



tchaikovsky
4 Suites for orchestra FIRST COMPLETE RECORDING
the new philharmonia orchestra
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NEW PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA

PETER ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY 1840–1893
The Complete Orchestral Suites

Suite No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 43

[1]	I Introduction and Fugue	12.32
[2]	II Divertimento	5.42
[3]	III Intermezzo	8.05
[4]	IV Marche miniature	1.52
[5]	V Scherzo	7.56
[6]	VI Gavotte	6.23

Suite No. 2 in C Major, Op. 53

[7]	I Jeu de sons	11.28
[8]	II Valse	5.38
[9]	III Scherzo burlesque	5.06
[10]	IV Rêves d'enfant	9.03
[11]	V Danse baroque	4.06

Suite No. 3 in G Major, Op. 55

[12]	I Elégie	10.55
[13]	II Valse mélancolique	5.51
[14]	III Scherzo	4.32
[15]	IV Tema con variazioni (Hugh Bean, violin)	19.23

Suite No. 4 Mozartiana, Op. 61

[16]	I Gigue	1.46
[17]	II Menuet	3.29
[18]	III Preghiera	4.54
[19]	IV Thème et variations (Colin Bradbury, clarinet · Hugh Bean, violin)	14.46

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TCHAIKOVSKY: FOUR ORCHESTRAL SUITES FOR ORCHESTRA

GENESIS OF THE SUITES

No one will argue with the proposition that in any descriptive writing a straightforward recital of hard facts is desirable. This applies with particular force in the program-note genre, where cliché is as conventional as it is usually unavoidable. And so I had been studying these works, meanwhile thinking through the possible annotative approaches to their first integral recording. Only after numerous false starts did I despair of introducing this music to my satisfaction. For it turns out that the historian who would put these scores in proper perspective is confronted by a frustratingly wide range of options. There are so many points of departure, so many others one wants to elaborate; and you cannot hope to cover everything in less than a monograph anyhow. Under such circumstances the longest way around in any direction could be the shortest way home.

So saying, it is as relevant as not to admit at the outset that the more I thought about these pieces the more irresistibly I was prompted to reflect on

the vagaries of professional advocacy and public taste. Item: if memory serves, in a lifetime of concertgoing I have heard but two and a half of the four, approximately, in actual performance; and my most recent “live” encounter with any of them dates back at least a dozen years. And yet these same mostly unfamiliar compositions had figured importantly, almost controllingly, in the worldwide renown that came to Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893). Inevitably, one wonders about this “strange harmony of contrasts”. Nor is one’s curiosity about so incongruous a state of affairs dispelled — indeed, it is further aroused — by a close reexamination of the music.

We may reasonably assume that the ground rules of the fame game have remained constant since the beginnings of cultural commerce. Chic has been, and is still, a factor of consequence on the music scene. The vicissitudes attributable to fashion do not, however, vitiate the notion that quality will out. This is an aesthetic article of faith, and defensibly so. To be sure there is often

a time lag. It has taken something over a half-century for the works of Gustav Mahler and Charles Ives to get their due, and the last returns are not in yet. Contrariwise there is the case of Jean Sibelius. In his heyday he was idolized, but even as he lived out his twilight years a predictable negative reaction developed; and an equally predictable counterreaction was then thwarted. In consequence, the Sibelius Symphonies to this day have not reclaimed their former popularity — and remember that in 1935 this composer had been rated ahead of all others, not excluding Beethoven, et al., in a poll of the New York Philharmonic’s national broadcast audience!

