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2 CDs



KÁLMÁN

Die Csárdásfürstin (The Gypsy Princess)

Yvonne Kenny
Roider • Erdmann
Kathol • Ebner
Holecek • Kálmán
Klumpp

Slovak Philharmonic
Choir and Radio
Symphony Orchestra

Richard Bonyng

**Emmerich
KALMAN**

(1882-1953)

**Die Csárdásfürstin
(The Gypsy Princess)**

Operetta in Three Acts

Libretto by Leo Stein and Bela Jenbach

Sylva Varescu Yvonne Kenny
Edwin Ronald Michael Roeder
Countess Stasi Mojca Erdmann
Count Boni Marko Kathol
Feri von Kerekcs / The Notary Karl-Michael Ebner
General Rohnsdorff Hellmuth Klumpp
The Prince Heinz Holecek
The Princess Yvonne Kálmán

**Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra
Slovak Philharmonic Chorus (Chorus-master: Marian Vach)
Richard Bonyng**

**The German libretto may be accessed at
www.naxos.com/libretti/gypsyprincess.htm**

CD 1**Die Csárdásfürstin****1** Vorspiel

2:54

Act I**2** Lied: Heia, heia, in den Bergen ist mein Heimatland
(*Sylva, Boni, Feri and Chorus*)

3:14

3 Marsch-Ensemble: Alle sind wir Sünder
(*Boni, Feri, 8 men*)

4:11

4 Duett: Sylva, ich will nur dich
(*Sylva, Edwin*)

5:07

5 Lied: Aus ist's mit der Liebe
(*Boni, 8 women*)

3:16

6 Lied (Ensemble): O, jag' dem Glück nicht nach
(*Sylva, Edwin, Boni, Feri*)

5:18

7 Finale I: Ich, Edwin Ronald
(*All Soloists and Chorus*)

16:11

Act II**8** Entr'akt

1:58

9 Tanzwalzer: Erstrahlen die Lichter
(*Chorus*)

3:12

10 Schwalbenduet: Ich warte auf das grosse Wunder
(*Stasi, Edwin*)

4:32

11 Duett: Heller Jubel
(*Sylva, Edwin*)

6:26

56:20**CD 2****Die Csárdásfürstin (contd.)****Act II (contd.)****1** Quartett: Liebchen, mich reisst es
(*Sylva, Stasi, Edwin, Boni*)

4:23

2 Duett: Mädel, guck
(*Stasi, Boni*)

2:38

3 Duett: Tanzen möchte ich
(*Sylva, Edwin*)

3:34

4 Finale II: Das Glück wohnt überall
(*All Soloists and Chorus*)

9:35

Act III**5** Intermezzo

2:27

6 Terzett: Nimm, Zigeuner, deine Geige
(*Sylva, Boni, Feri*)

3:59

7 Duett-Reminiszenz: Mädel, guck
(*Stasi, Boni*)

1:28

8 Schlussgesang: Tausend kleine Engel
(*Sylva, Stasi, Edwin, Boni*)

0:57

Orchestral selections from other operettas**9** Dorfkinder

6:56

(Waltz on melodies from the operetta *Der Zigeunerprimás*)**10** Vive le roi

4:49

(From the operetta *Der Zigeunerprimás*)**11** Hollaho, hollaho, wir kommen zurecht
(Wo Zigeuner lustig fideln)

5:29

(From the operetta *Die Faschingsfee*)**12** Lockend soll ertönen Dir ein feurig Lied
(From the operetta *Das Hollandweibchen*)

4:10

13 Grand Palotás de la Reine

6:52

(Hungarian Dance Suite from the operetta
Der Teufelsreiter)

Emmerich Kálmán (1882–1953)

The Gypsy Princess

Emmerich Kálmán was born on 24th October 1882 in the Hungarian town of Siofok. His father was a well-to-do businessman but was reduced to bankruptcy during Kálmán's childhood, an experience which left a lasting mark on young Kálmán's imagination. The family moved to Budapest, then one of the twin capitals of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and despite his father's determination that Kálmán should make a career in law it soon became evident that the call of music was too strong to be ignored. Originally Kálmán's ambition was to be a concert pianist, but this was thwarted by an affliction to his arm-muscles. In Kálmán's own words "I was as one who had fallen from the clouds, a very serious and very sad young man". Indeed, according to that great historian of Viennese operetta, Bernard Grun, Kálmán remained that way inclined all his life. "Even at times of his greatest triumphs", wrote Grun, "the stocky man with the friendly blue eyes generally looked very serious and very sad. Rapture and high spirits were as foreign to his nature as bad manners and uncouthness. The Csardas-cavalier was a sober and careful citizen who did his work, kept his finances in order and quietly went on his way."

