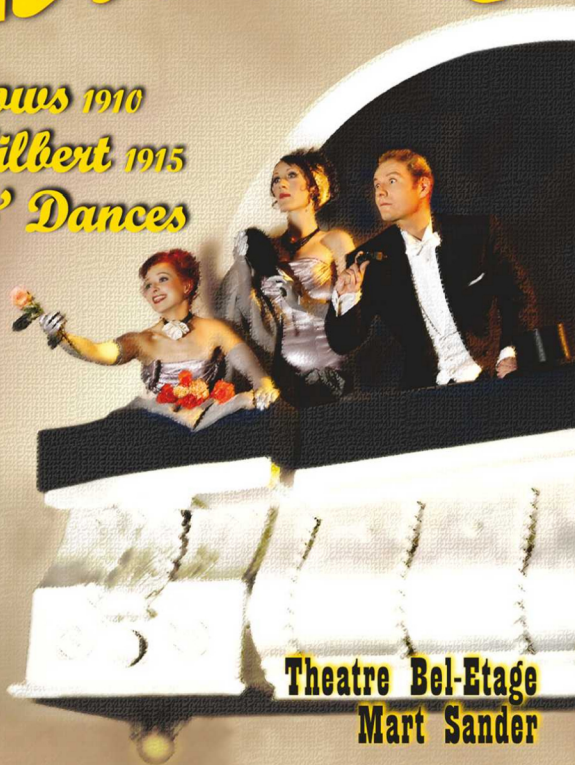


# *The* Finck Album

*In the Shadows 1910*  
*Gilbert the Filbert 1915*  
*Palace Girls' Dances*

*Stage hits*  
*songs and dances*



**Theatre Bel-Etage**  
**Mart Sander**

# HOMMAGE TO PAVLOVA

With praise of Paulhan everywhere  
The universe rejoices  
It's heavier than is the air  
By just ten thousand pounds.  
But if The Daily Mail could spare  
A sum of equal size  
For one who's lighter than the air  
Pavlova wins the Prize  
M.T.P.



Café Royal  
June 9th  
1910

H. M. T. P.

*Herman Finck conducting and  
Anna Pavlova dancing, June 9th, 1910.  
Finck worked with Pavlova on several occasions,  
including a Command performance in July 1912.*

# *The* **Finck Album**

1.	Cheero! <i>Orchestra</i>	1.58
2.	In the Shadows <i>Miss Kelli Uustani</i>	4.06
3.	Hullo, Girls! <i>Orchestra</i>	2.43
4.	My Waltz Queen <i>Mr Mart Sander*</i>	3.22
5.	Jocoso <i>Orchestra</i>	2.48
6.	Dear Old Fighting Boys <i>Miss Kelli Uustani &amp; Mr Mart Sander</i>	3.11
7.	Pirouette (dedicated to Anna Pavlova) <i>Orchestra</i>	2.54
8.	Venetia (from <i>Decameron Nights</i> ) <i>Miss Pirjo Levandi</i>	4.51
9.-14.	My Lady Dragonfly – Ballet Suite <i>Orchestra</i>	15.44
15.	The K-Nuts Medley including “Gilbert the Filbert” and “I’ll Make a Man of You Yet” <i>Miss Kelli Uustani &amp; Mr Mart Sander</i>	3.16
16.	Queen of the Flowers <i>Miss Pirjo Levandi &amp; Mr Mart Sander*</i>	5.04
17.	Moonlight Dance <i>Orchestra</i>	3.50
18.	Decameron Nights – Orchestral Suite <i>Orchestra</i>	13.46

**Total CD duration: 67.54**

\* new lyrics by Mart Sander

*The Principals and orchestra of Theatre Bel-Etage, Tallinn, Estonia*

*The Singers: Kelli Uustani (2,6,15), Pirjo Levandi (8,16) & Mart Sander (4,6,15,16)*

This album is dedicated to British composer, arranger and conductor Herman Finck (1872–1939), who was the musical director of the Palace Theatre in London – famous not only for its orchestra but also for the beautiful Palace Girls. This is the second album in our series featuring British light music composers of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

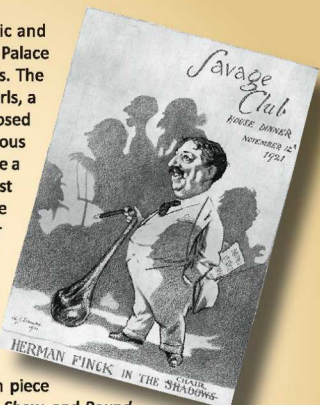
**Herman Finck** is one of many musicians whose style has become (according to the orthodox fashion) out of date, and whose name, once known by every household, has been almost forgotten. He was born in London on 4 November 1872; his baptismal name was in fact Hermann Van Der Finck, his parents being Dutch immigrants.

