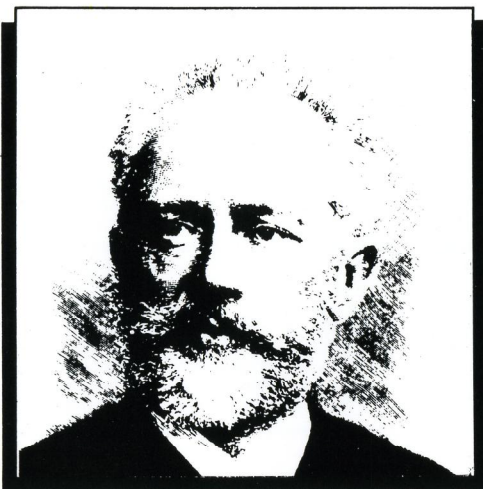
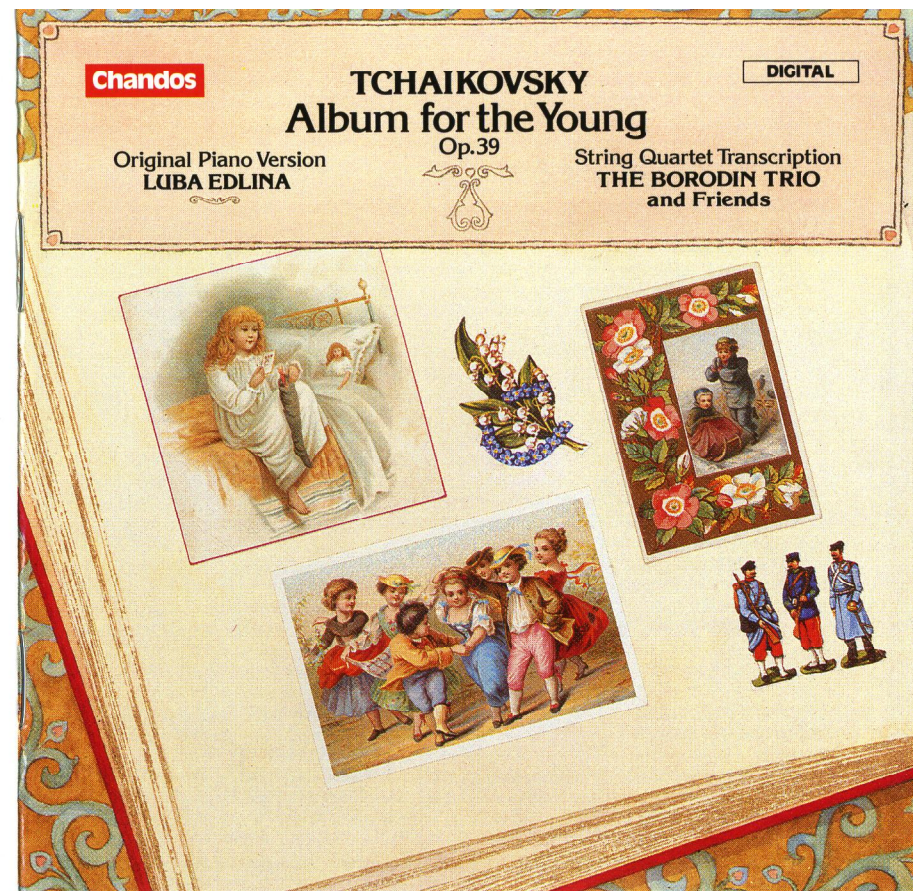


**Chandos**

**CHAN 8365**



© 1985 Chandos Records Ltd. © 1985 Chandos Records Ltd.  
Printed and made in West Germany/Imprimé en Allemagne.  
CHANDOS RECORDS LTD. LONDON, ENGLAND



Although Tchaikovsky began taking piano lessons when only four years of age, and was considered to have made remarkable progress as a pianist by the time he was six, he had no ambition to be a virtuoso pianist, the world of sound which made its greatest appeal to his imagination being that of the orchestra. Nevertheless, he composed a quantity of piano music, including two sonatas, the second of which, in G major, is of major significance. With his fascination for colour it is not surprising that Tchaikovsky's keyboard music offers particular scope to orchestrators, especially string writers, such as Rostislav Dubinsky, who transcribed the *Album for the Young* for string quartet.