With the fate of the Tchaikovsky Suites we have, I think, something else altogether. Psychologists of the Gestalt school might describe it as a sort of transposition phenomenon. It is not that the composer’s name has fallen from grace. To the contrary, his niche in the Pantheon would seem to be more secure than ever. Rather, what has evidently happened is that whereas the Tchaikovsky Suites used to be ubiquitous, it is now as if they had been simply replaced by the Tchaikovsky

Symphonies. My hunch about this, duly allowing for the disparity of artistic values involved, is somewhat equivocally as follows: I say it happened probably because the international standard repertoire can contain only so much; and probably also because, given the mores of the musical marketplace, any orchestral suite by definition is intellectually less edifying, spiritually less uplifting, somehow of a lesser expressive order, than is any symphony. For is not sonata form the *sine qua non* of the tonal art?

No doubt the foregoing is too simplistic, but the rhetorical question posed is rich in irony as addressed to Tchaikovsky. He did come to regard himself as a symphonist above all, or so one infers from the available evidence. But this posture invited opprobrium in some quarters because he never mastered the mechanics of classical structure. And for all his adulation of Mozart (about which more shortly), both the “absolute” ideal beloved of Central Europe and the particular kind of creative discipline attached to it were temperamentally anathema to him. He really believed that music, his music anyway, had to have some

programmatic meaning, if only a private one. All of this leads us inexorably, jumping a few logical steps, to a conclusion already suggested by a perusal of Tchaikovsky's orchestral music — that his Symphonies are not significantly more symphonic than his Suites. As an anthropologist might put it, each partakes of the same hybrid vigor.

The implications of this quasi-parity are intriguing. But in my judgment yet another view of the Suites is not only possible but plausible. I believe that they have a sizable importance historically not discerned by Tchaikovsky nor, so far as I know, anyone else. To wit, it seems to me that with this music Tchaikovsky brought to triumphant rebirth and fruition the congeries of concepts underlying the very *raison d'être* of the suite form — a form which had been, by his time, dead and buried for a whole century.

This hyperbole calls for some elaboration. Briefly, my reasoning is thus. Everybody knows that the suite had its origins in dance, more precisely in a cumulative collection of characteristic national dances,

beginning with those of Renaissance France and Italy (then the gigue from England, the sarabande from Spain, et al.), and finally arriving at a synthesis in Baroque Germany, where the assortment was more or less standardized and conceptually unified. Whereupon the Bachian format became the paradigm. But as living music, as a form in which composers composed, the suite did not have a chance against the symphony. The authoritative Willi Apel has it that the suite “became practically extinct after 1750”, leaving only traces of itself in the Mozartean divertimento and cassation.

But wait — Apel subsequently alludes in passing to “a modern type of suite in which the traditional scheme of dances is replaced by a free succession of movements of different character, frequently in the character of national dances or ballet dances”. As to the genesis of this “modern type” Apel does not even venture a guess; he merely remarks that it “gained favor in the 1880s ...”. In the context one gathers that Apel has in mind the concert sequences adapted from such theater scores as those for *L'Arlésienne* and

Peer Gynt, not to mention the many operatic and balletic digests to follow them into the semi-serious orchestral repertoire. But in fact the Apel definition fits these far less closely than it fits the Tchaikovsky Suites — the earliest of which was first performed in 1879 and all of which were introduced within the next decade.

In this connection it remains to recall what the composer wrote to his friend and former pupil, Serge Ivanovich Taneiev, when the latter complained of the F minor Symphony that he could not hear it without seeing a ballerina in his mind's eye:

I have no idea what you consider “ballet music” or why you should object to it. Do you look upon every melody in a lively dance rhythm as “ballet music”? If so, how can you reconcile yourself to most of Beethoven's symphonies, in which you will find such melodies on every page? ... I can never understand why “ballet music” should be used as an epithet of contempt. The music of a ballet is not invariably bad [an extraordinarily self-effacing

statement, considering that Swan Lake was then three years behind him!] ... And when the music is good, what difference does it make whether Sobyeshchanskaya dances to it or not? I can only think that certain parts of my symphony displease you because they recall the ballet, not because they are intrinsically bad. Perhaps you are right, but I do not understand why dance tunes should not be employed...