Finck began his musical training at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. In 1900 (at the still early age of 28) he joined the **Palace Theatre**, where he served as Musical Director until the late 1920s. The Palace was famous not only for its orchestra, but for the **Palace Girls**, a group of beautiful singing and dancing ladies, for whom Finck composed numerous dances, among them *Hullo, Girls!* [track 3]. The most famous of these was originally a vocal number called *Tonight*, which became a top hit under the title *In the Shadows* [track 2]. This remains his best known work due its being one of the last pieces played aboard the Titanic. Whilst at the Palace, Finck was also a principal conductor at the Drury Lane Theatre, and he made recordings of many of his own works and arrangements with the two theatre orchestras for the Columbia Graphophone Company.

Finck's compositions included about thirty stage shows, two of which are represented on this album, the ballet *My Lady Dragonfly* and the operetta *Decameron Nights*, a superbly written piece which has not been played since 1923. Revues such as *The Passing Show* and *Round the Map* were very popular with variety theatre audiences, while his songs and light orchestral pieces were among the best known tunes of their day. Examples on this album include *Queen of the Flowers* [track 16] and *Gilbert the Filbert* aka *The K-Nuts*, included in a medley specially arranged for this recording by Mart Sander. The Palace also proudly presented the ballerina Anna Pavlova in her first ever English performance – Finck dedicated his lovely orchestral piece *Pirouette* [track 7] to her.

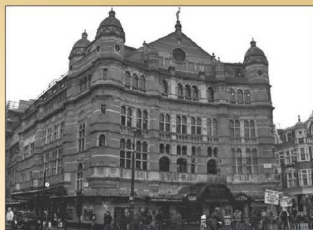
Finck was also a very talented arranger, and one of his most popular works was a medley of music-hall and light classical tunes called *Melodious Memories*; his recording of this piece sold very well and it was a staple in many of the famous London tea-rooms which boasted a resident 'palm court' orchestra.

It is easy to underestimate the position and influence which this almost-forgotten figure enjoyed in his heyday. He is described in *The Music Hall & Theatre History Website* as "One of the wittiest men in London. He was of medium height, inclined to stoutness, dark, with luxuriant dark hair parted in the middle ... he was never at a loss for a joke." He was also highly regarded among the top musicians of his day including Sir Thomas Beecham and was a special favourite of the Royal Family, especially King George V. Finck was musical director





of the very first Royal Command Performance, held on 1 July 1912 at the Palace Theatre, and led a cast featuring all of the top British music-hall and variety performers of the day including Harry Lauder, Vesta Tilley and George Robey – along with the Palace Girls of course. The exception was Marie Lloyd, whose act was considered too risqué for the King and Queen!. This pioneering show saw the theatre decorated with three million roses; the proceeds were donated to the Variety Artists' Benevolent Fund.



**The Palace Theatre in Finck's time**

Also in 1912, a concert was held at Drury Lane to which the King brought his cousin Kaiser Wilhelm, only 2 years before their respective countries went to war. *In the Shadows* was included in the programme at the specific request of the King, who had become quite a fan. It was ironic that Finck experienced a 'right royal embarrassment' in front of the King at a charity event held at Buckingham Palace Riding School. The orchestra was playing *Melodious Memories* while the audience of titled personages awaited the King's arrival; just as the Royal party entered the theatre, the orchestra reached that part of the medley called *Hush, Hush, Hush, Here Comes the Bogey Man!*

Finck continued to enjoy success throughout the 1930s, while light music as a genre was still at the height of popularity. His autobiography, also entitled *My Melodious Memories*, was published by Hutchinson in 1937 and is a witty and entertaining resumé of a different world of entertainment to that we know today. He never saw the decline and near-death of variety and light music, as he died shortly before the outbreak of World War II, on 21 April, 1939. A new generation is beginning once again to appreciate the gentle joy of

British light music and to rediscover composers such as Finck, Albert Ketelbey, Hubert Bath, Lionel Monckton and others. We trust that this album will help in that process. The music is exquisite and lovingly performed and we are delighted to present *The Finck Album* to you.  
*Notes* ©2011 Stephen Sutton



References: 'Herman Finck' <<http://en.wikipedia.org>>  
'In the Shadows' by Richard Graves, on Music & Vision  
<<http://www.mvdaily.com>>  
The Music Hall and Theatre History Website (Matthew Lloyd)  
<<http://www.arthurlloyd.co.uk>>

Finck's Second *Melodious Memories* recording, issued in 1931 (image from the Stephen Sutton collection)





**Pirjo Levandi** became an overnight sensation after graduating from the Tallinn Music Academy and making her debut at the Estonian National Opera. The tall and slender soprano with more than apt acting abilities was one of the leading members of the ENO ensemble for 8 seasons, making welcome guest appearances at other opera houses and music festivals, including the Gilbert and Sullivan festival in the UK. Since then, she has dedicated herself to the lighter repertoire, often with the Bel-Etage troupe or the Swing Swindlers ballroom orchestra, as well as being a mother. She has also discovered her skills as a comedienne and in 2010 won the Estonian Drama Award as the best actress in the supporting cast. Miss Levandi can also be heard on the first album of the series dedicated to neglected British composers of light music – The Monckton Album (Diversions, DDV24110)

