

The NAXOS logo is a blue square with the word "NAXOS" in white, stylized, uppercase letters. Above the letters are several horizontal lines of varying lengths, and below them are several vertical lines of varying heights, creating a grid-like pattern.

SEATTLE SYMPHONY
COLLECTION

The album cover features a scenic photograph of a large, snow-capped mountain peak in the background, surrounded by a dense forest of evergreen trees. In the foreground, a large body of blue water is filled with numerous small sailboats. The text is overlaid on the image in white, bold, sans-serif font.

Pyotr Il'yich
TCHAIKOVSKY

Symphony No. 1 'Winter Daydreams'
Symphony No. 2 'Little Russian'

Seattle Symphony
Gerard Schwarz

Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)
Symphony No.1 in G Minor, Op. 13 'Winter Daydreams'
Symphony No. 2 in C minor, Op. 17 'Little Russian'

Born in Kamsko-Votkinsk in 1840, the second son of a mining engineer, Tchaikovsky had his early education, in music as in everything else, at home, under the care of his mother and of a beloved governess. From the age of ten he was a pupil at the School of Jurisprudence in St Petersburg, completing his course there in 1859 to take employment in the Ministry of Justice. The foundation of the new Conservatory of Music in St Petersburg under Anton Rubinstein enabled him to study there as a full-time student from 1863. In 1865 he moved to Moscow as a member of the staff of the new Conservatory established by Anton Rubinstein's brother Nikolay. He continued there for some ten years, before financial assistance from a rich widow, Nadezhda von Meck, enabled him to leave the Conservatory and devote himself entirely to composition. The same period in his life brought an unfortunate marriage to a self-proclaimed admirer of his work, a woman who showed early signs of mental instability, and could only add further to Tchaikovsky's own problems of character and inclination. His homosexuality was a torment to him, while his morbid sensitivity and diffidence, coupled with physical revulsion for the woman he had married, led to a severe nervous breakdown. The story of Tchaikovsky's death in St Petersburg in 1893 is now generally known. It seems that a member of the nobility had threatened to complain to the Tsar about an alleged homosexual relationship between Tchaikovsky and his son. Some musicologists contend that, to avoid open scandal a court of honour of Tchaikovsky's old school-fellows met and condemned him to death, forcing him to take his own life. His death was announced as the result of cholera, and this official version of the event was, until relatively recently, generally accepted.

As a composer Tchaikovsky represented a happy synthesis of the West European or German school of composition, represented in Russia by his teacher Anton Rubinstein, and the Russian nationalists, led by

Balakirev. Nevertheless, acceptance abroad was not universal. Hanslick, in Vienna, could deplore the "trivial Cossack cheer" of the *Violin Concerto* and other works, while welcoming the absence of any apparent Russian element in the last of the six symphonies. In England and America there had been a heartier welcome, and in the latter country he had been received with an enthusiasm that exceeded even that at home. In his diary of the American concert tour of 1891 he remarked on this and on the curious habit of American critics, who tended to concentrate their attention on the appearance and posture of a conductor, rather than on the music itself.

Among the Russian nationalists César Cui was an acerbic critic, and his view of Tchaikovsky's graduation cantata, a setting of Schiller's *Ode to Joy*, as very weak was not encouraging. His *Overture in F*, however, won greater success, and the approval of the Rubinstein brothers. After graduation Tchaikovsky took up his position at the Conservatory in Moscow, with an initial salary of fifty roubles a month, which increased when the Conservatory was officially inaugurated in September. It was with the encouragement of Nikolay Rubinstein, now his guide and mentor, that he started work on his first symphony, working on it throughout the summer. At the end of August he visited St Petersburg and showed the unfinished symphony to his former teachers, Anton Rubinstein and Nikolay Zarembo, both of whom regarded it with disfavour, as they did when Tchaikovsky again sought their approval during the Christmas holidays. The symphony was eventually introduced to the public piecemeal by Nikolay Rubinstein, who conducted a performance of the *Scherzo* in Moscow in December 1866, and the *Adagio* and *Scherzo* in St Petersburg the following February. The whole symphony was eventually performed in Moscow a year later. Its composition had been fraught with difficulties, due in part to the irregular hours Tchaikovsky kept as a lodger in Nikolay

