

OVERTURES

VOLUME TWO

Auber
Auber

Bernstein

Donizetti
Donizetti

A. Gomes
Gomes

Charles Simon Catel
Catel

Verdi

Verdi

Nicolai

Nicolai

Thomas
Thomas

Von Suppé

Franz von Suppé

"THE PRESIDENT'S OWN"
United States Marine Band
Colonel John R. Bourgeois, Director

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"THE PRESIDENT'S OWN"

United States Marine Band

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The nine overtures on this recording span 164 years: eight were composed in a period of 78 years, and the ninth followed 86 years later. Seven of the nine were written within a 40-year period, and four of these appeared within 8 years. While such statistics seem a trivial pursuit of the musical kind, the birth order and relative proximity is essential to understanding these overtures and the cultures which produced them.

Published research is laden with references to who influenced whom, which composer imitated what composer, and perhaps the most virtuous reference: whose style developed and expanded upon what other composer's. These litanies are almost Biblical in nature: in French opera "Boieldieu beget Auber who beget Offenbach..." and in Italian opera "Bellini beget Rossini who beget Donizetti who beget Verdi..." They become the *idée fixe* of scholarly biographical articles, leading one to wonder whose compositions were the most influenced.

Comparison becomes inevitable regarding the seven composers on this recording whose overtures span 1830-1870. This 40-year period at mid-century is fascinating, for the time between Auber's 1830 opera *Fra Diavolo* and Gomes' 1870 *Il Guarany* marks the most fertile and glorious period in the development of 19th century opera and operetta. All seven composers helped define 19th century music and, for 12 years, all were alive at the same time.

It was an embarrassment of riches to have operas and operettas by Auber, Donizetti, Rossini, Thomas, Offenbach, Suppé, Meyerbeer, Wagner, and Verdi appearing, seemingly, with the frequency of pop tunes, while symphonic works of Mendelssohn, Schumann, Liszt, and Berlioz poured forth like an artesian well. It was a desperately competitive environment in which to make one's debut, much less one's living.

Beethoven's monumental Symphony No. 9 premiered in 1824. In the following 6 years, Weber, Beethoven, and Schubert died, and with them passed the classical period in music. However, to list the composers who followed

them is to see the future of music unfolding. Consider those born in our 40-year span, 1830-1870: Brahms, Saint-Saëns, Bizet, Mussorgsky, Tchaikovsky, Dvorák, Grieg, Rimsky-Korsakov, Elgar, Puccini, Mahler, Debussy, Richard Strauss, Dukas, Glazunov, and Sibelius. During the next 5 years, 1870-1875, Holst, Schoenberg, and Ravel were born, forecasting the close of the Romantic period and the emergence of the 20th century. It was a remarkable era. The same century in which Alfred Nobel invented dynamite had perhaps an even greater explosion of musical talent such as the world is unlikely to see again.

But as fascinating and intriguing as this central 40-year period was, we must not make orphans of Catel and Bernstein, whose works exist at the outer reaches of the time span covered on this recording. Like the others, Catel and Bernstein were influenced by their own time and culture.

Bernstein's overture to *Candide* is a splendid example of musical evolution. It is his most familiar composition and one of the most performed "classi-

cal" works composed in the 20th century (Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings* notwithstanding). *Candide* is witty, energetic, tuneful and wonderfully compact, making it a perennial favorite of audiences. Unfortunately, the operetta, like many of its predecessors throughout history, suffered from an inadequate plot for which even Bernstein's music could not compensate.

C*andide* has been compared with overtures to Rossini's *La Gazza Ladra* and Weber's *Oberon*, not because of stylistic or motivic similarity but because of its enduring popularity. Even if the larger works are never again performed, they live vicariously in synoptic form through their overtures, the instrumental calling cards of works long forgotten.

The comparison between Leonard Bernstein and the others is not as far-fetched as it might seem. All are, to one degree or another, derivative, which implies simply that the composers reflected the influence of their musical predecessors. For some, this process was clearly and cognitively imitative. For others, it was more

developmental as each sought to find his own musical voice. While some sought it and others could not escape it, being compositionally "correct" involved following well-established recipes for tasteful music making.

In his book *The Language of Music*, author Deryck Cooke wrote, "Music as we know it could not be created at all but for the existence of a long tradition of past music; and every composer draws continually on his experience of this tradition—which cannot be anywhere else, for him, but in his own *unconscious mind*....We can begin from this undeniable fact: that...inspiration... is clearly a matter of reproducing certain well-worn melodic *formulae* in new guises."

For example: Catel's *Overture in C* bears an uncanny resemblance to Mozart. Auber and Thomas sought to recreate the charm and elan of Rossini. Gomes was influenced by Rossini, Donizetti, and especially Verdi. Nicolai felt the Germanic influence of Weber, Schubert, and Mendelssohn. Suppé created a Viennese style strongly modeled on Offenbach. And Verdi took the

mantle of Italian opera from Bellini and Donizetti and shaped it into a richer musical language which would later be passed on to Puccini. Bernstein's musical mentors represent an eclectic mix of styles and periods which display the fullest knowledge and hindsight available in the 20th century. Lest this be considered a flaw of character or ability, it should be noted that imitative influences abound in the arts. Oscar Wilde may have said it best when he commented "Originality is the ability to successfully conceal one's sources."

Such influences were undoubtedly even more difficult to escape in the mid-19th century when great composers roamed the earth and the paying public could be highly selective. Even so, Rossini and Offenbach dominated light opera and operetta. Rossini's overtures remain masterpieces of the genre, defining by their omnipresence much of what we consider successful.

