

# FRANZ LEHÁR

## Das Land des Lächelns

(The Land of Smiles)



Elisabeth Schwarzkopf • Nicolai Gedda  
Erich Kunz • Emmy Loose  
Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus  
Otto Ackermann

## Great Operetta Recordings

Franz  
**LEHÁR**  
(1870 – 1948)

# Das Land des Lächelns (The Land of Smiles)

Operetta in Three Acts  
Libretto by Ludwig Herzer and Fritz Löhner

Lisa ..... Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano)  
Prince Sou-Chong ..... Nicolai Gedda (tenor)  
Gustl ..... Erich Kunz (baritone)  
Mi ..... Emmy Loose (soprano)  
Tschang ..... Otakar Kraus (baritone)

Speaking parts:

Fu-Li ..... Felix Kent  
Servant ..... André Mattoni

Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus  
Otto Ackermann

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<b>CD 1</b>	<b>74:03</b>	<b>12</b> Dialogue: <i>Hoheit, der Sekretär der chinesischen Gesandtschaft</i> (Servant, Lisa, Sou-Chong, Fu-Li)	0:33
<b>1</b> <i>Overture</i> (Orchestra)	8:40		
<b>Act I</b>	<b>28:03</b>	<b>13</b> <i>Wir sind allein</i> (Lisa, Sou-Chong)	0:47
<b>2</b> <i>Da kommt Lisa! ... Hoch soll sie leben Heut', meine Herr'n, war ein Tag</i> (Gustl, Chorus, Lisa)	1:40	<b>14</b> <i>Ein Lied, es verfolgt mich Tag und Nacht</i> (Lisa, Sou-Chong)	2:24
<b>3</b> <i>Flirten, bisschen flirten</i> (Lisa, Chorus)	2:02	<b>15</b> <i>Es wird schon so sein</i> (Sou-Chong, Lisa)	2:45
<b>4</b> Dialogue: <i>Bitte, Lisa, bleib' doch ein Moment!</i> (Gustl, Lisa)	1:26	<b>16</b> <i>Von Apfelblüten einen Kranz, ah</i> (Sou-Chong, Lisa)	2:02
<b>5</b> <i>Es ist nicht das erste Mal</i> (Lisa, Gustl))	2:25	<b>Act II</b>	<b>37:20</b>
<b>6</b> Dialogue: <i>Bitte Hoheit, einzutreten</i> (Servant, Sou-Chong)	0:22	<b>17</b> <i>Prelude</i> (Orchestra)	0:58
<b>7</b> <i>Ich trete ins Zimmer, von Sehnsuch durchbebt ... Immer nur lächeln und immer vergnügt</i> (Sou-Chong)	4:21	<b>18</b> <i>Dschinthien wuomen ju chon ma goa can</i> (Chorus)	3:35
<b>8</b> Dialogue: <i>Guten Abend, Hoheit!</i> (Lisa, Sou-Chong)	0:17	<b>19</b> <i>Im Namen unseres Wen-Sway-Jeh</i> (Tschang, Chorus, Sou-Chong)	3:52
<b>9</b> <i>Ach, trinken Sie vielleicht mit mir ein Tässchen Tee? ... Bei einem Tee à deux in selig süsser Näh</i> (Lisa, Sou-Chong)	2:44	<b>20</b> Dialogue: <i>Unser erhabenes Herrscherhaus</i> (Tschang, Sou-Chong, Lisa)	1:06
<b>10</b> Dialogue: <i>Sie sind sehr gallant, Hoheit</i> (Lisa, Sou-Chong)	0:16	<b>21</b> <i>Dich sehe ich, und nur dich sehe ich, Lotusblume!</i> (Sou-Chong)	1:12
<b>11</b> <i>Von Apfelblüten einen Kranz, ah</i> (Sou-Chong)	3:59	<b>22</b> <i>Wer hat die Liebe uns ins Herz gesenkt</i> (Sou-Chong, Lisa)	3:38
		<b>23</b> <i>Onkel Tschang! Onkel Tschang! Jetzt ist er weg ... Im Salon zur blau'n Pagode</i> (Mi)	3:33

