipsy band of first violinist **Jožka Pihík**⁹⁹ recorded a larger series of Slovak orchestral and sung recordings in Bratislava for *Polydor*. One of them was likely the first Slovak recording of foxtrot called "*Drotárský-foxtrot (Tinker's Foxtrot)*".¹⁰⁰ Four recordings in Hebrew accompanied by a harmonium were sung by Bratislava Chief Rabbi **Salomon Stern**. The brass band of **Joseph Snaga** and the Berlin dance orchestra of bandmaster **Paul Godwin** recorded a relatively extensive series of orchestral compositions by Czech authors for the Czech catalogue of the *Polydor* label from 1929 to 1930.

From 1929 the Brno-based popular **Military Band of Infantry Regiment No. 43** began recording for *Polydor*. The band was conducted by bandmaster **František Zita** from 1919 to 1936. These recordings heralded the second, already exclusively "Brno" wave of recordings for the *Polydor* Czech catalogue. In addition to František Kreuzmann and Ivo Rubín, a former member of the *Red Seven* cabaret, during this year Mr. Zita's band also accompanied elite Brno-based singers of popular music Valentin and **Václav Šindler**, **Oldřich Nový** and **Jan Purkrábek** on nearly one hundred recordings. In the recordings of opera arias, this military band accompanied **Běla Rozumova**, **Karla Tichá**, **Arnold Flögl** and other Brno-based opera artists. A little later, these individuals and other popular Brno singers **Vladimír Konůpka** and **Karel Kosina** made

97 The transcript of the surname of this singer and dramatic actor underwent several transformations: on the labels of gramophone records he was written as *Kreutzmann*, *Kreuzmann* or *Kreuzman*. In several recordings for the *Homocord* brand he also used the pseudonym *Bedřich Křížík*.

98 The address of this company was Náměstí Svobody 6, Brno.

99 The name of this band was garbled on the labels of *Polydor* gramophone records, saying "*cigáňski oršester*", or "*oresšter so spevom cigáňou*". Since the beginning of the 1920s the ensemble of this Slovak violinist performed in Hungary, Austria and Sweden, as well as in many Czech cities. It mainly recorded national songs on gramophone records of various brands until the 1940s.

100 In fact, this was a melody paraphrasing the tune of the Czech national song starting with the words "*A tinker walked along the road and a farmer's wife called him to wire together her pot with two handles...*".

a series of recordings for the *Polydor* label in Vienna accompanied by the dance orchestra of bandmaster **Ernst Holzer**. The two recordings that began this series represent a certain curiosity: the Czech versions of two German hits were rather comically sung by a certain **Jan Pavlík**, whose mother tongue definitely was not Czech. Speaking of curiosities, these also include the promotional recordings advertising the *Svet* electric engine (Fig. 145-g) – in Purkrábek's rendition we can hear a "Song about the Svet electric engine", a "Merry chat about the Svet electric engine", and we are offered "Several details about the manufacturing of electric engines" and hear a lecture titled "The Svet electric economic sets"¹⁰¹.

The Brno recordings for the *Polydor* label were concluded by eight recordings of the **Choir of Moravian Teachers** with its first choirmaster **Ferdinand Vach**. Several more recordings of opera tenor **Karel Zavřel** and violinist **Váša Příhoda** were recorded on a black label and outside the series of usual order numbers.

In 1930, a series of more than forty recordings of popular songs was published on the *Polydor* label by tenor **Jaroslav Zlonický**,¹⁰² accompanied by

the **Paul Godwin**¹⁰³ Dance Orchestra conducted by bandmaster **Miloš Smatek** on these recordings made in Berlin.

Another, this time smaller wave of Czech recordings was made on the *DGG Polydor* label in Prague in the studio of the *Esta* record company from November 1932 to October of the following year in a series of order numbers starting with 316,000 (Fig. 145-e). Almost fifty recordings in this series were recorded by only three ensembles: the **Dr. Grzyba Jazzorchestr**,¹⁰⁴ the **Osadníci**¹⁰⁵ vocal choir and **Dance Orchestra of D. Stoljarovič**.¹⁰⁶ Several recording from this series were complemented with older recordings from the German *Polydor* catalogue. The highest ascertained order number of this series is 316,035.

At the same time, and on the same label – including the designation *Made in Czechoslovakia* – German recordings which the parent company *DGG* had pressed by *Esta* for distribution outside Germany were placed on the *Polydor* label. This practice ended in 1933, but the German catalogue still has six recordings sung for this label in Hebrew by Karlovy Vary Chief Rabbi **Moritz Perlmann** in 1935.

101 The rather naive text of this advertising informed, among other things, that "*dung was removed and collected manually and noisy swears were heard during this work. When suddenly a message came from Židenice in Brno that we would get help, everybody shouted 'Hurrah...!'*".

102 This singer with undistinguished and unmistakable voice used several various pseudonyms on gramophone records: **Z. Palma** (*Triumph*), **Zoltán Emery** (*E Rekord, Cordy, Melodycord*), **Jiří Stiller** (*Esta*), **J. Skála** (*Kristall*).

103 These recordings have no connection with Brno – they were made as a business project of Miloš Smatek and Jaroslav Zlonický for their store with gramophone records in Prague's Jugoslávská Street. The store was operated in the name of Zlonický's wife **Marie Zlonická**.

104 The dance orchestra of bandmaster **Siegfried Grzyb** (also **Vítězslav Hřib**) who later recorded for *Ultraphon* under the name of the **Orchestra of Dr. Harry Osten** or **Alcron Jazz**. It is also mentioned as **Polydor Jazz** on the aforementioned *Polydor* label.

105 It is also written as the **Mottl's Group** and **Quintett Settlers** on the *Polydor* label, i.e. the Czech tramping ensemble the Settlers.

106 Ensemble of bandmaster **David Nunja Stoljarovič**, consisting of immigrants from Russia. From 1925, it performed in Prague's *Fénix* palace. From 1933 to 1938, it recorded for the *Esta* gramophone company under the name of **Orchestra of Harry Harden**.

The fourth and last wave of the Czech recordings was pressed on the green *Polydor* label (Fig. 145-f) from 1939 to 1941, this time with designation *Made in Germany*. Recordings of national songs taken over from the Czech catalogue of *Esta* intended for our countrymen were published in the series of order numbers 16,100 and 11,000. The same recordings were simultaneously doubled by being pressing on the red *Grammophon* and *Grammophon – Die Stimme seines Herrn* (Fig. 071-b, 071-c) labels.

During the time of the *Slovak State*, the Austrian branch of *DGG* pressed original Slovak recordings on red-brown and carmine *Polydor* labels. Most of these recordings were sung by tenor **František Křištof Veselý** accompanied by the **Small Radio Orchestra** in Bratislava. The repertoire of this series consisted mainly of operetta recordings and tangos

by Slovak authors. After 1945, some of these titles were published in reissues on the *Esta* label.

The historically-interesting epilogue of the presence of the *Polydor* label in Czech lands and Slovakia represents a series of more than two hundred recordings that the Berlin headquarters of *DGG* had pressed from May 1944 on gramophone records with the usual light brown label (Fig. 145-i) in the *Esta* factory in Prague. These recordings were done for the *ROA* (*Russian Liberation Army* – “*The Vlasov Army*”) and *UPA* (*Ukrainian Insurgent Army* – “*The Bandera Army*”). In addition to many Russian and Ukrainian artists and ensembles, Czech symphonic orchestras with conductors **K. B. Jiráček**, **Alois Klíma** or **René Kubínský** and the studio dance orchestra of **S. E. Nováček** participated in these recordings. The last recordings of this series were made as late as in February 1945.

Smaller record companies on the Czechoslovak market

Artiphon

Gramophone records with the *Artiphon Record* label were the main product of *Schallplattenfabrik Artiphon Record GmbH*, established in 1919 by German entrepreneur **Hermann Eisner**,¹⁰⁷ a pioneer of the German recording industry and sound reproduction. The Czech programme on these gramophone records (Fig. 015-a) emerged in 1922. In 1925, with the arrival of the electric recording method the label modified its appearance, as well as its word trademark (Fig. 015-b) and the Czech repertoire already

included recordings of modern dances. For the third and last time the gramophone records of this company with a completely new Czech repertoire were introduced to the Czechoslovak market, again with a slightly altered label (Fig. 015-c) from 1930 to 1935.

From the beginning of the 1920 to 1935, the parent company *Artiphon* pressed gramophone records for Germany and many other European countries on various labels from its own recordings, and from the matrices of other gramophone companies, often without their knowledge

¹⁰⁷ **Hermann Eisner** (1860–1927). The founding member of the *International Association for Phonographic Sciences* with its office in Berlin. Until 1903 he was selling recorded phonograph cylinders, later he experimented with the production of gramophone records. In 1904, he co-founded the *Homophone* gramophone company, where he stayed in the position of technical director until 1918.

or permission. Eisner had one and the same recording made by anonymous “artistic orchestra” pressed on labels in France, whereas it appeared, for instance in Czechoslovakia, under a different matrix or order number on another label, where the same orchestra received a name such as the “Prague String Orchestra”. From 1924, Eisner began cooperating with the factory of Hermann Maassen, whose pressing plant in Podmokly/Obergrund took over the pressing of the *Artiphon* gramophone records for Czechoslovakia. Most recordings from *Artiphon* matrices were pressed here using the sandwich method on a cardboard layer until approximately 1933.

Hermann Eisner willingly provided his matrices for pressing on many ordered labels of individual wholesalers; thus, almost twenty labels of domestic vendors poured out on to the Czech market from 1930 to 1935 – for example *Ahoj*, *Amphion*, *Arpiton*, *Elektra*, *E-Rekord*, *Ermophon*, *Letem*, *Monopol*, *Melodycord*, *Nubaphon*, *Rektophon*, *VOWA*, *V. Z.* – bringing out identical recordings of the Czech repertoire (see captions by the depictions of these labels). The gramophone records of the *Pallas* (Fig. 136-b) and *ASO* (Fig. 017) brands were the last to offer recordings from the *Artiphon* matrices in 1937. However, in Yugoslavia, a catalogue of *Elektroton* gramophone records (Fig. 058) offered these recording as late as 1941. At the beginning of the 1930s, other record companies – *Kristall*, *Esta* and *Kalliope Electro* – were also taking over recordings from *Artiphon* matrices.

From the end of the 1920s, the company recording orchestra of *Artiphon* was the dance and jazz orchestra of Dutch bandmaster and violinist **Eddy Walis**. For example, Jára Pospíšil, Karel Hruška, Lev Uhlíř or Jaroslav Zlonický recorded popular Czech music with this orchestra in Berlin.

After 1933, frequent vocalists on the recordings of the folk repertoire were accordion player Franta Poupě, brothers Karel and Václav Zeman or the anonymous **Singers Duo**. The prices of these gramophone records (between 12 and 15 CZK) were very affordable. The director of *Artiphon* for the Czechoslovak Republic was Josef Vrba, a former long-time representative of *Columbia*.

As a curiosity, in 1929 the Prague company of **Erich Crohn** introduced to the Czechoslovak market the *Phonycord Flexible* (Fig. 144), a bendable gramophone record with a Czech programme copied from the recordings of *Artiphon*. These gramophone records were manufactured from a translucent mass similar to celluloid in various colour shades, but this mass was said to be inflammable. These records are mainly recordings of singer Jára Pospíšil. However, like the bendable gramophone records of other companies *Tri Ergon Colorit* (Fig. 187) or *Esta Flexible* (Fig. 061-a), these records only managed to stay on the market for just less than a year.

Edison Bell

One of the oldest English record companies, *Edison Bell*, tried to establish itself in the Czechoslovak Republic at the end of the 1920s, but its efforts were not overly successful. The Czech repertoire on gramophone records with the *Edison Bell* “Radio” label with a diameter of 20 cm (Fig. 051) was recorded only once in October 1929 on the initiative of the manager of the Romania branch of this company, **S. Schmidt**, and had a relatively ambivalent nature: recordings of the brass **Music of Garrison Regiment No. 28** of bandmaster **Jan Pešta** alternated with the recordings of Czech tramping ensemble the **Tramp Boys**, men’s choir **The Prague Twelve**, or comedian Jára Kohout accompanied by the Theatre Rococo orchestra.

Violinist **Vojtěch Frait**, a student of **Otakar Ševčík**, also made several recordings for this label. In his memoirs,¹⁰⁸ operetta tenor Jára Pospíšil says that he made several recordings for this company in one of the rooms of the hotel *Flora* in Prague's Vinohrady quarter, but that he never saw any of these recordings. Although the press at the time¹⁰⁹ stated that *Edison Bell* had acquired "an existing big factory" in Prague, which was to introduce about two hundred recordings that "would involve all kinds of modern repertoire", this was likely just speculation.¹¹⁰ It is much more probable that the parent company used the services of the Berlin *Triumphone* for the production of the gramophone records with the *Edison Bell* "Radio" label. *Triumphone* published gramophone records of the *Kalliope* brand, amongst other things with a Czech repertoire. In 1930, the Prague's *Gramotechnika* magazine presented gramophone records of the *Kalliope Electro Record* brand with a diameter of 20 cm, resulting allegedly from the cooperation of its parent company (with its headquarters in Prague II, Krakovská 9) with English company *Edison Bell*. In addition, gramophone records with this diameter, relatively successful in England, Germany and other advanced gramophone markets, never enjoyed much popularity in the Czechoslovak Republic. It is therefore no wonder that the *Edison Bell* "Radio" label with Czech programme disappeared in the same extremely short period time that it had appeared.

Kalliope Electro Record

A Czech programme appeared on *Kalliope Electro Record* gramophone records with a modern design (Fig. 99-b), showing the company trademark in a constructivist style at the end of 1928, when *Triumphons s.r.o.* (with its headquarters in Prague II on Krakovská St. 9¹¹¹) took over the representation of this brand for the Czechoslovak Republic as a branch of its Berlin parent company *Triumphone, Grammophon und Grammophonbestandteile-Vertriebsgesellschaft m. b. H.* The director of the Prague branch responsible for the composition of Czech repertoire was Mr. **J. Langfelder**, described in the professional press as one of the oldest and most experienced experts in the field, as well as a "lover of gramophone music".

Czech recordings in the series Z 6100 were published on gramophone records with a diameter of 25 cm. The first series of popular period hits was made in a Berlin recording studio by tenor Jindra Láznicka, accompanied by local orchestra **Sam Baskini Jazz-Symphoniker** conducted by bandmaster and composer **František Šmíd**.¹¹² Czech-American singer **Olga Rubíková**, who at that time visited the Czechoslovak Republic as a member of a folklore singers' ensemble consisting of American countrymen, joined Láznicka on several recordings of potpourries of Czech folk songs. This series was complemented by about

108 J. Pospíšil, E. Kešner: *Being an Operetta Star*, Panton, 1978.

109 Austrian professional magazine *Die Tonwiedergabe*, October 1929.

110 This claim could not be verified. However, it is proven that no gramophone company existed in Prague in 1929.

111 In addition to the distribution of the *Kalliope* gramophone records, this company also sold the SEL radios of Berlin-based company *Lorenz*.

112 **František Šmíd** (1887–1956). Bandmaster, composer and publisher, the first director of OSA (1919). He invented the patented typewriter for sheet music.

a dozen recordings that the parent company had pressed from the clearance matrices of German company Vox.

Other Czech recordings were published by *Kalliope* in the summer of 1929 – again, nearly all of the more than thirty recordings were sung by Jindra Lázníčka accompanied by the “Kalliope Orchestra”, i.e. the Baskini’s jazz symphonic musicians conducted by Fr. Šmíd. However, in order to prevent the fact that potential customers might find the selection of vocalists rather monotone, Lázníčka was also written on the labels under pseudonyms J. Pražák and Fr. Jindra. Six comic scenes were also included into this series of recordings, narrated by a “well-known Prague comedian” whose verbal expression was in the Vlasta Burian style – however, it was not possible to identify the actual interpreter.

In the spring of 1930, the director of the Prague representation of the parent company negotiated the recording of gramophone records in Berlin for R. A. Dvorský. According to the contract, he was supposed to do ten recordings sung in the Czech language with the Sam Baskini orchestra, and, if necessary, help with English vocals on several other recordings for the German market. The recording was successful and the company made it possible for Dvorský to do eight more Czech recordings sung in Czech with his **Melody Boys**.

Opera tenor **Jan Kalvach**¹¹³ made another series of Czech recordings with the orchestra conducted by Fr. Šmíd. Most of these recordings were later taken over by *Está* for its gramophone records. At the same time, more recordings of Czech and Slovak national songs by J. Kalvach on small *Kalliope*

gramophone records with a diameter of 20 cm were published – at that time the labels only offered the information “Singing – orchestra” (Fig. 99-a). It has not yet been possible to register all of the recordings, but the sequence of matrix numbers indicates that there could have been at least 24 of them. In January 1931 these gramophone records were advertised in the professional press for the discount price of 18 CZK.

The last series – again, about thirty recordings – of popular music with Czech singing by Jindra Lázníčka was made in August 1930 in Berlin. At that time the parent company had already encountered financial problems and terminated its activities on account of bankruptcy. That same year, Czech company *Forresta* bought some clearance matrices with a Czech and international repertoire and used them for its first recordings on *Está Flexible* bendable celluloid gramophone records.

The Austrian branch of the parent company still pressed the Czech repertoire from the *Artiphon* matrices from 1936 to 1939 on the *Kalliope* black labels. These recordings were made for the Austrian market.

Kristall

In 1928, the German branch of its English parent company, *Crystalate Manufacturing Co.*, was established in Berlin under the name *Deutsche Crystalate Schallplatten GmbH*, and the Šimon Adler company with a distribution warehouse in Havířská street in Prague took over representation of the German branch for Czechoslovakia less than

¹¹³ **MUDr. Jan Kalvach** (1889–1950), also shown as **J. Doubrava** on the labels of gramophone records. Member of an amateur ensemble in Prague, the **Opera-Studio**, which mostly presented operas that were not on the repertoire of official theatres. MUDr. Kalvach has more recordings of arias and popular pieces on the *Está* and *Columbia* gramophone records.

a year later. The Czech programme of recordings on *Kristall* gramophone records (Fig. 102-a) was introduced in the series P 400 – P 800. The first recordings were made in Prague on portable equipment operated by a German technician and included orchestral recordings of the popular **Beneš Brass Music**, a band of **A. M. Nademlejnský**, and orchestra of **F. A. Tichý**. The period hits were recorded mainly by baritone **Franta Renet**, tenor of the *Moravian-Silesian National Theatre* **Jarka Budil** and popular singer and entertainer **Sláva Grossmann**, all accompanied by these orchestras. Similarly to *Kalliope*, several recordings pressed from the clearance matrices of German company *Vox* were included into this series of Czech recordings, mainly the recordings of comic scenes by Ferenc Futurista, Jára Kohout and **Vojta Merten**.