Rossini was a prodigious composer who seemed to toss overtures off as an afterthought. His felicity is demonstrated by an anecdote in which Rossini, having spent the day compos-

ing while propped up in bed, accidentally dropped the pages of an overture onto the floor. As the story goes, rather than get out of bed to pick them up, Rossini considered it easier to compose another overture. In a letter, Rossini revealed his attitude toward composing overtures: "Wait until the evening before opening night. Nothing primes inspiration more than necessity, whether it be the presence of a copyist waiting for your work or the prodding of an impresario tearing his hair. In my time, all the impresarios in Italy were bald at thirty."

Offenbach, while perhaps not as prolific, was no less skilled at creating charming music which the public found irresistible. (*A chart showing the lifetimes of the principal composers discussed here, along with the composition dates of the overtures, is included in the center pages of this booklet.*)

Audiences today enjoy overtures due to their native charm and familiarity. Virtually everyone exposed to radio, television, and the movies has heard this music in one form or another. Overtures seem tailor made for theme

and mood music: some excerpts dramatic, others humorous.

Radio drama hero Sergeant Preston might never have negotiated the harsh terrain of the Yukon without Reznicek's overture *Donna Diana*. And, in all probability, the Lone Ranger's crime fighting ability would have been less impressive had he not been spurred on by the strains of Rossini's overture *William Tell*. Another of Rossini's overtures, *The Barber of Seville*, was featured in a full scale animated production by Warner Brothers starring Bugs Bunny and Elmer Fudd. Rossini, whose sense of humor was keen, might even have approved of such an adaptation.

The *Raymond* overture of Thomas and Suppé's *Light Cavalry* have been extensively used, as has Nicolai's *Merry Wives of Windsor*. Snippets and major themes from great overtures appear so frequently that they reside in the hazy part of memory where, like distant relatives at a family reunion, they are vaguely familiar even if we haven't a clue about their names.

Familiarity has kept overtures on concert programs, particularly band programs, for which they provide bravura showpieces to demonstrate the technical abilities of the band and soaring melodic passages for soloists.

Most of the composers represented on this recording had known involvement with bands, and we may assume the others had similar associations. Catel was Assistant Conductor of the band of the French Garde Nationale. Gaetano Donizetti's brother Giuseppe was Bandmaster in charge of Turkish military bands, and his brother Francesco played drum in a band in Bergamo, Italy. Gomes' father was a bandmaster. As a boy Suppé studied with the local bandmaster and later played flute with the band. Thomas served with the French National Guard during the 1848 Revolution, and likely worked with its band. Even Verdi was associated with bands in Italy and conducted the town band in Busseto.

These composers almost certainly included their own overtures in the repertoire of bands with which they were associated, and thus created a

performance tradition which continues to the present day.



LIGHT CAVALRY

Franz von Suppé

(b. Spalato, Dalmatia, 1819 -
d. Vienna, Austria, 1895)

Franz von Suppé (whose real name was Francesco Ezechiele Ermenegildo Cavaliere Suppé Demelli) was an Austrian of Belgian heritage. As a youth he studied flute with a man named Ferrari, the local bandmaster. He apparently also received instruction in composition for, at age 13, he completed a mass he entitled *Missa dalmatica*.

Suppé's father sent him to Italy to study law at Padua, however, he also spent time in Milan where he heard the works of Rossini, Donizetti, and Verdi. Suppé was distantly related to Donizetti's family, and it is possible that Donizetti encouraged both the visit to Italy as well as his musical ambitions.

When his father died in 1835, Suppé moved to Vienna with his mother, where he studied at the Conservatory with Simon Sechter and Ignaz Seyfried, who had been a personal friend of Mozart. While his family preferred that he study medicine, music won over medicine as his chosen career.

In 1840 he was put on staff at the Josefstadt Theater as an unsalaried flutist and conductor. During this period, he also conducted at Pressburg and Baden. Then in 1845 he conducted at Vienna's Theater an der Wien, while occasionally performing as both a flutist and a singer.

Inspired by the music of Jacques Offenbach, Suppé sought to recreate Offenbach's style in his own Viennese idiom. He composed 30 comic operas and operettas, as well as 180 other stage works. Suppé is considered the father of Viennese operetta and a master of elegant and charming music. His compositions were for years unrivalled in the Viennese repertoire, only eventually surpassed by the operettas of Johann Strauss, Jr.

Suppé became Music Director at the Carltheater in 1865 and remained there until his retirement in 1882. Even after retirement, he continued to compose until his death from cancer at 76.

Light Cavalry was premiered March 24 (or March 21 according to some sources), 1866, at the Carltheater in Vienna. Its Austrian military setting and the plot are inconsequential to modern audiences, for whom the overture is the only known remnant. Its self-evident trumpet fanfares and horse riding rhythms are interrupted by a passionate Gypsy melody whose significance can only be imagined.



CANDIDE

Leonard Bernstein

(b. Lawrence, Massachusetts, 1918 -
d. New York, New York, 1990)

Leonard Bernstein will be remembered as a brilliant and controversial figure in 20th century music. As conductor, composer, author, teacher,

television personality, *raconteur*, mentor, and sometime political activist, his efforts will continue to spur analysis and debate well into the next century. His brilliance as a musician and pianist are indisputable. While some found him eccentric and others found him inspired, boredom was rarely a component of a Bernstein performance.

He was born near Boston, and was originally given the name Louis, which he had legally changed at age 16. He attended the Boston Latin School and studied piano privately with Helen Coates and Heinrich Gebhard. Bernstein entered Harvard in 1935, graduating with honors in 1939. He went on to the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia where he studied conducting with the legendary Fritz Reiner. Those familiar with Reiner's sparse conducting style and microscopic beat have difficulty reconciling Reiner's example with Bernstein's podium gymnastics.

From 1940-1941, he attended the Berkshire Music Center at Tanglewood where he served as assistant to Serge Koussevitsky, who was to become Bernstein's most important musical

mentor. He earned his diploma from Curtis in 1941 and for the next 2 years conducted a variety of orchestral and chamber concerts in the Boston area.

