

The NAXOS logo is located in the top right corner of the cover. It consists of the word "NAXOS" in a bold, sans-serif font, with a small graphic of a classical building facade above it.

101

*Great Orchestral
Classics*

Volume 5

The Four Seasons: Spring

Peer Gynt

Concierto de Aranjuez

Sabre Dance

Rosamunde

Surprise Symphony

Invitation to the Dance

Albinoni: Adagio

and others



DDD

101 Great Orchestral Classics - Volume 5

The Russian composer Aram Khachaturian, of Armenian extraction, drew frequent inspiration from the ethnic minorities in the South of the Soviet Union. His ballet *Gayane*, written in 1942, is set in an Armenian cotton cooperative, where the heroine of the title is eventually able to dispose of her drunken husband and marry the chairman of the cooperative. The most famous dance in the ballet is the energetic *Sabre Dance*.

An earlier Russian composer, Sergey Rachmaninov, chose exile in 1917, rather than subservience to the new régime. Although he had established himself as a composer and conductor in Russia in the first years of the present century, abroad he was obliged to concentrate rather on performance as one of the greatest pianists of his time. The second of Rachmaninov's four piano concertos was written in 1900 and 1901 and represented a return to composition after a period of sterility brought about by the failure of his first symphony. Psycho-analysis brought a cure, of which the concerto, in all its romantic extravagance, is the first example.

Composers have not always been happy in their literary collaborators. Franz Schubert, born in Vienna in 1797, never found official musical employment in his native city, although publishers were beginning to show interest in his work at the time of his death in 1828. His *Rosamunde* music was written in some haste in 1823 for a romantic drama by the blue-stocking Helmina von Chézy. The play died almost at once, but Schubert's music, some of which he re-used elsewhere, was revived and finally published in 1891.

The priest-composer-cum-violinist Antonio Vivaldi was an active figure in the music of Venice during the first forty years of the eighteenth century. His compositions, many of them written for the girls' orphanage where he was intermittently employed as violin teacher and director of instrumental music, include some 500 concertos, and of these the most famous now, as then, are the *Four Seasons*. The first of the set, *Spring*, makes use of bird-song, interrupted by a brief thunder-storm, before the first mood is restored.

The symphony, an orchestral work usually in three or four movements, developed as a form during the course of the eighteenth century, its progress more or less coinciding with the life of Joseph Haydn, who was born in 1732 and lived until 1809. Haydn, for much of his life Director of Music to one of the richest men in the Habsburg Empire, was released by the death of his patron in 1790 to accept engagements elsewhere. There followed two visits to London, the city for which he wrote his last twelve symphonies. No. 94 was composed in 1791 and first performed in London the following year. The symphony is known as *The Surprise* because of the sudden loud chords that interrupt the course of the present slow movement.

Edvard Grieg was closely involved with his compatriot Ibsen in work for the Norwegian theatre. Ibsen's play *Peer Gynt* follows the curious exploits of a folk hero, taking him from Norway as far away as Egypt and the desert, where he is greeted and entertained by the exotic Anitra.

The Venetian composer Albinoni, a contemporary of Vivaldi in early eighteenth century Venice, did not write the famous *Adagio* attributed to him. This charming piece is in fact the work of Remo Giazotto, an Italian music critic and musicologist, born in Rome in 1910.

The violin is among the most beautiful of instruments, its sound closely resembling the better sounds of the human singing voice. Tchaikovsky wrote only one violin concerto, assisted by his young friend, the violinist Kotek, a former student of Moscow Conservatory, where the composer had been teaching. The *Canzonetta* is the slow movement of the concerto, replacing Tchaikovsky's first thoughts, which were later issued as a separate composition.

Joaquin Rodrigo, blind from the age of three, is among the best known of Spanish composers of the twentieth century. The guitar, in the improved concert form developed by the great virtuoso Segovia, has allowed the composition of concertos, in which the instrument is joined by the orchestra. The evocatively Spanish slow movement of Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez*

is part of a work written in 1939, on the composer's return to Spain after the Civil War.

Weber was a cousin of Mozart's wife and son of a man whose varied interests had led finally to the management of a troupe of actors. He wrote the first significant German romantic opera, *Der Freischütz*. His *Invitation to the Dance*, originally for piano, follows a programme: a gentleman asks a girl to dance, she accepts and there is desultory conversation as they dance, until it comes to an end and they part.



8.551145

STEREO

DDD

101 GREAT ORCHESTRAL CLASSICS

Volume 5

1. KHACHATURIAN: Sabre Dance (2:25)

(from Naxos 8.550085)

Czecho-Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra/Anthony Bramall

2. RACHMANINOV: Piano Concerto No. 2 - Adagio sostenuto (11:17)

(from Naxos 8.550117)

Jenő Jandó/Budapest Symphony Orchestra/György Lehel

3. SCHUBERT: Rosamunde - Ballet Music No. 2 (7:46)

(from Naxos 8.550145)

Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra/Michael Halász

4. VIVALDI: Spring - Allegro (3:29)

(from Naxos 8.550056)

Takako Nishizaki/Capella Istropolitana/Stephen Gunzenhauser

5. HAYDN: Symphony No. 94 - Andante (5:31)

(from Naxos 8.550114)

Capella Istropolitana/Barry Wordsworth

6. GRIEG: Peer Gynt Suite - Anitra's Dance (3:19)

(from Naxos 8.550140)

Czecho-Slovak State Philharmonic Orchestra/Stephen Gunzenhauser

7. ALBINONI: Adagio (11:27)

(from Naxos 8.550014)

Capella Istropolitana/Richard Edlinger

8. TCHAIKOVSKY: Violin Concerto - Canzonetta (6:57)

(from Naxos 8.550153)

Takako Nishizaki/Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra/Kenneth Jean

9. RODRIGO: Concierto de Aranjuez - Adagio (10:53)

(from Naxos 8.550220)

Gerald Garcia/Czecho-Slovak State Philharmonic Orchestra/Peter Breiner

10. WEBER: Invitation to the Dance (9:24)

(from Naxos 8.550081)

Czecho-Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra/Ondrej Lenárd

Total Playing Time: 72'28"



4 891030 511453

Made in Germany



ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. UNAUTHORISED PUBLIC PERFORMANCE,
BROADCASTING AND COPYING OF THIS COMPACT DISC PROHIBITED.
© 1991 HNH International Ltd.
© 1991 HNH International Ltd.
DISTRIBUTED BY: NVD MUSIC AND VIDEO DISTRIBUTION GmbH,
OBERWEG ZIG-HALLE V. D. 8025 UNTERHACHING, MUNICH GERMANY.