

**Excerpts from reviews of
Maud Powell, *The Complete Recordings (1904-1917)*
NAXOS Historical Series of Great Violinists
Released in 4 volumes, 2001-2004**

“An energetic and committed artist, Powell performed with all the great American and European orchestras of her time, and was personally acquainted with many great contemporary composers. Her success as a virtuoso was influential in the expansion of classical music listening in America, and she set a new standard for violin performance. At Naxos price, this little piece of violin history is too affordable to miss. Highly recommended.”

Simon Hewitt Jones, *Classical Music Web*, November 2001

“Volume 1 reveals a strong and vibrant personality, especially in Bellstedt's "Caprice on Dixie" and Bruch's "Kol Nidrei". Powell impressed Bruch with her playing of his Violin Concerto no.1 and this recording, although sonically compromised, helps explain why.”

Robert Cowan, *Gramophone*, December 2001

"The third volume of Naxos's Maud Powell: the Complete Recordings 1904-7 showcases this fine player's talents in a variety of smaller compositions, most unexpectedly in a previously-unissued *La Bohème Potpourri* – an extremely lifelike recording, especially given its pre-electric provenance." **Robert Cowan, *Gramophone*, April 2002**

“Pioneer American Violinist was the sub-title of Karen Shaffer’s 1988 biography of Maud Powell and it was a good one to choose. She was the first violinist to be signed by Victor, a genuine proselytiser for American music, an inveterate tourer, quartet leader, musical barnstormer and one of the finest string players of her time. It was Powell who gave the American premieres of, amongst others, the concertos by Tchaikovsky, Dvorak, Sibelius, Aulin, Conus, Coleridge-Taylor and the Lalo F major. A major figure in American musical life. ...I have nothing but praise. Notes by Karen Shaffer, Powell’s biographer, are admiring and cogent. This is a series of real discographic and musical interest. A major artist’s entire body of work will be available at a cheap price in good transfers. If only such enterprise and largesse were to be shown to other elite violinists – Albert Sammons, Paul Kochanski, Joan Manen... the list is long. How about it, Naxos?”

Jonathan Woolf, *Classical Music Web*, December 2001

“...this is a series of major importance because Powell was a major violinist. No history of the Violin on Record is in any sense complete without her and I commend the series.”

Jonathan Woolf, *Classical Music Web*, 2002

"A number of her recordings fit on two CDs, beautifully re-mastered by Ward Marston... She plays with incredible verve, pointedly "clean" technique, impeccable intonation, and none of the mannerisms found on recordings by great European violinists of the time."

***Turok's Choice* April 2002**

“These vibrant transfers of the 78s she made during the first two decades of the 20th century demonstrate just how superb an artist she was, with some magical playing. Forty-six tracks of popular and unusual short pieces, always performed with sensitivity and at times magic. Essential for all violin enthusiasts....”

Minneapolis-St. Paul Sunday Tribune, March 17, 2002

“[The Victor Company’s] promotional materials told us to ‘Listen to Maud Powell’s violin...if you want to find out how much can be got out of a fiddle, go--listen to--Maud Powell.’ They were right.

Powell’s performances are the type of playing that may bring tears to your eyes, going straight to the heart and soul of the music and resonating with whatever you find inside yourself. She starts with a remarkably intense tone and naturally easy phrasing, then adds a tastefully varied vibrato and portamento (as vocally-inspired ornaments to heighten the expressivity). She varies her intonation according to the keys and the directions of the phrases, as her younger contemporary Pablo Casals did on the cello. It is extraordinary, like the best singer one can imagine but going beyond words. It is the kind of performance where it doesn’t even matter what music she’s playing...classical bon-bons, excerpts, folk songs, whatever. The music becomes a living thing in performances this good: breathing and moving and dancing right in front of you, and commanding your attention. It will get to you and you will feel it. What more needs to be said?

Bravo to Naxos for making these recordings available.... These discs would be a ‘must-have’ even at three or four times the price that Naxos is asking for them....”

Bradley P. Lehman, January 2, 2002

“Naxos is now presenting these long forgotten documents from the early period of the recording history, bringing out the warm and full violin sound for which Maud Powell was so famous with astonishing freshness and depth. The superior restoration efforts by Ward Marston made this possible. The now available third volume lists the *Finale* of the Mendelssohn-Concerto, an until-now unpublished *Potpourri* from Puccini’s *La Bohème* and Maud Powell’s own transcription of the spiritual *Deep River*. The secure intonation, the elegance in the mastery of the bow and the musicality being communicated mark these recordings as witnesses of a superior level of violin playing.”

Peter. T. Köster, *Klassik-Heute (Classic-Today)* April 2, 2002

“As with the third volume in Naxos’s impressive Powell series this final one contains an unexpected bonus for collectors and discographers in the form of the previously unpublished 1913 Borowski. Elsewhere the high standards are properly and rightly maintained, from full recording details to good quality transfers, and biographical notes. Powell devotees and those interested in performance practice will need no second invitation.

This has been a major undertaking by Naxos. Powell’s complete, issued output is now available in four budget priced CDs. There’s a great deal here to ponder in the musicianship of this important figure and Naxos has been wise in utilising Ward Marston’s work, much of which first appeared in CDs and cassettes for the Maud Powell Foundation. A series like this deserves a salute and it gets one from me.”

Jonathan Woolf, *Classical Music Web*, December 8, 2004

“I’m a collector of antique phonographs and period acoustic recordings. Only last year did I discover several Maud Powell recordings, I instantly fell in love! I have about 25 original recordings, mostly 12" and some 10" and I will be sharing them on youtube. Thank you again for all your work to preserve the music of such a magnificent violinist.”

Thank you again and kind regards, Richard

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<i>Gramophone</i>	Robert Cowan	December 2001
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<i>Classical Music Web</i>	Simon Hewitt Jones	November 2001
<i>Classics Today</i>	Jed Distler	November 2001
<i>Classical Music Web</i>	Jonathan Woolf	December 2001
<i>Stuttgarter Zeitung</i>	Von Götz Thieme	January 16, 2002
<i>The Strad</i>	Tully Potter	January 2002
Amazon.com	Bradley P. Lehman	January 2, 2002
<i>Minneapolis-St. Paul Star Tribune</i>		March 17, 2002
<i>Strings</i>	Benjamin Ivry	February/March 2002
<i>Turok's Choice</i>		April 2002
Classics Today	Michael Jameson	April 2002
Klassik-Heute (Classic-Today)	Peter. T. Köster	April 2, 2002
<i>American Record Guide</i>	Magil	July/August 2002
European String Teachers Association Newsletter		Summer 2002 & Fall 2002
Kjeu-åue, former president, Swedish String Teachers Association		
Diapason	Jean-Michel Molkhou	Septembre, 2002
Classical Music Web	Jonathan Woolf	March 2003
Classical Music Web	Jonathan Woolf	December 8, 2004
Mid-Sussex Citizen, England	Kevin Bryan	2005