Bernstein's "big break" came in 1943 when he was selected Assistant Conductor of the New York Philharmonic under Artur Rodzinski. In November of that year, with only 16 hours notice, the 25-year old Bernstein substituted at a scheduled broadcast of the New York Philharmonic for the ailing conductor Bruno Walter, who was considered one of the world's pre-eminent interpreters. The response to Bernstein's debut was nothing short of fantastic, and his career was launched.

In 1958 Bernstein became the first American-born Music Director of the New York Philharmonic, a post he held until 1969 when he resigned. From that time until his death, he conducted all the great orchestras of the world, enjoying a particularly close relationship with the Israel Philharmonic and the Vienna Philharmonic. He also occasionally produced various compositions, which received mixed reviews from the critics. He died in 1990 at age 72.

With all of the diverse attitudes toward his work, Bernstein is still considered one of the most brilliant musicians of the century.

Bernstein's career as a composer of successful stage works was already well-established with his ballet *Fancy Free*, his opera *Trouble in Tahiti*, and his musical comedies *On the Town* and *Wonderful Town* when he took on the project to create a musical comedy based on Voltaire's *Candide*. It premiered in Boston on October 29, 1956, and had a short run on Broadway. Bernstein revised *Candide* in 1973, fashioned an operatic version in 1982, and revised that in 1988. In the years preceding his death, he conducted a full recording of *Candide* with an all-star cast, finally giving us his definitive interpretation.

The overture to *Candide* was premiered by the New York Philharmonic under Bernstein's direction in 1957. Since that time, it has become a perennial concert hall favorite for both orchestra and band. The transcription for band performed on this recording was prepared with Bernstein's approval

in 1986 by American composer Clare Grundman.



THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR

(Carl) Otto (Ehrenfried) Nicolai
(b. Königsberg, Germany, 1810 -
d. Berlin, Germany, 1849)

Otto Nicolai had an unhappy childhood. After the divorce of his parents, he remained with his father, a musician, with whom he studied piano but, sadly, his father's cruelty eventually drove him to run away.

In 1827 he went to Berlin where he studied theory with Zelter, who subsequently arranged for Otto to study singing at the Gymnasium Zum Grauen Kloster. During 1828-1830 he studied with Bernhard Klein at the Royal Institute for Church Music.

Nicolai made his concert debut on April 13, 1833, in Berlin, and was active as a pianist, singer, and composer with a specialty in church music. In

that same year, he attracted the attention of King Frederick William III, and was subsequently selected as the organist to the Embassy Chapel in Rome by the Prussian ambassador, Freiherr de Bunsen. Bunsen was so impressed with Nicolai's talent that he paid the fees for Nicolai to study counterpoint with Palestrina scholar Giuseppe Baini.

His sole contact with the theater was his funeral cantata composed for the death of Vincenzo Bellini, but the lure of an operatic career caused Nicolai to quit the post of chapel organist in 1836. In 1837 he moved to Vienna where he took the post of singing teacher and Kapellmeister at the Kärntnertortheater, and gained the reputation of a brilliant and demanding conductor.

In 1838 he returned to Italy and enjoyed the adulation of being a respected composer. Three years later, he returned to Vienna to accept the appointment as court Kapellmeister in succession of Kreutzer. He was largely responsible for establishing symphonic programs using the musicians of the

Imperial Court Opera Theater. These concerts established the Vienna Philharmonic as a separate entity from the opera orchestra. Through his efforts as a conductor, Nicolai is credited with significantly improving the level of orchestral performance in Vienna.

Nicolai was appointed Kapellmeister of the Royal Opera in Berlin in 1848. Shortly thereafter, he was asked to write a new German comic opera, and he chose Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor* as his subject. Initially, Nicolai was hesitant to take on this project, feeling that only Mozart could have done justice to Shakespeare's work. Once he overcame his initial misgivings, he began work on the opera only to have problems both with librettists and with a rival at the Royal Opera, all of which resulted in his going past the deadline for the completion of the opera. In disgust, he resigned his post as Kapellmeister of the Royal Opera, but his patron, Frederick William III, then compensated by naming him to the combined directorships of the Berlin Cathedral Choir and the court opera.

The Merry Wives of Windsor is in three acts, with the libretto by Hermann von Mosenthal, after Shakespeare. It was premiered at the Hofoper, Berlin, on March 9, 1849, and became a huge success. In its first 60 years of existence it was performed 250 times in Berlin alone, and it remains Nicolai's only enduring work. Excerpts were also frequently performed, including a Vienna performance featuring soprano Jenny Lind.

Unfortunately, Otto Nicolai did not live to enjoy the phenomenal success of his new opera since he died of a massive stroke 2 months after the opera's premiere. Critics have praised Nicolai for his marriage of the German traditions of Weber and Mendelssohn with the Italian influences he gained during his time in Italy. Nicolai was one of the most important German composers to study extensively in Italy, as did Meyerbeer (a German originally named Jakob Liebmann Beer, who changed his name to Giacomo Meyerbeer following his Italian success).

Concerning his training in Italy, Nicolai wrote, "Had I never left

Germany, I should never have written as I do. German schooling one must have, but Italian facility must be added to it. This is how Mozart came to be, and if I had his spirit I too could produce something good." Indeed, Nicolai remained self-conscious about his ability as a composer: "I have more intellect than imagination, and therefore composing is more difficult for me than for others. People such as Donizetti and the like write continuously without self-criticism."

Despite this lack of confidence, both audiences and critics praised *The Merry Wives of Windsor* as a masterpiece. Critic Eduard Hanslick, known for destroying more than one musical reputation, described Nicolai as "a true artist: gifted, enthusiastic, ambitious..." And in perhaps the most impressive demonstration of the opera's popularity, even after the premiere of Giuseppe Verdi's *Falstaff* (also based upon a Shakespearean play), Nicolai's *The Merry Wives of Windsor* remained more popular on German operatic stages for many years. The brilliant transcription for band was done by John Philip Sousa for his own band.