But to return to Kálmán's youth. He studied composition in Budapest with Professor Koessler, who also taught Bartók and Kodály. In 1907 his serious compositions won him the prestigious Franz-Joseph Prize of the City of Budapest, but within a year he had registered his first outstanding success as an operetta composer. This was *Herbstmanöver* (Autumn Manœuvres), which not only brought him to the attention of the operetta moguls in Vienna, but even reached the stages of London and New York. Within a couple of years Kálmán had moved to Vienna, a city which, since the rebirth of operetta with Lehár's irresistible *Merry Widow* in 1905, had been gripped by a positive epidemic of operetta fever. With *Der Zigeunerprimás* (1912) Kálmán achieved what he himself always regarded as his finest score, and it

moved the authoritative critic Richard Specht to write: "If, after the experiences of the past season, I were to choose one of the operetta-maestri as the man for whose talents I had the highest hopes, that man would be Kálmán." Specht's hopes were not betrayed when, in 1915, Kálmán produced what was to remain his greatest popular success, *Die Csárdásfürstin* (The Gypsy Princess). Outstanding among his later works were the enchanting *Gräfin Maritza* (Countess Maritza) (1924) and *Die Zirkusprinzessin* (The Circus Princess) (1926), and at least four of his other operettas were a great deal more than merely passing successes. In 1938 Kálmán sought refuge from the Nazis in the United States. After the war he returned to Europe and died in Paris on 30th October 1953.

Kálmán's great contribution to the musical language of Viennese operetta was to bring to it the brilliant colours, the heady rhythms and the dynamic energy of his native Hungary – not just as an imitator, like so many other composers, but as one who was speaking his own musical mother tongue. By the time he wrote *Die Csárdásfürstin* he was achieving an ideal blend of Hungarian soul, Viennese elegance and international sophistication. For the audiences which packed the Johann Strauss Theater for a record-breaking run during the dark days of the First World War it mirrored and preserved a way of life which they were beginning to realise had vanished for ever. They left the theatre feeling better than they had when they went into it, a quality which the piece still pre-eminently possesses.

Apart from a marvellously varied score, one which does not contain a single weak number, *Die Csárdásfürstin* benefits from an expertly constructed libretto by Leo Stein and Bela Jenbach. The characters are vividly etched, the comic dialogue is still genuinely funny, and the *volte face* which transforms doom and gloom into a happy ending is a classic of its kind. The mainspring of the plot, a *mésalliance* between aristocrat

and showgirl, may seem today like something which could only exist in the pages of operetta, but that is far from true; in London society, for instance, many an eyebrow was raised when the Marquis of Headfort took as his bride a delectable Gaiety Girl named Rosie Boote. The basic ambience of *The Gypsy Princess* is the world of what in London were called the Stage Door Johnnies, and though it may be tempting today to dismiss them as a bunch of idle wastrels it is worth remembering how many of them, whether from London, Vienna or Budapest, had, by November 1918, sacrificed their lives.

Nigel Douglas

Kálmán's *Dorfkinder* (Village Children) is a waltz sequence based on melodies from the operetta *Der Zigeunerprimás* (The Gypsy Violinist), the story of the violinist Racz Pali, once famous but now crippled, who passes on his art to his sons. He is not happy with the eldest, Lachzi, who has his own way of performing and has his eye on his cousin Juliska, whom Racz has chosen as his fourth wife. A visit from Count Gaston to invite Racz to Paris leads to a meeting with Sari, Racz's daughter, with whom he falls in love. Racz is unwilling to go to Paris, but when Laczi offers to go in his place, he insults him, and the young man leaves in dudgeon. Racz takes the risk of going to Paris himself, with Juliska and Sari, finding that Laczi has found a place for himself there as a conductor. All ends happily, when Racz admits that he is too old, Laczi wins great success, and Count Gaston's grandmother recognises in Racz a former lover of her own. Gaston marries Sari, Laczi marries Juliska, and Racz gives Laczi his Stradivarius. The quartet *Vive le roi* is taken from the same operetta.

Die Faschingsfee (The Carnival Fairy) was first given in Vienna in 1917. Viktor Ronai, a young painter, has won a prize of 50,000 marks and celebrates with his friends. Viktor intervenes when a guest molests a beautiful girl, but the man turns out to be the donor of the prize, which he withdraws. Viktor's gentlemanly act loses him the money but earns him a kiss from the girl.

In his studio the next day everything has been forgotten, and the money is back again. Viktor's benefactress, though, is the girl, and after various misunderstandings it turns out that she is the Princess Alexandra Maria.