With what you say as to my symphony's having a program I wholly agree. But I do not understand why this must be a mistake, I am much more afraid of the contrary: I wish no symphonic work to emanate from me that has nothing to express and is made up merely of harmonies and a purposeless pattern of rhythms and modulations. Of course my symphony is program music — but it would be impossible to present the program in words... Should not this be true of a symphony, the most lyrical of all musical forms? Should it not express all the things for which

words cannot be found, which nevertheless arise in the heart and demand expression?

The biographer Herbert Weinstock observed of Taneiev's objection (since repeated by many others) that "it is thinking in reverse," that indeed only the best ballet music, i.e. Tchaikovsky's own, sounds like the Tchaikovsky Symphonies. Or — he might have added — like the Tchaikovsky Suites.

A final fascinating footnote on the Suites vis-à-vis the Symphonies: all of the works herewith were composed in the years between the Fourth and Fifth Symphonies. It is not altogether ridiculous, therefore, to consider Tchaikovsky's writing in these forms as falling along a single continuum of (excluding *Manfred* and the bastard "Seventh Symphony") ten scores — in turn the *Winter Dreams*, the *Little Russian*, the *Polish*, the four Suites, the Fifth Symphony, and the *Pathétique*. One could hardly prepare a seamless brief in support of this whimsy, but it would have efficacy enough if only it gave each listener a moment's pause before he submitted — as Tchaikovsky would not — to the tyranny of labels.

Now as to the natal circumstances of the Suites, and again a disclaimer. For the months prior to the First Suite alone provide far and away the most unbelievable chapters of a life story that is never less than incredible. Properly, we should begin the narrative with the winter of 1876–77, when the mid-thirtyish Tchaikovsky received his modest first commission from the wealthy woman who was to subsidize his genius so handsomely through four years of liaison by mail and messenger — the recently widowed Nadezhda Filaretovna Frolovskaya von Meck, nine years his senior, whose passionate devotion to his music was to affect Tchaikovsky's every waking moment for the rest of his days. (They never met, by her stipulation, but the Soviet government has since published three large volumes of their extant correspondence comprising 771 sometimes extremely lengthy letters.)

All of that, however, is quite another story. Also, it is a long, fantastic, quintessentially "romantic" and hence much-told tale by now familiar to everyone. For our purposes an overview will suffice, if only because the biographically crucial year of 1877

was now past. (Among other things, this is to say that we need not be concerned with the women in Tchaikovsky's life. The last of them had been Antonina Ivanovna Milyukova, his marriage to whom had driven him to a suicide attempt and finally to an acceptance of his homosexuality.) Except for travels and tours, then, it is enough to say of the decade in which Tchaikovsky produced the four Suites that it was a time of financial security, of at least a modicum of emotional security as a concomitant, and of steadily growing fame — enough of it to sustain even so tender a psyche as Tchaikovsky's.

SUITE NO.1 IN D MINOR, OP. 43

The Suite No.1 in D minor, Op. 43, took shape in the late summer of 1878 while the composer was sojourning luxuriously at Braïlov, Nadezhda Filaretovna's sprawling estate in the Ukraine (she was away at the time, having left orders that he was to be waited on hand and foot). But he did not get around to the orchestration until the following April, after the premiere of *Yevgeny Onyegin*. The score was finished a month later at

Kamenka — i.e., the property near Kiev presided over by his doting older sister, Alexandra Ilyinishna, and her husband, Lev Vasilyevich Davidov. Their home was always a favorite stopover for the peregrinating Tchaikovsky.

In the spring of 1879, still at Kamenka, he wrote to his publisher, Peter Ivanovich Jürgenson:

Either I am much mistaken, or this work will be popular, catching on quickly. It is very modestly and easily orchestrated ... Everyone here is mad about the *Andante*, and when I played it as a piano duet with my brother, one girl fainted (this is a fact!). To make the fair sex faint is the loftiest triumph any composer can achieve.