The first stage of the existence of the Czech repertoire on the *Kristall* gramophone records ended in the middle of 1930 with a fire at the company warehouse. At that time, Šimon Adler advertised for sale a selection of cheap gramophone records from what remained from the warehouse.¹¹⁴ The newly established *Crystalate Gramophone Record Co. Ltd.*¹¹⁵ took care of the Czech repertoire on gramophone records with the blue *Kristall* label (Fig. 102-b) at the end of 1930. Although the new orchestral recordings were recorded in Berlin, with respect to increased customs fees imposed on imported gramophone records, an agreement was reached on the pressing of the processed matrices in the newly established Czechoslovak record company *Está* in Prague. New

recordings with vocals of several universal tenors, usually accompanied by German dance orchestras of bandmasters **Emil Roósz** or **Oskar Joost** were published in the 22,000 series of order numbers. This was mostly a folk repertoire – it included polkas and waltzes of popular Czech authors and songs from the Czech sound films, and it was complemented with orchestral recordings from the company's German catalogue.

Simultaneously with this second and last stage of the parent company's presence on the Czechoslovak market, recordings on cheap secondary labels *Triumph* (Fig. 188) with a diameter of 20 cm, and *WUBA Record* (Fig. 207) a diameter of 18 cm, complemented, or rather copied the Czech repertoire. Most of the vocals on these gramophone records were sung under pseudonyms by either Jára Pospíšil (Jar. Veselý) or **František Vintera (Franz Winternitz)**.¹¹⁶ These small gramophone records were sold at about one-half of the price of gramophone records with a diameter of 25 cm.

From the end of 1932, no new Czech recordings appeared on the *Kristall* label – the competition from Czechoslovak gramophone companies *Está* and *Ultraphon* with a similarly oriented Czech programme was significant. From 1933 to 1934 *Está* published in the E 3000 order series, within a secondary utilization of the already purchased recordings, almost three hundred recordings from the matrices of German *Kristall*, including a number of Czech recordings, which it also placed on its cheap sub-labels *Slavia* and *Lido*.

114 A certain part of these remains was bought by movie company *Elekta* to use them during the shooting of "You don't know Hadimrška" – in one of the scenes of this comedy, Vlasta Burian is destroying dozens of *Kristall* gramophone records by throwing them into shelves.

115 This company's office was in Prague II, Nekázanka 15, and it was subordinated to the Vienna branch of the English parent company.

116 This bilingual tenor of German nationality was reportedly a former student of the singing and opera school of Professor Konrad Wallenstein in Prague. He also used the pseudonym of **Ferry Svoboda** or **Franz Swoboda**.

Pallas

Producing gramophone records on this brand undoubtedly required effort to avoid paying taxes and import customs fees both in Germany and in the Czechoslovak Republic. Gramophone records with an art nouveau style label, with the silhouette of one of the mythological goddesses with immense power (Fig. 136-a), were offering Czech recordings from 1932 to 1933 in the series of order number starting with 14,000. They were produced in a factory established in West Bohemian small town of Potůčky/Breitenbach near Karlovy Vary/Karlsbad as a branch of German company *Clausophon* which belonged to entrepreneur **Clemens Claus**, who came from the North German city of Diepholz. This company manufactured gramophone records of various brands from matrices of other companies in the town of Thalheim, on the German side of Ore Mountains since 1929. As a consequence of the economic crisis, the parent company encountered considerable difficulties with sales, and it thus tried to transfer a part of the production of its gramophone records to Czechoslovakia where, of course, there was still a focus on the German-speaking population of the border regions. The Czechoslovak professional press was reserved in their welcome of this pressing plant, but stated that if quality was maintained with regard to both technology and music, domestic businessmen could only benefit from it. However, this happened at the time when this “domestic” producer announced, shortly after the beginning of production in the Czechoslovak Republic, that it would press gramophone records with the participation of Czech orchestras and artists. However, within one year it published only about twenty-five records with original Czech recordings that it had recorded in the studio of Czechoslovak company *Esta* in Prague. The pressing plant

complemented these recordings with German recordings from the matrices of various foreign companies which represented the majority of its production.

After a break the Czech repertoire on *Pallas* gramophone records was renewed – this time with a red label (Fig. 136-b) in 1935. The *Zikmund Rubel* company, which had stores in Prague in the hall of the *Koruna* palace and passage of the *Národ* palace nearby, took care of the distribution. Again, however, only about ten gramophone records with recordings of folk polkas and waltzes by an anonymous orchestra, the **Bohemians-Band**, and with the singing of tenors hidden under pseudonyms **Zdeněk Fiala** and **Boža Černý**, were published. The absolutely last Czech recordings, about twenty of them, were placed on this label in 1937 – however, in this case they were only the re-pressed recordings from the production of *Artiphon* with the singing of duo Vašek Zeman and Tino Muff, probably recorded on order in the Prague studio of the *Esta* record company.

Tri-Ergon

A relatively short episode in the history of the sound industry in Czechoslovakia is represented by only sixteen gramophone records with a Czech repertoire from the production of German company *Tri-Ergon* (Fig. 186). Šimon Adler, a Czech gramophone records businessman, was instrumental in this when, in June 1930, after a fire at the *Kristall* gramophone records warehouse (see above) ended the representation of the brand, he took over the distribution of these gramophone records, allegedly produced using the “photo-electric” method. In order to record the first series of Czech popular music, Mr. Adler sent tenor **Vladimír Tomš** and bandmaster and composer Miloš Smatek, who conducted

the company orchestra of **Géza Komor**¹¹⁷ on the twenty-two recordings made there, to Berlin. A little later, a series of ten more Czech recordings where the artists were mentioned only as a “Brass Orchestra with Singers” appeared. One Austrian company simultaneously pressed some of the recordings of the parent company – including the Czech repertoire – on the bendable, colourful gramophone records of *Tri-Ergon Colorit* (Fig. 187).

In 1932, as a result of patent disputes, the company founders split and *Tri-Ergon Gesellschaft* terminated its activities. For some time the recorded matrices were still pressed on the distribution label *Star* (Fig. 176), or the top half of the label was pasted over with the *Star* paper lunette on the already pressed gramophone records.

Vox

From 1922, the gramophone records with the Vox label were manufactured by German company *Vox-Schallplatten- u. Sprechmaschinen-Aktiengesellschaft* (at address Berlin W. 9, Postdamerstraße 10).¹¹⁸ The author of the graphic form of the labels of the gramophone records of this brand was a renowned German advertising graphic artist **Wilhelm Deffke**.¹¹⁹ Austrian conductor **Erich Kleiber**¹²⁰ was appointed the company artistic director. Thanks to Kleiber, the Vox brand catalogue of gramophone records contained

a number of excellent instrumentalists, opera singers and classic orchestras, including a series of now very rare recordings of the **Böhmisches Quartet** chamber ensemble (Fig. 202-a). The German catalogue was also soon enriched by gramophone records with recordings of modern dances by top German and visiting American jazz orchestras. The company ensemble for the recordings of dance music was the orchestra of German violinist and conductor **Bernard Etté**,¹²¹ with which many musicians from the USA and European countries performed in the 1920s.

Vox produced gramophone records with 30 cm and 25 cm diameters, and from 1927 to 1929 it also pressed *Teddy* brand gramophone records with a diameter of 15 cm and a repertoire for children. No catalogue of Czech recordings on Vox gramophone records was found, and of the presumed volume of the Czech repertoire, only about one-third of the recordings could be reconstructed. Since 1924, the Czech programme was published care of businessman Emil Schmelkes who took over the representation of this company. Several of Hašler’s melodies recorded by the aforementioned orchestra of Bernard Etté were among the first recordings for the Czechoslovak Republic. Since 1925, hits sung in Czech by Valentin Šindler and recorded in Berlin were published on this label. In 1926 a series of five gramophone records with recordings for the

117 **Géza Komor** (1900–1951). Hungarian violinist and the bandmaster of the German dance orchestra from 1927 to 1935. He recorded gramophone records from 1927 to 1932 for *Tri-Ergon*.

118 German radio started its broadcasting from the seat of this company called the *Vox-Haus* in October 1923.

119 **Wilhelm Heinrich Deffke** (1887–1950). The author of several thousand various company logos. He is reputed as the “father of the modern logo”.

120 **Erich Kleiber** (1890–1956). Born in Vienna and studied in Prague. From 1923, he was the music director of *Berlin State Opera*. After Hitler’s takeover of power he resigned. In 1938, he moved to Buenos Aires where he became the music director of *Colón Theater*. In 1945, he refused an offer to again become the director of *BSO* in the Soviet sector of Berlin. He died in Zurich.

121 **Bernard Etté**, his real name was **Bernard Sommer** (1898–1973). He performed in the first broadcastings of the German radio with his dance orchestra.

VIII. *All-Sokol Festival* in Prague were published in a special album. Several recordings of popular songs and *Biblical Songs* by A. Dvořák recorded bass-baritone Professor **Egon Fuchs**. Popular hits for this brand were also recorded by the then popular singers Ferda Kohout and Boža Vronský. After 1927 a series of popular songs and comic scenes by Jára Kohout, Vojta Merten, Ferenc Futurista, Jaroslav Zlonický, **Miloslav Jeník** (Fig. 202-b) and bilingual tenor **Viktor Poor** was published. In addition to the anonymous “Vox Orchestra”, on this label are also a number of recordings of the brass “Band of Mr. Ludvík, Prague” but no data could be found regarding its identity. However, with respect to the

fact that orchestral ensembles in general recorded gramophone records at the place of their activities (any movement of a larger number of musicians would be financially and logistically too costly), it is possible to presume that at least in this case the recording was done in Prague.

The last Czech recordings were made on Vox gramophone records in October 1928 in Berlin. At that time the parent company already faced serious financial difficulties, and soon after it went bankrupt. Some of the Vox clearance matrices with Czech recording were later pressed on the *Kalliope Electro*, *Homocord*, *Esta* and *Kristall* labels.

Czechoslovak record companies Esta and Ultraphon and their subsidiaries

The history of the first Czechoslovak record company, *Esta*, and the discography of its Czech recordings were recently examined in detail.¹²² The discography of this company’s recordings for the Slovak market and for distributors in Poland, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria and Germany is being prepared. Let us therefore just briefly mention some milestones in the development of these record companies.

In the middle of 1930, the Prague company *Forresta* announced production of bendable celluloid gramophone records with the *Esta Flexible* label (Fig. 061-a) pressed from the matrices of several German companies. The relatively primitive conditions of the production of gramophone records from highly flammable material aroused the resentment of the competent authorities, which

soon prohibited their production. Therefore, in the fall of this year the company began manufacturing shellac gramophone records from its own matrices (Figs. 061-b to 061-zz). The company introduced the *Slavia* (Fig. 169) and *Desky Lido* labels (Figs. 040-a, 040-b) as cheap sub-labels. Until the end of the 1930s, *Esta* almost exclusively produced recordings of popular music on gramophone records with a diameter of 25 cm and pressed order-made gramophone records both for the domestic market and for foreign countries where they were published on many various brands. On the basis of a contract with German company DGG, *Esta* also pressed *Brunswick* (Fig. 025-b) and *Polydor* (Figs. 145-e) gramophone records. During World War II, gramophone records with the label “Lyra with a mandolin” were pressed in the *Esta* factory with propagandistic recordings of **Charlie and his**

¹²² G. Gössel and F. Šír: *Czech catalogue of recordings of gramophone company Esta 1930–1946*. In 2015, The Moravian Library in Brno published 100 copies within the *Virtual National Phonotheque* project. Its electronic version is at <https://archive.org/details/ceskykatalognahravekgramofonove>.

Orchestra¹²³, and, before the end of WWII it, also pressed *Polydor* gramophone records (Fig. 145-i) for the *Russian Liberation Army* (=Vlasov Army) and *Ukrainian Insurgent Army* (=Bandera Army).

A detailed processing of the repertoire of Czechoslovak *Ultraphon* is still being awaited. We would like to only briefly mention some of the more important moments from the existence of this company, which was at one time the largest in Czechoslovakia.

The first *Ultraphon* gramophone records with a Czech and Slovak repertoire appeared on the domestic market thanks to Prague distribution company *Ravitas* at the end of 1929. They were recorded in the Berlin recording studio of parent company *Deutsche Ultraphon Aktiengesellschaft*, and German technicians later arrived in Prague with recording equipment. The *Ravitas* company at first also distributed numerous recordings originally made for the German catalogue, and it also took over the distribution of the *Musica Sacra* (Fig. 122) and *Orchestrola* (Fig. 135) labels. In 1931 it introduced cheap sub-labels *Artona* (Fig. 018), *Selekton* (Fig. 167) and, for a short time also *Ultraphonet* (Fig. 190).

In 1933 the Czechoslovak Ministry of Trade permitted, and, retroactively from 1st January 1932, registered joint stock company *Ultraphon*, which took over all of the assets and liabilities of *Ravitas*, and bought the *Ultraphon* trademark. The company gradually acquired the majority of renowned Czechoslovak artists and music ensembles for recording gramophone records. It also carried out important orders for *Czechoslovak*

Radio and the Sokol movement, and recorded many speeches of leading cultural and political personalities. Dozens of recordings in German for both the domestic, German speaking Czechoslovak population, and for Germany and Austria, were published on the *Ultraphon* label. Czech *Ultraphon* also distributed gramophone records of German company *Telefunken* (Fig. 182-a), and both companies mutually recorded and traded their matrices.

Along with other auxiliary and secondary companies from the sound industry, both of the aforementioned Czechoslovak record companies were nationalized in 1945 on the basis of decree of President **Edvard Beneš** and their productions were merged. On 1st January 1946 they were transferred under the authority of the newly established state-owned *Gramofonové závody*. The still-existing *Supraphon*, originally founded in 1946 as a distribution company for the export of Czechoslovak gramophone records abroad, became the legal successor of *Ultraphon* and *Esta*.

123 For full story of Charlie and his Orchestra and these recordings see "Hitler's Airwaves" by H. Bergmeier and R. Lotz (Yale University Press, New Haven & London, 1997).

Recorded Sound in Czech Lands, 1900–1946

This publication is the first comprehensive contribution to mapping the history of the sound industry in the Czech lands or the Czechoslovak Republic. The publication provides data excerpted from the press of the period, publications and corporate catalogues, knowledge gained by examining physically-found gramophone records and other materials.

The collected materials relate to all of the record companies that imported gramophone records to Bohemia, Moravia, and to the Czechoslovak Republic after 1918. Alternatively, they also include records recorded in this area with the participation of Czech, Moravian and Slovak soloists and orchestras. The gramophone record distributors of the relevant brands, size and type of the recorded repertoire, as well as a list of prominent artists who recorded for the relevant company are specified for each record label represented here. With a few exceptions, information was not systematically provided about recordings originating after 1946, when the recording industry in Czechoslovakia was nationalized and the national enterprise *Gramofonové závody* was established.

The extensive illustrated appendix includes all known forms of gramophone record labels that included recordings with the participation of Czech and Slovak artists and orchestras, created both in the Czech lands and abroad. Each depicted label is accompanied by a brief legend stating the origin or the place and date of the recording.

Keywords

Sound industry – gramophone records – phonographic cylinders – record companies – pressing of gramophone records – distributors of gramophone records – catalogues of gramophone records – Austria-Hungary – Czechoslovakia

Die Tonaufnahmeindustrie in den böhmischen Ländern, 1900–1946

Diese Veröffentlichung stellt den ersten komplexen Beitrag dar, welcher die Geschichte der Tonaufnahmeindustrie in den böhmischen Ländern bzw. der Tschechoslowakischen Republik ins Auge fasst. Es werden einerseits Informationen aus der zeitgenössischen Presse, Sachliteratur und Kataloge der einzelnen Unternehmen präsentiert, andererseits Erkenntnisse, welche bei der Erforschung von gefundenen Schallplatten und weiterer Materialien gewonnen werden konnten.

Die gesammelten Materialien betreffen alle Grammophonplattenunternehmen, die in Böhmen und Mähren und nach dem Jahr 1918 auf dem Gebiet der Tschechoslowakischen Republik ihre Schallplatten anboten. Ausserdem geht es um Schallplatten welche in demselben Zeitraum unter Beteiligung von Solisten und Orchestern aus Böhmen, Mähren und der Slowakei aufgenommen wurden.

Für jedes hier vertretene Grammophonplattenunternehmen wurden die Distributoren der Schallplatten, deren Marken, der Umfang und die Art des aufgenommenen Repertoires und die Aufzählung von bedeutenden Interpreten, welche für eine Firma aufgenommen haben, aufgezeichnet. Von Ausnahmen abgesehen wurden systematisch nur Informationen über die bis 1946 entstandenen Aufnahmen angegeben, dem Jahr, als in der Tschechoslowakei die gesamte Tonaufnahmeindustrie verstaatlicht wurde. Daraus entstand das *Nationalunternehmen Grammophonwerke*.

Die umfangreichen Bildbeilagen umfassen alle bekannten Etiketten von Schallplattenaufnahmen mit Beteiligung böhmischer, mährischer und slowakischer Interpreten oder Orchestern, welche sowohl im böhmischen Gebiet wie auch im Ausland entstanden sind. Jedes abgebildete Etikett begleitet eine kurzgefasste Legende, die den Ort und das Datum ihrer Aufnahme anzeigt.

Schlüsselwörter

Tonaufnahmeindustrie – Schallplatten – Wachswalze – Grammophonunternehmen – Presswerke der Schallplatten – Distributoren der Schallplatten – Kataloge der Schallplatten – Österreich-Ungarn – Tschechoslowakei.

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Appendix





01



PLNĚNÍ EDISONOVA FONOGRAFU NA ZEMSKÉ JUBIL. VÝSTAVĚ V PRAZE.

02

A. ROSENTHAL

k. u k. Hof-Optiker u. Mechaniker | c. a k. dvorní optik a mechanik
PRAG, Graben 10, | **PRAHA, Příkopy 10,**
 Palais der Creditanstalt. | Palác úvěrního ústavu.

03-a



03-b



03-c



04



05



06-a



06-b



07



08

Celá tato zásilka obsahující  rodinný fonograf

„ALFA“

a 12 válců jen za K 21.—.

Nejkrásnější zpěvy,
pochoďy
a kuplety.



JARUŠEKOVY
BESEDY.

09-a



*Mluvíci
stroje
Jarůšek
a spol.
Brno*

**TVRDÉ
ZLATÉ VÁLCE**

ALFA

JSOU DLE NEJNOVĚJŠÍCH
A NEJLEPŠÍCH ZPŮSOBŮ
VÝROBY ZA SPOLUÚČINKOVÁNÍ NEJLEPŠÍCH
SIL UMĚLECKÝCH VYROBENY

TOVÁRNÍ PATENTY v MNOHA ZEMÍCH
VŠECHNA PRÁVA AUTORSKÁ VYHRAŽENA

**VÝROBEK
MNOHA TOVÁREN,**
poskytuje nejdokonalejší
repertoir všech tu-i-cizozemských
hudebních novinek.

**NEJLEPŠÍ A
NEJDOKONALEJŠÍ VÁLCE**
PŘEKVAPUJÍCÍ SÍLA A PLNOST ZVUKU
TON ČISTÝ, BEZ JAKÉHOKOLIV VEDLEJŠÍHO ŠRÁMOTU

**PŘI SVĚ JAKOSTI
NEJLEVNĚJŠÍ VÁLCE**

HLAVNÍ SKLAD
K. JARUŠEK A SPOL.
BRNO

ROZMNOŽOVÁNÍ ZAPOVĚZENO

09-b



Založeno r. 1905.