DON PASQUALE

(Domenico) Gaetano

(Maria) Donizetti

(b. Bergamo, Italy, 1797 -

d. Bergamo, Italy, 1848)

Gaetano Donizetti was the fifth child in a poor family of artisans. His father was a weaver who wanted his son to become a lawyer, however, music was to be Gaetano's life. At 9 years of age, he entered the Lezioni Caritatevoli di Musica, a charity institution and training school for choristers of S. Maria Maggiore. While there, he studied singing and harpsichord and later studied harmony and counterpoint with Johannes Simon Mayr (also known by the Italian version of his name, Giovanni Simone Mayr).

Mayr was so convinced of Donizetti's talent that he arranged and paid for Donizetti's transfer to Bologna where, with Mayr's encouragement, he enrolled in Liceo Filarmonico Comunale in 1815. In Bologna, Donizetti

studied counterpoint and fugue with Pilotti, and then with Padre Mattei, who had been one of Rossini's teachers.

In 1817, Donizetti returned to Bergamo where he began to compose in earnest, although his prolific compositions of this period were largely non-operatic in nature. He secured his first success with his comic opera *Il Falegname de Livonia* in 1819 and, by 1830 when he premiered his opera *Anna Bolena*, he was considered a full member of the Italian operatic establishment.

Donizetti's composing coexisted with an active teaching career throughout his life. In 1834 he was named professor of counterpoint and composition at the Conservatorio di San Pietro a Majella in Naples. In 1835 he went to Paris at the invitation of Rossini but never made France his home as did Rossini. In 1837 he was made Director Pro Tempore of the Conservatory in Naples, a position he resigned the following year when it was not made a permanent appointment. In the meantime, his wife died in childbirth on July 30, 1837, bringing a tragic end to their 9-year marriage. To

the surprise of his countrymen, Donizetti went to Vienna in 1841 to accept the post of Imperial Hofkapellmeister, the *Maestro di Capella e di Camera e Compositore di Corte* to the Emperor himself.

In 1843, he returned to Paris to debut *Don Pasquale*, which met with immediate success after its premiere on January 3, 1843. Tragically, his physical and mental condition had begun to deteriorate due to syphilis, and by 1845 he had become both insane and an invalid. Physicians applied leeches with no result. In 1846 he was placed in a mental clinic outside Paris where, under the impression that he had been jailed, he wept constantly. He stayed there nearly a year until he was released to the care of his nephew, who returned him to his birthplace for the last few months of his life.

Donizetti wrote nearly 70 operas in his 25-year career as a composer. Of these, few were comedies, the most notable being *L'elisir d'amore* and *Don Pasquale*, which is considered his comic masterpiece. It was premiered January 3, 1843, at the Théâtre Italien

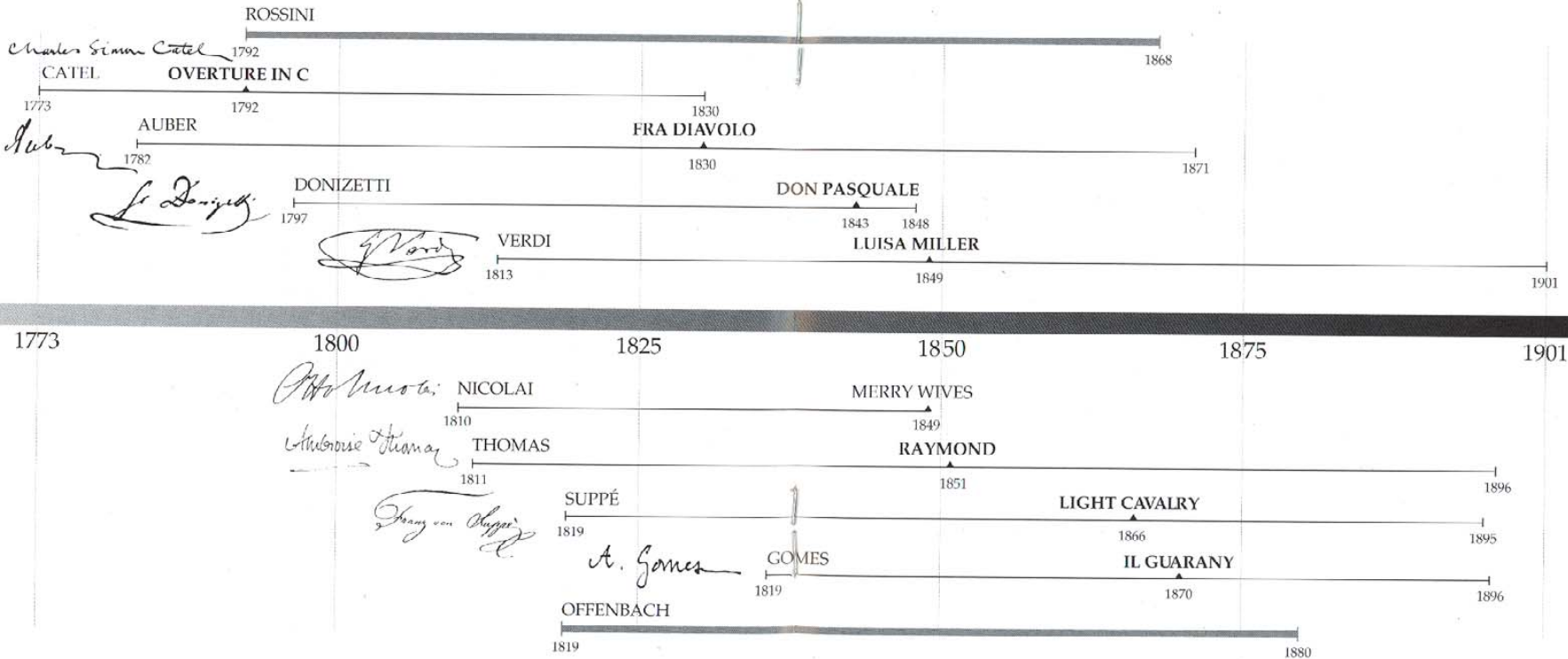
in Paris, and is in three acts to a text by Giovanni Ruffini and Donizetti after Anello's libretto for Stefano Pavesi's *Ser Marc' Antonio*. It is recorded that Donizetti rewrote so much of the text that the librettist (presumably Ruffini—although the name Salvatore Cammarano has been mentioned in some sources) refused to acknowledge it.