Das Hollandweibchen (The Little Dutch Wife), first staged in 1920, is set in the petty German principedom of Sonnenburg-Glücksberg, where Princess Jutta is to marry Crown Prince Paul Roderich, whom she does not know but whose letters she cherishes. The bridegroom fails to appear and Jutta swears revenge. She tracks Paul to a hotel, where he is gambling, disguising herself as a waitress, leading him on, only to reject him. He has to use all his charm to win her back again.

The Hungarian Dance Suite *Grand Palotás de la Reine* is taken from a much later work. *Der Teufelsreiter* (The Devil's Rider) had its first performance in Vienna in 1932. The Hungarian cavalry captain Count Sándor is in love with the daughter of his political enemy Metternich. Leontine is destined to marry Prince Karl, the son of the bankrupt Prince Honorius of Monaco, who actually is in love with a dancer. Needless to say, all ends happily. The dance suite is taken from the third act of the operetta.

Keith Anderson

Synopsis

CD 1

Act I

We find ourselves in the Orpheum Cabaret Theatre, Budapest, on a very special evening; the undisputed star of the establishment, Sylva Varescu, is making her farewell appearance before leaving on a tour of the United States. The Prelude [1] is an orchestral version of her most famous number, the *Song of the Siebenbürger Maiden*, and the curtain rises [2] to find the city's *jeunesse dorée* demanding yet another encore. After three demands she obliges, and the song, which opens with a nostalgic evocation of her distant mountain

home, develops into a rip-roaring exposition of a philosophy of life not unlike that of Bizet's Carmen – "If you wish to win my heart, take care; you will be mine, body and soul through heaven and hell". "O la la, that's the way I am!", she sings, before dancing a hectic csárdás with the entire company urging her on.

Sylva's two firmest friends amongst her admirers are Count Bonifazius Kancsianu, known to one and all as Boni, and a somewhat more elderly aristocrat, Feri von Kerekes. While Sylva is backstage getting changed Boni, Feri and the rest of the male *habitués* agree [3] that without the chorus girls of the Orpheum their lives would be dreary indeed. For self-confessed wasters such as them, who believe in late to bed and late to rise, what could be more delightful than young ladies who treat love as transient, to be taken with a smile not a tear?

Boni and Feri are worried by the fact that their young Viennese friend, Prince Edwin von und zu Lippert-Weylersheim, seems to be breaking the rules and falling seriously in love with Sylva. This is something which his family would never tolerate, as Boni puts it, they are so upper crust that they wear white gloves to go to bed in. Edwin arrives in a distracted mood. This is not helped by yet another telegram from his father summoning him home - his friendship with the "song and dance floozy" is apparently compromising the whole family.

Sylva is supposed to be leaving for America later that night, accompanied by Boni as her manager, but Edwin is determined to stop her. He goes to her dressing-room and begs her not to leave. In a tender waltz duet [4] he declares his love. She gently reminds him that the more suddenly passion flames the more likely it is to end as ashes, but by the end of the number we are left in little doubt that she is also deeply in love with him.

For Boni, the trip to America involves tearing himself away from the young ladies of the chorus. It is time, he tells them, [5] to abandon his profligate existence and say goodbye to love. Yet, somehow, every time he reaches this decision the same thought strikes him - life without girls just would not work. After all,

without sunshine even a rose cannot blossom - so, just occasionally, like now for instance, what about another kiss?

Sylva rejoins Edwin, Feri, and Boni, who has laid on a farewell supper in her honour. In a quartet [6] characterized by rapidly shifting moods Sylva sings of every woman's search for the love that brings lasting happiness, a concept which is also dear to Edwin's heart. The mood is one of emotional tension. Boni interposes to lighten the atmosphere, and to another fiery csárdás they dance their way to the supper room.

At this point disaster strikes. Eugen von Rohnsdorff, a priggish relation of Edwin's and a fellow officer in the army reserve, arrives to drive him back to Vienna; Edwin's father has clearly been pulling strings with the regiment, and to make matters worse he is putting pressure on Edwin to marry his young cousin and childhood sweetheart Countess Stasi Eggenberg. Forced into a corner, Edwin comes to a decision. He tells Rohnsdorff that he will be ready in half an hour. He calls the company round him (all except Boni, who is busy packing for his imminent departure) and announces that Sylva will not be leaving after all. She will be staying – as his wife.

The drama proceeds through an extended Finale [7] which falls into four distinct sections. Edwin has a notary fetched from the neighbouring café, and to the amazement of the entire company he dictates a document binding himself to make Sylva his wife within eight weeks. The gypsy band strikes up a highly unusual form of Mendelssohn's wedding march, and as the celebrations reach their climax Rohnsdorff returns. To a brief reprise of his earlier declaration of love Edwin asks Sylva to wait in Budapest until he can return to fetch her; she gives him her assurance and he takes his leave.