Nikolai Rubinstein introduced the First Suite in Moscow that December, while Tchaikovsky was in Rome. As the composer had predicted, it was a decided success. It was even more enthusiastically received in St. Petersburg, where Edward Napravnik conducted it later that season. Indeed, for all its recent paucity of

performance the work seems always to have been a “sure-fire” proposition. I remember how much it delighted a Carnegie Hall audience in the 1950s, when Dimitri Mitropoulos gave the only “live” performances in my experience.

The Op. 43 is laid out in six movements. It was presumably the *Introduzione e fuga (Andante sostenuto)* that so pleased the Kamenka household, and no wonder, for its careful contrapuntalism contains the full measure of Tchaikovskyan flavor without once compromising academic form. The *Divertimento (Allegro moderato)* on at least one occasion was described by its composer as a minuet, but really it partakes more of the waltz, and it is mostly in 3/4 time; that it is not music of the dance at all, moreover, could be argued persuasively. That is surely true of the *Intermezzo (Andantino semplice)*, which is like a protracted Slavic song, now melancholy, now impassioned. The exquisitely woodwindy *Marche miniature (Moderato con moto)* is an appetizing foretaste of the march in Act I of *The Nutcracker*, which it preceded by fourteen years. The *Scherzo (Allegro*

con moto) is more of the same but expanded to heartier proportions, with an intervening respite of swaying loveliness. The closing *Gavotte (Allegro)* is appropriately graceful and almost courtly in its obeisance to tradition except — also appropriately — when it breaks loose near the end and tears into the brief but brilliant peroration. (Parenthetically, I suggest the opening moment of the second section as a musical “whodunit” *par excellence*. Whenever I have played these few measures of solo clarinet for friends and asked them to identify the music, the guesses almost invariably include the wrong century, the wrong country, and the wrong composer — as often as not “Aaron Copland” has been the answer, which says something for the incipient modernism of Tchaikovsky, born sixty years earlier!)

SUITE NO.2 IN C, OP. 53

By far the least familiar of these four works is No.2 in C, Op. 53, which dates from 1883. Tchaikovsky had just returned to St. Petersburg after five months of touring, and once again he started thinking about an orchestral suite immediately after finishing an

opera (this time *Mazeppa*). In a letter to Nadezhda Filaretovna that July he resolves “at all costs” to compose a suite. Proofreading the *Mazeppa* parts was a seemingly endless torture, but by August he was able to tell his benefactress that the suite was finally in progress, and his pace accelerated after the good news from Moscow that his latest opera had been accepted for a Bolshoi production. The Op. 53 orchestration was accomplished in Kamenka that October.

As with the First Suite, Tchaikovsky was absent from the premiere of the Second, which was given in February of 1884 at Moscow on — literally — the night after the premiere of *Mazeppa*. The opera had not been a great success, and the despondent composer left for western Europe the very next day. His spirits would have been lifted considerably if he had lingered only a few more hours in Moscow. For the Op. 53, conducted by Max von Erdmannsdörfer, achieved a triumph the like of which even Tchaikovsky had not known before. The critics were unanimously enraptured by its verve, its deftness of instrumentation, its ingenuity of structure, its wealth of

melodic invention. Not for nothing is this work programmed (when it is programmed at all) as Tchaikovsky’s *Suite caractéristique*. There is simply no justifying, on the internal evidence, the neglect that has been its lot in our time.

There are five sections making up the Op. 53. The opening *Jeu de sons* (“Play of Sounds”) is exactly that. It is also *echt*-Tchaikovskyan, and balletic in the extreme to the extent that it recalls the Op. 48 Serenade in the same key which has been so compellingly choreographed by George Balanchine. Likewise the ensuing *Valse*. The central *Scherzo burlesque* is marvelously Russian in much the same way as Stravinsky’s *Petrouchka* was to be many years later. Tchaikovsky heightens his simulation of folk atmosphere to perfection by adding four accordions to the Orchestra. (Purists may wonder why Tchaikovsky did not insist on the straight-tuned *bayan*, which is the Slavic equivalent of the familiar button-key accordion. Quite apart from the composer’s understandable aversion to thus discouraging performances in many a far place where four *bayans* hardly could be found, the explanation is that the instruments have much the