První český odborný závod na Moravě

K. Jarušek a spol.

prodej a sklad mluvicích strojů,

Brno,

Velké náměstí 28, II.

Adresa dopisů:

K. Jarušek a spol., Brno.

Adresa telegramů: Jarušek Brno.

Brno.

Ueselá ulice čís. 4, II.

Účet poštovní spořitelny 53.716.

Bankovní účet
u České průmyslové banky, filiálka
v Brně.

Vlastní a cizí výrobky nejlevnějších, při tom ale nejdůkladnějších
strojů: fonografů, gramofonů a příslušenství.

Veškerý novinky.

- - Zvláštnosti. - -

Zastupitelství předních domů rakouských, německých a anglických.

Stálý bohatý sklad válců, ploten a strojů.

===== Ia. čisté válce k vlastním snímkům. =====

Výrobky továren „Excelsior“. — „Columbia“ gramofony.

Plotny: Odeon, Columbia, Zonofon, Favorite, Globus za nejlevnější ceny

Obchodní zásada:

===== **levně a solidně.** =====





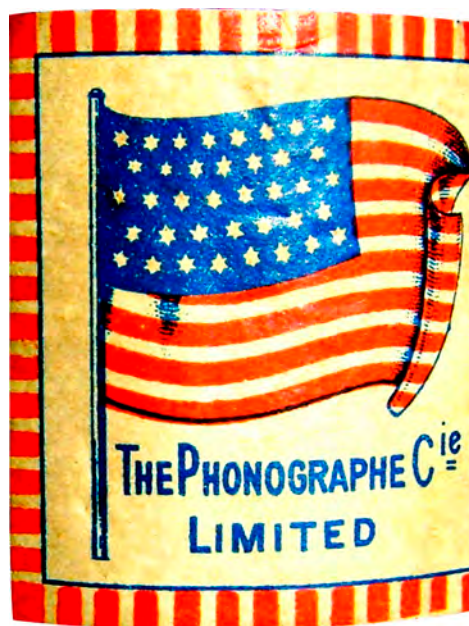
10



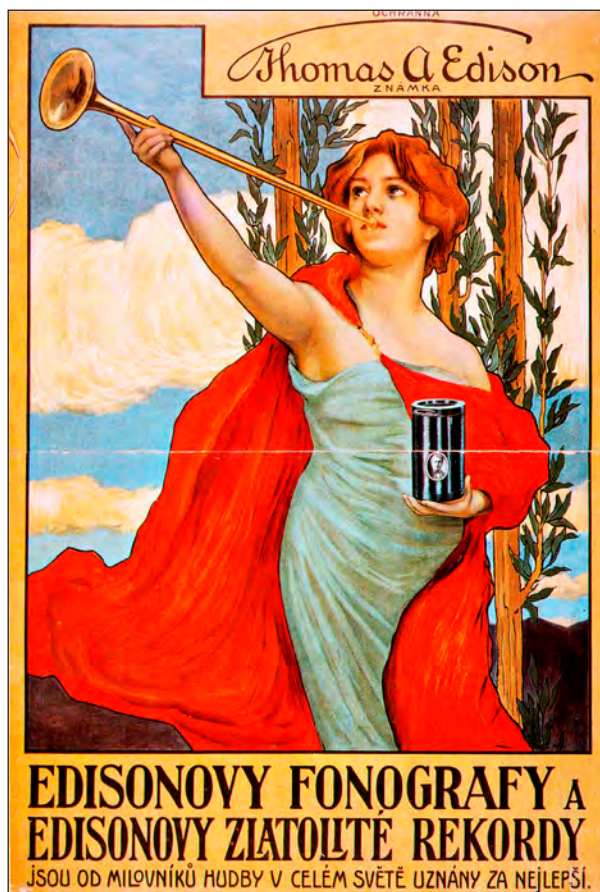
12-a



11



12-b



13-a



13-b



13-c



14-a



15-a



15-b



14-b

Excelsior-Hartgusswalzen
Deutsches Fabrikat

Excelsior-Hartguss-Records!

Anerkannt grösste **Haltbarkeit**
mit geringster Abnutzung bei hervor-
ragender **Klangfülle!**

Excelsior-Phonographen und Platten-Apparate.
Excelsior-Werk, Köln.
Fabrik-Niederlage f. Berlin
u. Umgegend: **W. Bahre,**
— **Friedrichstr. 12.** —
Generalvertretung f. Bayern:
G. Kratzer, Nürnberg,
Grünerstrasse 23.

Reichhalt. Programm, Monatl. Nachträge.

Exportlager: Berlin SO., Melchiorstr. 12, Carl Drissen. — Hamburg, Deichstr. 26, Max
Kunath. — London, E.C. 17, Hatton Garden Alb. F. Vischer. — Paris,
99 Rue Lafayette L. d'Aragon



16

Verlangen Sie Grogos-
• Offert in unseren • **Veritas-Reform-Phonographen**

Der Veritas „PERFECT“ ist ein vorzüglicher, sehr rein und laut
spielender, durchaus solid und dauerhaft gearbeiteter Apparat.

17 Platin-Veritas-Phonographen-Vertrag ist vollständig ausser-ordentlich-Messing-Gehäuse, Metall-Konstruktion, mit modernem
Bauweise.

18 Veritas-Wandhalter-Schalltrichter von 90 cm Durchmesser, mit Kellernverglas und geometrischer Logik (der Veritas).

19 Veritas-Wandhalter in Berlin, für 1000.

20 Veritas-Wandhalter, nachher mit überlegener Silber und Veritas-Gehäuse-Schulter.

21 Veritas-Wandhalter für Veritas-Wand.

Grösse des Veritas-Wandhalter (Höhe 70 cm, Breite 10 cm)
Höhe 100 cm, Breite 10 cm

Veritas-Goldguss-Walzen

von höchster
künstlerischer
und
technischer
Vollendung!

Veritas Record

Neueste Wiener, Ungarische, Böhmisches, Polnische u. Internationale Repertoire!
Master bereitwillig auf Verlangen!

Veritas Import House, Wien I, Kärntner-Strasse 28.



17-a



17-b



17-c



Von der Vortrefflichkeit

unserer Electra-Goldgusswalzen wird Sie ein

Versuch überzeugen.

Verlangen Sie
ausführliche Offerte,
unseren Herbst-Katalog
und
Reklame-Plakate

Prompte
zuverlässige
Lieferung

Die Prüfung unserer
Electra Goldgusswalzen
und deren reichhaltigen
Repertoire's bringt jedem
Händler Nutzen.

Phonographen-Walzen-Fabrik Electra G. m. b. H., Namslau Schlesien

Vertreter: **H. Scholz, Rixdorf-Berlin, Fuldastr. 9**
— Fernsprecher: Amt Rixdorf 976 —

18-a

Machen Sie
einen Versuch
mit unserer
Elektra
Goldguss-Walze



Sie werden sehr
zufrieden sein.
Elektra
Goldguss-Walzen
sind stets in jeder Anzahl
sofort lieferbar.

Phonographen-Walzenfabrik Elektra G. m. b. H., Namslau Schles.

Vertreter: **H. Scholz, Rixdorf-Berlin, Fuldastrasse 9**
Fernsprecher Amt Rixdorf 976

18-b



Elektra- Goldguss-Walzen

anerkannt bestes deutsches Fabrikat

Deutsches, dänisches, böhmisches Repertoire

Hauptfabrik: Namslau, Schlesien
-/- Filialfabrik: **Prag**, Böhmen -/-

Ausschliesslicher Alleinvertrieb für die
gesamte österreichisch-ungarische Monarchie durch

Diego Fuchs, Prag

Wenzelplatz 7

für Dänemark durch

C. V. Steenstrup, Kopenhagen

Kunbrostrect 12.

18-c

PRVNÍ PRAŽSKÁ TOVÁRNA HUDEBNÍCH STROJŮ A ORCHESTRIONŮ

DIEGO FUCHS, PRAHA,
VÁCLAVSKÉ NÁM. 7.

Pisárny a prodejny:
VÁCLAVSKÉ NÁM. 7.

Oficiální zástupce
ŘÍŠSKÉ GRAMOFONOVÉ SPOLEČNOSTI
a
INTERNAT.-ZONOPHON-COMPAGNY
V BERLÍNĚ.
Adresa telegramů: DIEGO FUCHS PRAHA.

TELEFON: Meziměstský 3115. — Továrna 3956.
Pisárny a prodejny 3115a. — Obchod v malém 3115b.
Soukromý byt 3115c.
Účet rakouské pošt. spořitelny čís. 30.288. — Účet
uherské pošt. spořitelny čís. 18.694. — Běžný účet
u Průmyslové banky v Praze.
Stálé vzorkové sklady: Lipsko. — Hamburk.

Továrna:
PRAHA - VYSOČANY.
Stanice: Libeň St. d.

Vlastní odbočná továrna nejproslulejších
ZLATOLITÝCH VÁLEČKŮ
„ELEKTRA.“
Generální zástupce
TOVÁRNY HUDEB. STROJŮ „POLYFON“
LIPSKO-WAHREN.

1932/33

18-d



18-e

"Electra"
Zlatolitě válečky

Elektra
ZAKONEM CHRÁNĚNÁ ZNAČKA

Vlastní patenty
D.R.P. č. 166399, D.R.S.M. č. 262992.
Hlavní továrna: Elektra Namslav Pruské Slezsko.
Filiální továrna: Elektra, Vysočany u Prahy.

jsou
nedostižné,
nejdokonalejší.

obdiv
vzbuzujícího
hlasu.

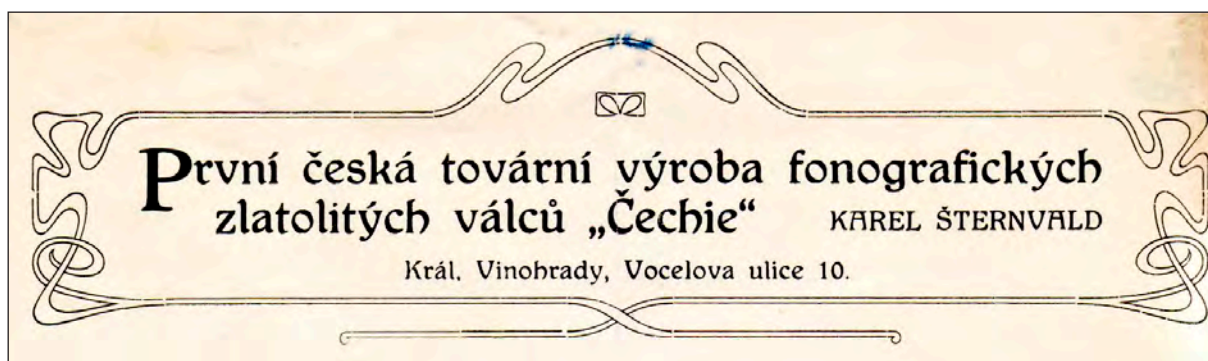
nazpívané a
náhrané
nejlepšími
umělci.

SELEST VYLOUČEN.

Mé pole
est celý svět

PRECISIONCORD

18-f



19-a



19-b



19-c





001-a, 001-b

A.B.C. GRAND RECORD

Matrices *Esta*, 25 cm, 1932–1933

Recordings with this label were made for *Sternberg Record Company*, Budapest, Hungary. Recorded were in Prague by Czech dance bands with vocals in Hungarian or German.



001-c, 001-d

ABC ELECTRO RECORD

Matrices *Esta*, 25 cm, 1932–1933

At the same time, some of these recordings were pressed also on the *Magyar Divatcsarnok*, *Sternberg*, *Weekend* and *Danubius Record* labels.



002

A.B.C. GRAND RECORD

Matrices Beka, 25 cm, 1908–1912

Name of this label contains abbreviation of **Austria Beka Company**. The Czech recordings on this label featured Czech interpreters performing mostly in Vienna and also some reissues from catalogues of Beka company.



003

AMOR GRAND RECORD

Matrices Beka, 25 cm, 1909–1912

This is a variation of the previous label. The “schoolboy” shooting his bow at the target is here replaced by “Amor”. These records, targeted at the Czech minority living in Austria, were distributed by company of Theodor Pichler, Porzellan Gasse 25, Wien IX.



004-a, 004-b

AHOJ – MEZINÁRODNÍ DESKA SPORTU

Matrices Artiphon, 25 cm, 1932–1933

One of numerous cheap labels with recordings pressed from Artiphon matrices. “Mezinárodní deska sportu” translates as “International Sports Record”: rather strange wording, because this label had nothing to do either with sports nor with internationality, its repertoire being brass and dance bands, with the vocals sung in Czech only. The word Ahoj (“ahoy”) was originally used as a greeting among sailors, but today it is a colloquial address among Czech people.



005

AHOJ NA NEDĚLI

Matrices *Ultrapphon*, 25 cm, 1935

"Ahoj na neděli" translates as "Hello for Sunday". This was a series of seven records (one for each day of the week) targeted at young people who loved to spend weekends in the country. The song titles tried to reflect the ambience of camp fires, wooden cabins by the riverside, etc.



006

ALFA

Matrices *Beka*, 25 cm, cca 1913–1915

One of many cheap labels produced by the pioneer of the recording industry in Bohemia, Mr. Diego Fuchs. Repertoire of these records was "cheap", too, mostly consisting of brass bands and folk tunes. *Alfa* was advertised alongside another of Fuchs' labels, *Omega*.

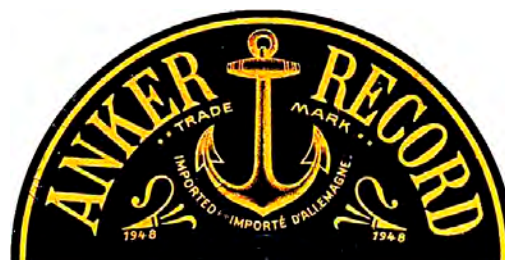


007

AMPHION ELEKTRO

Matrices *Artiphon*, 25 cm, 1930–1933

Another label from a family of cheap records produced from *Artiphon* matrices, with the same basic repertoire as we find on labels such as *Letem*, *Monopol*, *Nubaphon* or *Rektophon*. Unknown distributor.



008

ANKER RECORD

Matrices *Anker Phonogramm GmbH*, single-sided, 25 cm, 1905

Very shortly after emergence of this company a unique series of recordings of Czech operatic singers was released on this label. (No such a recording is presented here.)





009

ANKER-ELITE-AUFNAHME

Matrices Anker Phonogramm GmbH, 30 cm, 1911–1913

Oskar Nedbal was the only Czech artist whose name we find on this sub-label of British Columbia company, distributed in Germany by *Orchestrophon-Sprech- und Musikwerke* and in Austro-Hungarian Empire by company *F. A. Richter & Co, Rudolstadt* of Vienna.



010

AR STUDIO

Made-on-order recording foils, 25 and 30 cm, cca 1940–1950

Products of the private recording studio directed by Ing. Adolf Řípa, residing in premises of *Lucerna Palais* in Prague.



011-a

ARFA/АРФА

Matrices Esta, 25 cm, 1934–1936

Label with recordings made in Prague on behalf of *Cohen Co.* of Sofia. This Bulgarian producer let some of these track press also on labels *Blgarska vojenna slava* and *Caruso* (see).



011-b, 011-c

ARFA/АРФА

Matrices Esta, 25 cm, 1934–1936

Recordings for this label made *Esta*, on behalf of *Cohen Co.* of Sofia, in a number of sessions with Bulgarian vocalists accompanied by Bulgarian orchestra of Ramadan Lolov or Czech band of Harry Harden.



012

ARENA RECORD

Matrices *Polyphon-Musikwerke AG*, 25 cm, 1909–1913

This 8000 series was designated for operettas and popular music. These recordings were used also by other Czech dealers, which pressed them on their own labels *Elite*, *Janus*, *Fox*, *Derby*, *Omega* and others.



013

ARMÁDNÍ DISKOTÉKA

Matrices *Supraphon*, 25 and 30 cm, 1950

One of parallel labels of *Supraphon* with recordings allegedly "suitable for use in military corps" (*Armádní* = *Military*). At the same time, *Supraphon* produced also *Národní diskotéka* (*Národní* = *National*) label. The real purpose of these series is not quite clear.



ARNOŠT PIHERT - PLEVA
Telefon 43012, Praha II., Spálená 15, první katedra.

014-a, 014-b

ARPITON

Matrices *Artiphon*, 25 cm, 1930–1933

Produced for the wholesaler **Arnošt Pihert**, *Spálená ulice 15, Praha II.* Another label from the family of cheap records produced from *Artiphon* matrices, with the similar repertoire as found on *Letem*, *Monopol*, *Nubaphon* or *Rektophon* labels.



015-a

ARTIPHON RECORD

Produced by Artiphon, 25 cm, cca 1921–1922 (Czech program)

The first design of the label of records produced by then brand new German company. It produced also recordings of Czech interpreters (not presented here).



015-b

ARTIPHON RECORD

Matrices Artiphon, 25 cm, cca 1923–1925

Another design of the label of records produced by the Artiphon gramophone company established in 1919 by Herrmann Eisner, one of the pioneers of German sound industry.



015-c

ARTIPHON ELECTRO SPECIAL

Matrices Artiphon, 25 cm, 1930–1933

This slightly changed design of Artiphon label was used for records made by electric recording process. Reissues from these matrices were pressed on more than ten different labels of distributors from Czechoslovakia.



016

ARTISTOTIPIA/АРТИСТОТИПІЯ

Matrices Extraphon/Экстрафонь, 30 cm, 1917 (?)

Label of the Russian branch of International Extra Record in Kiev. Director of this pressing plant was one Jindřich Ignatěvič Jindříšek of Czech nationality, who probably also initiated these recordings of famous Czech chamber ensemble Ševčík Quartett.



017-a, 017-b

ASO

Matrices Artiphon, 25 cm, 1931–1934, 1937, Esta, 1935–1936

A custom-made label of records destined for sale in departmental store chain ASO (*A*nder and *S*on, *O*lomouc). After Artiphon disappeared from Czechoslovak market in 1935, new releases for the ASO label were pressed from *Esta* labels. In 1937, also some reissues of *Artiphon* releases were published.



018-a, 018-b

ARTONA

Matrices Ultraphon and Clausophon, 25 cm, 1932–1935

The cheap sub-label of the Czech *Ultraphon*, often presenting also older or imperfect recordings.