Of the foreign operatic commissions Donizetti completed, *Don Pasquale* is only one of three which have full length overtures thematically related to the operas they precede. In typical Donizettian style, the overture includes obbligato instruments which embellish a theme (as heard here with the trumpet) and broad melodies such as the aria *Com'è gentil* (Soft beams the light), a serenade by Ernesto (tenor) to his beloved Norina (soprano) in the garden by moonlight, performed in the band transcription by solo euphonium.

The story of *Don Pasquale* is as follows: Don Pasquale da Corneto (bass), a rich old bachelor, decides to marry so his nephew Ernesto (tenor) will not inherit his fortune since he disapproves of Ernesto's choice of a

This chart shows the lifetimes of the composers on this recording who lived and worked in the late 18th century and throughout the 19th century, along with the composition

dates of the overtures. The lifetimes of Rossini and Offenbach, two major influences during this period, are included as points of reference.



bride, the attractive young widow Norina (soprano). The young couple is aided by Dr. Malatesta (baritone), a mutual friend of theirs and Pasquale's. They arrange for Pasquale to go through a mock marriage with "Sofronia" (Norina in disguise), supposedly Malatesta's sister who just arrived from a convent. As soon as the "wedding" is over, "Sofronia" reveals herself and does everything possible to make Pasquale's life miserable. Malatesta suggests that the marriage be annulled. Pasquale agrees, admits that he has been fooled, and forgives everyone.

Charles Simon Catel

OVERTURE IN C

Charles-Simon Catel

(b. L'Aigle, France, 1773 -
d. Paris, France, 1830)

Catel was, like so many other composers, a child prodigy. As a youth he was enrolled in the *École Royale de Chant* in Paris where he studied with Gossec and Gobert. He also served as an accompanist there and at the Paris Opera from age 14.

In 1790, Gossec appointed him Assistant Conductor of the Band of the *Garde Nationale*, which spurred his interest in composing for the wind band. With the establishment of the "Free Music School of the Parisian National Guard" (which would become the National Conservatory), Catel was engaged as professor of counterpoint and harmony. During his tenure at the Conservatory he was commissioned to write a text on harmony. It was published in 1802 in French, German, Italian, and English and, for 20 years was the standard text on harmony in Europe.

Catel, along with Gossec, Méhul, and Cherubini, was made an inspector of the Conservatory (equivalent to being awarded a higher academic rank) in 1810. He held this post for 6 years before resigning due to conflicts with his colleagues. He was named a member of the *Académie des Beaux-Arts* in 1817, but never achieved the success as an opera composer which he sought. In 1820 he retired from teaching and, much the same as in Voltaire's *Candide*, spent the last 10 years of his life working in his garden, an avocation

for which he received some recognition as a horticulturist.

In addition to his 10 operas, he composed symphonies and chamber works for orchestral groups, as well as a number of equally ambitious hymns, overtures, symphonies, and marches for wind band. At the height of the French Revolution, Catel produced a great deal of "propaganda music" for the National Guard. One of the most important of these works was the "Hymn of Victory" for chorus with band accompaniment.

Catel composed the *Overture in C* in 1792 for the Band of the National Guard. It has a sense of elegance and clarity reminiscent of Mozart and is considered one of the finest wind band compositions of this period. It was premiered on November 10, 1793, by the Band of the National Guard at the "Festival of the Worship of Reason," one of a rather bizarre series of events aimed at renaming all French churches "Temples of Reason." Ten days later, the *Overture in C* was then performed in concert at the Feydeau Theater after which the *Journal de Paris* printed the

following note: "Overture by Catel, student of Gossec, with an absolutely new character. Its results are terrific." The edition for modern bands used on this recording was prepared by Richard Franko Goldman and Roger Smith.



LUISA MILLER

Giuseppe Verdi

(b. Le Roncole, Duchy of Parma,
Italy, 1813 - d. Milan, Italy, 1901)

Giuseppe Verdi has been described as the greatest Italian composer of opera, the patriarch of Italian opera, and the greatest Italian music dramatist since Claudio Monteverdi. He composed 26 operas in a 54-year period and is considered the most significant link between Donizetti (who said of Verdi "this man is a genius") and Giacomo Puccini. Verdi began his career as a contemporary of Bellini, Donizetti, and Rossini and ended his life as a contemporary of Claude Debussy and Richard Strauss. Verdi

was the son of a tavern keeper (an establishment which perhaps bore more resemblance to a corner grocery and wine shop). His only sibling was a sister who died when she was in her teens. As a boy he was a pupil of Pietro Baistrocchi, a local church organist. When he began to show promise, his father sent him to Busseto for further training, where he studied with Ferdinando Provesi, Director of the Municipal Music School and the Philharmonic Society (which included the town band).

By 1829, Verdi was conducting and filling in for his teacher, Provesi, when Antonio Barezzi, a wealthy Busseto music lover, became interested in him and encouraged him to apply to the Milan Conservatory. Verdi did so but failed the entrance examination because he was considered too old, and because his piano technique and knowledge of composition were considered inadequate.