However, these twenty-four pieces have a homogeneity and charm which offer a fascinating glimpse into the relaxed moments of a mature composer. Yet mature is perhaps the wrong term, for Tchaikovsky's personality was still recovering from the tremendous shock waves following his disastrous marriage and his attempted suicide. These were during 1877, in the autumn of which he was close to madness and ordered by his doctor to take a complete rest in the country. It was there that Nadezhda von Meck wrote offering him an annuity of 6,000 roubles, expressly stating that their only communication should be by letter, one of the most important and sympathetic acts of patronage in the history of music.

With the knowledge that he could devote himself to composition, and the inspiration of both *Eugene Onegin* and the Fourth Symphony at their height, Tchaikovsky was able to complete both these major works by January 1878. In March he started work on the Violin Concerto, and also the G major Piano Sonata, which was completed in April.

Nevertheless, the final settlement of the divorce was fraught with difficulties and Madam von Meck, realising that Tchaikovsky's sensitive nature could easily succumb to the pressure of worry, offered the composer the use of her house at Brailov, where he was able to relax and be looked after. He had earlier written to his publishers that he was not able to begin a large-scale work after *Eugene Onegin* and the Fourth Symphony, but that he felt he could undertake some creative recreation in the composition of small pieces, specifically mentioning ideas for piano pieces for children. His publisher was delighted with the idea and wrote back saying that a collection as envisaged could well be highly profitable, along a similar line to the success of Schumann's *Album for the Young*, composed in 1848.

Work began on the collection in February 1878 and was completed at Brailov in May. Tchaikovsky's publisher was proved right, the *Album for the Young* being a commercial success.

Tchaikovsky had obviously studied Schumann's work for these pieces are careful not to demand too much technical ability from the player, while they also provide a wide variety of character and expression. At the same time they are very definitely by a Russian, although never a Russian who is determined to push nationality down the throat of the listener or performer. Tchaikovsky was more of an internationalist than his nationalistic contemporaries in the *Kutchka*, or *Mighty Handful*, the five composers led by Balakirev whose intention was to create a strong Russian musical element the basis of which was folk music. These include Borodin, Cui, Mussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov.

Although the members of the *Kutchka* regarded Tchaikovsky as a composer whose approach was not sufficiently concerned with his country, Tchaikovsky himself thought otherwise. In a letter to Madame von Meck he states his attitude unequivocally. "On the whole, as far as the Russian element in my music is concerned, that is the relationship between the national songs and my melodies and harmonies, this is because I grew up in the backwoods, from earliest childhood saturated with the indescribable beauty of the characteristic traits of Russian folk music, because I passionately love their Russian element in all its manifestations, because, in a word, I am *Russian* in the fullest sense." In the same letter Tchaikovsky mentions that Russian folk music even comes into his work unexpectedly, as in the finale of the Fourth Symphony.

In *Album for the Young* the Russian element infects many of the pieces, but the cosmopolitan Tchaikovsky is also anxious to include representations of the music of other lands. They are perfectly designed for an amateur player, most taking only around half-a-minute, only two lasting more than a minute. In the printed edition only nine of the twenty-four take two pages of music, the rest having a page or less, while the level of difficulty is slight, only *The Song of the Lark* needing more than a minimum of technique, and even then very little in fact. The titles are largely self-explanatory.

1. **Morning Prayer** is an appropriate start for the collection, chordal in character and gently serious in content.
2. **A Winter Morning**, a lyrical if crisp musical picture of a Russian winter scene, loosely based on one of Tchaikovsky's collection of *Fifty Russian Folk Melodies*, which he arranged for two pianos in 1868/69.
3. **The Hobby Horse** has a Schumann flavour, its gentle staccato suggesting an enjoyable hobby horse race.
4. **Little Mother**, which also recalls the atmosphere of Schumann, is a tender tribute to Mama.