At this moment Boni returns announcing that the bags are packed – he and Sylva must be on their way. In high excitement his friends explain that everything is different now – Sylva is cancelling the tour and is engaged to marry Edwin. "That's impossible!" Boni replies, and he produces a printed announcement, given him by Rohnsdorff, of Edwin's engagement to Stasi.

Tenderly he says to Sylva “It is better this way – you would never have fitted into a family like that”; and Sylva, with a colossal effort of will, hides her shattered hopes behind a defiant determination to go out into the world and conquer every heart she can.

Left alone on stage, Feri picks up the printed announcement, calls over the leader of the gypsy band and settles down with a glass of wine. Sadly he repeats the first few lines of their earlier song (track [3]). He has seen it all before. There is little he does not know about the ladies up on stage, who treat love as something transient, to be taken with a smile, not a tear...

Act II

(*Eight weeks later.*)

After an orchestral reprise [8] of Boni’s song with the chorus girls, the curtain rises and a restrained and formal waltz [9] transports us to the elevated ambience of the Lippert-Weylersheims’ Palace in Vienna. Edwin’s parents are giving a party. The younger guests sing of their delight in twirling round the floor, while the old Prince and Princess congratulate themselves on how well Edwin and Stasi seem to be getting on together.

The young couple emerge as being the best of friends, but nothing more. Edwin still knows nothing about the trumped-up engagement announcement, and cannot understand why Sylva abandoned him. Stasi knows that Edwin was in love with Sylva, but does not know that this is the last evening of the eight week period, or that Edwin is still desperately hoping for a last minute message. When Stasi and Edwin sing a waltz duet [10] it is characterized not by passion but by charm. They both know that in the rarefied social circle to which their families belong a true love match is a rare event, so they agree to do what the swallows do, build themselves a nest and be as happy in it as they can.

Suddenly this cosy atmosphere is blown apart. Sylva appears, together with Boni, whom she has persuaded to pretend that they are married. The Prince and Princess greet Boni warmly, and are delighted to meet his dazzling young wife. Much amusement is caused when the American ambassador comments on

the Countess Kanschianu’s extraordinary resemblance to the cabaret star Sylva Varescu, whom he recently saw performing in New York; but the Prince puts matters straight by pointing out that it would be inconceivable for a mere showgirl to be mistaken for an aristocrat like the Countess.

Edwin contrives to corner Boni and launches a violent attack on him for his apparent treachery. Poor Boni, sworn to silence, is reduced to a frenzy of ever more absurd excuses, but is rescued by Stasi asking him to dance. Edwin and Sylva confront one another, Sylva informing him that she has come “to catch a glimpse of the girl to whom you were engaged long before you pulled your little joke on me!” They manage to maintain a façade of formal politeness, but the duet which they sing [11] as they reminisce about their last evening together (in the nostalgic key of C minor) makes it evident that, though they now walk separate paths, their feelings for each other have not changed.

CD 2

It is a convention of Viennese operetta that the feelings of the soubrette pair do not run as deep as those of the romantic leads, and it soon becomes clear that Stasi and Boni have taken a rapid shine to one another. Most of the comedy in *Die Csárdásfürstin* is restricted to the spoken dialogue, but in a humorous quartet [1] the two couples dance a spirited waltz, Edwin with Stasi and Boni with Sylva, while all four make it evident that their dearest wish would be to change partners. This they soon do, and Stasi is taken aback that the newly married Boni should be making unashamedly amorous advances to her. Boni’s tongue is still tied, but for the time being Stasi is happy to accept his explanation [2] that love has a habit of making us blind.

Edwin and Sylva cannot maintain the pretence that they are no longer in love. Boni finds them in an ardent embrace, Edwin offers Boni satisfaction, and Boni hastily assures him that that will not be necessary – his union with Sylva has never been consummated, and Edwin is entirely welcome to her. This time there is no hint of a minor key as Edwin and Sylva indulge in an

ecstatic outburst of joy [3].

The lovers, however, have not yet reached calm waters. Edwin explains to Sylva that her marriage to Boni has been a blessing in disguise; there can be no objection to his marrying a divorced Countess. "But when they find out who I really am?" asks Sylva. "That must not happen", replies Edwin; and then, with an unfortunate turn of phrase, he goes on to say "It is much better this way. The other way we would never have been really happy". In a second extended finale [4], which skilfully knits up many of the score's principal themes, Sylva decides to leave. The old Prince detains her, saying that he has something to say of great importance to the house of Lippert-Weylersheim. He is halfway through announcing Edwin's engagement to Stasi when she interrupts him, saying that Edwin is in love with someone else. Edwin confirms that this is true, and that the someone else is Countess Kanschianu; whereupon Sylva reveals her true identity, but claims that she could, if she wished, insist on becoming a Princess Lippert-Weylersheim. She produces Edwin's legal document; Edwin assures her that he is still happy to stand by their agreement, but she tears it up, bitterly repeating Edwin's words "We would never have been really happy". With a final reflection that love does indeed makes us all blind, Boni escorts her from the palace.