He subsequently became a private student of Vincenzo Lavigna, the accompanist at La Scala. In 1834 Verdi successfully applied for the post of

maestro di musica in Busseto. He was married in 1836 and completed his first opera, *Oberto*, in 1838. In 1839 he moved to Milan but tragedy followed him. Between 1836 and 1840 his two infant children died; then in 1840 his wife died as well. Stricken with grief, he considered abandoning music as a career, but managed to persevere.

The first great triumph of Verdi's career came in 1851 with *Rigoletto*, followed by *Il Trovatore* and *La Traviata*, both of which premiered in 1853. From then on, his career moved from success to success. He remarried in 1859 and was elected to membership in the prestigious Académie des Beaux Arts in France in 1864 to fill the vacancy created by the death of Giacomo Meyerbeer. Verdi was elected a senator in the Italian parliament in 1875 and became visibly active in Italian politics. His last opera, *Falstaff*, premiered in 1893 when he was 79 years old. Finally, in 1897 he founded the Casa di Riposo per Musicisti, a retirement home for aged musicians.

Verdi's musical style was at first compared unfavorably with Rossini's, but as the 19th century drew to a close and the influence of Richard Wagner became a dominant force in opera, Verdi's operatic realism gained the respect of the world. Fellow composer Georges Bizet observed, "Verdi...has wonderful bursts of passion. His passion is brutal, it is true, but that is better than having no passion at all." And Verdi wrote, "It may be a good thing to copy reality, but to invent reality is much, much better." This he did, accomplishing much to put the "grand" in what we know today as "grand opera."

Luisa Miller, Verdi's 14th opera, premiered December 8, 1849, at the Teatro San Carlo in Naples. It was based upon Schiller's *Kabale und Liebe* (Intrigue and Love) dating from 1784 to a text by Salvatore Cammarano, and is described as a *melodramma tragico* (a tragic melodrama). The story is set in Tyrol in the early 17th century and centers upon the love of Luisa (soprano), daughter of the old soldier Miller (baritone), for Rodolfo (tenor), the son of Count Walter. But, in a typically con-

fusing operatic plot twist, Rodolfo conceals his real name and rank from Luisa and goes by the name of "Carlo." Rodolfo (Carlo) is expected to marry Federica (mezzo), the Duchess of Ostheim. When he refuses, he is imprisoned. Meanwhile, Luisa is forced by Wurm (bass) to write a letter saying she is in love with someone else. When Rodolfo is released from prison, he makes Luisa confess that she wrote the letter and then poisons both himself and Luisa. But before the poison takes effect, Luisa reveals that she was forced to write the letter. With his remaining strength, Rodolfo grabs a sword and kills Wurm. Vindicated, the lovers die in the presence of their parents.

Ambroise Thomas

RAYMOND

Charles Louis Ambroise Thomas
(b. Metz, France, 1811 -
d. Paris, France, 1896)

Thomas was the son of music teachers. In 1828, at age 17, he entered the Paris Conservatoire where he stud-

ied piano with Zimmerman, and harmony and accompaniment with Dourlen. While there, he won the admiration of Luigi Cherubini (who was then Director of the Conservatoire) and went on to study composition with Jean François LeSueur.

During his first year at the Conservatoire, Thomas won the first prize for playing. In his second year won the first prize for harmony, and in 1832 he was awarded the coveted Prix de Rome for his cantata *Hermann et Kelly*. With the prize came 3 years of study in Italy, after which he visited Vienna and then returned to Paris where he devoted himself to composing operas.

In 1845 he was made a Chevalier of the prestigious Légion d'honneur. During the 1848 Revolution, Thomas served in the National Guard and was likely involved with the Guard's excellent band. In 1851 he was elected to the French Academy upon the death of Luigi Spontini and, in 1856, he became professor of composition at the Paris Conservatoire. In 1871, following the death of Daniel-François Auber, he was

named Director of the Conservatoire, due mainly to the success of his operas, particularly *Mignon*. However, before assuming his new post, the 60-year-old Thomas volunteered for service in the Franco-Prussian War. As Director of the Conservatoire, he made a significant impact upon the institution by working to raise the standards and to increase the budget.

Thomas received his greatest honor in 1894 when he became the first composer to receive the Grand Croix of the Légion d'honneur, presented to him at the 1,000th performance of *Mignon* at the Opéra-Comique in Paris. He lived his last 2 years in Paris where he enjoyed the privileges of his esteemed position and the respect of the musical world, which granted him equal status with Gounod, Massenet, Bizet, and Berlioz. In the minds of many, he was considered second only to Gounod in his mastery of the French style of opera.

Raymond (or *The Queen's Secret*) was premiered June 5, 1851, in Paris and was well-received, although it was considered to be "Rossinian" by some critics. The story is based upon *The Man*

With the Iron Mask and, while the plot was considered absurd, its overture has remained a perennial favorite.



FRA DIAVOLO
Daniel-François-Esprit Auber
(b. Caen, France, 1782 -
d. Paris, France, 1871)

The circumstances of Auber's birth could have been taken from the tired vaudeville routine in which one comedian, after suggesting that his partner consider a career on the stage, reminds him that a stagecoach is leaving in 5 minutes. Rather than having been "born on the stage" in a performing sense, his mother gave birth *en route* to Caen in a stagecoach, apparently close enough to the city for it to have been recorded as his birthplace.

He was the son of a royal huntsman who served Louis XVI before becoming an art dealer later in life. Daniel demonstrated early musical talent on

piano and became a student of Ignaz Anton Ladurner, under whose tutelage he composed several early works.

In 1802, his father took advantage of the break in hostilities between France and England to send Daniel to London to study business. After 1 year there, Daniel returned to Paris and became a student of Luigi Cherubini. When his initial attempts at composition were unsuccessful, Auber ceased to compose for 6 years.