Rubinstein's house and the necessity, all too often, of working late at night on the score. This had resulted in insomnia, hallucinations, a recurrence of what he referred to as apoplectic fits, and in July a nervous break-down. The symphony was dedicated to Nikolay Rubinstein, revised for publication in 1874 and corrected once more for a new edition in 1888.

The titles provided by Tchaikovsky for the first two movements of the symphony are largely irrelevant to a listener. The first, in which many have suggested the influence of Mendelssohn, carries the title *Daydreams of a Winter Journey*, the first theme emerging from the mist of the violins, played by flute and bassoon, and a second equally Russian theme introduced by the clarinet in a movement of classical sonata-form structure. The *Adagio*, which won particular approval from the Moscow audience at its performance in 1868, has the title *Land of Desolation, Land of Mists*. Here the trumpets and timpani of the first movement have no part to play, as the strings introduce the slow movement, leading to an overtly Russian oboe melody. The *Scherzo*, which has no other title, was adapted from the composer's *Piano Sonata in C sharp minor*, with a new *Trio* section, while the final movement, with its mournful woodwind opening, is based on a folk-song that also lies behind the two principal themes that follow. In the last section of the *Finale* the introduction re-appears briefly before the energetic conclusion.

In 1872 Tchaikovsky spent part of the summer at Kamenka at the house of his elder sister Sasha, a welcome respite from his now irksome duties at the Moscow Conservatory, an institution threatened by a chronic shortage of money. July brought a visit to Kiev, to the house of his friend Kondratyev at Nizy and to the consumptive Shilovsky at Usovo, during the course of which he nearly lost the sketches of a second symphony, which he had started at Kamenka. Known as the "*Little Russian*", the symphony was completed by the end of the year and Tchaikovsky was able to play through the *Finale* at the Rimsky-Korsakovs' in St Petersburg at Christmas. The work received its first performance in Moscow in February 1873, to be repeated in April and to be played

in St Petersburg in March, to the approval of the group of nationalist composers, whose principles it seemed to endorse. The whole work was extensively revised by the composer in 1880.

The first movement was completely rewritten by Tchaikovsky, to his own satisfaction but not always to that of later critics. The *Andante sostenuto* opening offers a folk-tune from the Ukraine, a region known as Little Russia. The melody is introduced by the horn and echoed by the bassoon, later to be taken over fragmentarily by other instruments. The exposition of the movement, marked *Allegro vivo*, is succinctly expressed, with the initial folk-song re-appearing in the development, and making a return in conclusion.

Tchaikovsky claimed only to have rescored the second movement, which had been retrieved from a *Wedding March* in the third act of his rejected opera *Undine*. In structure it is in three principal sections, its central portion a Ukrainian folk-song, while the outer framework is built in a similar form, the march itself enclosing a contrasting passage.

The *Scherzo*, allegedly shortened and rescored, shows the influence of Borodin's *First Symphony* in its rhythmic variety. It has a contrasting *Trio*, opened by oboes, clarinets, bassoons and horns, to be joined by the violins in a counter melody, in a movement that demonstrates again the composer's early mastery of orchestral colour.

The *Finale* opens in grandiose style, leading to another Ukrainian folk-song, *The Crane*, similar in contour to the *Promenade* theme used by Mussorgsky in his *Pictures at an Exhibition*. This melody provides material for both introduction and first subject, while the second subject offers a number of harmonic ambiguities with an attractively lop-sided dance-rhythm. The central development makes full use of the two themes, with a recapitulation that takes us into unexpected keys before the C major conclusion.