Act III

(*Later that night.*)

After an orchestral reprise [5] of the duets (Tracks [2] and [3]) the curtain rises to reveal the lobby of an elegant hotel. Enter Sylva and Boni; they are bickering dejectedly about the disastrous turn of events, when suddenly who should appear but the chorus girls from the Orpheum, who are on tour in Vienna, chaperoned by Feri. Feri urges Sylva to come back to the theatre, to the place where she really belongs, and to assist his plea he calls on the services of the hotel's gypsy band. In a trio [6] which, of all the numbers in the score, most

completely encapsulates the spirit of *Die Csárdásfürstin*, Feri and Boni attempt to dispel Sylva's gloom:

"Strike up, Zigeuner, drive our sorrows away,
Play, gypsy, play, till night has turned into day.
Who knows how long this sad old world will survive,
And at least we are still alive."

At this point, with considerable ingenuity and in a series of the funniest dialogue scenes in the whole of operetta, the librettists set about tidying up the loose ends. Boni's tongue being no longer tied he proposes to Stasi over the telephone, she accepts, hurries over to the hotel and joins Boni in a reprise [7] of their Act II duet. The old Prince appears, Feri introduces himself and urges him to take a more tolerant view of Edwin's love for Sylva. In his youth Feri himself, it appears, lost his heart to the star of the Orpheum in the provincial town of Miskolcz, but she married two elderly aristocrats on the trot, both of whom died, and after that Feri lost track of her. When he mentions her second husband's name and then produces an old photograph the Prince is thunderstruck. The widow of Count Geza Zentler! It can only mean one thing – he, Prince von und zu Lippert-Weylersheim, is married to an erstwhile song and dance floozy from Miskolcz! He withdraws his opposition to the union of Edwin and Sylva; the poor boy is not to blame – he is a victim of heredity.

It only remains to effect a rapprochement between Edwin and Sylva, and Boni shoulders the task. He contrives to have Sylva enter the room while he is on the telephone, supposedly with Edwin at the other end, pistol in hand and about to blow his brains out. "Tell him that I love him and can't live without him!", shrieks Sylva. "Now, Edwin", asks Boni down the phone, "what shall I tell Sylva? What are your last words?" Quietly, from the doorway, comes the voice of Edwin – "That I love her and can't live without her!" We have reached the happy ending [8].

Nigel Douglas

Yvonne Kenny

Yvonne Kenny was born in Sydney and made her operatic début in London in 1975 as Donizetti's *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra*. After winning the Kathleen Ferrier Competition she joined the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, where her rôles have included Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*, Ilia in *Idomeneo*, Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Adina in *L'elisir d'amore*, Liù in *Turandot*, Aspasia in *Mitridate* and Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*. She has won international renown in the great Handel rôles, notably *Semele* and *Alcina* at Covent Garden and La Fenice, Venice, Romilda in *Xerxes* for English National Opera, in London and on tour to the USSR, and with the Bavarian State Opera, Alcina with Nicholas McGegan at the Göttingen Handel Festival and both Cleopatra in *Giulio Cesare* and Armida in *Rinaldo* in Sydney. She has sung at the Vienna State Opera, La Scala, Milan, the Berlin Staatsoper, Paris Opéra, Hamburg, Zurich and Glyndebourne, and taken leading rôles in opera houses throughout Europe and North America. Yvonne Kenny appears regularly in concert in Europe, Australia and North America, and has appeared at the Edinburgh, Salzburg and Aix-en-Provence Festivals, in Carnegie Hall and as a regular guest at the BBC Promenade concerts. She has a significant list of recordings to her credit. She was made a Member of the Order of Australia for Services to Music in 1989 and in 1999 was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Music by the University of Sydney.