021-b

BBC

Non-commercial single-sided foil, 30 cm, 1945

Here documented *BBC* recording contains transcription of a speech by dr. Eduard Beneš made before his return journey to Czechoslovakia after the end of the WWII. Varnished metal foil.



021-c

BBC

Non-commercial single-sided foil, 30 cm, 1942

Record with transcription of anti-Nazi sketches recorded initially in Hollywood and New York. Such varnished metal foils were used for the short-wave broadcasting into then by the Nazis occupied Bohemia and Moravia.



022-a

BEKA

Matrices Beka, 25 cm, 1920

This beautiful "three graces" label was introduced in 1914 and after 1914 presented only a very few recordings with the Czech artists or targeted at Czechoslovak market.



022-b

BEKA

Matrices Beka and Favorite, 25 cm, 1924–1926

After the WWI *Beka*, since 1910 already a part of the Lindström's empire, introduced the new Czech repertoire in 1924.





022-c

BEKA

Matrix Beka, 25 cm, 1924–1926

Label of this sample record mentions also the number of musicians of the notorious Herman Brass Band (20 men).



022-d

BEKA

Matrices Beka, 25 cm, 1926

This label is unusual in that it shows a photographic image of the baryton Jan Fík of *National Theatre* in Prague. Reissue of this particular recording was already pressed on the standard Beka label of red colour.



022-e

BEKA

Matrices Beka and Favorite, 25 cm, 1926–1930

The last appearance of the Beka label with the Czech program, soon to be replaced by the red label of Parlophon (see).



023

BRILLANT

Matrices Ultraphon, 25 cm, 1931

A cheap label of records intended for sale in the departmental stores in Germany. This particular recording was made in Prague by the R. A. Dvorský dance band.



024

BRILLANT-SPECIAL

Matrices Ultraphon, 25 cm, 1931

Another variation of previous label. The alleged "Jazz-Sinfonie -Orchester Joe London" is in fact in Prague made recording of the dance band of R. A. Dvorský.



025-a

BRUNSWICK

Matrices The Brunswick-Balke-Collender Co., 30 cm, 1925

Chamber ensemble *New York String Quartet*, formed from Czech musicians, recorded for this label a few sides, among others American Quartet op. 98, labelled then as "Nigger Quartet".



025-b

BRUNSWICK

Matrices Esta, 25 cm, 1939

The American *Brunswick Co.* had been represented in Czechoslovakia since 1927 till 1948, but there were only four sides being recorded for this label in 1939, by one "Swing-Symphonic-Orchestra" of unknown personnel.



026

BLGARSKA VOJENNA SLAVA/ ВЪЛГАРСКА ВОЕННА СЛАВА

Matrices Esta, 25 cm, 1938

The Cyrillic wording at the top reads 'Bulgarian Military Glory.' It is a sub-label of the Bulgarian *Arfa* (=Harp) brand. Distributed via the *Cohn company* of Sofia, it was manufactured in Prague by the *Esta* factory.



027

CARUSO RECORD/ КАРУЗО РЕКОРДЪ

Matrices Esta, 25 cm, 1936

A variant of the *Arfa* label (see) with recordings of Bulgarian folk tunes. Ordered by the *Cohen* company of Sofia, these matrices were made in Prague by the *Esta* company.



028

COLUMBIA DISC RECORD

Single-sided, 25 cm, 1902

The oldest version of a *Columbia* disc with a recording by the Czech artist. Jaroslav Kocian recorded mere three sides for this company.



029-a

COLUMBIA PHONOGRAPH CO.

Single-sided, 18 cm, 1902

This is a reissue of a recording registered in 1901 on a cylinder. Gramophone records of this diameter were later on never reissued.



029-b

COLUMBIA PHONOGRAPH CO.

25 cm, 1905

Reissue of a 1902 recording on the label of this design, boasting with various prizes from Paris and St. Louis.



029-c

COLUMBIA PHONOGRAPH CO.

Single-sided, 25 cm, 1905

Another variation of the same label, mentioning already its Berlin headquarters. This particular recording is the transcription of a track recorded on a cylinder in 1901 in Prague.



029-d

COLUMBIA PHONOGRAPH CO.

Single-sided, 25 cm, 1905–1906

Design of this label is similar to the previous one, newly is mentioned also the Vienna headquarters.



029-e

COLUMBIA PHONOGRAPH CO.

Single-sided, 25 cm, 1906

Reissue of a track recorded in 1901 on cylinders *Columbia* in Prague.



030-a

COLUMBIA GRAPHOPHONE RECORD

25 cm, 1906

In 1906, merged *Columbia Phonograph Co.* and *American Graphophone Co.* and new recordings were pressed on the double-sided records with this new design of label.



030-b

COLUMBIA RECORD

25 cm, around 1914

European pressings from matrices with "ethnic recordings" made in the USA. Headquarter of *Columbia* for Austro-Hungarian Empire seated in Vienna.



030-c

COLUMBIA

30 cm, 1925

This label was reserved for symphonic music and operatic singers and was published also in black colour (not documented here).



030-d

COLUMBIA

25 cm, 1925–1928

Most of recordings on records with this label were reissues from older US and English matrices. Quality of these "sandwich" pressings was very poor.



030-e

COLUMBIA

25 cm, 1929–1931

This slightly modernized variation of the previous label was used till the merge of GC and *Columbia* in 1931. In Czech shops were records with is label offered till 1935.

Columbia



Columbia Graphophone Company Limited, London

JOSEF VRBA A SPOL.,
PRAHA II., POŘÍČ Č. 6.



030-f

COLUMBIA

25 cm, 1932–1936

In this OČ series were released both the reissues of older Czech repertoire and new recordings made in Prague, Budapest and Vienna.



030-g

COLUMBIA

Various matrices, 25 cm, 1932–1939

In OD series of catalogue numbers were released reissues of foreign recordings targeted at Germans living in Czechoslovakia. Initially the colour of this labels was orange, as with series OČ (see the previous label).



030-h

COLUMBIA

Matrices *Electrola*, 25 cm, 1941–1943

Series of recordings released on this label was recorded in Berlin in 1941–1943 on behalf of Vladimír Chmel, the last pre-WWII director of *The Gramophone Co. (Czechosl.) Ltd.*



031

COLUMBIA GRAND OPERA RECORD

Matrices *Columbia Graphophone Co.*, 30 cm, 1912

Label reserved for recordings of important operatic singers. Initially in red colour, was introduced in 1903.



032-a

CONCERT RECORD "GRAMOPHONE"

Matrices *The Gramophone Co. Ltd./DGAG*, 25 cm, 1912–1914

Records with label of this design were since 1912 pressed in the new plant in Ústí/Aussig in Northern Bohemia.



032-b

CONCERT RECORD "GRAMOPHONE"

Matrices *The Gramophone Co. Ltd.*, 25 cm, 1912–1914

Another variation of the same label. Later these labels, being on sale, obtained overprint GRANÁT.



032-c

CONCERT RECORD "GRAMOPHONE"

Matrices *The Gramophone Co. Ltd.*, 25 cm, 1912–1914

Not very common design of the same label, in terms of time referring to previous trade mark of "writing angel".



032-d

CONCERT RECORD "GRAMOPHONE"

Matrices *Victor*, 25 cm, cca 1921

Reissue of this recording, originally made in New York, was in Ústí/Aussig pressing plant released on label of this design.



032-e

CONCERT RECORD "GRAMOPHONE"

Matrices GC, DGG and Victor, 25 cm, 1912–1914

This green colour of the label indicates lower price category of the record.



032-f

CONCERT RECORD "GRAMOPHONE"

Matrices The Gramophone Co. Ltd., 25 cm, cca 1915

On this "low-budget" label (war design?) were released reissues of older GC recordings. This particular recording was made in 1911.



032-g

CONCERT RECORD "GRAMOPHONE"

Matrices GC/Victor, 25 cm, 1922–1924

Very last design of CRG label pressed in Czechoslovakia. In 1924, the words were changed on *His Master's Voice*.



033

CORDY ELECTRO=RECORD

Matrices Kalliope/Triumphon, 25 cm, 1931–1932

Sole distributor of records with this label, made by *Electrocord Co.* of Leipzig, was in Czechoslovakia company of Mrs. Marie Zlonická, wife of popular singer Jaroslav Zlonický.



034

ČECHOSLOVÁK / ČECHOSLOVÁK V ANGLII

Non-commercial recordings, matrices BBC and transfers, 25 and 30 cm, 1941–1944

Records with this label were in Great Britain published by Czechoslovak exile magazines of the same name. Pressed both on shellac and vinyl.



035

ČESKO-SLOVENSKÝ ROZHLAS

Non-commercial recordings, 25 and 30 cm, 1938–1939, 1945

This label was a variant of the *Radiojournal* label (see). These non-commercial recordings were used internally, in broadcasting of Czech Radio.



036

ČESKOSLOVENSKÝ ROZHLAS

Non-commercial recordings, Decelith foil, 25 and 30 cm, 1946

The building featured on this label housed technical background of Czechoslovak Radio and until May of 1945 also served for broadcasting.



037

DACAPO-RECORD

Matrices Dacapo and Janus (Czech program), 25 cm, 1910

Made by *Dacapo-Record Company* of Berlin with its branch in Vienna. In Great Britain was in 1911–1914 the sole distributor of this label William A. Barraud, brother of author of the famous Nipper & Gramophone painting, Mr. Francis J. Barraud.





038-a, 038-b

DANUBIUS RECORD

Matrices *Esta*, 25 cm, 1931–1932

Label of Hungarian company *Sternberg Ármin es. és kir. udvari Hangszergyár* (*Sternberg Record Co.*) presented also in Prague by *Esta* made recordings. The *MRG* abbreviation stands for pressing plant *Magyar Ruggyantaárugyár* of Budapest.



039

DERBY-RECORD

Various matrices, 25 cm, 1910

Produced by *Turmalin-Fabrik Derby-Record Co.* of Berlin. Czech repertoire/recordings were offered by the company of *Adolf Schlesinger*, *Mariahilfstrasse 89A*, Vienna.



040-a, 040-b

DESKA LIDO/LIDO ČESKÁ DESKA

Matrices *Esta* and others, 25 cm, 1932–1933

These were cheap sublabels of the *Esta* company, with a “cheap” repertoire, too, mostly taken also from older on-sale matrices from *Kristall*, *Artiphon* and German *Ultrapphon*.



041

DESKA HARMONIE

Matrices *Columbia*, 25 cm, 1910–1911

Made-on-order label with older recordings transcribed from matrices of cylinders and records of *Columbia*. In Prague, these records were offered by the company of *Josef Krejčík*.



042

DESKA SIRENA

Matrices Homophon Co., 25 cm, about 1910

These records were pressed by the *Sirena Sprechmaschinen-Vertriebs-GmbH* company of Berlin for Prague wholesalers *Kettner & Riedl*. The peacock-tail-like fan above the spindle hole also appears on the *Lyrophon* label (see); whether there was any business connection between the two labels is unknown.



043

DESKY-MOZART

Matrices Lyrophon, 25 cm, 1909

The company of one Josef Kukla in Prague boasted that its new records, *Desky Mozart*, were twice as durable as records issued by any other manufacturer. In fact, Mr. Kukla merely used matrices from *Lyrophon* which were already on sale and covered their labels with his own stickers.



044-a, 044-b

DESKY SVATOPLUK

Matrices Beka, 25 cm, 1907–1911

This labels of unidentified Czech dealer featured the usual repertoire of brass bands and comic speeches. Its matrices were obtained from the *Beka* company.



045

DECCA

Matrices Decca Records Inc., 25 cm, 1944

Dance band of this White-Russia immigrant performed and recorded since 1925 till 1938 in Czechoslovakia, mostly under his artistic name of Harry Harden. Then Harden left for the USA to continue his musical career there.



046

DISCO DI PROPAGANDA

Matrices of Italian origin (?), 30 cm, cca 1933

Promotional record of the large concert agency and music publishing house *Moltrasio & Luzzatto* of Milano. Tenor of *National Theatre* in Prague Tino (Antonín) Šimek recorded in 1932 his only side for *Ultraphon* label.



047

DISKOTEKA

Matrices Ultraphon, 30 cm, 1938

As explained on this label, it was intended to be "a series of gramophone recordings of important music and speeches for both family and school". Nevertheless, only three records with this label were published.



048

DISQUE POUR GRAMOPHONE

Matrix GC, 25 cm, 1905

The French version of a label with recordings made by GC. It is believed that of Czech artists only Jan Kubelík was released on this French label.



049

DIXI

Matrices C. Lindström A. G., 25 cm, 1933

Dixi was made-on-order for the departmental store chain *JE-PA* of *Jentsch and Pachner Co.* The matrices, obtained from C. Lindström A. G., were recorded in Berlin and pressed in the factory of GC in Ústí/Aussig in Czechoslovakia.



050

EDEN-RECORD

Matrices Hermann Maassen, 25 cm, 1912–1913

Another from the series of made-to-order labels pressed in Hermann Maassen's factory in North Bohemia. Actually, these records were produced not fully "kosher", according the law.



051

EDISON BELL RADIO

Matrices Edison Bell Radio, 20 cm, 1928

Only a few records with this label were found, although about 200 recordings with Czech artists were made in a room of the *Flora Hotel* in Prague.



052

EDISON BELL PENKALA RECORD

Matrices Edison Bell Co., 25 cm, 1927

A Czech trace in Croatia: pianist and band leader Richard Šimaček was of a Czech origin, but no other information relating to his jazz-band are known.



053-a, 053-b

EDISON RECORD

Matrices Edison, 25 cm, 1912–1928

Out of the Czech interpreters, beside ethnic recordings of a few Czech-American bands, we find on these labels only recordings of Emma Destinnová and Váša Příhoda.



054

E REKORD

Matrices Artiphon, 25 cm, 1928–1932

Manufactured by Hermann Maassen. The 'E' stands for "electrical", since the angular flashes either side of the logo suggest that the new technology of electrical recording was used in the production.



055

E. BERLINER'S GRAMOPHONE

Single-sided records, 17 cm, 1900–1901 (recordings in Czech)

These shellac discs recorded in Vienna present historically the very first recordings of Czech singers.



056-a, 056-b

ELEKTRA UNIVERSAL

Matrices Artiphon, 25 cm, 1932

This is another example of the exploitation of *Artiphon* matrices by an unidentified Czech distributor. Probably a very small series of records.



057-a

ELECTROLA

Matrices GC/DGG/Lindström, 25 cm, 1940

Beside here documented recordings of the operetta singer Jarmila Kširová, there were found no other recordings by Czech interpreters of popular music on this label, with exception of some reissues from matrices of sister companies.



057-b

ELECTROLA

Matrices GC/DGG/Lindström, 25 and 30 cm, 1938–1941

Some Czech artists recorded for this label also in Prague. A few releases were published in 1940–1943 also on *Hlas jeho pána* label (see).



058-a, 058-b

ELEKTROTON

Matrices Esta, Pallas and Artiphon, 25 cm, 1932–1938

Catalogues of Yugoslavian *Elektroton* company offered as late as in 1941 these records pressed from matrices of *Esta*, as well as from matrices of *Pallas*, recorded already in 1932.



059

ELITE-RECORD

Matrices Polyphon, 25 cm, 1913–1914

The Czech repertoire of this label was pressed from the matrices also appearing on the contemporary *Patria*, *Fox* and *Arena* labels. They were ordered through a catalogue published by *Novitas* company owned by Diego Fuchs.



060

ERMOPHON

Matrices Artiphon, 25 cm, 1932

This is another example of the exploitation of *Artiphon* matrices by an unidentified Czech distributor. Probably a very small series of records made in Obergrund pressing plant.



061-a, 061-b

ESTA FLEXIBLE

Matrices Kalliope, Artiphon and Vox, 25 cm, 1930

The very first *Esta* records were made of "flexible, unbreakable, pliable" celluloid by "a new electro process" in the factory of the *Forresta* company in Prague.



061-c, 058-d

Matrices Esta, 25 cm, 1930–1931

Another colour variations of the *Esta* labels. Its first recordings from own matrices begun this first Czechoslovak gramophone company to press on shellac records in autumn of 1930.



061-e - 061-h

ESTa

Matrices *Está*, 25 cm, 1931–1934

A few of frequently used designs of early labels of the *Está* records.



ESTA



061-i – 061-L

ESTA

Matrices Esta and Le chant du monde (L), 25 cm, 1932–1935

A few more examples of frequently used designs of early labels of the Esta records.



061-m

ESTA SPECIAL

Matrices *Kristall*, 25 cm, 1933–1934

This *Esta* semi-label was positioned over a *Kristall* original after this German company stopped to cooperate with *Esta* and left Czechoslovak market at the end of 1932.



061-n

ESTA MACCABI

Matrices *Esta*, 25 cm, 1933

This custom label was made for a gymnastic festival, the Maccabiah Games (sometimes referred to as the Jewish Olympics), the first of which was held in 1932 and which are still being held.



061-o, 061-p

ESTA

Matrices *Esta*, 25 cm, 1934–1937

Another designs of *Esta* labels, used on the records pressed in the mid–1930's.



061-q

ESTÁ ČOS

Matrices *Está*, 25 cm, 1931–1932

Custom-made label used on the records produced on behalf of the Czech gymnastic organization *Sokol* for its rally, which took place in Prague in 1932.



061-r

ESTÁ LASIBO

Matrices *Está*, 25 cm, 1935

As with the earlier release (see previous label), the same primary-colour combination was used except in reverse order. These records were made as a teaching tool to help young children learn how to sing.



061-s

ESTÁ BAŤA

Matrices *Está*, 25 cm, 1932

The label of this record, made on behalf of automotive branch of *Baťa* company, commemorates the tragic death of its founder, Tomáš Baťa, in a plane crash in 1932.



061-t

ESTÁ KONRAD HENLEIN

Matrices *Está*, 25 cm, 1934

Although manufactured by *Está*, this label shows no corporate name, suggesting this was a privately commissioned item, not for sale to the general public.



061-u, 061-v

ESTA

Matrices *Esta*, 25 cm, 1934 - 1938

These labels were used for advertising/promotional records containing spoken word or songs praising products of various companies. Non-commercial records without catalogue numbers.



061-w, 061-x

ESTA

Matrices *Esta*, 25 cm, 1936

Another variations of the labels of non-commercial *Esta* records with political speeches, or of a promotional content.



061-y

ESTA

Matrices *Esta*, 25 cm, 1942

This feminine-looking label was used for recordings of the well-known Czech actress Jiřina Štěpničková reciting from the script of stage plays.



061-z

ESTA

Matrices *Esta*, 25 and 30 cm, 1946

This design was used for the sample records after 1945, only a few months before the decree of nationalization of gramophone industry was implemented.



061-za

ESTA ČAVU

Matrices *Pathé*, 25 cm, 1928

These custom-made records were recorded in Czechoslovakia on behalf of the Czech Academy of Science and Arts by French technicians of *Pathé* company and pressed in 1931–1932 in *Esta* factory in Prague.



