

101  
*Great Orchestral  
Classics*  
*Volume 7*

**Finlandia**

**Nutcracker**

**Eroica Symphony**

**The Planets: Jupiter**

**Emperor Waltz**

**Entrance of the Queen of  
Sheba**

**España**

**Flight of the Bumble-bee  
and others**

The DDD logo is a small white rectangular box with the letters "DDD" in a bold, black, sans-serif font, positioned in the bottom right corner of the image.

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## 101 Greatest Orchestral Classics - Volume 7

Spain fascinated 19th century composers in search of the exotic. In Spain, after all, Arab civilisation met Iberian, producing its own particular synthesis. The French composer Emmanuel Chabrier, at the wish of his parents a civil servant before turning solely to music, visited Spain in 1882. The musical result was his famous Spanish rhapsody, *España*.

Felix Mendelssohn was as precocious as any composer could be. His comfortable family background allowed him to develop his talents and interests, and once the best advice had been obtained proved no obstacle to a career in music. Born in Hamburg and brought up largely in Berlin, he made a home for himself for a number of years in Leipzig, where he conducted the famous Gewandhaus Orchestra and founded the Conservatory. His Violin Concerto in E minor, with its splendidly lyrical and serene Andante, was written in 1844, towards the end of an unsatisfactory period back in Berlin, and first performed in March 1845 in Leipzig, with the violinist Ferdinand David.

Russian ballet underwent remarkable development during the course of the 19th century, particularly under the French dancer and ballet-master Marius Petipa. He provided the libretto for *Nut cracker*, based on a Hoffmann story that takes the young heroine Clara from a Christmas party to the enchanted Land of Sweets. Tchaikovsky had his doubts about the work, which was not particularly successful at its first performance in 1892, the year before his death. The *Waltz of the Flowers* is part of the *divertissement* for the entertainment of Clara in the country of her dreams.

German by birth, Italian in early musical ambitions and later English by choice of domicile, Handel dominated music in London for some 40 years, his influence continuing long after his death in 1759. From Italian opera for the London theatre he turned his attention to a remarkable creation, the English oratorio, a compromise that proved popular in its use of English, its satisfyingly religious texts and its Italianate music. The *Queen of Sheba* arrives to great effect in Handel's oratorio *Solomon*, first performed in London in 1749.

Napoleon, as he rose to power, seemed to many the embodiment of republican principles, the First Consul and creator of a new classical Roman Republic. When he followed the example of Augustus and in 1804 declared himself Emperor, there were those who were disillusioned, among them Beethoven. He had intended his Third Symphony, the *Eroica*, as a tribute to Napoleon, but changed the dedication, which in any case celebrated in its course the death of a hero. The first movement *Allegro con brio* remains a monumental achievement.

The bumble-bee that flies to the music of the Russian composer Rimsky-Korsakov takes to the air in his 1900 opera *The Legend of Tsar Saltan*, in which the hero changes himself into a bee and takes stinging revenge on his wicked aunts.

Hindu astrology fascinated the English composer Gustav Holst, popularly known chiefly for his great orchestral and choral work *The Planets*, first performed in its complete form in London in 1920. Jupiter, described as the Bringer of Jollity, has also acquired patriotic words from another source, suiting the spirit and period of the work.

The 17th century Nuremberg composer Pachelbel has won recent popularity for his Canon, an attractive enough work, in which two forms are combined. A short bass pattern is repeated through a series of 28 variations in which three upper instruments enter one after the other in canonic imitation.

National music in Finland is dominated by the impressive achievement of Jean Sibelius, with his seven great symphonies and series of symphonic poems. *Finlandia* was written in 1899 to accompany a patriotic pageant staged by the press pensions fund. It came at a time when Finnish feelings were running high against Russian domination.

The famous Emperor Waltz of the younger Johann Strauss enjoys an ambiguous title. Intended originally to celebrate the visit of the Austrian Emperor to his German counterpart in Berlin and the friendship between their two countries, it bore the title *Hand in Hand*, until the publisher Simrock saw the possibilities of the present title, which could honour either of the Emperors.

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(from Naxos 8.550086)  
Czecho-Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra/Keith Clark
- 2. MENDELSSOHN: Violin Concerto - Andante (9:26)**  
(from Naxos 8.550153)  
Takako Nishizaki/Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra/Kenneth Jean
- 3. TCHAIKOVSKY: Nutcracker - Waltz of the Flowers (6:50)**  
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- 4. HANDEL: Arrival of the Queen of Sheba (3:23)**  
Budapest Strings/Bela Banfalvi
- 5. BEETHOVEN: "Eroica" Symphony - Allegro con brio (13:11)**  
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- 6. RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: Flight of the Bumble-bee (1:30)**  
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- 8. PACHELBEL: Canon and Gigue (6:03)**  
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- 9. SIBELIUS: Finlandia (8:25)**  
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- 10. JOHANN STRAUSS II: Emperor Waltz (11:14)**  
(from Naxos 8.550339)  
Czecho-Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra/Ondrej Lenárd

**Total Playing Time: 73'52"**



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