24	Dialogue: <i>Ein merkwürdiges Haus!</i> (Gustl, Mi)	1:18	2	<i>Zig, zig, zig, zig, ih! ih! ih! ...</i> <i>Wenn die Chrysanthemen blüh'n</i> <i>Du bist so lieb, du bist so schön</i> (Mi, Gustl)	2:37
25	<i>Als Gott die Welt erschuf ... Meine Liebe,</i> <i>deine Liebe, die sind beide gleich</i> (Gustl, Mi)	2:45	3	<i>Auf Wiederseh'n! ...</i> <i>Wie rasch verwelkte doch das kleine Blümchen</i> <i>Glück!</i> (Mi)	2:05
26	Dialogue: <i>Mein lieber Neffe</i> (Tschang, Sou-Chong)	0:45	4	Dialogue: <i>Lisa, wir sind verloren!</i> (Gustl, Sou-Chong, Lisa)	0:25
27	<i>Dein ist mein ganzes Herz!</i> (Sou-Chong)	3:30	5	<i>Dieselbe Sonne, die über Europa scheint ...</i> Dialogue: <i>Lisa, wir sind zwei Menschen</i> (Lisa, Sou-Chong, Gustl, Mi)	2:49
28	<i>Alles vorbei! ... Ich möcht' wieder einmal</i> <i>die Heimat seh'n</i> (Lisa)	1:45	6	<i>Liebes Schwesterlein, sollst nicht traurig sein</i> (Sou-Chong, Mi)	2:42
29	Dialogue: <i>Sou, du musstest wirklich die vier</i> <i>Frauen heiraten?</i> (Lisa, Sou-Chong)	0:30			
30	<i>Mit welchem Recht? ... Ich bin dein Herr!</i> (Lisa, Sou-Chong)	4:15			
31	<i>Die Herrin darf dem Palast nicht verlassen ...</i> <i>Ihr Götter sagt, was ist mit mir gescheh'n?</i> (Sou-Chong)	2:30			
32	<i>Dein war mein ganzes Herz!</i> (Sou-Chong)	2:07			
<b>CD 2</b>		<b>78:21</b>			
<b>Act III</b>		<b>12:02</b>			
1	Dialogue: <i>Lisa! Lisa! ... Gustl! Um Gotteswillen!</i> (Gustl, Lisa, Mi)	1:24	7	<b>DIE LUSTIGE WITWE: <i>Vilja Lied</i></b> <b>Dusolina Giannini</b> , soprano Rec. 13th September 1938 Mat. ORA 3226-1; Cat HMV DA 4446	3:06
9	<b>DER ZAREWITSCH: <i>Einer wird kommen</i></b> <b>Ester Rethy</b> , soprano Vienna Symphony Orchestra • The Composer Rec. January 1942 Mat. ORA 5353-2; Cat. HMV DA 4497	3:24	8	<b>FRASQUITA: <i>Hab' ein blaues Himmelbett</i></b> <b>Richard Tauber</b> , tenor Rec. 24th May 1927 Mat. xxB7714-2; Cat.O-8312	4:00