same timbres anyhow; besides, the accordions are used only *en passant* and strictly for coloristic effect.) The *Rêves d'enfant* ("A Child's Dreams") inevitably is prophetic of *The Nutcracker* in its gossamer evocation of tulle and tarlatan. And the final *Danse baroque* is — well, certainly not what that implies, except insofar as the listener can associate the period involved with olden Muscovy. It is all very, very Russian. You can virtually feel the flashing feet of peasants executing an elaborate *kazatzke* in the light of a blazing campfire. The orchestration is complete with "barbaric yawps" and all the other coruscating devices that add up to Tchaikovsky's distinctively and distinctly *caractéristique* style.

SUITE NO.3 IN G, OP. 55

The Suite No.3 in G, Op. 55, was composed in 1884. It has four movements, but one of them (as with, e. g., Beethoven's "Moonlight" Sonata) is known by countless music lovers — and, in this instance, countless balletomanes as well — who have never even heard the other three. I myself have never encountered the complete score in a "live" concert. In this

recording, happily and almost uniquely, the work is performed in its entirety, just as it was when Hans von Bülow conducted its St. Petersburg premiere in January of 1885. (It seems to have been heard in Moscow a few days earlier, but there is some confusion about this.) We are told that the work "electrified" St. Petersburg. That being so, it is nice to be able to add that Tchaikovsky was, for once, among those present.

It happens that we know a great deal about the genesis of the Third Suite because it dates from a period in which Tchaikovsky assiduously confided in his Diaries. He spent some five weeks at Kamenka in the spring of 1884, and there is an entry for every one of those fifty-eight days (including enough material on his libidinal life to document a clinical case study of the homosexual artist). Specifically as to the Op. 55 he chronicled the following (Lakond's translations):

April 16: Tried to lay the foundation of a new symphony both in the Trostyanka forest and at home, in the afternoon, but still am dissatisfied ... Strolled in the

garden and sowed the seeds not of a future symphony but of a suite.

April 26: Worked with great intensity on the *Scherzo* [third movement] this morning.

April 29: Finished the *Scherzo*.

May 3: ... finished the sketch of the *Valse* [second movement].

May 5: Fussed with one place in the *Andante* [finale] until seven o'clock.

May 8: I think it is coming out very nicely.

May 9: ... finished the *Andante*, with which I am very satisfied.

May 11: I decided to drop [the original first movement] and write something else entirely different.

May 12: ... suddenly a new idea struck me and the thing went well.

May 15: Wrote the last variation...

May 18: Worked very successfully (the variation before the finale).

May 19: Wrote a variation in the morning.

May 21: I wrote four whole variations.

May 23: Finished the *Suite*.

Sauntered about the garden and the square before supper.

Wonderful evening.

A month later, from Grankino, Tchaikovsky was atypically salesman-like in a letter to his publisher: "A work of greater genius than the new Suite never was!!! My opinion of the newborn composition is *so* optimistic; God knows what I shall think of it a year hence." And a fascinating if fleeting glimpse into the composer's awareness of snob appeal and the efficacy of labels is provided by a letter he wrote ten days after this to Taneiev: "I wanted to write a Symphony," he admitted. "*However, the title is of no consequence.*" [My italics.]