061-zb

ESTA ČAVU

Matrices *Esta*, 25 cm, 1937

Another variation of the label used for the records made on behalf of the Czech Academy of Science and Arts, containing speeches of politicians and of important representatives of Czechoslovak cultural life.



061-zc, 061-zd

ESTA

Matrices *Esta*, 25 cm, 1942

These records presented laughing stories told by the slightly blockheaded father Spejbl and his reprobate son Hurvínek. Later reissues of these records were pressed on standard single-coloured labels already.



061-ze, 061-zf

ESTA

Matrices *Esta*, 25 cm, 1942

A set of five records with this label presented texts from the popular book "Broučci", by author Jan Karafiát, telling stories of a young firefly and its family. Later reissues of this set were, after 1946, pressed also on *Národní diskotéka* and *Supraphon* labels.



061-zg

ESTA

Matrices *Esta*, 30 cm, 1938

This label was used for the record issued at the occasion of the X. festival of gymnastic-patriotical movement *Sokol*, which took place in Prague in 1938.



061-zh

ESTA

Matrices *Esta*, 25 and 30 cm, 1942-1946

This colour variation of the label was used for recordings of so called "higher popular music" published by *Esta* in the series of catalogue numbers 6000 and 2000.



061-zch

ESTA

Matrices *Esta*, 30 cm, 1943

The only two recordings of popular songs that *Esta* let press on a record of 30 cm diameter contain chansons sung by leading Czech chansonnette Mila Spazierová-Hezká.



061-zi

ESTA

Matrices *Esta*, 30 cm, 1944

An unusual "folk-art" treatment of this label, with laurel branches symbolizing victory, was used for these records serving as one of the awards in a contest of the Melantrich publishing house, at this point of time the owner of *Esta* factory.



061-zj, 061-zk

ESTA

Matrices *Esta*, 30 cm, 1943

Labels depicting the building of *National Theatre* in Prague were used for recordings of the operatic singers engaged there.



061-zL, 061-zm

ESTA

Matrices *Esta*, 25 and 30 cm, 1945–1946

After the WWII were on these labels published reissues of recordings pressed initially on records bearing the two previously depicted labels.



061-zn, 061-zo

ESTA

Matrices *Esta*, 25 and 30 cm, 1940–1945

The two most frequent designs of labels used during the WWII.



061-zp, 061-zq

ESTA

Matrices *Esta*, 25 cm, 1940–1942

Labels of non-commercial sample records used for demonstration purposes only or for passing judgement on quality of each given recording.



061-zr, 061-zs

ESTA

Matrices *Esta*, 25 and 30 cm, after 1945

The standard labels after the WWII were designed by well known Czech artist František Muzika.



061-zt, 061-zu

ESTA

Matrices *Esta*, 25 and 30 cm, after 1945

Labels of the previous two designs were printed also in several other colours – black, light blue, beige and light green.



061-zv

ESTA

Matrices Esta, 30 cm, 1933

On the label of this colour were issued the very first recordings of symphonic music from own matrices of Esta company.



61-zx

ESTA

Matrices Esta, 30 cm, 1945

These recordings were made by Esta on behalf of the Rabbi school in Kežmarok, Slovakia.



061-zy

ESTA

Matrices Esta, 30 cm, 1946

One of the last designs of the Esta label used after the WWII for recordings of the symphonic music.



061-zz

ESTA Lion with Lyre

Matrices Esta and Ultraphon, 25 cm and 30 cm, 1947–1950

In 1946, as a result of nationalization, Esta merged with Ultraphon to be transformed into "national enterprise" Gramofonové zdvody with leading label of Supraphon.



062

EX DISCOTHECA

Non-commercial recording, matrices *Ultraphon*, 30 cm, 1944

This record was made by *Ultraphon* as a private recording on behalf of two prominent actors of *National Theatre* in Prague. It is in fact the hard-core pornographic version of the balcony scene from Edmund Rostand's drama "Cyrano of Bergerac".



063

EXTRAPHON/ЭКСТРАФОНЪ

Matrices *Extraphon/Экстрафонъ*, 25 cm, 1912

In this recording, the waltz by composer Archibald Joyce (with the original title "Autumn Dream") is performed by an unidentified "Czech Salon Orchestra" directed by one Mr. Jarov (?).



064-a

FAVORITE RECORD

Matrices *Favorite*, 18 and 25 cm, 1907

Gramophone company *Schallplatten-Fabrik-Favorite-Werke* (see) of Berlin was established in 1904. The first Czech recordings were in 1905 pressed on label of violet colour and of diameter of 18 cm.



064-b

FAVORITE RECORD

Matrices *Favorite*, 25 cm, 1907

Label of the standard black colour used in 1907–1911. Numerous recordings from this time were later reissued both on *Omega* and *Beka* labels (see).



064-c

FAVORITE RECORD

Matrices Favorite, 25 cm, 1908

Non-commercial sample record made on behalf of operatic singer Štěpán Chodounský, historically the very first collector of records and cylinders in Bohemia.



064-d

FAVORITE RECORD

Matrices Favorite, 25 cm, 1909

Partiotically tinted label was chosen for recording of the Czech national anthem backed by the speech of senator Václav Klofáč, later on one of the founders of Czechoslovak Republic.



064-e

FAVORITE RECORD

Matrices Favorite, 25 cm, 1912–1914

This attractive design of the *Favorite* label was introduced in 1912. The Czech program was expanded by a few composition of Karel Hašler, but still the most recordings for this label was being recorded by the Herman Brass Band.



064-f

FAVORITE RECORD

Matrices Favorite/Lindström, 25 cm, 1913–1917

The last pre-WWI design of the *Favorite* label had a very poor quality of print on backgrounds of various colours – beige, red or green.



064-g

FAVORITE RECORD

Matrices Favorite, 25 cm, 1921

On records with this very last design of the *Favorite* label we find only reissues of some pre-WWI recordings. De iure the *Favorite* company ceased to exist in 1927.



065

FENDRYCHOVA OZVUČKA DVOŘÁK

Matrices Globos, 25 cm, 1906

No record exists of a publisher by the name of Fendrych and his tuning fork (ozvučka). The name of the tune "Sousedovic hrušky" (Neighbour's pears) is based on the German original, "Kirschen in Nachbars Garten" (which means *cherries*, not pears!).



066-a, 066-b

FONOTIPIA

Matrices Societa Italiana di Fonotipia Milano, 27 and 35 cm, 1904–1922

Recordings issued in the catalogue numbers series of 69000 were in 1905–1907 pressed also on the records of 35 cm diameter.



066-c

FONOTIPIA

Matrices Societa Italiana di Fonotipia Milano, 27 cm, 1920

Reissues of the older recordings made in 1905–1907 were, after 1918, published on these labels of single-coloured print.



066-d

FONOTIPIA

Matrices Societa Italiana di Fonotipia Milano, 27 cm, 1919

The export, slightly simplified variation of the previous labels, manufactured for market in the USA.

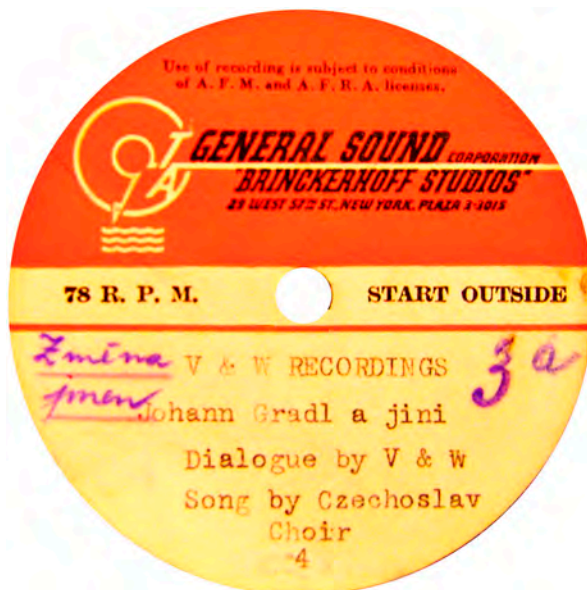


067

FOX-RECORD

Matrices Beka and Kalliope, 25 cm, 1913

This label appeared just for a short time after Diego Fuchs had to stop production of his *Patria* labels when DGG sued him for using his fox-and-gramophon logo, too similar to the well-known "Nipper" image.



068

GENERAL SOUND CORPORATION

Non-commercial recording foils, 30 cm, 1942

This recording was made in New York (not in Hollywood, where the political sketches of Voskovec & Werich usually were recorded) because of the need to record also the Jaroslav Ježek's Czechoslovak Choir domiciled in New York.



069

GORA

Product of an unknown company, 20 cm, 1935

This picture disc made of the varnished cardboard was pressed on behalf of Czech singer and entrepreneur Jára Kohout on the occasion of the first showing of the operetta "Nezapomeň" in a musical theatre in Prague.



070

GEVAPHONE

Non-commercial recording foils, 25 and 30 cm, 1944

Product of the German Agfa-Gevaert Co. enabling to make the instantaneous recordings by engraving needles. Since the end of the 1930's were these foils used in the Czech Radio.



071-a

GRAMMOPHON

Matrices DGG, 25 and 30 cm, 1935

This label was used for recordings sold in Germany. For sale outside Germany were recordings of Váše Příhoda pressed on the export Polydor label.



071-b, 071-c

GRAMMOPHON

Matrices Esta, 25 cm, 1939–1940

Manufactured by the Deutsche Grammophon GmbH in Berlin. It is not clear at whom this series of records with Czech popular songs was targeted.



072

GRAMOLA

Matrices GC/Victor, 25 and 30 cm, 1926–1928

Presented as a product of the pressing plant in Ústí/Aussig. The paste-over would cover the image of Nipper the dog listening to his master's voice. This label is known also in black colour (not documented here).



073

GRAMPLASTMASS/ГРАМПЛАСТМАСС

Matrices Supraphon, 25 cm, 1956

On this label was in the USSR released, among other recordings made by *Supraphon*, foxtrot "China Boy", recorded in Prague by the Gustav Brom dance orchestra.



074-a

GRAMOPHONE CONCERT RECORD

Matrices GC, 25 and 30 cm, 1902–1907

Initially, these records were manufactured as single-sided only, after 1904 also as double-sided. In 1907, the word "Typewriter" disappeared.



074-b

GRAMOPHONE CONCERT RECORD

Matrices GC, 25 cm, 1907–1911

When in 1907 the GC changed its name (no typewriters anymore), the Czech program was pressed also on this cheaper green label.



074-c

GRAMOPHONE CONCERT RECORD

Matrices GC, single-sided, 25 cm, 1902

Privilege of red label enjoyed Kubelik just a few years. After he had made recordings for *Fonotipia*, his recordings were returned on standard black label.



074-d

GRAMOPHONE CONCERT RECORD

Matrices GC, 25 cm, 1913

On this very last pre-WWI design of the label appears already the logo of Nipper the dog with the gramophone. The overprint **GRANÁT** indicates the lower price category.



075-a

GRAMOPHONE "MELBA" RECORD

Matrices GC, single-sided, 30 cm, 1904

This label bears the name of the important Australian operatic singer Nelly Melba, here accompanied on violin by the Czech virtuoso Jan Kubelik.



075-b

GRAMOPHONE "MELBA" RECORD

Matrices GC, single-sided, 30 cm, 1912

Reissue of the previous recording was already manufactured in then brand new pressing plant in Ústí n./Labem/Aussig a./Elbe.



075-c, 075-d

GRAMOPHONE "MELBA" RECORD

Matrices GC, single-sided, 30 cm, 1912

Another designs of the same labels with reissues of older recordings, manufactured in then brand new pressing plant in Ústí n./Labem/Aussig a./ Elbe.



076-a

GRAMOPHONE "MONARCH" RECORD

Matrices G+T, single-sided, 30 cm, 1903

The very first design of the 30 cm diameter record, with a recording of Czech soprano Berta Foerster-Lauterer and tenor Leo Slezak.



076-b

GRAMOPHONE "MONARCH" RECORD

Matrices The Gramophone Co. Ltd., 30 cm, 1911

The denominations "Concert" and "Monarch" indicated diameter of records – 25cm, respectively 30 cm.



077

GRAMPHONE RECORD

Matrices G+T, single- and double-sided, 18 cm, 1902–1905

Label of the very first records recorded by the GC in Prague. This small diameter was subsequently replaced by records of 25 cm (Concert) and 30 cm (Monarch) diameter.



078

GRAMMOPHONHAUS

Single-sided, 25 cm, years of production unknown

This record from a company of Vienna contains probably the very first vocal recording in Slovak language made in Europe. In the U.S., however, the Slovak immigrants were already making numerous records at that time.



079-a, 079-b

"GRAMPHONE=RECORD"

Matrices GC/DGG, 25 cm, 1922

Recordings for Czechoslovakia had the prefix T (Tchéchoslovaquie).



080

GROHAG

Matrices Ultraphon and others, 25 cm, 1932

Some recordings of Czechoslovak *Ultraphon* with vocals in German language were published also on this label of German *Grosshandelsgesellschaft*. The alleged *Jazz-Symfonie-Orchester Joe London* is in fact the dance band of R. A. Dvorský.



081

HARRISON RECORDING STUDIOS

Non-commercial recordings, 25 and 30 cm, 1939

The last speech of the former Czechoslovak president E. Beneš in the USA before he moved to Great Britain to spend the rest of the WWII there. His speech was broadcast by a New York radio station then.



082

HELIOFON

Matrices Homophon, 25 cm, 1925

Label of the "Factory of Turntables and Machines for Household" of Jan Pubal domiciled in the small town of Volyně in South Bohemia. His records were pressed in the *Homokord* plant in Prague VI.



083

HELIOPHON-RECORD

Matrices Beka/Columbia, 25 cm, 1908–1910

For these records obtained its distributor masters from both *Beka* and *Columbia* and these were, at the same time, pressed also on records bearing *Omega*, *Scala* or *Desky Svatopluk* labels.



084-a

HIS MASTER'S VOICE

30 cm, 1931

In this "celebrity label" honouring the revered first president of Czechoslovakia, Tomas Garrigue Masaryk (1850–1937), was recorded in 1928 at the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the newly founded Czechoslovak Republic.



084-b

HIS MASTER'S VOICE

30 cm, 1933

This HMV celebrity label pictures Bedřich Smetana, the composer of the opera *The Bartered Bride*. Reissues of this series of 15 records was already pressed on the standard HMV labels.



084-c

HIS MASTER'S VOICE

Matrices GC and Victor, 25 and 30 cm, 1924–1947

The first appearance of this label went through several small changes, but the basic design of Nipper listening in to the voice of his master remained the same.



084-d

HIS MASTER'S VOICE

Matrices GC, 25 cm, 1935

Custom-made label used for two records released to commemorate the 1st Convention of the Czech Catholics, taking place in Prague in 1935.

"His Master's Voice"



**PŘÍSTROJE a DESKY
ZDE NA SKLADĚ
TÉŽ NA NEJPOHODLNĚJŠÍ
SPLÁTKY.**



084-e

HIS MASTER'S VOICE

Matrices GC and Victor, 25 cm and 30 cm, 1937–1939

On the first records in this series with prefixes JW and JX were pressed recordings of the American swing bands and later on also of the Czech operatic singers.



084-f

HIS MASTER'S VOICE

Matrices Electrola, 25 cm, 1940

The last design of *HMV* label in Czechoslovakia. When using of English language was not allowed anymore in occupied Bohemia and Moravia, translation of *HMV* slogan into Czech language (*Hlas jeho pána*) was used.



084-g

HIS MASTER'S VOICE

Matrices GC, 25 and 30 cm, 1945–1947

After the WWII, this new design of the *HMV* label was introduced for the reissues of mainly pre-war recordings and for a few newly made recordings.





085-a

HLAS JEHO PÁNA

Matrices GC/Electrola, 25 and 30 cm, 1939–1941

Reissues of the older recordings and some new releases made in Prague could be, after 1940, pressed on this “updated” Nipper label in Czech language.



085-b

HLAS JEHO PÁNA

Matrices Electrola, 25 cm, 1941–1943

The catalogue numbers of the records with this label follow the numbering of the HMV records published in 1937–1940.



086-a, 086-b

HOME SPECIAL RECORD

Matrices Artiphon, 25 cm, 1923

The cheap records from the Hermann Maassen's factory, produced by the “sandwich” method. Usually, the matrices were sold to wholesalers who let them press on their own labels.



087-a, 087-b

HOMOCORD

Matrices *Homophon-Company GmbH*, 25 cm, 1927–1928

With introduction of the electric recording process most of the labels changed their designs a bit – usually the word “Electric” was added.



087-c, 087-d

HOMOCORD

Matrices *Homophon-Company GmbH*, 25 cm, 1929–1932

The last designs of the labels with the Czech program. Since 1932, some older *Homocord* matrices were pressed also on the *Odeon* label.



088

HOMOCORD LILIPUT

Matrices Homophon-Company GmbH, 18 cm, 1925–1929

About 40 Czech recordings were placed on these records of a small diameter. Although priced very moderately, they met no success with the audience.



089

HOMOCORD-ODEON-PARLOPHON

Matrices Lindström A. G., 25 cm, 1932

The promotional record with samples of the best from the Czech repertoire of popular music on all three labels of the *Lindström Co.*



090-a

HOMOKORD

Matrices Homophon-Company GmbH, 25 cm, 1909

The first design of the label with the Czech program. Most of the recordings provided the notorious brass band directed by Arnošt Herman.



090-b

HOMOKORD

Matrices Homophon-Company GmbH, 25 cm, 1910–1914

In 1907, due to the similar pronunciation of words "Homophon" and "Zonophone", name of the *Homophon* label had to be changed.

HOMOKORD





090-c

HOMOKORD

Matrices Homophon-Company GmbH, 25 and 30 cm, 1921–1928

On the records with this label we find voluminous Czech program. More over, many Czech wholesalers used *Homokord* matrices for their own labels, for example *Maraton* or *Rubin* (see).



090-d

HOMOKORD ELECTRO

Matrices Homophon-Company GmbH, 25 cm, 1928

In 1927, the mother company swallowed English *Columbia*, so, at the same time, gained access to the recording system *Western Electric*. So the label changed its colour and the word “*Electro*” was added.



091

HOMPHON-RECORD

Matrices Homophon-Company GmbH, 25 cm, 1913–1914

This was a cheap label with practically the same repertoire as found on the common *Homokord* labels from that time. In Germany the *Homphon* label was distributed by the *Titania Record Co.*, in Prague it was offered by wholesalers *Kettner & Riedl*.



092

HSH

Matrices Hljóðfaeraverzlun Sigríðar Helgadóttur S. F., 25 cm, 1953

The Czech trace in Iceland: Jan Morávek (1912–1970) with his band accompanies on this record popular singer A. Clausen. Morávek studied at the conservatory in Vienna and moved to Iceland in 1948.