Michael Roider

The tenor Michael Roider was born in Salzburg where he graduated from the classical secondary school before entering the famous Music Academy Mozarteum pursuing both vocal and violin studies. While at the Mozarteum he served as a violinist in the Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra, the Camerata Academica and the Salzburg Pro Arte String Quartet. As a singer he was awarded prizes in the Salzburg International Mozart Competition as well as in the Schubert-Wolf-Lied-Competition of the Vienna Musikverein. He made his operatic début as Ferrando in Mozart's *Così fan tutte* at the Basel Theater. After engagements and guest-appearances at numerous opera-houses, including those of Leipzig, Geneva, Karlsruhe, Bern and Graz, he was engaged by the Vienna Volksoper, where he made his début in 1994, and in the following year by the Vienna State Opera, where he continues as a member of the company. At both Viennese opera-houses Michael Roider sings a wide range of various rôles, ranging from Lehár and Johann Strauss to major rôles of the lyric and character tenor repertoire, including those of Herod in *Salome*, Laca in *Jenůfa*, Loge in *Rheingold*, Painter in *Lulu* and of Captain Vere in Britten's *Billy Budd*. At the same time he enjoys a career in the concert and recital hall.

Mojca Erdmann

The Hamburg-born soprano Mojca Erdmann started her musical education at the age of six with violin lessons, and sang in a children's choir at the Hamburg State Opera. She later studied singing with Evelyn Herlitzius, and subsequently with Hans Sotin at the Cologne Musikhochschule, where she also began to study violin. She graduated in 2001 at the Berlin Hochschule der Künste as a student of Peter Maus. Since 1997 she has been a member of the ensemble of the Komische Oper Berlin, where she has undertaken the rôles of Ännchen in *Der Freischütz*, Nannetta in *Falstaff*, Morgana in *Alcina*, Comtesse Anastasia in *The Gypsy Princess*, Schwanenprinzessin in *The Tale of Tsar Saltan*, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro*, and Blonde in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*. In 2002 she was awarded the first prize and the special prize for contemporary music at the Bundeswettbewerb Gesang. In September 2003 she made her début at the Berlin Deutsche Oper as Papagena. She has appeared elsewhere as a guest singer and also enjoys a career as a concert singer in Germany.

Marko Kathol

The tenor Marko Kathol studied singing at the Bordeaux Conservatoire and with Claes H. Ahnsjö in Munich, before joining the Würzburg Stadttheater as tenor buffo. From 1996 to 2003 he was engaged at the Munich Gärtnerplatz Staatstheater, before embarking on a free-lance career. His rôles have included Alfred in *Die Fledermaus* and Lord Percy Harwich in *Lady Hamilton* in Cologne, Lyonel in *Martha* in Leipzig, Adam in *Der Vogelhändler* in Dresden, Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi*, Camille and Danilo in *Die lustige Witwe* and Caramello in *Eine Nacht in Venedig* in Munich, and Tony in *West Side Story* at the Vienna Volksoper. His wide operatic repertoire ranges from Mozart to Carl Orff, with a parallel list of rôles in operetta. Marko Kathol had his first stage experience at the Klagenfurt Stadttheater, before training as a classical dancer and a period of ten years as a member of the Bavarian State Ballet. His career as a singer has brought guest performances in opera houses and concert halls throughout Germany and Austria, as well as in Hungary and Israel.

Karl-Michael Ebner

The tenor Karl-Michael Ebner was born in Schärding am Inn in Austria. A soloist with the Vienna Boys' Choir, he subsequently studied the oboe, conducting and singing at the Academy for Music and Performing Arts in Vienna. From 1990 to 1996 he studied singing at the Bruckner University in Linz, and was then a student of Km. Gerdrude Grob-Brandl. He has been Artistic Director of the Steyr Music Festival since 1995 and General Director of the Bad Hall Kurtheater for Opera and Musicals since 1997, as well as Leader of the USO vocal ensemble since 1990. He is active as a concert soloist in church music and opera and stage performance. In 1996 he made his début at the Linz State Theatre in Cavalieri's *La rappresentazione di anima e di corpo* at the International Bruckner Festival. He has performed as a soloist in numerous radio and commercial recordings with the USO vocal ensemble, the Vienna Symphony Orchestra and many others. Since the 1999/2000 season, he has been an ensemble member of the Vienna Volksoper, and in 2001 made his début at the Vienna State Opera as Monostatos in *Die Zauberflöte*. Guest contracts have taken him to the United States, Hong Kong, Beijing, and Macao, and to the Bruckner Festival. Karl-Michael Ebner's unusually large repertoire includes more than thirty rôles, ranging from Don Basilio in *Le nozze di Figaro* and the Steuermann in *Die fliegende Holländer* to Freddy in *My Fair Lady* and Jean-Michel in *La cage aux folles*.

Heinz Holecsek

Born in Vienna, Heinz Holecsek studied at the Vienna Conservatory and then at the Vienna Music Academy, before joining the Vienna Volksoper, making his début there as Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte*, a rôle he later undertook at the Vienna State Opera. His operatic repertoire includes the rôles of Figaro in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Leporello and Masetto in *Don Giovanni*, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, Gianni Schicchi, Fra Melitone, Dr Bartolo in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Schaunard in *La Bohème*, and the Circus Director in *The Bartered Bride*. He has had an equally busy and distinguished career in operetta and in concerts and recitals throughout Europe and as far afield as Japan. He has also appeared as an actor and served as a stage and artistic director for festival opera performances. His many recordings include collaborations in operas, operettas, song recitals and Viennese songs, and he has appeared frequently on television.