## Appendix

### Excerpts from Operettas by Lehár Performed by Legendary Singers

- 10 FRIEDERIKE:** *Sah' ein Knab' ein Röslein steh'n* 3:32  
**Leonardo Aramesco**, tenor  
 Rec. ca. 1933  
 Mat. 5096 BH; Cat. U.S. Brunswick 53160
- 11 FRIEDERIKE:** *Oh Mädchen, mein Mädchen*  
**Leonardo Aramesco**, tenor 2:37  
 Rec. ca. 1933  
 Mat. 5097 BH; Cat. U.S. Brunswick 53160
- 12 EVA:** *Wär es auch nichts als ein Augenblick* 3:54  
**Lotte Lehmann**, soprano  
 Rec. 3rd September 1938  
 Mat. xxB8150; Cat O-8730b
- 13 DAS LAND DES LÄCHELNS:** *Selections* 8:45  
**Elisabeth Schwarzkopf**, soprano  
 & **Rupert Glawitsch**, tenor  
 Orchester des Deutschen Opernhauses, Berlin •  
 Walter Lutz  
 Rec. 17th August 1940  
 Matrices 025121/22; Cat. Telefunken E 3115
- 14 PAGANINI:** *Selections* 9:10  
**Elisabeth Schwarzkopf**, soprano  
 & **Rupert Glawitsch**, tenor  
 Orchester des Deutschen Opernhauses, Berlin •  
 Hansgeorg Otto  
 Rec. 2nd September 1939  
 Matrices 024618/19; Cat. Telefunken E 3041
- 15 SCHÖN IST DIE WELT:** *Ich bin verliebt* 3:36  
**Ester Rethy**, soprano  
 Vienna Symphony Orchestra • The Composer  
 Rec. January 1942  
 Mat. ORA 5352; Cat. HMV DA 4497
- 16 SCHÖN IST DIE WELT:** *Liebste, glaub' an mich*  
**Marcel Wittrisch**, tenor 3:03  
 Rec 12th December 1930  
 Mat. BD 9348-2; Cat. HMV EG 2164
- 17 SCHÖN IST DIE WELT:** *Schön ist die Welt* 3:11  
**Marcel Wittrisch**, tenor  
 Rec. 12th December 1930  
 Mat. BD 9347-2; Cat. HMV EG 2164
- 18 DER FÜRST DER BERGE:**  
*Kindchen, sie hübsch brav* 3:31  
**Irene Eisinger**, soprano  
 Orchestra • Arthur Guttman  
 Rec. ca. 1930  
 Mat. 3219 BH; Cat. DGG 24827
- 19 DER FÜRST DER BERGE:** *Alt und jung* 3:12  
**Irene Eisinger**, soprano  
 Orchestra • Arthur Guttman  
 Rec. ca. 1930  
 Mat. 3220 BH; cat. DGG 24827
- 20 GIUDITTA:** *Meine Lippen, sie küssen so heiss*  
**Jarmila Novotna**, soprano 3:29  
 Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra • The Composer  
 Rec. 11th January 1934  
 Mat. Ve2110; Cat. 0-4537-b
- 21 GIUDITTA:** *Du bist meine Sonne* 4:34  
**Helge Rosvaenge**, tenor  
 Rec. January 1943  
 Mat. 2RA 5855-2; Cat. HMV DB 7664
- 22 GIUDITTA:** *Freunde, da Lebens ist lebenswert*  
**Helge Rosvaenge**, tenor 3:15  
 Rec. January 1943  
 Mat. 2RA 5856-1; Cat. HMV DB 7664
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 Ward Marston
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## Franz LEHÁR (1870-1948)

### Das Land des Lächelns (The Land of Smiles)

In the twilight of his career Franz Lehár aptly commented: 'I think an operetta should never lose contact with human feeling or ideas. This is the secret of its impressiveness which, arousing emotion, is more profound, serious and purer than the effectiveness of what is nothing but a show'. Such an observation is certainly true of his operetta *Das Land des Lächelns* (The Land of Smiles).

Generally considered the most significant operetta composer of the first half of the twentieth century, Franz Lehár was Hungarian born, though his greatest successes were achieved first in Vienna and latterly in Berlin. Son of a bandmaster, the young Lehár entered Prague Conservatoire at the age of fifteen, later joining an orchestra, before enlisting in the Army and becoming its youngest bandmaster at the time. Based at Pola on the Adriatic he was able to hone his orchestral techniques through the opportunity of conducting the orchestra in the country's only outlet to the sea.

It was the great success of Lehár's waltz *Gold und Silber* (Gold and Silver), composed for Prince Metternich's eponymous opera ball in January 1902, that revealed his talents to a wider public. On leaving military service he was first employed as a conductor at the Prater in that summer, followed by employment as a Kapellmeister at the Theater an der Wien in the autumn. Around this time he composed his first serious operetta *Wiener Frauen* for the rival Carltheater in December 1902, the news of which forced his resignation from his conducting position. Now Lehár had the opportunity and independence to pursue a full-time composing career. Three further operettas followed before the appearance of *Die lustige Witwe* (The Merry Widow) in December 1905. The worldwide success of this new work made the composer's name known internationally. It continues to remain the composer's best-known stage work a century later. Further operettas before the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914

followed, *Der Graf von Luxemburg* (The Count of Luxembourg) (1909), *Zigeunerliebe* (Gypsy Love) (1910) and *Eva* (1911).