093-a, 093-b

IMPERIAL

Matrices Vocalion/Crystalate, 25 cm, 1940

The singer and actress Henriette Schäffler was born 1913 in Karlsbad/Karlovy Vary, studied in Prague and as an actress performed in German theatres in Brün/Brno and Karlsbad/Karlovy Vary. Since mid-1930's played saxophone, sung and recorded for the *Ultraphon* label with the Harry Osten band. In 1941, she married band leader Primo Angeli.

Vereinigte Schallplattenwerke Janus-Minerva G.m.b.H.
Berlin SW. 48, Friedrichstr. 13.
Wien, Magdalenenstr. 73 • HANNOVER • Morchenstern i. Böh.



094-a, 094-b

JANUS-RECORD

Matrices Vereinigte Schallplattenfabrik Janus-Minerva, 25 cm, 1907–1914

Beside recordings produced by the mother company we find on this label also some Czech recordings pressed from renumbered matrices of *Beka* and *Polyphon*.



095-a, 095-b

JEN PRO Dospělé

Matrices *Esta*, 25 cm, 1933

This sub-label of *Esta* contained dubious sex-oriented comic monologues/sketches. The label name means "For Adults Only", the three question marks are equivalent of the "XXX" designation which is used today for "adult" material.



096

JUMBO-RECORD

Matrices *Jumbo/Odeon*, 25 cm, 1908–1912

Jumbo Record Factory of Berlin was in 1909 swallowed by the *International Talking Machine Company m. b. H.*, which on this label introduced also its own recordings.



097

JUMBOLA-RECORD

Matrices *Jumbo/Odeon*, 25 cm, 1910–1912 (Czech program)

This another, cheaper label of the *Jumbo Record Factory* was introduced in mid-1909 and already towards the end of the same year was advertised as another product of the *ITMC m. b. H.*



098-a, 098-b

KALLIOPE

Matrices Kalliope Gesellschaft m. b. H., 25 cm, 1906

The oldest, rather ugly design of the label with the Czech program. This "neutral" design was chosen on purpose, so that the label could be pasted over with the stickers of various shopkeepers.



098-c

KALLIOPE

Matrices Kalliope Gesellschaft m. b. H., 25 cm, 1910–1912

Much more good-looking label of the same company. Matrices with the Czech program were pressed also on other made-on-order labels until 1914 - see for example *Olimpia* and *Koncertní desky Lucerna*.



099-a

KALLIOPE ELECTRO RECORD

Matrices Triumphon GmbH, 20 cm, 1929–1930

On records with this label and of this diameter only the Czech program is known, allegedly as a result of the cooperation with the company *Edison-Bell-Radio* (see).



099-b

KALLIOPE ELECTRO RECORD

Matrices Triumphon GmbH, 25 cm, 1929–1930

The Czech program was recorded in Berlin between August 1929 and September 1930, shortly after this date the company went bankrupt. Some recording were pressed later on the *Melodycord* and *Cordy* labels (see).



099-c

KALLIOPE ELECTRO RECORD

Matrices Artiphon, 25 cm, 1936

Label in black colour made in Austria, targeted at the large Czech minority living there. The Czech repertoire was published on this label till 1939.



100

KISMET

Matrices Lindström AG/Okeh, 25 cm, 1927–1928

A smaller series of the recordings destined for people living in eastern Slovakia and Ruthenia, then a part of Czechoslovakia.



101-a, 101-b

KONCERTNÍ DESKY LUCERNA

Matrices Kalliope and Beka, 25 cm, 1909–1912

“H & V Praha” refers to the *Hlad & Vlas* company, which had its store in the newly build large *Lucerna* (Lantern) palais in the city centre, the very first concrete/iron building in Prague.



102-a

KRISTALL ELEKTRO RECORD

Matrices Deutsche Crystalate Schallplatten GmbH, 25 cm, 1929

Label of the Czech representation of the German branch of the British mother company *Gramophone Record Manufacturing Co., Ltd.* of London.



102-b

KRISTALL ELEKTRO RECORD

Matrices Deutsche Crystalate Schallplatten GmbH, 25 cm, 1930–1932

Since the beginning of 1932 pressed these matrices *Esta* in Prague. Later on released *Esta* some of them on its own label in the series of the catalogue numbers E 3000.



103-a, 103-b

LETĚM – MEZINÁRODNÍ DESKA SPORTU

Matrices Artiphon, 25 cm, 1932-34

Recordings on this obscurely named label (*In a Flight - International Record of Sports*) had nothing to do with any flight or sports, and definitely they were not international. Recordings were in fact the same as can be found on the cheap labels *Nubaphon*, *Monopol* or *Rektophon* (see).



104

LEOPHON RECORD

Matrices Artiphon, 25 cm, 1924

The Leophon records were pressed by Hermann Maassen on behalf of the wholesaler *Sigmund Geiger Co.*, domiciled in the Moravian city of Brno. Since 1912,



105-a

LINDEX

Matrices C. Lindström A.G., 15 cm, 1924-1930

Beside fairy tales and children's ditties with piano accompaniment we find on this label instrumental versions of popular tunes played by anonymous dance bands.



105-b

LINDEX

Matrices C. Lindström A.G., 15 cm, 1924–1930

This colour variation of the previous label was used for recordings of the Czech and Slovak national anthems.



106

LINDSTRÖM AMERICAN RECORD

Matrices C. Lindström A.G./Okeh, 25 cm, 1924–1927

On this label with the Czech program we find only recordings made in the USA by our Czech-American countrymen.



107

LINGUAPHONE LANGUAGE RECORD

Matrices The Linguaphone Institute, 25 cm, 1933

For these courses of the foreign languages usually actors or personalities of the given country, governing faultless pronunciation, were engaged. In case of the Czech language, the actor of *National Theatre* František Smolík was engaged.



108

LONDON TRANSCRIPTION SERVICE, THE

Non-commercial recordings, matrices BBC, 25 and 30 cm, 1942–1945

Produced by *BBC World Service* during the WWII. Beside political propaganda and transcription of *BBC* broadcastings to then occupied Czechoslovakia these records contained also songs and music performed by Czechoslovak soldiers fighting in Great Britain against Nazis.

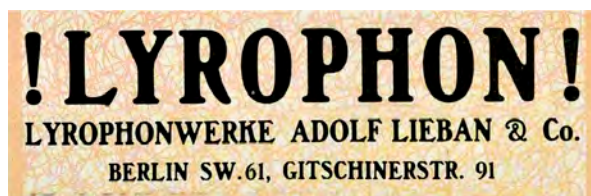


109

LONGOPHON

Recording of Longophon C. O. B., single-sided, 20 cm, 1934

Picture discs of Mr. C. O. Bestehorn from Germany featured mainly recordings of film melodies. This presented record contains a song from the Austrian movie "Frasquita" directed by Karel Lamač and starring soprano Jarmila Novotná.



110-a

LYROPHON

Matrices Lyrophonwerke A. Lieban & Co., single-sided, 25 cm, 1906

The founder of this company, Adolf Lieban, was born in the South-Moravian town of Ivančice. Some recordings from the *Lyrophon* label were later reissued on the *Beka* and *Favorite* labels (see).



110-b, 110-c

LYROPHON

Matrices Lyrophonwerke A. Lieban & Co., 25 cm, 1906–1909

The Czech recordings on this label present usual repertoire we found on the records of other companies of the same time, operating in Bohemia or Moravia.



111

MAGYAR DIVATCSARNOK

Matrices *Ester*, 25 cm, 1931–1932

Records with this label were produced on behalf of the Hungarian *Sternberg Record Co.*, to be sold in the departmental store of the same name in Budapest.



112

MELODIA RECORD PLATTE

Matrices *Columbia/Beka*, 25 cm, cca 1910–1913

Label of the German company of *Grünbaum & Thomas AG* distributed by the wholesaler *Georg Bernhardt Melodia-Spezial Musik-Haus* of Leipzig.



113-a, 113-b

MARATON /MARATON REKORD

Matrices *Homokord*, 25 cm, 1921–1927

These records were distributed by wholesalers *Antonín & Arnošt Fučík Co.* of Prague, who obtained their matrices from *Homokord*. The “Maraton orchestra” is in fact one of many manifestations of the notorious brass band led by Arnošt Herman; his band made about 5000 recordings (!) between 1902 and 1930, for practically all labels with the Czech repertoire.



114-a, 114-b

MELODYCORD

Matrices Triumphon/Kalliope, 25 cm, 1931

On this label were published recordings of *Kalliope* after this company went to bankruptcy in 1930. Alleged "Melodycord jazz orchestr" is in fact Sam Baskini's dance band directed by the Czech composer and bandleader Miloš Smatek.



115-a

MERCURY

Matrices Esta and Ultraphon, 25 cm, 1946–1948

The export label of the national enterprise *Gramophone Company* dating from the time just before cancelling of all contracts covering exchange of recordings with this Chicago company.



115-b

MERCURY

Matrices Mercury Record Corp., 25 cm, 1946–1948

According to the contract of exchange of recordings were in Czechoslovakia pressed also records featuring top contemporary jazz musicians from the USA.



116

METAFON-RECORD

Matrices *Homophon/Hermann Maassen*, 25 cm, 1913

The made-to-order label of *Metallwaren Fabriks* of Budapest pressed in Bohemia by Hermann Maassen using the *Homophon* matrices.



117

MEZINÁRODNÍ DISKOTÉKA

Matrices *GC/Victor*, 25 and 30 cm, cca 1950

This "International Discoteque of Music Theatre" label was pressed by *Supraphon*, mostly from the nationalized matrices of GC. Records were distributed to schools and cultural institutions. The scope of this edition and dates of its publishing are not known.



118

MIROFON

Matrices *Homophon/Odeon*, 25 cm, 1913

Another example of the numerous made-to-order labels produced by *Hermann Maassen Record Werke* in Bohemia, this one being ordered by the Prague wholesaler *Arnošt Fučík*.



119-a

MONARCH RECORD "GRAMOPHONE"

Matrices *GC/Victor*, 30 cm, 1910–1914

The later design of records of 30 cm diameter, manufactured in the pressing plant of *The Gramophone Co. Ltd.* in Ústí n. Labem/ Aussig a. Elbe.



119-b

MONARCH RECORD "GRAMOPHONE"

Matrices GC/Victor, 30 cm, 1910–1914

Another design of records of 30 cm diameter produced shortly before the WWI and manufactured in pressing plant of *The Gramophone Co. Ltd.* in Ústí n. Labem/Aussig a. Elbe.



119-c

MONARCH RECORD "GRAMOPHONE"

Matrices GC/Victor, 30 cm, 1910–1914

This design of label used for 30 cm "monarch" records already includes the notice of "Austrian Gramophone Co." in Czech language.



120-a, 120-b

MONOPOL

Matrices Artiphon, 25 cm, 1932–1934

The extensive Czech repertoire on the cheap records of these labels just copied program of more expensive records produced by both *Ultraphon* and *Esta* companies. Hermann Maassen pressed these records for the wholesaler *Josef Vrba* of Prague



121

MOSGORPLASTMASS/ МОСГОРПЛАСТМАСС

Matrices Pressing Plant of Moscow City, 25 cm, 1950

The well-known song of the composer Jaroslav Ježek was recorded in the Czech language by the singer Helena Loubalová in Moscow during one of her concert tours through the USSR.



122

MUSICA SACRA

Matrices Ultraphon, 25 and 30 cm, 1930–1932

This label was taken over by the Czech Ultraphon from the German Ultraphon and served for the recordings of sacral music. After making a few new recordings, for general lack of interest this label ceased to exist.



123

NICOLE RECORD

Matrices Nicole, single-sided, 18 cm, 1902–1905

These records had nothing to do with Bohemia, of course. This alleged recording of a "Czech Band" (Orchester Český) (Orchester Český) belongs, in fact, to the Band of Swedish King's Bodyguards. Pressed on tinted celluloid.



124

MUZTRUST/MYЗTPYCT

Matrices GC, 30 cm, 1926

On the records with this label exploited the USSR since late 1920's older matrices with recordings of symphonic music and operatic singers, produced originally by the Riga pressing plant.



125

NOLAPHON

Matrices Esta, 25 cm, 1935

This label was produced and pressed by the *Esta* company, probably in a very small series, on behalf of an unknown Czech distributor.



126

NOVAPHON ELECTRO RECORD

Matrices of various companies, 25 cm, 1932–1933

The cheap records with this label were made of the varnished cardboard in Austria by the company *Novaphon Schallplatten Gesellschaft* of Vienna. Here presented recording was made in the *Ultraphon* studio in Prague by R. A. Dvorský dance band.



127

NUBAPHON

Matrices Artiphon, 25 cm, 1933–1935

This label, using *Artiphon* matrices, was made for the *NU-BA* department store chain.



128-a

ODEON RECORD

Matrices ITMC/Odeon, 27 cm, 1904–1912

The double-sided records of the *ITMC* company were for the first time presented at the Leipziger Messe in the spring of 1904. Distributed in Germany were by *Kalliope*, the sole distributor for Austro-Hungary was the company of Hermann Maassen of Vienna.



128-b

ODEON RECORD

Matrices ITMC/Odeon, single-sided, 19 cm, 1904–1909

Although ITMC came as the first company with the double-sided records, the sample recordings usually were pressed as single-sided only.



128-c

ODEON RECORD

Matrices ITMC/Odeon, 19 cm, 1904–1910

The first recordings in the Czech language were made in Vienna (prefix of m. no. V), since 1906 then in Prague (prefix Z). The Czech repertoire on Odeon records was very extensive.



128-d

ODEON RECORD

Matrices ITMC/Odeon, 27 cm, 1908

This record was issued in celebration of the Kaiser Franz Josef's 50th Jubilee year as reigning monarch of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the gold and black colour combination being that of the Hapsburg monarchy.



128-e

ODEON

Matrices Odeon, 27 cm, 1904–1909

Records with the label of this design were sold in Germany – that is why the name of the mother's company is written in the German language.



„ODEON“ GENERÁLNÍ ZASTUPITELSTVÍ

PRO ČECHY, MORAVU A SLEZSKO

ZIKMUND GEIGER, BRNO

MEZIMĚSTSKÝ TELEFON ČÍSLO 942

ADRESA TELEGRAMŮ: „ODEON“ BRNO



128-f - 128-i

ODEON RECORD

Matrices Odeon, 27 and 25 cm, 1910–1914

Reissues of the older Czech recordings from matrices of 27 cm diameter were, after 1910, pressed on the blue label, as well as the recordings from Jumbo and Jumbola matrices. Advertised were until 1930.



128-j – 128-m

ODEON

Matrices Odeon, 25 cm, 1920–1936

After-WWI, design of the main labels of Lindström Co. with both older and new recordings. The dark blue version was used till 1942.



128-n
ODEON

Matrices Odeon, 25 cm and 30 cm, 1932

The standard colour of the Odeon label with electrical recordings was dark blue, the operatic recordings were pressed on the label of brown colour, too.



128-o
ODEON

Matrices Odeon, 25 cm and 30 cm, 1933–1936

Recordings of important Czech artists (film star A. Nedošínská, soprano Jarmila Novotná) were pressed on this green label, indicating the highest price category.



128-p
ODEON

Matrices Odeon, 25 cm and 30 cm, 1945–1946

The last design of the Odeon label brought reissues of older recordings only, made both in Prague and Berlin



129
ODEONETTE

Matrices Odeon, 15 cm, 1927–1929

The Czech repertoire on these small records, destined to be used on the children's small turntables, consisted mainly of the popular tunes and rhymes.



130

OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION

Non-commercial recordings, matrices of various companies, 30 cm

Overseas branch of the *Office of War Information* produced large series of recordings intended for broadcasting to Europe. Pressed in the vinyl.



131

OLIMPIA-RECORD

Matrices *Kalliope* and others, 25 cm, 1911–1913

This was the made-to-order label for the *Vlas & Co.* in Prague. The design of this label represents a bright example of the extremely high level of European interest in classical mythology at that time.



132

OLYMPIA

Matrices *Homophon*, 25 cm, cca 1926–1927

The image in the upper segment of this label shows the twin towers of Týnský Church in Prague's Old Town Square. Why the label shows this image instead of something associated with the Olympic theme is unknown. Custom-made label for unknown distributor.



133-a

OMEGA MEZINÁRODNÍ DESKA

Various matrices, 25 cm, 1912–1923

The made-to-order label (*Mezinárodní* = *International*) for Diego Fuchs, pressed mostly from matrices of *Favorite* (then on sale already) and also from some other German producers.



133-b

OMEGA MEZINÁRODNÍ DESKA

Matrices of various companies, 25 cm, 1912–1923

Both this and the previous label were published in various colour versions and were still being offered in the catalogues and advertisements till 1932.



134

OPERA DISC COMPANY INC.

Matrices GC/DGG, 30 cm, 1922

After the WWI begun the German DGG to export to the USA under this label records pressed also from the pre-WWI matrices of GC. After the lost trial the DGG had to stop this activities.



135-a, 135-b

ORCHESTROLA

Matrices Orchestrola-Vocalion/Ultraphon, 20 cm, 1930–1932

The Czech recordings destined for this label were made in June 1930 in Berlin. Some reissues were pressed also on the label Ultraphonet (see), introduced by the Czech Ultraphon in 1933.



136-a, 136-b

PALLAS

Matrices *Pallas* and various German companies, 25 cm, 1932–1933 (Czech program)

Since 1929 one of the labels of the German *Clausophon Co.*, pressed in Thalheim near Czechoslovak border. The Czech program was introduced in 1932 for a short time only, with pressing plant in Breitenbach near Carlsbad (today Potůčky near Karlovy Vary). In 1935, a few Czech recordings were published on this red label, and even in 1937, some titles were reissued from the older *Artiphon* matrices.

Sole distributor was the company *Zikmund Rubel, Praha II.*



137-a, 137-b

PALOMA ELECTRO RECORD

Various matrices, 25 cm, cca 1933

These records made in Austria were pressed also from renumbered matrices of Czechoslovak *Esta* and *Ultraphon* companies – here with the recordings of R. A. Dvorský orchestra made in Prague.



138-a

PARLOPHON

Matrices Carl Lindström A.G., 30 cm, 1911

One of the first labels of the *Parlophon* records with the last, in Vienna made recording of the Czech tenor Karel Burian.



138-b

PARLOPHON

Matrices Carl Lindström A.G., 30 cm, 1929–1936

The Czech operatic singers Jan (Hans) Berlik and Guglielmo (Vilém) Zitek recorded outside Czechoslovakia.



138-c, 138-d

PARLOPHON

Matrices Carl Lindström A.G., 25 and 30 cm, 1929–1936

These labels went only through some very small changes of their designs during about five years of their presence at Czechoslovak market.



139

PARLOPHON JUNIOR RECORD

Matrices Columbia/Beka, 25 cm, cca 1910–1911

This label was produced by the Austrian branch of the *Rena Manufacturing Co. Ltd.* of England. The same recordings were pressed (at the same time) also on the *Melodia Record Platte*, *Heliophon* and *Columbia* labels (see).



