

## Guido Cantelli Conducts Tchaikovsky

The total effect of this recorded performance is the emphasising of the heroic side of Tchaikovsky's Symphony, and the minimising of its introspective side. In large measure this effect is due to the deliberate conception of the conductor, in some measure also to the character of the actual recording. Cantelli presents the E minor as a noble work (and nobly it is played, indeed, by the La Scala orchestra, with exceptionally adroit wind-chording). This conception is manifest in several ways, not least in the vigorous forward movement with which he sweeps the music along. The walse, oddly enough, sounds a little slow, but a metronome on a check soon showed that it was taken at the correct tempo marking, and this steady, unremitting pace allows nobility to what can be made to sound trivial, or at least sentimental. Most of all, we find this abatement of the tragic element in Tchaikovsky's mind in Cantelli's firm and far-seeing treatment of the *molto* theme, in its first presentation and especially in its returns on sides 5 and 7. The last movement he makes sound positively hopeful, encouraging rather than, as sometimes, merely making the best of things. All praise to the performance, then. As for the recording, no complaints can be made against its fullness and richness, nor against its power to fill a large room at a high dynamic level. On the other hand, from the opening notes on the clarinets one finds a booming quality, which needs care in handling though, on my set at least, it cannot be eliminated. It is a heavy piece of recording, distinctly tubby in places (e.g. the strings at first on side 3, though their tone later improves); the lower registers are so much stressed that on side 4 the 'cello melody' overwhelms the oboe's counterpoint. Side 5 gives good balance, and side 6 too, though my copy gave considerable surface-noise. There is also some confusion when rapid orchestral passagework occurs; and it is not too much to say that the brass department dominates the whole symphony to an unnecessary degree. This was certainly an interesting musical experience.

**H.F. - The Gramophone, April 1951** (review of original 78rpm issue)

Mr. Cantelli has been winning golden opinions here. This is the first time I've heard him. In addition to the remarkable weight and warmth of tone, which is quite outstanding, I find the treatment worthy, in its all-through pull and power. (But how I longed for the LP system : few works make me so conscious of the crudity of the old endscing.)

It was a happy thought of Bakireff's to urge Tchaikovsky to interpret Shakespeare. *Roméo* is one of the best things he ever did bearing in mind the composer's heavy, even turgid ideas of romance and his quicktouchéd, fiery imagination, this, we can allow, is the way to hard oneself upon an immortal tragedy, too deep to speak about, but fit for a fantasy-tone-poem such as nobody could write better than Tchaikovsky. If we can give him his head, and not deny his right to illumine his beloved Shakespeare (as we are told Kean did) "by flashes of lightning," we can enjoy the lush valour and sentiment, chivalry and woe of this essay...

**W.R.A. - The Gramophone, January 1952** (review of original 78rpm issue - excerpt)

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# Cantelli

conducts

## Tchaikovsky

### Symphony No. 5 • Romeo & Juliet



La Scala Orchestra

Philharmonia Orchestra

Studio recordings 1950/51

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TCHAIKOVSKY SYMPHONY NO. 5; ROMEO AND JULIET  
CANTELLI, LA SCALA ORCHESTRA; PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA

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Producer and Audio Restoration  
Engineer: Mark Obert-Thorn

Front cover artwork based on a  
photograph of **Guido Cantelli**

**Romeo & Juliet**

Recorded 13 October 1951  
Abbey Road Studio 1, London  
First issued as HMV DB 21373-75S (78s)  
First LP issue HMV ALP 1086

**Symphony No. 5**

Recorded 23 & 26 September 1950  
Abbey Road Studio 1, London  
First issued as HMV DB 21187-91 (78s)  
First LP issue HMV ALP 1001

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1 TCHAIKOVSKY *Romeo and Juliet – Fantasy Overture* (18:27)

**Philharmonia Orchestra Guido Cantelli**

### TCHAIKOVSKY *Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64*

- 2 1st mvt. - Andante – Allegro con anima (13:00)
- 3 2nd mvt. - Andante cantabile, con alcuna licenza (12:45)
- 4 3rd mvt. - Valse (Allegro moderato) (6:09)
- 5 4th mvt. - Finale (Andante maestoso – Allegro vivace) (12:16)

**Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala, Milano Guido Cantelli**

Total duration: 62:37

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