The break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire following the end of hostilities in 1918 together with the introduction to Europe of new styles of popular music from the American continent, seemed to inhibit Lehár for a short period of time. Success returned when the highly popular Austrian tenor Richard Tauber (1891-1948) appeared in a Salzburg production of *Gypsy Love* in 1921, soon followed by the new *Frasquita* in Vienna the following spring. Lehár would then compose six further operettas over the ensuing decade for the unique voice of Tauber. These would include songs, duets and ensembles but also what became known affectionately as the 'Tauber-Lied'. These operettas were *Paganini* (1925), *Der Zarewitsch* (1926), *Friederike* (1928), *Das Land des Lächelns* (1929), *Schön ist der Welt* (1931) and *Giuditta* (1934). The subject matter and story-line for these works may have appeared rather sentimental, even old-fashioned at the time, but Lehár was astute enough to create unhappy endings in some of these works, something which hitherto had not occurred in Viennese operetta.

In 1935 the composer founded his own publishing house Glocken Verlag in Vienna in order to have more control over the performance and the availability of his works. He even acquired the rights of his earlier works from publishers to whom he had earlier sold the copyright. His seventieth birthday was celebrated in Nazi-occupied Vienna but other than that he lived quietly with his partly Jewish wife away from the public gaze. His principal musical activity during this time was a series of radio broadcasts of his operettas that have happily come down to us. Moving to Zurich in 1946, where his wife died the following year, Lehár then returned to his Austrian villa at Bad Ischl, dying there in October 1948. The building is now a museum to the

composer's memory.

When one examines any Lehár score it is immediately evident that the composer was a superb creator of melodies, but also a composer who was able to develop his musical language over the years from 1902 until 1934, something that is certainly far from the norm in the world of operetta and musicals of that time. His use of the Viennese waltz is always obvious, but it is the skill in his orchestration, something he alone always undertook, that is very much his own. He was also adept at employing local atmospheric colouring in his scores. For example, notice the differing orchestral effects he employs in the first act of *The Land of Smiles*, set in Vienna, as against that of China in the two remaining two acts. It is most effective.

The vocal highlight of *The Land of Smiles*, incidentally a reworking of an earlier 1923 operetta *Das Gelbe Jacke* (The Yellow Jacket) but to a new libretto, has to be the melting “*Dein ist mein ganzes Herz*” in Act 2 as sung by Prince Sou-Chong. Other equally memorable songs are Prince’s “*Immer nur lächeln und immer vergnügt*” and “*Von Apfelblüten einen Kranz*”, the charming duet “*Bei einem Tee*”, all from Act 1. From Act 2 there is the love duet “*Wer hat die Liebe*”, Mi’s delightful “*Im Salom zur bl’n Pagode*”, the Mi/Gustl duet “*Meine Liebe*”, and the bitter but poignant duet between the Prince and Lisa “*Ich bin dein Herr*”. All these are preceded by the Overture, which is a splendid potpourri of the principal melodies.

Made in 1953, this was the first complete recording of *The Land of Smiles*, of which *The Gramophone* magazine wrote, the following year: “The principals all excel in sentiment. [Schwarzkopf offers] perfection of performance ... Loose is the ideal soubrette ... Gedda sounds young and caressing ... Kunz’s charm ... and Kraus imparts the right touch of sterness. The orchestral playing is pointed and colourful”.

In the rôle of the Chinese prince Sou-Chong is the Swedish tenor **Nicolai Gedda** (b 1925). His versatility has always been considered remarkable in that he has sung in and can speak seven languages. Born in

Stockholm of a Russian father and Swedish mother, a bass member of the Kuban Don Cossack Choir and later cantor at the Russian Orthodox Church in Leipzig, he was trained at the Swedish Royal Academy of Music. He made his début at the Royal Opera in Stockholm in 1951 in the première of Sutermeister’s *Der rote Stiefel*, followed by the rôle of Chapelou in Adam’s *Le postillon de Longjumeau* in April 1952, an occasion that brought him to international attention. After taking part in the first Western recording of *Boris Godunov* under Dobrowen (Naxos 8.110242-44), Gedda made his La Scala début in 1953 as Don Ottavio and the Groom in the première of Orff’s *Il trionfo di Afrodite*. The following years saw him appear at the Paris Opéra (Huo in *Oberon*), the Aix-en-Provence Festival, Covent Garden (the Duke in *Rigoletto*), Salzburg Festival (Belmonte in *Die Entführung*) and the Metropolitan in New York as Gounod’s Faust. In 1958 he created the rôle of Anatol in Barber’s *Vanessa*, which he also gave in Salzburg. He first sang Berlioz’s Benvenuto Cellini at the Holland Festival in 1961, which he later repeated at Covent Garden in 1966, 1969 and 1976. He also appeared in Russia in 1980-81 to great acclaim. His London concert-hall début took place in 1986. He sang at the Met for 22 seasons in 27 rôles in 289 performances. He was still recording as recently as 2002. Gedda has proved the most versatile lyric tenor of his time with a vast discography covering every conceivable aspect of the repertory.

