



# AMICA International

## Automatic Musical Instrument Collectors' Association

### Honor Roll

**MME. GERMAINE SCHNITZER**  
by Bill Knorp

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Although Germaine Schnitzer has retired as a concert pianist, she is as active as ever in other fields and her knowledge and enthusiasm concerning the present, and the happenings of today, is truly remarkable. Her interest in music covers a lifetime of being a musician, a concert manager, a travel consultant, and a friend of travelers and musicians. Her knowledge of opera is vast, although it is the piano with which she made her musical career.

Mme. Schnitzer was born in Paris, and her mother was French and her father was Alsatian. She has been known as a "celebrated Viennese pianist" and also as "a celebrated French pianist," but in any case she did have a lot of experience in both countries. She began her musical training at age six, and at age eight she could transpose Bach at sight. In Paris she first studied with Raoul Pugno at the Paris Conservatoire. Later she studied in Vienna with Emil Sauer, and both of these teachers were famous as pianists and teachers, and both have made recordings. Mme. Schnitzer progressed rapidly and to a remarkable degree and she made her American debut in Chickering Hall, Boston, in 1906. She played in New York five days later and appeared in Europe in recital and as soloist with leading symphony orchestras, becoming a favorite in both. She has played with the New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Cincinnati, Detroit, St. Louis, San Francisco and Los Angeles symphony orchestras, the Padeloup and Colonne Concerts in Paris, the Berlin Philharmonic, the Vienna Philharmonic, and many others, and under such great conductors as Gustav Mahler and Karl Muck.



*Photo: Germaine Schnitzer wearing the veil given to her by the great actress Sarah Bernhardt.*

Two of the many interesting events which took place during Schnitzer's career were the two benefit concerts for Moritz Moszkowski, who was ill and in desperate straits financially in Paris. Fourteen grand pianos were placed on the stage of Carnegie Hall for the first concert, and the pianists who performed that evening, December 21, 1921, were Josef Lhevinne, Germain Schnitzer Wilhelm Bachaus, Alexander Lambert, Sigismond Stojowski, Ernest Schelling, Elly Ney, Harold Bauer, Leo Ornstein, Ignaz Friedman, Ernest Hutcheson, Percy Grainger, Alfredo Casella and Ossip Gabrilowitsch. Naturally such a large group needed a conductor, so Walter Damrosch was at the podium that evening. The concert has been written up in a number of books and made a sensation. It was repeated at the Metropolitan Opera House with great success in aiding the sick composer, who died in 1925.

Some reviews:

To say that she achieved success is to put it mildly. Hers was a blazing triumph, a complete conquest. This girl is without question the greatest and most important new voice in pianoforte playing that has sounded upon us for a decade at least. -- The New York Journal

She came without the loud trumpeting which usually herald foreign artists or those of native birth who have gone abroad for a foreign hallmark, and her success was for that reason all the more emphatic and convincing. - The New York Tribune

She has a superb tone, big, sonorous, rich and wide in range. -- The New York Sun

In addition to her brilliant technique she commands a singing tone, and a virile one, which has a certain admirable nobility. -- The New York World

And right after her American debut:

Miss Schnitzer is a musician in the narrow meaning of the word; she is also a poet. That she is the former was revealed at once in her admirable playing of Bach's "Prelude and Fugue," while in her playing of the "Carnival" she was romantically poetic. The capriciousness, the whimsicality, the tenderness, the brilliance, the dreaminess of Schumann's music were expressed with the spontaneity of an improviser.

-- Musical America Dec. 22, 1906

Germaine Schnitzer at present occupies a prominent position and is one of the most interesting among the celebrated interpreters of pianoforte literature. Technically, she has splendid assets, finely developed finger velocity and pleasing tone qualities, especially in pianissimo passages, in which she uses a delightfully feathery touch.

#### A LIST OF SCHNITZER RECORDINGS:

##### Part I: WELTE-MIGNON

Etude, A Minor, Opus 25, No. 11 (Chopin) Prelude, B-flat Minor, Opus 28, No. 16 (Chopin) Toccata in F Major, Opus 111, No. 6 (Saint-Saens)

##### Part II: AMPICO

60051 Etude, A flat Major (Trois Etudes No. 2)

(Chopin)

51325 March Militaire, Opus 51, No. 1 (Schubert

Tausig)

51333 Sous Bois (In The Woods) (Staub) 60341 Gavotte, B Minor (Bach--Saint-Saens)

60743 Fantasie-Impromptu, Opus 66, C Sharp Minor

( Chop in)

61851 Songs Without Words, No. 30, A Major (Spring

Song) (Mendelssohn)

62383 Serenade, No. 1 (Drdla)

64153 Morceaux Caracteristiques, Opus 7, No. 7, E

Major (Mendelssohn)

64593 Polacca Brillante, Opus 72, Key of E(von Weber)

62821 Aubade (Frey)

62021 Minuet, Opus 14, No. 1, G Major (Paderewski)

There are additional recordings, some made for Hupfeld, but the catalogues are hard to find so the above is only a partial list. We are delighted and happy to have Mme. Schnitzer as an Honorary Member of AMICA, and hope she will attend some of our meetings.