**Kelli Uustani** graduated from the Royal Academy of Music in London and has since then proved herself to be an extremely versatile singer, whose repertoire ranks from light opera and musical comedy to jazz and funk. She is the leading female vocalist of the Swing Swindlers, a dance orchestra led by Mart Sander, specializing on the repertoire of the 1930s, and can be heard on all of the band's many albums. Miss Uustani is also a sought after vocal coach and arranger for several vocal groups and is often employed by the song writing team, responsible for the (so far only) Estonian winning Eurovision entry. Even when mothering her baby daughter, she still has time for studio work and a tight schedule of gigs.

**Mart Sander**, the leader and vocalist of both the Bel-Etage and the Swing Swindlers, began his professional musical career at the age of 17 and has since then stayed in the spotlight. He has released dozens of albums, sang and directed at the Estonian National Opera, composed both light and serious music, as well as acted both on stage and screen and hosted several popular TV programs (such as the Estonian version of Dancing With The Stars). He is a well known champion of Gilbert and Sullivan, and was commended by Queen Elizabeth II for his promotion of British music, during Her Majesty's state visit to Estonia. Mr. Sander is also an exhibited painter and has written three best selling novels.

The **Bel-Etage** company took over an old music hall at the heart of Tallinn, Estonia, in 2000; since then it has produced and recorded many Victorian and Edwardian shows, musical revues and comic operas. The company is well known for championing British music, especially Gilbert and Sullivan, whose work was previously not well known to Estonian audiences. Bel-Etage also supports a ballet troupe and two successful orchestras and is in constant demand at home and abroad.



BY COMMAND  
  
 KING GEORGE V.

Dear Mr. Albert,

Re "In the Shadows"

We are sending you to-day under separate cover the "Daily Telegraph" of May 18th and "London Opinion" of May 20th (see paragraphs marked in red ink).

You will observe from the "Daily Telegraph" that this is very important. Note that at the performance at Drury Lane Theatre before the King and the Kaiser, the piece was accorded a very prominent position on the programme, and this was at the direct request of King George V.

Yours very truly,

*Hawkes & Son*

*Dear Baka*  
*Baka*  
 BY COMMAND  
  
 KAISER WILHELM



Herman Finck



# In the Shadows

DANCE  
 by  
 HERMAN  
 FINCK.

Piano Solo - 2/-  
 Piano Duet - 2/-  
 Violin & Piano 2/-  
 Song - 2/-  
 Orchestra - 2/6  
 Band - 2/6

5



4

HAWKES & SON.  
 DENMAN STREET, PICCADILLY CIRCUS, LONDON, W.  
 PARIS.  
 E. SABLANT,  
 87 RUE DE PROVENCE.

BERLIN.  
 APOLLO VERLAG.  
 CHARLITENSTRASSE, 54.

Five complete detailed articles have insured such instant popularity as Herman Finck's "In the Shadows." It was at the King's personal desire that this piece be included in the concert programme to be performed before the Kaiser last evening.

sheet music notated  
 as to the royal  
 concert mentioned  
 in notes





## THE MONCKTON ALBUM

Principals and Orchestra of Theatre Bel-Etage

'Gramophone' Critics Choice CD 2004

Selections and Vocal Gems from The Ginglee, The Arcadians and The Quaker Girl

"Delicious music – sheer joy (Musical Opinion)

Diversions 24110



## FIVE-FIFTEEN

Mart Sander and his Swing Swindlers

A tribute to the BBC dance Orchestra

Musical Opinion Christmas Selection 2005

Great standards of soft swing in new recordings

"Something of a knockout" (Memory Lane)

Divine Art 25034

## The divine art family of labels



A full list of over 300 titles, with full track details, reviews, artist profiles and audio samples, is on our website.  
Available at any good record store or direct from our secure web stores.

UK office: Divine Art Ltd tel +44(0) 203 239 9088 (voicemail)

uksales@divineartrecords.com

US office: Diversions LLC tel +1 802 247 4295

sales@divineartrecords.com

CD and digital albums at [www.divineartrecords.com](http://www.divineartrecords.com)

WARNING: Copyright subsists in all recordings issued under this label. Any unauthorised broadcasting, public performance, copying or re-recording thereof in any manner whatsoever will constitute an infringement of such copyright. In the United Kingdom, licences for the use of recordings for public performance may be obtained from Phonographic Performance Ltd, 1, Upper James Street, London W1R 3HG

# THE PRINCIPALS

diversions  
ddv62402



KELLI  
GUSTANI

*lyric soprano*



MART  
SANDER

*conductor  
and baritone*



PIRJO  
LEVANMÄKI

*principal  
soprano*