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CHAN 4505

CHANDOS BRASS

BLACK DYKE
Plays
ROSSINI

JOHN FOSTER BLACK DYKE MILLS BAND

conducted by

Major Peter Parkes

Trevor Walmsley

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Black Dyke Plays Rossini

1 **Overture to 'The Silken Ladder'** 5:39
La scala di seta
Arranged by Peter Parkes

2 **Una voce poco fa** 6:12
Cavatina from *The Barber of Seville*
(*Il barbiere di Siviglia*)
Arranged by Peter Parkes
Phillip McCann solo cornet

3 **Tarantella Napolitana 'La Danza'** 2:09
Arranged by Gordon Langford

4 **Overture to 'Cinderella'** 7:54
La Cenerentola
Arranged by Peter Parkes

5 **Overture to 'Tancredi'*** 5:25
Arranged by William Rimmer

6 **Largo al factotum*** 4:42
from *The Barber of Seville*
Arranged by Gordon Langford
John Clough solo euphonium

7 **Overture to 'William Tell'*** 10:44
Guillaume Tell
Arranged by Gregor J. Grant

TT 43:32

John Foster Black Dyke Mills Band
Major Peter Parkes
Trevor Walmsley*

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Black Dyke Plays Rossini

From 1810, the date of Gioachino Rossini's first opera, to 1848, the year in which Donizetti died, three composers dominated Italian opera: Rossini, Donizetti and Bellini.

Rossini (1792–1868) was the most successful of the three; he had genius, wit and sparkle and a never-failing melodic gift. He was one of the first composers to succeed without a patron; he depended entirely on the commercial success of his operas. What an undertaking! In nineteen years he wrote thirty-eight operas. In a letter to another composer Rossini was frank about his methods:

> Wait until the evening before the 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 of Italy were bald at thirty… I wrote the overture to *La gazza ladra* on the day of its opening, in the theatre itself where I was imprisoned by the director… I did better with *Il barbiere*. I did not write an overture at all but took for it the one from *Elisabetta*. The public was entirely satisfied.

(Rossini does not mention that this overture was in fact used for no fewer than four different operas.)

The dash, spirit and irrepressible humour of Rossini's music set it apart as something special, but it was above all melody that made Rossini famous. It is this melodic emphasis which makes the music so practical for transfer from the orchestra to the brass band.

Overture to 'The Silken Ladder'
One of Rossini's earliest operas, *La scala di seta* was first produced in Venice in 1812. The Overture introduces the sustained crescendo, a device which was to feature in almost all of the later overtures. A feeling of tremendous excitement is generated as more and more instruments are added to the score, building the music to a great climax.

Una voce poco fa
Il barbiere di Siviglia, the greatest of all *buffa* operas, made Rossini's music the rage of Europe. The first performance in 1816 was ill rehearsed and poorly performed and the first act was a disaster. The second act went better and the work soon became established as the comic opera of all time. A large number of Rossini's arias are based on the device of the *cavatina* and *cabaletta*. The *cavatina*, slow and lyrical, would show off the singer's tone and line, and the following *cabaletta*, a fast section, brought out all the virtuosity of which the singer was capable. 'Una voce poco fa' is an excellent example of this form of aria – it also suits the style of playing for which Phillip McCann is so much admired.

Tarantella Napolitana 'La Danza'
This exciting tarantella is one of the collection of smaller works which Respighi used in his ballet score *La Boutique fantasque*. The arrangement for brass band performed here is by Gordon Langford.

Overture to 'Cinderella'
Produced in Rome in 1817, *La Cenerentola* had an immediate and great success and it shares with *Il barbiere di Siviglia* all the marks of Rossini's genius as a composer of comic opera. Unfortunately, a great deal of the music was lifted wholesale by the composer from earlier operas; this is probably the reason for its subsequent neglect.

The Overture, however, has always had its place in the concert repertoire. It begins with a very quiet slow passage in the lower strings (here brass), which immediately brings to mind that feeling of anticipation one has just before the curtain begins to rise. All the magic of the theatre is there. The following *Allegro* is Rossini at his sparkling best!

Overture to 'Tancredi'
The opera *Tancredi* was first produced in Venice in 1813; full of spirit and gaiety, it was received with great enthusiasm. All Venice and very soon all Italy was singing the tunes. 'I had thought', said Rossini, 'that after hearing my opera they would put me in the mad house – on the contrary, they are madder than I.'

Largo al factotum
This is Rossini's most famous 'Patter Song'. The effect is obtained by the character's singing as many words as possible in the shortest possible time. Every composer of comic opera, from Mozart to Sullivan, has used this device. In *Il barbiere di Siviglia* Rossini probably capped them all with 'Largo al factotum'. John Clough, for many years the highly valued euphonium soloist with Black Dyke Mills Band, plays this arrangement which was made for him by Gordon Langford.

Overture to 'William Tell'
In 1824 Rossini settled in Paris and five years later produced his last opera, *Guillaume Tell*. The Overture is more ambitious than those written for earlier operas. It is in effect a tone poem in four contrasting sections, and the only one to depart significantly from his usual scheme. The first, quiet section is marked *Andante*. It is followed by a violent storm

scene in which the trombones are used to great effect. This gives way to an idyllic, pastoral episode featuring solo cornet, horn and soprano cornet. A fanfare heralds the gallop: vigorous, exciting music typical of Rossini at his peak.

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BRASS

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