

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO
PASC 268

ALEXANDER KITSCHIN

CONDUCTS TCHAIKOVSKY AND GLAZUNOV

The **Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64** by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky was composed between May and August 1888 and was first performed in St Petersburg at the Hall of Nobility on November 6 of that year with Tchaikovsky conducting.

Like the Symphony No. 4, the Fifth is a cyclical symphony, with a recurring main theme. Unlike the Fourth, however, the theme is heard in all four movements, a feature Tchaikovsky had first used in the Manfred Symphony, which was completed less than two years before the Fifth. The theme itself is derived from a passage in Glinka's opera A Life for the Tsar—significantly, a passage using the words "turn not into sorrow". The theme has a funereal character in the first movement, but gradually transforms into a triumphant march, which dominates the final movement.

Tchaikovsky was attracted to this particular theme because the topic of the Fifth Symphony is Providence, according to the composer's notebook page dated 15 April 1888, which was about one month before he began composition of the symphony. The composer stated, in describing the introduction, "a complete resignation before fate, which is the same as the inscrutable predestination of fate." The changing character of the motto over the course of the symphony seems to imply that Tchaikovsky is expressing optimism with regard to providence, an outlook that would not return in his Sixth Symphony.

Producer's Note

Virtually nothing is known about conductor Alexander Kitschin, save for the fact that he was married to soprano Xenia Belmas (1889 - 1981), emigrated with her from the Soviet Union to Germany in 1921, and moved to South Africa with her in 1938. He accompanied her on a number of opera aria recordings made for Gramophone/Polydor in the late 1920s – and these three lone orchestral recordings. Kitschin's interpretations appear to be in the tradition of such other colorful, highly individualistic Russian-born interpreters as Coates and Golovanov; and from the evidence presented here, he was clearly in their league.

The sources for the transfers presented here were German Polydor pressings. The cuts in the finale of the Tchaikovsky Fifth were not dictated by 78 rpm side lengths; indeed, the symphony ran to eleven sides, and a violin solo was added to fill out the album. The original discs were credited to "The Opera-Orchestra, Berlin". WERM claims this is the Berlin-Charlottenburg Opera Orchestra, but the horn player in the second movement appears to be the same one featured in Leo Blech's Berlin State Opera Orchestra recording of two years later (Pristine Audio PASC 181), albeit without the cracked note that mars his solo there.

Mark Obert-Thorn, reissue producer

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ALEXANDER KITSCHIN

CONDUCTS

TCHAIKOVSKY SYMPHONY No. 5 1812 OVERTURE

GLAZUNOV
STENKA RAZIN

URAL COSSACKS CHOIR
BERLIN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
BERLIN STATE OPERA ORCHESTRA

STUDIO RECORDINGS, 1928 AND 1929

 **bert-Thorn**

1 GLAZUNOV *Stenka Razin, Symphonic Poem, Op. 13* (17:06)**Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra**

Recorded 1928 in Berlin
 Matrix nos.: 968 ½ bm, 969 ½bm, 970 bm and 971 bm
 First issued on Grammophon/Polydor 95088 and 95089

2 TCHAIKOVSKY Overture Solennelle '1812', Op. 49 (14:53)

Ural Cossacks Choir**Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra**

Recorded 1928 in Berlin
 Matrix nos.: 857 ½ bm, 859 bm, 860 ½ bm and 858 bm
 First issued on Grammophon/Polydor 95054 and 95055

TCHAIKOVSKY Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 643 1st mvt. - *Andante - Allegro con anima* (14:25)*

(Matrix nos.: 687 Bi I, 688 Bi I, 689 Bi I and 690 Bi I)

4 2nd mvt. - *Andante cantabile, con alcuna licenza* (11:15)

(Matrix nos.: 843 bm, 844 bm and 845 bm)

5 3rd mvt. - *Valse: Allegro moderato* (6:25)

(Matrix nos.: 616 bm and 617 bm)

6 4th mvt. - *Andante maestoso - Allegro vivace* (8:17)

(Matrix nos.: 621 bm and 622 bm)

Berlin State Opera Orchestra

Recorded 1928 and *1929 in Berlin
 First issued on Grammophon/Polydor 95056 through 95061

Alexander Kitschin, conductor



Producer and Audio
 Restoration Engineer:
Mark Obert-Thorn

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 and Charles Niss for providing
 source material

Cover artwork: detail from
Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky by
Nikolay Kuznetsov, 1893

Total duration: **72:21**

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