During Auber's compositional hiatus he was supported by his father, but this came to an abrupt halt in 1819 when his father declared bankruptcy. In an attempt to raise money, Auber returned to composition. Through the assistance of his teacher Cherubini, Auber obtained three operatic librettos by François-Antoine-Eugène de Planard. The second of these, *La bergère châtelaine*, was produced in 1820 and met with success, thus launching Auber's career.

His most fruitful collaboration was with librettist Augustin-Eugène Scribe, with whom he worked until

Scribe's death in 1861. Scribe, who was widely considered the best librettist of the time, wrote 37 librettos for Auber, some with other librettists.

In 1823, Auber became enthralled with the music of Rossini and composed three operas in the style of the Italian master. While his own style became less imitative of Rossini, his *opéras comiques* have been said to retain some of Rossini's "Italianite sparkle."

Auber served as Director of the Paris Conservatoire from 1842-1870, having been appointed Cherubini's successor in that position by King Louis Philippe. His career as Director might have lasted until his death had the Conservatoire not been converted to a hospital during the siege of Paris in 1870. In addition, he was named Musical Director of the Imperial Chapel in 1852 by Napoleon III.

Auber was a lifelong bachelor and *bon vivant* into his old age. He is reported to have said that the things he loved most were "women, horses, the boulevards, and the Bois de Boulogne." He composed 47 works for the stage,

45 of which were premiered between 1813 and 1869. His last opera was produced at age 87.

Auber's music is described as lively, tuneful, and charming and he is widely considered the master of the French *opéra comique*. His early compositions show the influence of Boieldieu (his predecessor in this genre) in a simple but sophisticated style which incorporated dance rhythms and tuneful melodies in an elegant package. Regarding his efficient compositional methods, Auber commented, "Counterpoint makes the symphony live but it kills the opera."

Richard Wagner, who had been critical at one time of Auber's style, comparing him to "a barber who lathers but forgets to shave," came to respect him. In fact, Auber's 1828 opera *La Muette de Portici* (*Masaniello*) was considered a landmark of French grand opera. It influenced Wagner during his composition of *Lohengrin*, and influenced operatic giants Rossini and Meyerbeer as well.

In perhaps the greatest tribute Auber received at the time of his death, Rossini, in a reference to Auber's small stature, said he was "*piccolo musica, ma grande musicista*"—"a small musician but a great music maker."

Fra Diavolo (or *L'hôtellerie de Terracine*) is in three acts and was first produced in Paris on January 28, 1830. It is Auber's most famous opera and remains the only one in the permanent repertory. *Fra Diavolo* (tenor) is a notorious bandit who assumes the identity of the Marquis of San Marco while engaged in a convoluted plot to steal the jewels of Lady Pamela (mezzo soprano), the wife of Lord Cockburn (bass). During this episode, *Fra Diavolo* compromises Zerlina (soprano), the daughter of an innkeeper. When he is betrayed by his associates, *Fra Diavolo* is shot. However, before dying, he clears Zerlina of any involvement in the affair, after which she is reunited with her lover, Lorenzo (tenor). In an alternative ending, *Fra Diavolo* escapes the bullet and is taken prisoner.

A. Gomes

IL GUARANY

Antônio Carlos Gomes

(b. Campinas, Brazil, 1836 -
d. Belém, Brazil, 1896)

Gomes began musical studies with his father, a town bandmaster who, in addition to teaching his son to play several instruments, sired 25 children by 4 wives. Gomes began composing at a fairly early age, and even ventured into larger musical forms when he composed a mass at age 18. He left home in 1859 and managed to get admitted to the Imperial Conservatory of Music in Rio. While there, he produced two operas strongly influenced by Rossini, Bellini, and Donizetti. The success of these operas led Emperor Don Pedro II to finance Gomes' education at the Milan Conservatory in Italy, where he studied with Lauro Rossi, the director of the school.

Gomes was applauded for several light pieces but earned international fame with his fifth opera, *Il Guarany*

(originally entitled *O Guarani*), which eclipsed his other works, including his other successful opera *Salvator Rosa*. In addition to his operas, Gomes composed three books of songs, choruses, and piano pieces. He also composed important works for two major American events: the Philadelphia Centennial (1876) and the Columbian Exposition (1893) in Chicago.

In 1895 Gomes was appointed Director of the newly founded Belém Conservatory of Music in Brazil, but he died of tongue cancer soon after arriving back in his home country.

Il Guarany was premiered March 19, 1870, at La Scala in Milan with enormous and immediate success. The opera toured extensively in Italy and was then performed in London at Covent Garden. Giuseppe Verdi heard *Il Guarany* and proclaimed it the work of a "truly musical genius." It is based upon a novel of the same title about Brazilian Indians by the Brazilian writer José de Alencar. Gomes used

actual Guarany Indian songs and folk melodies in *Il Guarany*, but critics have judged it, as one account recorded, "a romantic idealization of indigenous music." The opening of the overture, for example, is intended to be the Invocation to the Sun God by a wild tribe of Indians known as the Aimores. The music, however, sounds more Italian than Brazilian.

Even so, it is a compelling and dramatic opera. The final version of the overture, completed in 1871, has become virtually another national anthem in Brazil. The band transcription of the overture was played and recorded extensively by the great professional bands of the early 20th century, including those of John Philip Sousa and Giuseppe Creatore. The transcription performed on this recording was prepared by Sousa's legendary cornet soloist, Herbert L. Clarke.

"THE PRESIDENT'S OWN" United States Marine Band

The Marine Band traces its origin to the fifers and drummers who marched with the Continental Marines during the Revolutionary War. The band was officially established by an Act of Congress signed by President John Adams on July 11, 1798, making the Marine Band America's oldest professional musical organization. In 1801, the band moved to its present location at Marine Barracks, Washington, D.C., and now performs in John Philip Sousa Band Hall, home of "The President's Own."

