



TCHAIKOVSKY GOUNOD

Love Duets from Romeo and Juliet

Jean Fenn, Soprano

Raymond Manton, Tenor

Katherine Hilgenberg, Mezzo-soprano

Los Angeles Festival Orchestra

Franz Waxman

1953 Studio Recordings

FRANZ WAXMAN CONDUCTS • 2

Pyotr Il'yich TCHAIKOVSKY (1840-1893): Romeo and Juliet

- 1 N'entends-tu pas le rossignol? (Do you not hear the nightingale?) **15:28**
Duet completed and orchestrated by Sergey Ivanovich Taneyev (1856-1915);
arranged by Franz WAXMAN (1906-1967)
(Original Russian text by A.L. Sokolovsky (1837-1915) freely translated into French by an unidentified author)

Charles-François GOUNOD (1818-1893) Roméo et Juliette

- 2 Act IV: Va! Je t'ai pardonné **12:59**

Jean Fenn, Soprano • Raymond Manton, Tenor
Katherine Hilgenberg, Mezzo-soprano (Track 1)
Los Angeles Festival Orchestra • Franz Waxman

Originally released on Capitol CTL 7034
Recorded in Los Angeles, California on 9th April 1953

Reissue Producer: Michael Fine; Audio Restoration Engineer: Wolf-Dieter Karwatky
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Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) • Charles Gounod (1818-1893) Love Duets from *Romeo and Juliet*

The story of *Romeo and Juliet*, best known from the play by Shakespeare, has served as an inspiration to composers from the nineteenth century to the present, from Bellini, Berlioz, Tchaikovsky and Gounod to Prokofiev and Bernstein. For his tale of the feuding families of the Montagues and Capulets in Verona to the love of Romeo, a Montague, for the Capulet daughter, Juliet, and its tragic outcome, Shakespeare drew on earlier sources, but it is above all in his play that the tragic story of love and separation is known.

The present recording presents two versions of part of Act

III, Scene 5, of Shakespeare's play, set in Juliet's bedchamber, where the lovers, newly married, spend their only night together. The Gounod setting is taken from the fourth act of his opera *Roméo et Juliette*, while the Tchaikovsky-Taneyev work is a duet written as an independent composition and includes the interruption of the scene by the Nurse, a mezzo-soprano, bringing news of the approach of Juliet's mother.

Sergey Taneyev was a close friend of Tchaikovsky and distinguished as a composer and as a teacher. In addition to the present work he also completed the *Andante* and *Finale* of

Tchaikovsky's unfinished *Piano Concerto, Op. 79*. The *Love Duet* from *Romeo and Juliet* was published by Taneyev in 1894, based on sketches made by Tchaikovsky between 1878 and 1881, when he was contemplating the composition of an opera on the subject. In the former year he had written to Nadezhda von Meck, his unseen patroness, suggesting that he write an opera on Shakespeare's play, without any of the changes made by Berlioz and Gounod, and a few years later he returned to the project, in a letter to his brother Modest. The score indicates the parts of the composition that can be attributed to Tchaikovsky or to Taneyev. The orchestral introduction was constructed from themes from Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet Overture-Fantasia*, here extended by Franz Waxman's addition of the opening to the *Overture-Fantasia*, followed by Taneyev's own introduction. Tchaikovsky's sketches begin 29 bars before the first entrance of the soprano voice. Here Tchaikovsky had written out the vocal parts, based on a libretto by Alexander Sokolovsky freely adapted from the Shakespearean tragedy, but had left out a part of the accompaniment. The closing bars of this composition did not appear in Tchaikovsky's sketches, but were taken by Taneyev from the *Overture-Fantasia* already mentioned.

The opera *Roméo et Juliette* by Charles Gounod was first staged at the Paris Théâtre Lyrique in April 1867, with a libretto by Jules Barbier and Michel Carré based on Shakespeare's play. It won immediate success and was also staged widely abroad. The excerpt included here appears in Act IV of the opera and opens with an instrumental introduction in which four cellos suggest the happiness of the newly married couple, now together for the first and last time in a night of love. In a recitative Juliet forgives Romeo for killing her kinsman Tybalt, whose aim had been to kill Romeo. In the following *Andante* they sing of their love in *Nuit d'hyménée*, breaking off as Romeo hears the lark, the sign of approaching day, but Juliet assures him that it is the nightingale. Romeo resolves to risk staying. They embrace, but eventually Juliet admits that it is the day, which Romeo denies. Finally, however, they must part, and, as Romeo makes his escape, Juliet bids him farewell.

Los Angeles Festival Orchestra (1947-1966)

The Los Angeles Music Festival was first organized for the purpose of presenting each year a Festival of Music, the programmes of which introduced many important works of music hitherto unknown not only in Southern California but sometimes even to America and the world. They included 70 world premières. From their inception, the Orchestra and Festival were under the leadership of Franz Waxman. The musicians in the Festival Orchestra were hand picked by Franz Waxman from colleagues he had worked with since 1935. On other recordings from the 1950s and 1960s the orchestra was known as the Columbia Symphony Orchestra in performances conducted by Bruno Walter and Igor Stravinsky. For the present recording, Franz Waxman secured the services of three exceptional American singers. Jean Fenn enjoyed a resounding success with the San Francisco Opera Co., in 1952, where she sang the rôle of Musetta in *La Bohème*. Raymond Manton was introduced in a concert by the San Francisco Symphony in 1951 and appeared frequently on the Standard Hour radio and television programme. Katherine Hilgenberg (1920-1988), another San Francisco Opera alumna, sang frequently with Franz Waxman. For further information go to <http://www.franzwaxman.com/lamf/index.html>

Franz Waxman (1906-1967)

Franz Waxman's name is best known to the American public for his scores written for such pictures as *Rebecca*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *A Place in the Sun* and *Taras Bulba*, but his own interest and ability in the music did not end there. His own formal musical education was received in Berlin, and he conducted standard programmes of symphonic music in America, Europe, Israel and Russia. He conducted recordings for outstanding soloists, such as Jascha Heifetz (including his own *Carmen Fantaisie*, his most performed concert piece) and Isaac Stern. A study of the programmes of the Los Angeles Music Festival reveals a musical mind of vigour and enterprising foresight.

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ADD **MONO**

Franz Waxman Conducts · 2



Playing
Time
28:27

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The story of *Romeo and Juliet* has long been an inspiration for composers, and this programme provides an opportunity to compare two 19th-century masters' musical visions of the famous parting scene, Act III, Scene V of Shakespeare's play. Left unfinished at his death, Tchaikovsky's composition uses themes from his renowned *Romeo and Juliet Overture-Fantasia*, giving the singers some of the most beautiful and impassioned moments in all music. Gounod's opera has a wealth of marvellous duets, Act IV moving from a song of love to those aching tragic final scenes. Although remembered mainly for his film scores, Franz Waxman conducted standard programmes of symphonic music in America, Europe, Israel and Russia, and made recordings with outstanding soloists such as Jascha Heifetz, Isaac Stern and the three American singers heard on this reissue.

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