140-a

PATHÉ

Matrices Pathé Frères, 24, 29 and 35 cm, 1906–1911

All records of this label produced before the WWI started at centre of the record and the recommended speed of their playback was 90-100 rpm.



140-b
PATHE

Matrices Pathé Frères, 24 and 29 cm, 1911–1914

The second and last design of these hill and dale records with the Czech program. The sole representative for Bohemia was the company of J. Neuville, Jungmannova 17, Praha II.



140-c
PATHE

Matrices Pathé Frères Phonograph Co., 30 cm, cca 1916

The label of the American branch of the French Pathé Co. with two recordings of the Czech violin virtuoso František Ondříček.



140-d, 140-e
PATHE

Matrices Pathé Frères, 25 cm, 1928

Two labels of recordings made in Czechoslovakia on behalf of the *Czech Academy of Science and Art*, commercially published in 1931 by the company of Gustav Sušický of Prague.



140-f

PATHÉ

Matrices Pathé Frères, 25 cm, 1929–1930

The original label with the recordings made in Czechoslovakia on behalf of the Czech Academy of Science and Art (see previous label).



140-g

PATHÉ

Matrices Pathé Frères, 25 cm, 1938

The only record sung by the Czech actress Truda Grosslichtová. After she had left Czechoslovakia in 1938, she performed in Switzerland and France under her artistic name of Tanja Doll.



141

PHILIPS ALLEGRO

Matrix GC, 25 cm, 1937

Label of this promotional recording praising features of a Philips radio receiver was published in the series of standard catalogue numbers.



142

PHÖNIX

Matrices Esta and Ultraphon, 25 cm, 1933–1936

Manufactured in Austria by the Phönix-Schallplatten Fabrik. The Czech repertoire was represented with popular songs performed by the Czech dance bands of R. A. Dvorský and Harry Harden.



143-a – 143-d

PATRIA-RECORD/PATRIA REKORD

Matrices Kalliope Gesselschaft m. b. H. and others, 25 cm, cca 1909–1911

One of the pioneers of the Czech recording industry, Mr. Diego Fuchs ("fuchs" translates as "fox" in German) used different variations of labels for his pirate pressings. For his pairing of a fox and gramophone, which bore comparison to the well known painting of Nipper, Mr. Fuchs was repeatedly sued by the GC, the legal costs eventually forcing him into bankruptcy.

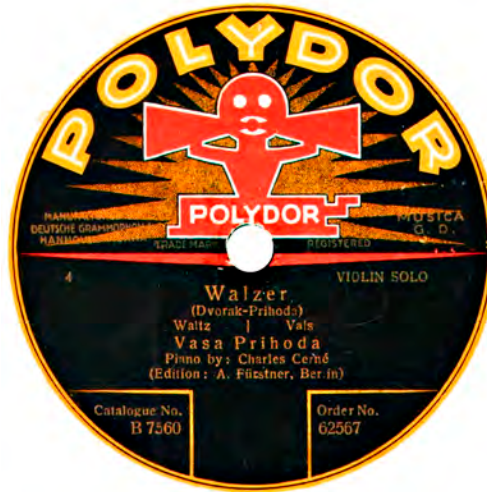


144-a, 144-b

PHONYCORD FLEXIBLE

Matrices *Artiphon*, 25 cm, 1930 (Czech program)

Product of the *Phonycord GmbH* of Berlin. Records were pressed in the transparent mass invented by *I. G. Farben*. The sole distributor in Czechoslovakia was the company of *Erich Crohn, Praha II., Poříč 15*.

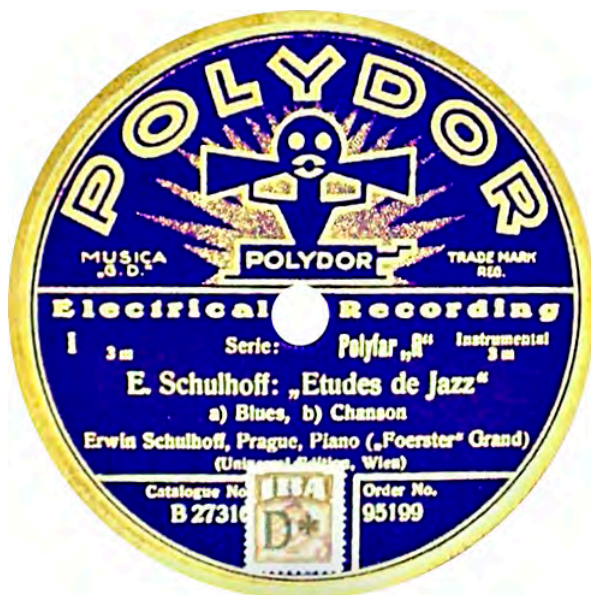


145-a, 145-b

POLYDOR

Matrices *DGG*, 25 and 30 cm, 1924 (labels here presented)

The very first design of then newly introduced export labels of German *DGG* with still mechanically produced recordings.



145-c

POLYDOR

Matrices DGG, 25 and 30 cm, 1928–1931 (label here presented)

Introduction of the electric recording process was mentioned on the labels with new releases. On this blue label were published also the very last recordings of the chamber ensemble Bohemian Quartet.



145-d

POLYDOR

Matrices DGG, 25 and 30 cm, 1928–1930 (label here presented)

The sole distributor of this label was the Moravian Gramophone Import Company K. Adler a spol., Brno, Náměstí Svobody 6. That is also the reason why we find only recordings of Moravian artists on this label.



145-e

POLYDOR

Matrices DGG, 25 cm, 1932–1933

Recordings in the series of the catalogue numbers 316000 were recorded and pressed in the *Esta* factory in Prague.



145-f

POLYDOR/GRAMMOPHON

Matrices *Esta*, 25 cm, 1938–1940

For whom the German DGG published this series of Czech recordings is not quite clear.



145-g

ELEKTRO-MOTOR "SVET"

Matrices DGG/Polydor, 25 cm, 1930

This promotional record was published in the series of the standard catalogue numbers of the *Polydor* label. The Czech repertoire was recorded in Berlin, Vienna and Brno.



145-h

POLYDOR

Matrices DGG/Polydor, 25 cm, 1942–1943

Label of a poor quality of print, placed on records with the Slovak program made in Bratislava during the WWII. After 1945, most of these recordings were reissued both on the *Esta* and *Ultraphon* labels.



145-i

POLYDOR

Matrices DGG, 25 and 30 cm, 1944–1945

On this label were pressed recordings made since the end of 1944 till March of 1945 in the *Esta* studio in Prague by Czech, Ukrainian and Russian interpreters. These records were destined for the soldiers of *Russian Liberation Army* (Vlasov Army) and *Ukrainian Rebelious Army* (Bandera Army) fighting alongside the German troops.



145-j

POLYDOR

Matrices DGG/Polydor, 25 cm, 1940

Probably the only two recordings of the Czech interpreters, published on this French label, made the choir of pilots forming our foreign army abroad after they have left Czechoslovakia due to Nazi occupation.



146-a, 146-b

PRAGA/ПРАГА

Matrices Ultraphon and Esta, 25 cm and 30 cm, 1945–1946

On this label was pressed unknown number of recordings. Targeted at Soviet soldiers stationed in Czechoslovakia. Translation of the titles of some songs bore, in the Czech language, some very funny connotations ("Tiger Rag" = *Охота на тигра* = *Hunting a Tiger*).



147

PRAGA

Matrices The Gramophone Co. Ltd., 25 cm, 1912

This custom-made record was issued in order to promote the recordings of the music composed for the 6th rally of the gymnastic organization of *Sokol*, taking place in 1912 in Prague.



148

PREMIER RECORD

Matrices Első Magyar Hangfelmeggyár, 25 cm, 1908–1913

The *First Hungarian Gramophone Company* used for recordings targeted at countries outside Hungary trade mark *Premier*. The most of the Czech recordings, made for this label, recorded the brass band directed by Arnošt Herman.

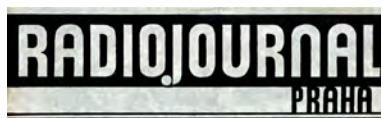


149-a, 149-b

PRESTO

Non-commercial recordings, 30 cm, 1941–1943

Labels of the New York recording studio frequented by Czech politicians exiled in the USA during the WWII. Foil of varnished glass.



150-a, 150-b

RADIOJOURNAL PRAHA

Non-commercial recordings. Matrices *Ultrapphon*, 25 and 30 cm, 1932–1939

Records with these labels were made by the *Ultrapphon* on behalf of Czechoslovak Radio (*Radiojournal*). Until 1938, about 500 recordings were made, intended for use in the radio broadcasting only.



151-a, 151-b

RADIUS

Matrices Ultraphon, 25 cm, 1932–1933

The generic denomination of “Harlem Melody Band” covered Czech dance bands of Jaroslav Ježek, Harry Osten and R. A. Dvorský. Recordings pressed on these labels were made in Prague for the *Mocsányi és Társa Hanglemezgyár* company of Budapest.



151-c

RADIUS

Matrices Ultraphon, 25 cm, 1933

The label of records made in the Prague *Ultraphon* studio for the Budapest company of *Mocsányi és Társa Hanglemezgyár*, usually with vocals by “Two Jazzers”



152

RADIONET RECORD

Matrices of various German companies, 25 cm, 1932–1933

The lines emanating from radio mast, built on Petřín hill of Prague, form a sort of spider-web. This label, active from 1932–1933, was the sub-label of the German *Pallas* label, publishing the Czech recordings.



153

RECORD

Matrices Ultraphon and others, 25 cm, cca 1931

Another from the series of the cheap labels intended for sale in the large departmental stores in Germany, here with the recording of a German orchestra directed by Czech composer F. A. Tichý.



154

RECORD

Matrices Artiphon, 25 cm, 1925–1934

One of the numerous labels produced by Hermann Maasen in his Obergrund factory. During the time, design of this label went through several small changes.



155

REFERENCE RECORDING

Non-commercial foils, 30 cm, 1942

Product of the radio-recording division of the *National Broadcasting Company* of Hollywood with recording of a sketch by then exiled Czech actors and comics Voskovec and Werich.



156

REGENT RECORD

Matrices Kalliope, 25 cm, cca 1907

Made for Österreichische Sprechmaschinen- Industrie A. Bürkl. Another example of the imperishable glory of the brass band directed by Arnošt Herman.



157-a

REKTOPHON

Matrices Artiphon, 25 cm (Czech program), 1932–1935

The made-to-order label of the cheap records with the similarly “cheap” Czech program pressed from *Artiphon* matrices in the Hermann Maassen factory.



157-b

REKTOPHON

Matrices Artiphon and Pallas, 25 cm (Czech program), 1935

The last Czech recordings were pressed on this green label in 1935. Name of this label bore a not too blissful resemblance to the meaning of “rekto” in Latin.



157-c

REKTOPHON ELEKTRO RECORD

Matrices Artiphon, 25 cm, 1930–1932

The earlier designs of the previous labels accentuated electric recording process. The extensive Czech program was recorded in Berlin and distributed in Czechoslovakia by the wholesaler Josef Vrba, Praha II., Na Poříčí 14.



157-d

REKTOPHON ELEKTRO RECORD

Matrices Artiphon, 25 cm, 1930–1932

The German program on this, in Czechoslovakia based label, was distributed by the *Hugo Schön Company*, which these records exported on red label (not documented here), as far as to the Netherlands.



158-a, 158-b

RENA

Matrices *Maassen Record/Columbia*, 25 cm, 1910–1920

The first records with this label produced Hermann Maassen in his pressing plant in Obergrund on behalf of *Max Böhm* company of Dippoldiswalde. As a cheap label with the Czech repertoire was *Rena* introduced in Bohemia in 1910.



158-c, 158-d

RENA

Renumbered matrices *Maassen Record*, 25 cm, 1922–1926

Designs of the previous labels used after the the WWI. Records with these labels were of a poor quality, made by the low-cost “sandwich” method (thin shellack layers pressed on cardboard in the middle).



159

ROCKHILL RECORDING

Non-commercial recordings, 30 cm, 1941–1943

Another label of the New York recording studio used for registering of speeches of the Czech politicians in exile during the WWII. Foil of varnished glass.



160

RWG

Matrices Ultraphon, 25 cm, 1932

Abbreviation of *RWG* (= Rheinisch-Westfälische Geschäftshäuser), a central buying association for individual household goods dealers (the successor of *ERWEGE* was *Kaufring*).



161-a, 161-b

RUBIN

Matrices Artiphon/Homophon Co., 25 cm, 1923–1925

This label was made for the wholesaler *Jan Kettner* of Prague, until the end of the 1940's the largest company in Czechoslovakia dealing with sheet music, gramophone records and musical instruments.



162-a, 162-b

RUBIN-RECORD

Matrices Homophon Co., 25 cm, 1910–1913

The Homophon company advertised this label as “the cheapest export label”. The Czech repertoire was distributed by the wholesaler *Kettner & Riedl Co.* of Prague.



163-a, 163-b

RUBINTON

Matrices Homophon Co., 25 and 30 cm, 1925–1929

Made for the wholesaler *Jan Kettner Co.* of Prague. The recordings made after 1927 have the word “Electro” on its labels; after 1928 we already miss the words “Voice of Artistic World” (“Hlas uměleckého světa”) on label of the new design.



164

SAADÉPHON

Matrices Supraphon, 25 cm, 1950

The world wants to be cheated: though this label indicates the recording studio Saadé in Beyrouth, this Lebanon folk tune sung in the Arabic language was in fact recorded by *Supraphon* in the *Rudolfinum studio* in Prague in August of 1950.



165

SCALA-RECORD

Matrices Beka/Lindström, 25 cm, 1910–1912

The made-to-order label produced by the *S. Weiss & Co.* of Berlin, established in 1907. The Czech program was an unattractive one, featuring brass bands and almost no vocals.

Scala-Record

S. Weiss & Co., Berlin SW. 68, Ritterstrasse 76.
Haben Verzeichnisse, internen Katalog und doppel-seitige „Schallplatten“ in englisch - deutsch - fran-zösisch - spanisch - italienisch - russisch.



166

SCHALLPLATTEN-FABRIK "FAVORITE"

Matrices Favorite-Werke, 18 and 25 cm, 1905–1906

The very first design of this label with the Czech recordings made in Vienna. These records were pressed both single and double sided. Later recordings were pressed on the *Favorite* label already (see).



167

SELEKTON

Matrices Ultraphon, 25 cm, 1932–1935

Together with the *Artona* label (see), was *Selekton* another cheap sub-label of the Czech *Ultraphon*, used also for releasing of recordings of not really A grade of quality.



168-a, 168-b

SCHALLPLATTE "GRAMMOPHON"

Matrices DGG/GC, 25 and 30 cm, 1913–1914

An alternative design of labels with recordings pressed both in Ústí n./L. and Berlin, intended for the German catalogue of the mother company.



169

SLAVIA

Matrices Esta, Kristall and German Ultraphon, 25 cm, 1932–1935

The name "Slavia" relates to the broad-based culture of Eastern European "slavic" countries, of which Czechoslovakia is one. *Slavia* label was a cheap sub-label of the *Esta* company.



170

SORTIMA

Matrices Esta, 25 cm, cca 1933

This label used both matrix and catalogue numbers of *Esta* company. Probably only a small series of records made for an unknown distributor.



171

SPECIAL

Matrices Ultraphon and others, 25 cm, 1933–1934

Label of the cheap records made in Germany intended for sale in the large departmental stores. It brought the same program as we find on labels *Brillant*, *Tempo* or *Grohag* (see).



172

SPECIAL-RENA

Matrices Hermann Maassen/Beka, 25 cm, 1925–1930

Another label of Hermann Maassen brought the same program as his related labels *Titania*, *Rena*, etc. In Prague were these records distributed mostly by the wholesaler *Antonín Fučík*.



173

SPECIAL RENA REKORD

Matrices Hermann Maassen/Beka, 25 cm, 1921–1925

Made-to-order label for company of the *Alois Riedl*, *Královské Vinohrady*, *Purkyňovo náměstí 16*, published earlier than the previously presented label.



174

STADION

Matrices Homophon Co., 25 cm, 1925–1927

Made-on-order label for records distributed by the wholesaler *Jan Kettner*, *Jugoslávská 12* of Prague.



175

STANDARD

Matrices *Esta* and others, 25 cm, 1935

This label of an Austrian distributor used the renumbered matrices of various companies. *Esta* offered recordings of the Harry Harden orchestra with vocals in German.



176

STAR

Matrices *Tri-Ergon*, 25 cm, 1931–1932

After the mother company went bankrupt in 1931, some recordings were still pressed on this distribution sub-label of *Tri-Ergon* (see).



177-a, 177-b

STERNBERG

Matrices *Esta*, 25 cm, 1932–1934

The Hungarian *Sternberg Record Company* distributed on this label also recordings of the Hungarian vocalists accompanied by the Czech dance bands of F. A. Tichý or Harry Harden made in Prague. Similar recordings were placed also on the Hungarian labels *Magyar Divatcsarnok*, *ABC Record*, *Weekend* or *Danubius Record* (see).



178-a

SUPRAPHON/СУПРАФОН

Matrices Ultraphon/Supraphon, 25 cm and 30 cm, 1952

This label in the Russian language was intended for export to the USSR. Since 1930's the name of *Supraphon* itself was used for electric turntables made in Czechoslovakia that could be connected with radio sets.



178-b

SUPRAPHON

Matrices Ultraphon, 25 cm, 1952

Reissue of the *Ultraphon* recordings released originally in 1940 (see). Nevertheless, these reissues were usually published on labels of much simpler design and colours.



178-c

SUPRAPHON LKR

Matrices Supraphon, 25 cm, 1952

This label was used for the series of recordings with so called "People's Course of the Russian Language". Similar thematic labels used *Supraphon* much more.



178-d

SUPRAPHON

Matrices Ultraphon and Supraphon, 25 cm, 1948-50

An early design of the label used in late 1940's brought both reissues of the older *Ultraphon* recordings and the new recordings made after 1947.

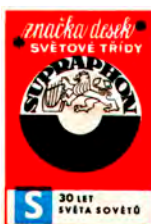


178-e, 178-f

SUPRAPHON U

Matrices *Ultraphon*, 25 and 30 cm, 1947–1950

During the transition period immediately after the nationalization, on this export label were pressed recordings published at the same time on the standard *Ultraphon* label, too.



178-g

SUPRAPHON – Národní diskotéka

Matrices *Supraphon*, 25 and 30 cm, 1950–1952 (?)

The colateral label to *Supraphon*. Likewise with the *Armádní diskotéka* label (see), the reason of its implementation is not quite clear.

179

SYRENA ELECTRO

Matrices *Esta*, 25 cm, 1936

Manufactured by the large pressing plant of Syrena company of Warsaw, as one of a very few recordings of Czech popular songs during the 1930's.