The "unknown" movements of the Op. 55 are, of course, the first three. The initial *Elégie*, in free rondo form, proffers in turn a gently flowing cantabile theme, a more emotional second one (*molto espressivo e con grandezza*), and yet a third for the horns — which eventually summon back the opening mood, with the solo violin lending its voice toward the end. Philip Hale once observed of Tchaikovsky's waltzes that "Death often is the piper, as in the old pictures." So with the *Valse mélancolique*, in which (except for the contrasting middle section) violas and then flutes "lament with a

lamentation [again quoting Hale] broken as by sighs." The *Scherzo*, too, contains elements far from the humorous connotations of the term. The chief theme suggests a carefree tarantella, but also we hear distant cymbals, drum rolls, snatches of martial music, all of which somehow "takes the edge off" the gaiety. As it turns out, the reckless dance prevails, but one's abandonment to pleasure meantime has been somewhat diminished by those airborne hints of some far-off battle. Just as Tchaikovsky's waltzes were as often bitter as sweet, his scherzi were not usually for laughing.

At this late date there is nothing new to say, annotatively, about the extended finale of the Third Suite. Of all the music in this integral performance the *Tema con variazioni* of Op. 55 is easily the most familiar, having long enjoyed an autonomous life in the concert hall and particularly the balletic theater (via Balanchine's *Theme and Variations*). In the brief précis that follows, the tempo indications given first are those to be found in the recent Soviet edition; where these are at variance with earlier editions, markings from the latter as noted in parenthesis:

THEME: *Andante con moto*. The statement is scored for strings alone, with the first violins carrying the memorable melody.

I. The strings in octaves play the opening variation pizzicato, with flutes and clarinets weaving counterpoint above the theme.

II. *Molto più mosso (Andante con moto)*. A sort of "perpetual motion" for the first violins.

III. *Tempo del tema*. For a woodwind septet: three flutes, two clarinets, two bassoons.

IV. *Tempo del tema (Pochissimo meno animato)*. The full orchestra is heard for the first time, and the theme is richly elaborated in B minor.

V. *Allegro risoluto (Allegro vivo)*. A brisk fugato for woodwinds and strings.

VI. *Allegro vivace*. Again the full orchestra, and a wealth of coloration.

VII. *Moderato (L'istesso tempo)*. A woodwind chorale, with the theme truncated.

VIII. *Largo (Adagio)*. Another foreshortening of the theme, with the strings supporting an exquisite English horn solo.

IX. *Allegro molto vivace*. A lively dance for the full orchestra, ending with a cadenza for the solo violin.

X. *Allegro vivo e un poco rubato*.

The solo violin is featured in this quasi-mazurka except for a few bars of woodwind.

XI. *Moderato mosso*. Meditative but majestic; violins and flutes are entrusted with the theme, and the basses and bassoons hold a pedal B until the modulatory passage that signals the Finale.

FINALE: *Polacca. Moderato assai — Tempo di Polacca, molto brillante (Moderato maestoso e brillante)*.

Actually designated Variation XII, this closing section is nothing less than a full-scale movement in itself, beginning with an introduction and subsequently swirling into a polonaise of immense "go" and gusto, inexorably building to a climax of stunning effectiveness. (Can one doubt that the premiere audience was, indeed, "electrified"?)

SUITE NO.4 ("MOZARTIANA"), OP. 61

Ever the loner, Tchaikovsky did not share the general veneration for his fellow "big-name" composers. He simply could not accept the consensus, e.g., that the elder Bach had been a towering genius. He was properly awed

by the grandeur of Beethoven, but found that he could respond only to the middle-period works. He regarded Handel as "wholly fourth-rate, for he is not even entertaining." He was fond of Brahms personally, but the latter's music impressed him as "full of pretensions" and charmless. Wagner's, too, left him cold; and that is understating the matter.

Tchaikovsky's aversion to the "standard brands" of the tonal art was not, however, without one shining exception: at various times he wrote in his Diaries or in letters to Nadezhda Filaretovna that "I not only like Mozart, I idolize him ... Mozart is not oppressive nor agitating. He captivates, delights, and warms me. To hear his music is to feel that one has done a good deed. It is hard to say exactly wherein this good influence lies, but it is unquestionably beneficial. The older I become, and the better I know him, the more I love his music ... It is my profound conviction that Mozart is the culminating point of musical beauty. Nobody has so made me weep and tremble with rapture at the knowledge of nearness to what we call the ideal ... In Mozart I love everything, for we love

everything in those we love truly ... If Beethoven holds in my heart a place similar to that held by the God Jehovah, I love Mozart as the musical Christ. This comparison does not, to me, seem blasphemous. Mozart was as pure as an angel, and his music is rich in divine beauty."