5. **March of the Wooden Soldiers** is a beautifully scaled down military march, complete with miniature cadences and fanfares.
6. **The Sick Doll** is appropriately serious, albeit with gentle pathos.
7. **The Doll's Funeral** follows, equally appropriate in gravity, with an innate understanding of the child's imagination of the occasion.
8. **Waltz**. After the funeral's gravity life awakes and Tchaikovsky provides this superb little cameo of relaxation by a master of dance music.
9. **The New Doll** arrives with great charm and spirit.
10. **Mazurka**, perhaps to celebrate the new doll this dance, which is Polish and Russian in character, also suggests a hesitation in footwork as the new arrival finds her feet.
11. **Russian Song** again looks to the *Fifty Russian Folk Melodies* collection, this time for a mere ten bars.
12. **The Peasant Plays his Ziehharmonika** brings the collection to the half-way point, and provides a quirky puzzle. Tchaikovsky is obviously anxious to suggest the actual sound of the peasant's instrument, which a first look at the German phrase at the head of the movement can prove misleading. This is "Der Bauer spielt Jarmonika", the last word sounding like the familiar mouth-organ. However the Tchaikovsky scholar and critic, Edwin Evans, showed that the jarmonika is really a kind of concertina, as used in the country. Edwin Evans comments on "the monotonous alternation of two chords, characteristic of the arch-enemy of Russian folk-music, the accordion."

Six examples of folk song occupy the next movements.

13. **Folk Song: Kamarinskaya** is an exciting, colourful setting of the well-known Russian folk tune.
14. **Polka**, from Bohemia, begins as though being played in a drawing room, but then grows in vitality and good-humour.
15. **Italian Song** is a reminder of Tchaikovsky's frequent visits to sunny Italy and the pleasure he always found there.
16. **Old French Melody** has a sense of antiquity and nostalgia.
17. **German Song** is a folksy ländler, harking back to the Tyrolese yodelling.
18. **Neapolitan Song** is a look back to Tchaikovsky's score for the ballet *Swan Lake*, composed in 1876, being a simplified quotation from the Neapolitan Dance in Act 4.
19. **The Old Nurse's Tale** furthers Tchaikovsky's great theatrical gifts, evoking the atmosphere of a highly dramatic story, perhaps a ghost tale?

20. **The Witch: Baba-Yaga** is one of Russia's favourite and most evil supernatural personalities, living in a house built on fowl's legs; but in this setting for the young her menace rarely rises above storybook level.
21. **Sweet Dreams** is pure Tchaikovsky, the longest and most beautiful of the collection.
22. **Song of the Lark** has some ornamentation which takes the youngster into the world of early technical prowess, while the lyricism, the arabesques and grace notes provide a fluency and charm unique to the collection.
23. **The Organ-Grinder Sings** makes use of a tune which Tchaikovsky heard being sung outside his Venice hotel in 1877. He made a note of it which he sent to Madame von Meck, describing the "charming voice" and "innate rhythmic sense" of the street singer who came every night with his young daughter. At the same time as this *Album for the Young* Tchaikovsky was providing his publisher with *Twelve Pieces of Moderate Difficulty*, the second of which is the evergreen *Chanson Triste*. For the final movement of this Opus 40 collection Tchaikovsky went to his street singer's tune, calling it *Interrupted Reverie*. In the *Album* the melody is given in a more simple form.
24. **In Church** provides a Russian Orthodox chant movement, with the impression of bells, whose deep tolling rounds off the collection which has opened with the *Morning Prayer*.

© 1985 Denby Richards

Recording Producer: Brian Couzens. Sound Engineer: Ralph Couzens.  
 Assistant Engineer: Bill Todd.  
 Side 1 recorded in the Church of St. Barnabas, Finchley,  
 London in November 1984.  
 Side 2 recorded in the Church of St. Pierre Apôtre,  
 Montreal in August 1984.  
 Front Cover Design: Clare Osborn.  
 Art Direction: Janet Osborn.



**The Borodin Trio** was formed after the three members emigrated from the Soviet Union in 1976. Since that date, they have established themselves as one of the best piano trios of our generation, having played in all the major cities of Europe and America, as well as making a tour of Australasia. Their British debut at the Wigmore Hall in July 1978 was "an outstanding success in anyone's book" (Daily Telegraph).