180-a, 180-b

SYLVIA

Matrices Hermann Maassen, 25 cm, 1911–1913

Another extremely powerful and attractive piece of graphic art from the Maassen company's art studio. Alas, records with these labels contained absolutely no important recordings.



181-a, 181-b

SYSTEM DR. RADWAN

Matrices Odeon, 25 cm, 1932

Made-on-order label produced for the wholesaler Jan Kettner Co. of Prague. These very strange “psychophonic” records were recorded in Berlin and pressed both in the Czech and German language.



182-a

TELEFUNKEN

Matrices Ultraphon and Telefunken, 25 cm, 1934–1944

The sister label of Czechoslovak Ultraphon. Its version in the blue colour (not presented here) indicated records of the higher price category.



182-b

TELEFUNKEN

Matrices Ultraphon, 25 cm, 1941

Label of a sample recording targeted at the German market. The German version of a Czech popular tune is here sung by two Czech singers.



182-c, 182-d

TELEFUNKEN

Matrices Telefunken/DGG/Polydor, 25 and 30 cm, 1942–1943

Labels of this design were used on recordings of mainly Slovak authors and interpreters, being pressed during the existence of the independent State of Slovakia (1939–1945).



182-e, 182-f

TELEFUNKEN

Matrices Ultraphon, 25 cm, 1937 (e), 1946 (f)

For the German market used *Telefunken* for publishing on its own label some recordings of the Czech artists, too. After 1945, for some reissues that passed the censorship of occupational authorities in Germany, the grey colour of the label was used.



183-a, 183-b

TEMPO

Matrices Ultraphon, 25 cm, 1932–1934

Some recordings of the Czech *Ultraphon* made in Prague were pressed in Germany on records with label *Brilliant* (see) and some others, and were intended for sale in the large German departmental stores.



184

TELRA-RECORD

Matrices *Austrian Beka Co.*, 25 cm, 1911

The label of *Johann Arlet Co.* of Vienna with recording of the operatic barytone Robert Leonhardt, who in 1905–1909 performed also in the *Deutsches Landestheater* in Prague and later on in the *Town Theatre* of Brno. His successful career continued in the *Met* in New York.



185

TITANIA

Matrices *Hermann Maassen/Beka*, 25 cm, 1925–1930

On this label we find the same repertoire as on labels *Rena*, *Special Rena Records* etc. (see). In Prague was this label distributed by the wholesaler *Antonín Fučík, Malé náměstí č. 459*. The trade mark *Titania* was registered in 1913 already.

S. ADLER
PRAGUE II.
— Lazarská 1. —



186

TRI-ERGON

Matrices *Tri-Ergon*, 25 cm, 1931 (Czech program)

On these, by patented "photo-electro process" made records, was the Czech program pressed in a very limited scope and for a short time only. Their distributor in Czechoslovakia offered the same recordings on "non-breakable, non-flammable, flexible" records with the *Colorit* label (see the following label).



187

TRI-ERGON COLORIT PHOTO-ELECTRO

Matrices *Tri-Ergon*, 25 cm, 1931

These transparent records of various colour shades, made from a patented stuff resembling celluloid and manufactured in Austria by *Colorit Schallplatten-Gesellschaft* of Vienna, brought the same Czech program as labels *Tri-Ergon* and *Star* (see).



188

TRIUMPH

Matrices Deutsche Crystalate GmbH, 20 cm, 1929–1931

The Czech program on this small record just complemented recordings published on the *Kristall* and *Wuba* labels (see). The sole distributor in Czechoslovakia was the *Crystalate Gramophone Record Co. Ltd., Praha II., Nekázanka 15.*



189-a

ULTRAPHON

Matrices Deutsche Ultraphon AG, 25 and 30 cm, 1929–1932

Label of records with the very first recordings for Czechoslovakia, still with address of the original owner of this company, the *N. V. Küchenmeister's Internationale Ultraphoon Maatschappij Amsterdam – Berlin.*



189-b

ULTRAPHON

Matrices Ultraphon, 25 and 30 cm, 1932–1938

For recordings destined for Austria and for the language courses this brown colour of label was chosen.

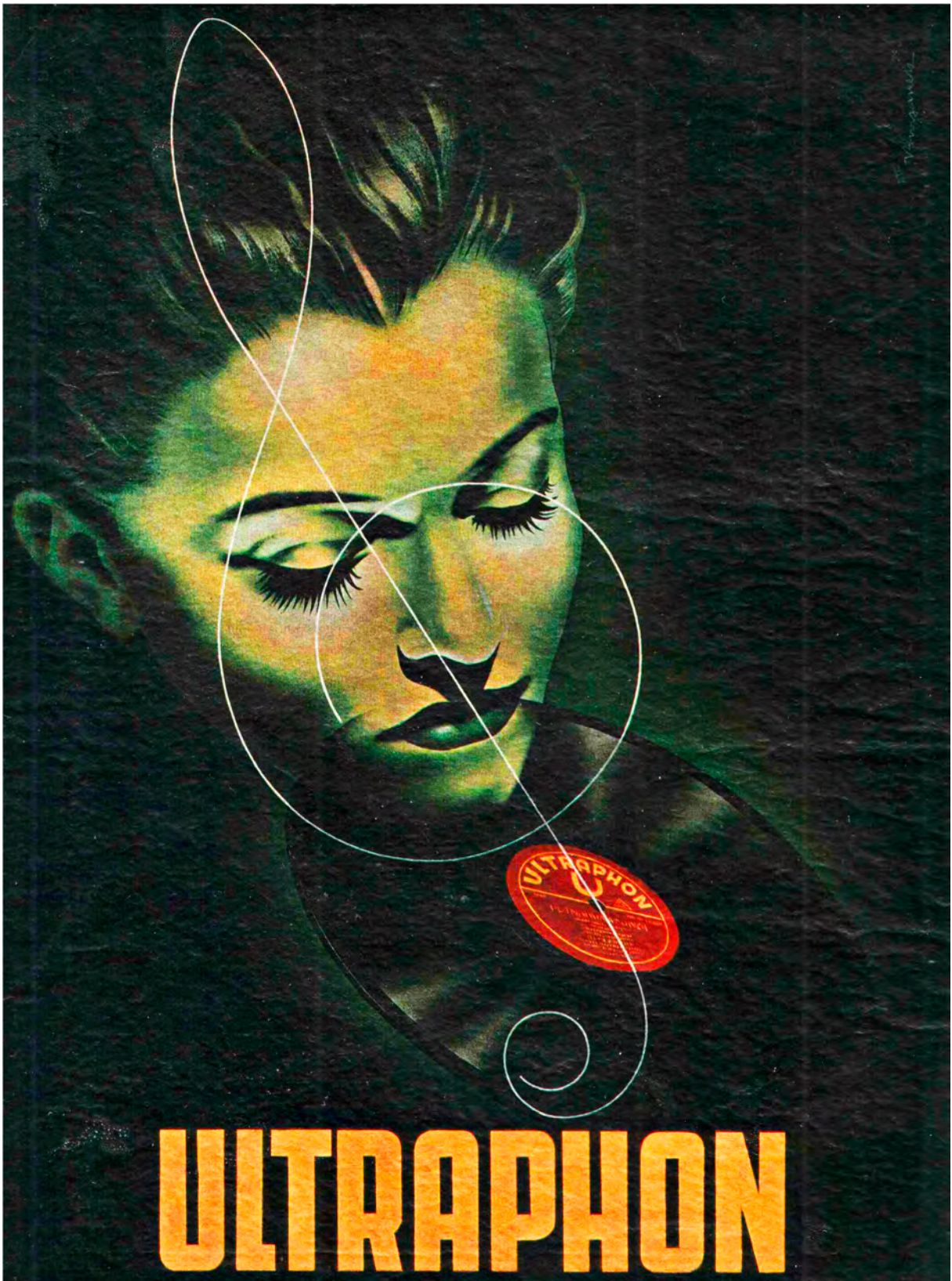


189-c

ULTRAPHON

Matrices Ultraphon, 25 cm, 1935

Beside the standard blue, red and during 1935–1939 green colour of labels (not documented here), for some special releases *Ultraphon* used also other colors of labels.





189-d – 189-g

ULTRAPHON

Matrices Ultraphon, 25 and 30 cm, 1935–1937

Another colour variations of *Ultraphon* labels.



189-h, 189-i

ULTRAPHON

Matrices *Ultrapphon*, 30 cm, 1936–1938

Recordings of political speeches. President Beneš resigned his presidency a few weeks before the date of here proclaimed “20 years of Czechoslovakia” was reached. Resigning on October 5, he immediately went into exile in the West.



189-j, 189-k

ULTRAPHON

Matrices *Ultrapphon*, 25 cm, 1933 + 1948

Recordings of music intended for playback during the rally of gymnastic/patriotic organization “Czechoslovak Community of Sokol”, later banned by the communists.



189-L, 189-m

ULTRAPHON

Matrices *Ultrapphon*, 25 cm, 1938–1939

Recordings with a patriotic content, produced shortly before WWII, were published on labels of special design.



189-n, 189-o

ULTRAPHON

Matrices *Ultrapphon*, 25 and 30 cm, 1942

Records remembering 10 years of the composer and bandleader R. A. Dvorský (one of the main shareholders of *Ultrapphon*) and of the singer and composer Karel Vacek on *Ultrapphon* label.



189-p

ULTRAPHON

Matrices Ultrapophon, 25 cm, 1940

The original design of label with recordings of the adventures of "Ferda the Ant", popular fairy tale. The later reissues were published usually on labels with plain colours already.



189-q

ULTRAPHON

Matrices Ultrapophon, 25 cm, 1944

A sample of one of the picture labels, used by Ultrapophon for recordings of especially fancied popular songs.



189-r, 189-s

ULTRAPHON

Matrices Ultrapophon, 25 cm, 1944 and 1947

Labels used on two sets of records presenting puppet plays performed by the traditional Czech marionettists.





189-t, 189-u

ULTRAPHON

Matrices Ultraphon, 25 cm, 1936 and 1944

Samples of numerous promotional records praising the quality of various products of domestic companies.



189-v

ULTRAPHON

Matrices German Ultraphon, 25 cm, 1929

Label of one of the very first promotional records made by German *Ultraphon* for the market in Czechoslovakia, recorded in 1929 in Berlin.



189-w

ULTRAPHON

Matrices Ultraphon, 25 cm, 1938

One of a set of records from a series propounding Army and general military readiness in 1938, which recalled a battle of heroic Czech Legions fighting in Russia against the Bolsheviks during and after WWI.



189-x

ULTRAPHON

Matrices *Ultrapophon*, 25 cm, 1940–1944

Label of this design was used for recordings of artists performing in the *National Theatre* of Prague.



189-y

ULTRAPHON

Matrices *Ultrapophon*, 30 cm, 1943–1950

Labels used for recordings of theatre plays.



189-z

ULTRAPHON

Matrices *Ultrapophon*, 30 cm, 1943–1950

Labels used for recordings of music by older Czech composers.



189-za

ULTRAPHON

Matrices *Ultrapophon*, 25 cm, 1950

A sample record containing the jazz composition "That's It" with scat vocal of a Czech singer which was never pressed on a commercial record.



189-zb

ULTRAPHON RAVITAS

Matrices *Ultraphton*, 25 and 30 cm, 1929–1932

Label of the non-commercial trial or sample recordings with the Czech repertoire distributed in Czechoslovakia by the *Ravitas* company.

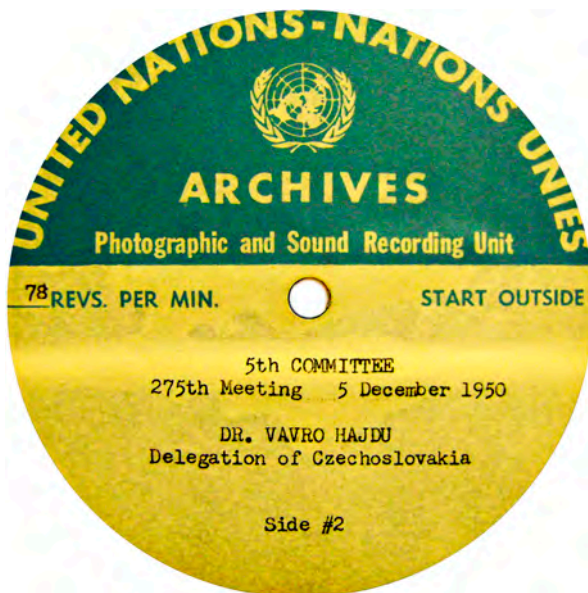


190

ULTRAPHONET

Matrices *Orchestrola* and *Ultraphton*, 20 cm, 1932

This label brought reissues of the recordings made originally for the *Orchestrola* label (see) and later on also some new recordings published at the same time on the *Ultraphton* 25 cm label.



191

UNITED NATIONS ARCHIVES

Non-commercial recordings, 30 cm, 1950

Label of the records of *Photographic and Sound Recording Unit* of *UN*, featuring speeches of delegates of the *UN* member countries. Foil of varnished tin.



192

UNITED STATES RECORDING CO.

Non-commercial recordings, 30 cm, 1942–1945

Records from the production of the recording company in Washington that provided service for the U. S. Congress during the WWII. Foil of varnished glass.



193

UNION RECORD

Matrices from various sources, 25 cm, cca 1912

This Austrian label is probably a product of *Johann Arlet Co.* of Vienna. In any case, the Czech violin virtuoso Jan Kubelík never recorded for this label.



194

VĚNUJE R. A. DVORSKÝ

Matrices Ultraphon, 25 and 30 cm, 1937–1943

This "personal", non-commercial label (Presented by RAD), with the stylised picture of the bandleader, singer and composer R. A. Dvorský was used for sample and trial recordings.



195-a, 195-b

ÚSTŘEDNÍ ÚSTAV ZDRAVOTNICKÉ OSVĚTY

Matrices Supraphon, 25 cm, end of the 1950's

A sample of labels used for recordings pressed by *Supraphon* on behalf of various state organizations, in this particular case of the "Institute of People's Health".



196

UNIVERSAL PICTURES CORP.

Matrices Columbia Phonograph Co., 40 cm, 1930

These records containing the soundtrack of talkies, or better to say "overdubbing" of the original sounds, were played at 33 1/3 rpm on the special turntables in the movie theatres equipped with projectors for the silent movies only.



197-a, 197-b

VENI VIDI VICI

Matrices Beka, 25 cm, 1909-1913

Records with these labels usually contained two titles on each side, although the total running time never exceeded 3 minutes. The Czech repertoire was ordered by the wholesalers *Kettner & Riedl*, *Josef Krejčík* and *Josef Vrba* of Prague.



198-a

VICTOR

Matrices GC and Victor, 25 and 30 cm, 1905-1936

Standard design of the label presenting in the USA both recordings of the Czech interpreters made in Bohemia or the USA and recordings of the Czech countrymen made in (mostly) New York or Chicago.



198-b

VICTOR

Matrix GC, single-sided, 30 cm, 1916

The American version of the label featuring a recording by the violinist Jan Kubelik, made originally for the GC.



198-c

VICTOR

Matrix Victor Talking Machine Co., 30 cm, 1916

Label of a test recording intended to be pressed – after the final approval – on the same commercial label as the previous one.



199

VICTROLA

Matrices GC and Victor, 25 and 30 cm, 1905-1929

Some recordings pressed in the USA on these labels of the red and black colour (not presented here) were, at the same time, pressed in the Czech lands on GCR, CRG and later on the HMV label, too.



200

VINDOBONA-RECORD

Matrices Beka, 25 cm, around 1910

Records with this label were targeted at the Czech countrymen living in Austria. It offered the same "grey" repertoire as, for example, the Derby label.



201

VLASTA REKORD

Matrices Homophon Co., 25 cm, cca 1912

A large community of Czech and Moravian protestant immigrants made in Berlin an influential segment of the ethnic neighbourhood called Neukölln. Running across the upper segment, this special label reads "Record of the Czech Expatriates".



202-a
VOX

Matrices Vox Schallplatten und Sprechmaschinen AG, 30 cm, 1924

Label of records with the very first recordings of the famous Bohemian Quartet, made during the concert tour of this chamber ensemble in Berlin.



202-b
VOX

Matrices Vox Schallplatten und Sprechmaschinen AG, 25 cm, 1925-1928 (Czech program)

Distributed in Czechoslovakia by entrepreneur Emil Schmelkes, in 1929-1935 representative of the *Homophon Co.* and in 1935-1938 the director of the *Esta* gramophone company.



203
VOWA UNIVERSAL

Matrices Artiphon, 25 cm, 1933-1934

Likewise the following label, made-on-order record for an unidentified wholesaler. The same repertoire as on the labels *Rektophone*, *Nubaphone* or *Monopol* (see).



204
V. Z.

Matrices Artiphon, 25 cm, 1932-1935

A made-on-order label from the large family of cheap records produced by the mother company, with the cheap Czech repertoire, too. Pressed for an unidentified client or retail seller.



208

ZON-O-PHONE RECORD

Matrices International Zonophone Co., single sided, 25 cm, 1901

The label used for one of the very first recordings in the Czech language pressed on a 10" record. Recorded in Vienna by Czech operatic singer František Pácal/Franz Pacal.



209-a

ZONOPHONE RECORD

Matrices GC/DGG/Victor, 25 cm, 1903-1910

Records with this label in the green colour were placed in the lower price category, compared with the same recordings pressed on the GCR or CRG labels.



209-b, 209-c

ZONOPHONE RECORD

Matrices GC/Victor, 25 cm, 1908-1914

Another variations of the design of Zonophone labels.



209-d

ZONOPHONE RECORD

Matrices GC/Victor, 25 cm, 1910-1915

When in 1911 the new pressing plant was opened in North-Bohemian town of Ústí nad Labem/ Aussig am Elbe, one could find its address on labels of the records pressed there.



209-e

ZONOPHONE RECORD

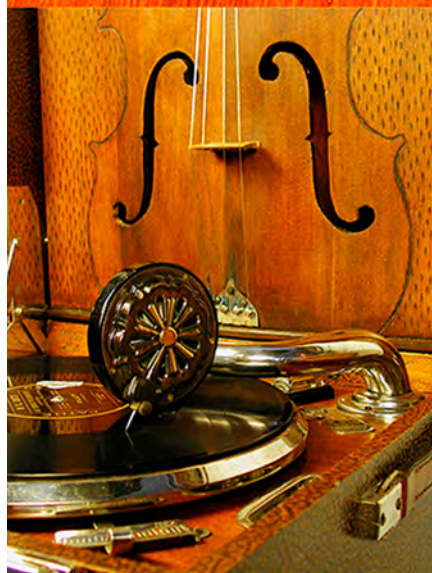
Matrices GC/Victor, 25 cm, 1913-1915

Records with this, in 1913 introduced design of the label in lila colour, were sold for the dumping price, to a rather angry response of competitive record companies.



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