Slovak Philharmonic Choir

The Slovak Philharmonic Choir was established in Slovakia in 1946 as the Bratislava Radio Mixed Choir. Ladislav Slovák, the choir's originator and founder, became chorus-master in the initial period, succeeded in 1955 by Jan Maria Dobrodinsky, who led the choir for more than twenty years, doing much towards the achievement of the choir's high professional quality. In 1957 the choir was incorporated in the association of the ensembles of the Slovak Philharmonic. Valentin Iljin followed in 1976 as chorus-master, succeeded in turn by Lubomír Mátl, Štefan Klimo, Pavol Baxa, Pavol Procházka, and Marián Vach. From 1991 to 2001 Blanka Juhanáková in collaboration with Jan Rozehnal, the principal chorus-master until 2003, when Marián Vach assumed responsibility, continued the tradition of enhancing the choir's performing skills. Half a century of intensive artistic activity has made the Slovak Philharmonic Choir an ensemble of outstanding quality, one of the leading such ensembles in Europe. There have been collaborations with many world-famous conductors, including Claudio Abbado, Jean Claude Casadesus, James Conlon, Dean Dixon, János Ferencsik, Riccardo Chailly, Zdeněk Košler, Ondrej Lenárd, Alain Lombard, Lorin Maazel, Kurt Masur, Zubin Mehta, Antonio Pedrotti, Libor Pešek, L'udivít Rajter, Karl Richter, Pinchas Steinberg, Hans Swarowsky, Václav Talich, and Christoph von Dohnányi. In addition to performances at home the choir has appeared in most European countries, as well as in Morocco, Turkey, and Japan. There has been collaboration with many renowned international symphony orchestras, including the Berlin Philharmonic, Vienna Philharmonic, Vienna Symphony, London Philharmonic, and Israel Philharmonic Orchestras, and the Orchestre de Paris. The Slovak Philharmonic Choir has also appeared at important international music festivals, including those of Vienna, Salzburg, Prague, Perugia, Edinburgh, Berlin, Athens, Madrid, Paris, and Munich. There have been many recordings for Slovak and international television and radio stations, as well as for leading record companies, including Opus, Supraphon, Deutsche Grammophon, Hungaroton, Sony, Marco Polo, Naxos, Nuova Era, and Decca.

Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra

The Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1929 as the first professional musical ensemble fulfilling the needs of radio broadcasting in Slovakia. From the start there was a particular emphasis on contemporary Slovak music, resulting in a close connection with leading Slovak composers, including Alexander Moyzes, Eugen Suchoň, Ján Cikker and others. The original ensemble was gradually enlarged and from 1942, thanks to Alexander Moyzes, the then Director of Music in Slovak Radio, regular symphony concerts were given, broadcast live by Slovak Radio. From 1943 to 1946 the Yugoslavian Kresimir Baranovic was the chief conductor of the orchestra. His successors were L'udovít Rajter, Ladislav Slovák, Václav Jirásek, Otakar Trhlík, Bystrík Režucha and Ondrej Lenárd, whose successful performances and recordings from 1977 to 1990 helped the orchestra to establish itself as an internationally known concert ensemble. His successor Róbert Stankovsky continued this work, until his unexpected death at the age of 36. His place was taken in 2001 by Charles Olivieri-Munroe. There are regular concert performances at the Slovak Radio concert hall in Bratislava, while through its broadcasts and recordings the orchestra has also become a part of concert life abroad, with successful tours to Austria, Italy, Germany, The Netherlands, France, Bulgaria, Spain, Japan and Malta.