The rôle of Lisa is sung by the German soprano **Elisabeth Schwarzkopf** (b. 1915), wife of the recording producer and impresario Walter Legge (1906-1979) whom she married in 1953. She studied at the Berlin Hochschule für Musik and later with the soprano Maria Ivogün, making her début as one of the Flowermaidens in *Parsifal* with the Städtische Oper, Berlin, in 1938. Originally a lyrical soprano she undertook rôles such as Adèle in *Die Fledermaus*, Musetta in *La Bohème* and Zerbinetta in *Ariadne auf Naxos* when she joined the Vienna State Opera under Karl Böhm in 1943. Her first overseas appearance was

with this company on their visit to London in 1948, when she sang Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* and Marzelline in *Fidelio*. She later joined the fledgling Covent Garden Company where for five seasons she sang a variety of rôles, mostly in English. Alongside these appearances, Schwarzkopf sang at the Salzburg Festival (1946-1964), La Scala, Milan (1948-1963), San Francisco (1955-1964) and, finally, at the Metropolitan in New York in 1964. She was greatly admired in the rôles of the Marschallin, Fiordiligi, the Countess in *Le nozze di Figaro*, and Donna Elvira. She also had a distinguished parallel career as a Lieder singer in the concert hall. She recorded a number of operetta rôles including Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus* and Saffi in *Der Zigeunerbaron*. Also to be found on CD2 are two recordings of Schwarzkopf's voice made at the start of her career.

The Austrian baritone **Erich Kunz** (1909-1995) was assigned the rôle of Lisa's admirer Gustl. Born in Vienna, he studied with Professor Lierhammer and the baritone Hans Duhan. Making his début as Osmin in Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Troppau in 1933, he spent the summer of 1935 as a member of the Glyndebourne Festival Chorus. This was followed by periods in Plauen (1936-37) and Breslau (1937-41) before joining the Vienna State Opera in 1940. Two years later followed his Salzburg Festival as Figaro. The year 1943 saw Kunz at the Bayreuth Festival singing Beckmesser in *Die Meistersinger*, a rôle he would repeat in 1951. He visited London in 1948 as a member of the Vienna Company, singing Leporello, Figaro and Guglielmo. He sang the latter rôle on his return to Glyndebourne in 1950. His years at the Metropolitan in New York were between 1952 and 1954 when he sang 22 performances of four rôles, Beckmesser, Leporello, Faninal and Figaro. He again sang in London with the Vienna Company in 1954. Kunz was a fine Mozartian with an engaging stage manner. He was also admired in operetta and Viennese songs.

The rôle of Mi is sung by the Austrian soprano **Emmy Loose** (1914-1987), who was born in

Karbitz/Aussig (on the Elbe) in Bohemia. Educated at the Prague Conservatory, she made her début in 1939 as Blondchen in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Hanover. Two years later she was engaged by the Vienna State Opera to perform Änchen in *Der Freischütz*. She sang there for 25 continuous years as a lyric and coloratura soprano. Loose also appeared regularly at festival seasons in Salzburg, Glyndebourne, Aix-en-Provence and Bregenz, in addition to engagements at La Scala, Milan. She appeared at Covent Garden in London with the Vienna Company in 1948 and as guest with the resident company, singing Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier* and Susanna in *Figaro* during the 1949-50 season. She also sang in Japan and North and South America. From 1970 she taught at the Vienna Academy of Music. Emmy Loose was admired in the operas of Mozart and Richard Strauss, a number of which she recorded.