Whether or not it may be said to have been aesthetically requited, this love is most tangibly manifest in Tchaikovsky's Suite No. 4, Op. 61, which he composed in the spring and summer of 1887 while vacationing and then vigil-sitting (with an old friend who lay on his deathbed) in purlieus as distant from each other as Borzhom, in the Caucasus, and Aachen, Germany. Obviously, however, there was nothing topical about Tchaikovsky's interest in this particular subject. And indeed, the seed from which the Op. 61 grew had been sown at Kamenka during the same spring that produced the Op. 55; a Diary entry dated May 17, 1884, reads: "Played Mozart and was in ecstasy. An idea about a suite from Mozart." When the idea became a reality, Tchaikovsky acknowledged his "inspiration" in these few words appended to the flyleaf of the score:

A great number of the most admirable small compositions of Mozart, for incomprehensible reasons, are little known, not only by the public, but also by the majority of musicians. The composer and arranger of this suite, entitled *Mozartiana*, would like to provide a fresh impetus for the performance of these miniature masterworks, which are modest in structure but full of incomparable beauties.

To his publisher, Tchaikovsky expressed more than optimism about the prospects for the Op. 61: "I think this Suite, because of its successful choice of compositions and its originality (the past revisited in a contemporary work), will have an excellent future." Then he went further: "Should I win approval, I would wish later to do another one and perhaps even a third." The former prediction came true even with the first performance, when the *Preghiera* movement had to be repeated. The conductor on that occasion (Moscow; November, 1887) must have been especially pleased to oblige. It was none other than the composer himself.

Hyphenated authorship inevitably focuses on the problem of proportionality. In this instance the ingredients approximate a conservatively classical Martini: three-fourths Tchaikovsky, one-fourth Mozart. (Balletomanes will not need to be reminded that this ratio in turn describes the respective percentages of George Balanchine's involvement with these composers over the years. In 1933 he choreographed *Mozartiana* and gave his dance work the same title. For better or worse the ballet has not arrived.) The foregoing description is only that — no apologia is intended. Any fool knows that Mozart does not need Tchaikovsky. But neither did Stravinsky need Tchaikovsky for *Baiser de la fée*, etc., etc. In the end, the purist like everyone else must submit to *Mozartiana* on its own terms. Deponent further sayeth not.

The Op. 61 comprises four movements. As intimated, each is based on a work of Mozart's. The opening *Gigue* is a free transcription of the one for piano in G, K. 574. The Minuet proceeds from another keyboard piece — the K. 355 in D. The section encored at the premiere is a twice-removed treatment built on

Liszt's paraphrase of the magnificent motet, *Ave verum corpus*, K. 618 (pianists know the Liszt version as *À la Chapelle Sistine*). The long finale is a transformation of Mozart's K. 455 Piano Variations [ten of them] on *Unser dummer Pöbel meint*. The theme was not Mozart's own; it derives from a basso aria in Gluck's 1776 Singspiel, *Pilger von Mekka* ("The Pilgrims of Mecca"). In this closing movement especially the arranger is devotedly faithful, in his fashion, to the Mozart text. Paradoxically, what results is even more Tchaikovskyan music than what went before! Those who wonder why might ponder John N. Burk's notion that these two composers had one thing above all in common — that both sought in their music to attain sheer, unstudied, sensuous pleasure. He might have added that each in his way succeeded, and perhaps that Tchaikovsky did (in the *Mozartiana* finale, for example) precisely because Mozart had done so a century earlier.

Notes by James Lyons
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