Richard Bonyngé

Born in Sydney, Richard Bonyngé studied at the New South Wales Conservatorium of Music and the Royal College of Music in London. He served as Musical Director of the Sutherland-Williamson Grand Opera Company in 1965 in Melbourne, Adelaide, Sydney, and Brisbane, was Artistic Director of the Vancouver Opera from 1974 to 1977 and Musical Director of The Australian Opera from 1976 to 1986. In 1977 he was awarded the CBE and the Order of Australia, and in 1989 was appointed Commandeur des Arts et des Lettres in Paris. He married the soprano Joan Sutherland in 1954. Richard Bonyngé is acknowledged as a scholar of bel canto opera, nineteenth-century French opera and nineteenth-century ballet music. He has conducted at most of the world's opera houses, in Great Britain, in the United States, Canada, Argentina, France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Switzerland, Holland, Portugal, Poland, Russia, Japan, Korea, Australia and New Zealand. His repertoire consists mainly of eighteenth-century opera, the great bel canto repertoire, French nineteenth-century opera, nineteenth-century ballet and opera, the operas of Mozart and Handel, and many operettas. He has been responsible for the revival of many operas which were not at the time included in the repertoire, including Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots*, Rossini's *Semiramide* and *Sigismondo*, Donizetti's *La fille du régiment*, *Maria Stuarda*, *Anna Bolena* and *Lucrezia Borgia*, Massenet's *Esclarmonde*, *Le Roi de Lahore* and *Thérèse*, Pacini's *Medea*, Haydn's *Orfeo*, and Verdi's *I Masnadieri*. Richard Bonyngé has recorded over fifty complete operas as well as the three great Tchaikovsky ballets, three Delibes ballets and countless relatively unknown ballets of Adam, Minkus, Burgmüller, Auber, Drigo, and Offenbach. He has also made videos of *Les Huguenots*, *La fille du régiment*, *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Die lustige Witwe*, *Les dialogues des Carmélites*, *Norma*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Lucrezia Borgia*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Lakmé*, *Il trovatore*, *Die Zauberflöte*, and *Die Csárdásfürstin*.

Kálmán's greatest popular success, *Die Csárdásfürstin* (*The Gypsy Princess*), is a marvellously varied score, without a single weak number. The characters are vividly etched, the comic dialogue, centred on a mismatch between aristocrat and showgirl, is still genuinely funny, and the *volte face* which transforms doom and gloom into a happy ending is a classic of its kind.

Emmerich
KÁLMÁN
(1882-1953)

Die Csárdásfürstin (The Gypsy Princess)

CD 1

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1 Vorspiel | 2:54 |
| Act I | |
| 2 Heia, heia, in den Bergen
ist mein Heimatland | 3:14 |
| 3 Alle sind wir Sünder | 4:11 |
| 4 Sylva, ich will nur dich | 5:07 |
| 5 Aus ist's mit der Liebe | 3:16 |
| 6 O, jag' dem Glück
nicht nach | 5:18 |
| 7 Ich, Edwin Ronald | 16:11 |
| Act II | |
| 8 Entr'akt | 1:58 |
| 9 Erstrahlen die Lichter | 3:12 |
| 10 Ich warte auf das grosse
Wunder | 4:32 |
| 11 Heller Jubel | 6:26 |

CD 2

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------|
| 1 Liebchen, mich reisst es | 4:23 |
| 2 Mädél, guck | 2:38 |
| 3 Tanzen möchte ich | 3:34 |
| 4 Das Glück wohnt überall | 9:35 |
| Act III | |
| 5 Intermezzo | 2:27 |
| 6 Nimm, Zigeuner,
deine Geige | 3:59 |
| 7 Mädél, guck | 1:28 |
| 8 Tausend kleine Engel | 0:57 |

CD 2 (contd.)

- | | |
|--|------|
| 9 Dorfkinder | 6:56 |
| (Waltz on melodies from the
opereetta <i>Der Zigeunerprimás</i>) | |
| 10 Vive le roi | 4:49 |
| (From the opereetta
<i>Der Zigeunerprimás</i>) | |
| 11 Hollaho, hollaho,
wir kommen zurecht | 5:29 |
| (Wo Zigeuner lustig fidein) (From
the opereetta <i>Die Faschingsfee</i>) | |
| 12 Lockend soll ertönen Dir ein
feurig Lied | 4:10 |
| (From the opereetta
<i>Das Hollandweibchen</i>) | |
| 13 Grand Palotás de la Reine | 6:52 |
| (Hungarian Dance Suite from
the opereetta <i>Der Teufelsreiter</i>) | |

**Yvonne Kenny • Michael Roider • Mojca Erdmann • Marko Kathol • Karl-Michael Ebner
Heinz Holecek • Yvonne Kálmán • Hellmuth Klumpp • Slovak Philharmonic Choir
Marian Vach, Chorus-master • Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra • Richard Bonyngé**

The libretto may be accessed at www.naxos.com/libretti/gypsyprincess.htm

Recorded at the Slovak Radio Concert Hall, Bratislava, from 9th-17th December 2002

(CD 1, CD 2 [1-8]), and from 22nd-23rd September 2003 (CD 2 [9-13])

Producer: Miloš Betko • Engineer: Otto Nopp • Editor: Ladislav Krajčovič • Booklet Notes: Nigel Douglas

Cover Picture: *Dancing Showgirl, 1928* (cover by Pierre for a French theatre programme)
(Mary Evans Picture Library)



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Playing Time
1:53:37



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