For the rôle of Tschang the Czech-born but later naturalised British baritone **Otakar Kraus** (1909-1980) was selected. Born in Prague, he studied with Konrad Wallerstein before moving to Fernando Carpi in Milan, making his début as Amonasro in Brno in 1935. He was a member of the Bratislava Opera from 1936 to 1939 but with the outbreak of the Second World War Kraus eventually came to Britain, later joining the touring Carl Rosa Company in 1940. As a member of the newly formed English Opera Group in 1946, he created Tarquinius in Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* at Glyndebourne, later taking the rôle of the Vicar in *Albert Herring*, and Lockit in Britten's realisation of *The Beggar's Opera*. He joined Netherlands Opera for the 1950-51 season in addition to creating the rôle of Nick Shadow in Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* in Venice later that year. This was followed by 22 years as a member of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. There he sang most of the principal baritone parts in addition to creating Diomedes in Walton's *Troilus and Cressida* in 1954 and King Fisher in Tippett's *The Midsummer Marriage* the following year. He sang Alberich in *The Ring* at Bayreuth between 1960 and



1962. Whilst not endowed with the greatest of voices, Kraus was a superb singing actor who was greatly admired for his make-up skills. He retired in 1973 to teach.

The recording's producer Walter Legge had originally wanted Karajan as conductor for his series of operetta recordings but he declined. Then he turned to the Swiss-naturalised **Otto Ackermann** (1909-1960) who proved to be an outstanding interpreter. Born in Bucharest, he first studied there at the Royal Academy of Music before moving to the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin, where his teachers were Georg Szell and Leo Prüwer. At the age of fifteen he conducted the Royal Romanian Orchestra while they were on tour, before accepting a position in the Opera House of his native city for the 1925-26 season. He was appointed a Kapellmeister at Düsseldorf Opera in 1928 and in 1932 moved to the German Opera in Brno. This was followed by an appointment in 1935 to the Municipal Theatre in Berne, where he remained until 1947. Between 1949 and 1955 Ackermann worked regularly at Zurich Opera in addition to the Theater an der Wien between 1947 and 1953. Then followed three years as Music Director at the Cologne Opera. He returned to Zurich in 1958 but soon became seriously ill, dying in 1960. Ackermann was a fine conductor of both opera and operetta in addition to being admired as a sound Mozartian.

The appendix to the complete recordings offers a number of rarities, the names of some of the performers well known, others now almost forgotten.

The Austrian-born soprano **Irene Eisinger** (1903-1994) was born in Kosel, Silesia, and studied in Vienna before making her début in Basel in 1926. She joined the Vienna State Opera in 1930 and also appeared at the Salzburg Festival between 1930 and 1933. Forced to leave Germany, she sang at the German Opera in Prague during the 1933-34 season. She appeared at Glyndebourne between 1934 and 1939 and again in Edinburgh with the company in 1949. Her rôles included Despina, Papagena in *Die Zauberflöte*, Blondchen in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and

Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro*. Additionally, she sang the rôle of Polly in the 1940 London production of *The Beggar's Opera*. Eisinger was a fine coloratura soprano and an excellent soubrette, as was witnessed by her Gretel, and Adèle in *Die Fledermaus* (both sung in English) during the 1936 Winter Season at Covent Garden. From 1938 onwards she lived in London.

The American-born soprano **Dusolina Giannini** (1900-1986) studied first with her father and later Marcella Sembrich. After making her début as Aida in Hamburg in 1925, she sang widely throughout Europe over the ensuing decade before first appearing at the Metropolitan in New York in 1936. She recorded for HMV both in Italy and Germany during her European years. She died in Zurich.

The German soprano **Lotte Lehmann** (1888-1976) studied in Berlin prior to making her début as the Third Boy in *Die Zauberflöte* in Hamburg in 1910. She first sang in London in 1914 and became a regular at Covent Garden between 1924 and 1939. Enjoying a long association with the Vienna Staatsoper she also sang widely throughout Europe and in the United States, where she settled before the outbreak of World War Two. Lehmann was a fine Lieder singer whose career lasted until 1951 when she became involved in teaching in California in addition to giving master-classes in London. She was a most distinguished artist, a fine actress and an inspiring teacher.

The soprano and actress **Jarmila Novotná** (1907-1994) studied first in Prague, later in Milan. She made her début in 1925 with Smetana's *The Bartered Bride* and also made her film début that year with the Czech silent movie *Vyznavaci slunce*. She later sang in Verona, Naples and Berlin. She lived until 1933 in Berlin, where she had also launched a successful film career. She moved to Austria where she met Lehár who engaged her for the leading role in *Giuditta*. Eventually Novotná went to England where she appeared in the film *The Last Waltz* in 1936. She moved to the United States and sang at the Metropolitan Opera in 1940, becoming an American citizen. She later appeared on

Broadway and eventually appeared in the films *The Great Caruso* and *The Great Waltz*. She retired in 1956.