The Marine Band's Presidential debut took place on New Year's Day, 1801, at a reception hosted by President John Adams. In March of that year, the band performed for the inauguration of Thomas Jefferson. Since that time, the band has performed for every Presidential inauguration.

Jefferson has been described as the "godfather" of the Marine Band and his personal interest in the organization led him to give the Marine Band the title "The President's Own."

From the earliest days of our nation, the Marine Band's primary mission has been to provide music for the President of the United States. Whether performing for South Lawn arrival ceremonies, State dinners, receptions, or accompanying famous entertainers, Marine musicians appear at the Executive Mansion more than 200 times annually.

John Philip Sousa, the band's 17th Director, was largely responsible for establishing the Marine Band as the world famous musical organization it is today. He served as Director from 1880-1892 and during that time began

to write the marches which would earn him the title "The March King." Sousa inaugurated the Marine Band's annual concert tour in 1891, a tradition continued to the present day.

Today's Marine Band is comprised of 143 of the nation's finest musicians, most of whom are graduates of our country's best music schools and conservatories. Musicians are selected at auditions much like those of major symphony orchestras. Once selected, musicians enlist in the United States Marine Corps and report directly for duty with "The President's Own." More than 90 percent of Marine Band musicians are career professionals who serve with the band for 20 years or more.

The band's 25th Director is Colonel John R. Bourgeois. A native of Louisiana, he was accepted into "The President's Own" in 1958 as a French hornist and member of the arranging staff. He later served as Operations Chief of the band, and was appointed Director in May 1979. As Director of the United States Marine Band, Colonel Bourgeois is musical advisor to the White House.

The United States Marine Band continues the tradition of excellence which earned it the title "The President's Own." Whether in White House performances, public concerts, or on tour, the music of the Marine Band is the music of America.

"THE PRESIDENT'S OWN" United States Marine Band

Colonel John R. Bourgeois, Director

Personnel for this recording

FLUTE/PICCOLO

MSgt Gail L. Gillespie
MGySgt Leslie L. Hunt III
GySgt Sharon R. Winton
SSgt Betsy J. Hill

OBOE

MSgt Michelle Hockett
GySgt Mark R. Christianson

E-FLAT CLARINET

GySgt John R. Barclay

B-FLAT CLARINET

GySgt Lisa A. Kadala
SSgt Jeffrey M. Strouf
GySgt Ruth A. Schlenker
SSgt Charles H. Willett
SSgt Randall A. Riffle
SSgt Jihoon Chang
MGySgt Terry R. Moore
GySgt Robert W. Cassel
GySgt Nan E. Lopata
SSgt Deborah B. Hanson-Gerber

SSgt John C. Norton
MSgt Richard T. Heffler, Jr.
GySgt Jay E. Niepoetter
SSgt D. Ray McClellan

BASS CLARINET

GySgt Barbara A. Haney
GySgt Olive U. Blackall

BASSOON

GySgt Roger C. Kantner
MSgt Dyane L. Wright

SAXOPHONE

MGySgt Ronald C. Hockett
MSgt John S. Boyd
MSgt Pasquale J. Marino
GySgt David L. Baesel

CORNET

SSgt Richard B. Lehman
MGySgt David L. Sorenson
SSgt J. Fred Marcellus
GySgt W. Andrew Schuller III

SSgt Nancy E. Taylor
SSgt John L. Abbracciamento
SSgt Kurt A. Dupuis

TRUMPET

SSgt John R. Hagstrom
GySgt Michael R. Montgomery

FRENCH HORN

MSgt William J. Zsembery, Jr.
MSgt Donald L. Dosch
GySgt John P. Troxel
SSgt Max E. Cripe
SSgt Mark A. Questad

EUPHONIUM

GySgt Michael J. Colburn
GySgt Paul S. Kellner, Jr.

TROMBONE

MSgt Bryan R. Bourne
MGySgt Daniel K. Williams
MSgt John E. Schaefer

BASS TROMBONE

GySgt Patrick S. Corbett

TUBA

MGySgt Thomas R. Lyckberg
SSgt Patrick S. Sheridan
SSgt Thomas D. Holtz

PERCUSSION

MGySgt Matthew B. Becker
MGySgt Wayne W. Webster
MSgt Jeffrey W. Gilliam
MSgt Neal T. Conway, Jr.
GySgt Steven D. Searfoss

STRING BASS

GySgt Peter S. Berquist

HARP

MGySgt Phyllis A. Mauney

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OVERTURES

VOLUME TWO

"THE PRESIDENT'S OWN" United States Marine Band

Colonel John R. Bourgeois, Director

- 1 Overture to *Light Cavalry* - Franz von Suppé.....6:59
Transcribed by Charles Godfrey
- 2 Overture to *Candide* - Leonard Bernstein.....4:18
Transcribed by Clare Grundman
- 3 Overture to *The Merry Wives of Windsor* - Otto Nicolai.....8:35
Transcribed by John Philip Sousa
- 4 Overture to *Don Pasquale* - Gaetano Donizetti.....6:17
Transcribed by Pasquale Pulvirenti
- 5 Overture in C - Charles-Simon Catel.....7:14
Edited by Richard Franko Goldman and Roger Smith
- 6 Overture to *Luisa Miller* - Giuseppe Verdi.....5:47
Transcribed by William G. Pruyn
- 7 Overture to *Raymond* - Ambroise Thomas.....8:39
Transcribed by V. F. Safranek
- 8 Overture to *Fra Diavolo* - Daniel-François Auber.....8:57
Transcribed by L. P. Laurendeau
- 9 Overture to *Il Guarany* - Antônio Carlos Gomes.....7:14
Transcribed by Herbert L. Clarke

"THE PRESIDENT'S OWN"
United States Marine Band
Colonel John R. Bourgeois, Director