Keith Anderson

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Keith Anderson

Gerard Schwarz



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Gerard Schwarz serves as Music Director of the Eastern Music Festival and Conductor Laureate of the Seattle Symphony. A renowned interpreter of 19th-century German, Austrian and Russian repertoire in addition to contemporary American composers, Schwarz recently completed his final season as music director of the Seattle Symphony after an acclaimed 26 years. His previous positions as Music Director include New York's Mostly Mozart Festival, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and the New York Chamber Symphony. As a guest conductor he has worked with many of the world's finest orchestras and opera companies. His discography of over 350 releases showcases his collaborations with the Seattle Symphony, the Berlin Radio Symphony, The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Czech Philharmonic, the London Symphony Orchestra and L'Orchestre National de France, among others. His pioneering recordings of American symphonists Diamond, Hanson, Hovhanness, Piston and William Schuman have received high critical praise, as have his cycles of works by Brahms, Mahler, Rimsky-Korsakov, Robert Schumann, Shostakovich, Richard Strauss, Stravinsky and Wagner. Schwarz has received hundreds of honours and accolades including two Emmy Awards, 13 GRAMMY® nominations, six ASCAP Awards and numerous *Stereo Review* and *Ovation Awards*. He holds the Ditson Conductor's Award from Columbia University, was the first American named Conductor of the Year by *Musical America* and has received numerous honorary doctorates. The National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences gave Schwarz its first "IMPACT" lifetime achievement award

Seattle Symphony



Gerard Schwarz conducts the Seattle Symphony in Benaroya Hall, Seattle
Photo courtesy of Yuen Lui Studio

The Seattle Symphony, founded in 1903, has gained international prominence with more than 140 recordings, 12 GRAMMY® nominations, two Emmys and numerous other awards. Gerard Schwarz led the Orchestra from 1985 to 2011, and is now Conductor Laureate. The Seattle Symphony is internationally recognized for its innovative programming and extensive recording history. The orchestra performs in one of the world's finest concert venues – the acoustically superb Benaroya Hall – in downtown Seattle. Under the leadership of Music Director Ludovic Morlot since September

2011, the Symphony is heard live from September through July by more than 315,000 people. For more information on the Seattle Symphony, visit www.seattlesymphony.org.

Written under difficult circumstances while he was employed at the Moscow Conservatory, Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No. 1* held the composer's affection throughout his life as "a sin of my sweet youth". The melodic richness and skillful orchestration in his later music can already be found in this and the *Symphony No. 2*, which owes its subtitle to the use of folk music from the Ukraine, a region known as 'Little Russia'. These youthful masterpieces are heard here "in performances full of grace and zest. Schwarz is a passionate advocate of this music, and it shows." (*The Seattle Times*)



Pyotr Il'yich
TCHAIKOVSKY
(1840-1893)

Symphony No. 1
in G minor, Op. 13
'Winter Daydreams' 44:11

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|---|-------|
| 1 I. Andante tranquillo | 12:07 |
| 2 II. Adagio cantabile ma non tanto | 12:16 |
| 3 III. Scherzo: Allegro scherzando giocoso | 7:29 |
| 4 IV. Finale: Andante lugubre | 12:19 |

Symphony No. 2
in C minor, Op. 17
'Little Russian' 33:14

- | | |
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| 5 I. Andante sostenuto – Allegro vivo | 11:04 |
| 6 II. Andantino marziale quasi moderato | 6:39 |
| 7 III. Scherzo: Allegro molto vivace | 5:14 |
| 8 IV. Finale: Moderato assai – Allegro vivo | 10:17 |

Seattle Symphony • Gerard Schwarz



Recorded on 7 June 1992 & 25 May 1993 at the Seattle Center Opera House, USA
Executive Producer: Amelia S. Haygood • Recording Producer: Adam Stern
Recording Engineers: John M. Eargle & Al Swanson • Editing: Stephen Basili & Ramiro Belgardt
Booklet notes: Keith Anderson
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