**Esther Rethy** (1912-2005) was born in Budapest, where she initially studied before moving to Vienna. Three years after her début she appeared as Marguerite opposite Jussi Björling's Faust at the Staatsoper in Vienna. She later sang at the Salzburg and Bregenz Festivals, continuing to perform until 1972. Her 1940s recordings with Lehár conducting reveal a gleaming soprano voice ideally suited to operetta.

The Rumanian tenor **Leonardo Aramesco** (1898-1946) enjoyed a successful career in Germany, working in Essen, Berlin and Munich in addition to Vienna and Prague. He was a regular broadcaster who also made a small number of recordings. He later moved to the United States and died in New York.

The tenor **Rupert Glawitsch** (1907-1971) enjoyed a longish career, almost exclusively in the worlds of broadcasting and operetta, principally in Graz, Hamburg and Vienna. His lyric voice was particularly suited to the microphone. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf recalled half a century later how helpful and reassuring he was in their duet recordings.

The Danish tenor **Helge Rosvaenge** (1897-1972) was virtually self-taught. He made his début at Nestrelitz, Germany in 1921 and it was in German-speaking countries that his career was primarily based. Singing at the Staatsoper in Berlin between 1930 and

1944, he also sang in Salzburg (1931-38) and appeared in London at Covent Garden in 1938 as Florestan in *Fidelio*. His United States début took place in recital at the age of 65, when he astonished his New York audience with his still bright tone and brilliant top notes. He recorded extensively over nearly four decades.

The Austrian-born later British naturalised tenor **Richard Tauber** (1891-1948) sang widely throughout Europe between 1913 and 1938. A member of the Staatsoper both in Berlin and Vienna, he became increasingly associated with the operettas of Lehár after 1922. He was popular in films in Germany prior to 1933, when the Nazi régime forced him to leave before eventually moving to Britain. A fine conductor, Tauber also composed a number of vocal and orchestral works. His vast recorded legacy covered virtually every aspect of vocal music.

The Belgian-born tenor of German parents **Marcel Wittrisch** (1900-1955) sang widely throughout Germany over three decades from 1925. In addition he sang at Covent Garden in London in 1931 and the title rôle of Wagner's *Lohengrin* at Bayreuth in 1937. His post-war career was largely based in Stuttgart. His many recordings display a voice not that dissimilar to that of Tauber, especially in the many examples of operetta.

**Malcolm Walker**

## Producer's Note

The source for the transfer of the complete recording of *The Land of Smiles* was a set of German LP pressings. The slight cutoff at the beginning of CD 1, Track 20 is an editing error present in the original master tape, and can be noticed on all editions.

**Mark Obert-Thorn**

## Synopsis

### CD 1

#### 1 Overture

### Act I

2 The scene is the villa of the Field Marshal Lieutenant Count Lichtenfels. To the left are two comfortable arm-chairs, to the right a piano. It is evening and an elegant company has gathered. A general drinks the health of the Count's daughter, Lisa. They are joined by Count Gustav von Pottenstein, a lieutenant of Dragoons, carrying a bouquet. Lisa enters, thanking the company for their congratulations.

3 Yet she is impatient with the frivolity of these occasions, with flirtation but no true love. The others echo her sentiments.

4 Count Gustav, Gustl, is her true admirer, and seeks to engage her attention, but she has other things on her mind.

5 They sing together, both aware that this is not the first or the last time that matters should be so. They remain good friends.

6 Prince Sou-Chong is ushered in by a servant.

7 He is in love with Lisa, but hides his feelings, hiding his heart-ache under his smiles.

8 Lisa greets him. They are now alone together, but problems of understanding arise, not helped by the fact that he does not drink wine.

9 They agree to drink tea together, and their love becomes evident.

10 Lisa thanks him for his compliments.

11 Joined by other girls, Sou-Chong explains the gentler ways of Chinese courtship.

12 An emissary from the Chinese embassy announces that Sou-Chong has been recalled to China as Prime Minister. The Count warns his daughter not to take any foolish step, as China and Europe are like fire and water, heaven and hell.

13 Sou-Chong and Lisa are alone once more.

14 She fondly recalls a melody she has heard from him, but makes clear that they belong in different worlds.

15 He is to return to China, but Lisa resolves to go with him, even to the end of the world.

16 He repeats his earlier song of courtship, telling how he would lay a garland of apple-blossom at her feet in a moonlit April night. They embrace and kiss.