Rostislav Dubinsky was founder and first violinist of the legendary Borodin Quartet for thirty years. Decorated as Musical Artists of Great Merit for 25 years of service, the quartet had given some 3,000 concerts around the world up until the time of Dubinsky's emigration. He met his wife Luba Edlina at the Moscow Conservatory when they were both students. She is best known for her many brilliant performances and recordings as pianist with the Borodin Quartet and was associated with them for 20 years.

Recordings for Chandos by the Borodin Trio include Piano Trios of Beethoven, Brahms, Dvorak, Mendelssohn, Rachmaninov, Schubert, Tchaikovsky and the Piano Trio and Quintet of Shostakovich. In addition Dubinsky and Edlina have recorded Sonatas of Shostakovich and Schnittke; Yuli Turovsky has recorded the Cello & Piano Sonatas of Prokofiev and Shostakovich with Luba Edlina, and Kodaly's Sonata and Duo plus an album of French duo works with his wife Eleonora.

**The Compact Disc Digital Audio System** offers the best possible sound reproduction – on a small, convenient sound-carrier unit. The Compact Disc's superior performance is the result of laser-optical scanning combined with digital playback, and is independent of the technology used in making the original recording. This recording technology is identified on the back cover by a three-letter code.

**DDD** = digital tape recorder used during session recording, mixing and/or editing, and mastering (transcription).

**ADD** = analogue tape recorder used during session recording, digital tape recorder used during subsequent mixing and/or editing and during mastering (transcription).

**AAD** = analogue tape recorder used during session recording and subsequent mixing and/or editing; digital tape recorder used during mastering (transcription). In storing and handling the Compact Disc, you should apply the same care as with conventional records. No further cleaning will be necessary if the Compact Disc is always held by the edges and is replaced in its case directly after playing. Should the Compact Disc become soiled by fingerprints, dust or dirt, it can be wiped (always in a straight line from centre to edge) with a clean and lint-free, soft, dry cloth. No solvent or abrasive cleaner should ever be used on the disc.

If you follow these suggestions, the Compact Disc will provide a lifetime of pure listening enjoyment.

**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., Ganton House, 14-22 Ganton Street, London W1V 1LB.

Chandos

CHAN 8365

**Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky**  
(1840-1893)

**Album for the Young**  
Op.39

Original Piano Version  
played by **LUBA EDLINA**

String Quartet Transcription  
by Rostislav Dubinsky

played by **MEMBERS OF THE BORODIN TRIO  
AND FRIENDS:**

Rostislav Dubinsky and Eleonora Turovsky *violins*;  
Leslie Malowany *viola*; Yuli Turovsky *cello*



		TIMINGS	TIMINGS	
		Piano	Quartet	
1.	25. Morning Prayer	1:35	1:35	
2.	26. A Winter Morning	0:54	0:57	
3.	27. The Hobby-Horse	0:36	0:33	
4.	28. Little Mother	1:18	1:41	
5.	29. March of the Wooden Soldiers	0:55	0:58	
6.	30. The Sick Doll	1:56	1:53	
7.	31. The Doll's Funeral	1:33	1:25	
8.	32. Waltz	1:15	1:10	
9.	33. The New Doll	0:28	0:33	
10.	34. Mazurka	1:16	1:12	
11.	35. Russian Song	0:39	0:47	
12.	36. The Peasant Plays His Ziehharmonika	0:46	0:57	
13.	37. Folk Song: Kamarinskaya	0:28	1:12	
14.	38. Polka	0:44	0:46	
15.	39. Italian Song	0:54	1:07	
16.	40. Old French Melody	1:11	1:22	
17.	41. German Song (Ländler)	1:17	1:18	
18.	42. Neapolitan Song	1:03	1:10	
19.	43. The Old Nurse's Tale	1:04	0:59	
20.	44. The Witch: Baba-Yaga	0:37	0:29	
21.	45. Sweet Dreams	2:06	2:21	
22.	46. Song of the Lark	1:04	1:08	
23.	47. The Organ-Grinder Sings	1:00	0:55	DDD
24.	48. In Church	2:15	2:35	TT = 58:48
		TT = 28:06	TT = 30:32	

© 1985 Chandos Records Ltd. © 1985 Chandos Records Ltd.  
Printed and made in West Germany/Imprimé en Allemagne.  
CHANDOS RECORDS LTD. LONDON, ENGLAND