### Act II

17 The new scene is a hall of Prince Sou-Chong's palace, where dignitaries await the Prince.

18 A ceremonial march is heard approaching, with priests, soldiers, sailors, mandarins, bringing the ceremonial yellow jacket.

19 An officer calls out a command, Sou-Chong is summoned to receive the yellow jacket, bestowed by the Emperor.

20 Lisa is now living with Sou-Chong. He assures her that she is queen in his house, but customs in China are clearly different.

21 Sou-Chong, though, only has eyes for Lisa, his lotus-blossom.

22 Sou-Chong and Lisa sing of their love.

23 Sou-Chong's sister Mi takes a realistic view of matters.

24 She sings of the differences and of Chinese traditions that hide their true feelings and desires.

25 Gustl has followed Lisa to China, and has struck up a relationship with Mi. He declares that originally all people were alike, but later became different, as Mi agrees. Yet both love the same.

26 Sou-Chong's Uncle Tschang has told his nephew that he should follow tradition and take four wives. This he is unwilling to do.

27 His whole heart is Lisa's, his finest song for her, his only love.

28 Lisa realises that all is over and that she must return to Vienna, her memories of home aroused by the arrival of Gustl.

29 She asks Sou-Chong if he must really take four wives.

30 He will not let her leave, and she asks by what right he keeps her there. In China, though, she is at the mercy of her master.

31 He gives orders that she shall not be allowed to leave, and now forbids her to leave. Her love for him has turned to hate, but alone he is distraught at what he has done.

32 He recalls his love for her.

## CD 2

### Act III

1 It is a week later. In the women's quarters of Sou-Chong's palace Lisa lies on a divan, surrounded by slave-girls who seek to entertain her. Gustl and Mi appear.

2 Gustl and Mi sing of the respective delights of China and Vienna.

3 He has devised a plan of escape for Lisa, but Mi regrets his departure; she loves him and will never forget him.

4 Lisa's attempted escape with Gustl through a Buddhist temple is thwarted by Sou-Chong, who bars their way. She demands that he let her go.

5 It is the same sun that shines on Europe that she finds so hot and dry, and she longs for her own country. Sou-Chong understands and agrees, telling Gustl to escort her home. As she goes, she turns once more, and seeing Mi quietly weeping gently tries to comfort her.

6 Sou-Chong tells his sister not to grieve but to follow his example, and the teaching of the Buddha, hiding sorrow behind a smile.

**Keith Anderson**

Playing  
Time  
2:32:24

Franz  
**LEHÁR**  
(1870 – 1948)

# Das Land des Lächelns

(The Land of Smiles)

Lisa ..... Elisabeth Schwarzkopf  
 Prince Sou-Chong ..... Nicolai Gedda  
 Gustl ..... Erich Kunz  
 Mi ..... Emmy Loose  
 Tschang ..... Otakar Kraus  
 Speaking parts:  
 Fu-Li ..... Felix Kent  
 Servant ..... André Mattoni

Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus  
 Otto Ackermann

Recorded 17th, 19th – 21st, April and 28th June 1953  
 in Kingsway Hall, London

Generally considered the most important operetta composer of the first half of the twentieth century, Franz Lehár was not only a master of lush, infectious melodies but a skilled orchestrator whose musical language conveys a wide range of human emotions. Made in 1953, this was the first complete recording of *The Land of Smiles*, of which *The Gramophone* magazine wrote: "The principals all excel in sentiment. [Schwarzkopf offers] perfection of performance ... Loose is the ideal soubrette ... Gedda sounds young and caressing ... Kunz's charm ... and Kraus imparts the right touch of sternness". Principal among the many vocal highlights is the melting "Dein ist meines ganzes Herz" from Act II, ravishingly sung by Nicolai Gedda.

CD I	74:03	CD 2	78:21
<b>1</b> Overture	8:40	<b>1-6</b> Act III	12:02
<b>2-16</b> Act I	28:03	<b>7-22</b> Excerpts from Lehár's Operettas performed by Legendary Singers	66:19
<b>17-32</b> Act II	37:20		

Reissue Producers and Restoration Engineers: Mark Obert-Thorn and Ward Marston  
 Cover photo: Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (Tully Potter Collection)



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