

RACHMANINOFF  
**A L E K S A N D R**



VASSILY  
GERELLO  
OLGA  
GURYAKOVA  
CONSTANTINE  
ORBELIAN  
MOSCOW  
CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

DE 3269  
0 13491 32692 4

DISC ONE

**SERGEI RACHMANINOFF** (1873–1943)

**ALEKO** — *Opera in one act, based on Pushkin's poem, "The Gypsies"*

- [1] Introduction — *orchestra* (2:55)
- [2] Chorus — *choir* (5:00)
- [3] The old gypsy's narrative — *bass and choir* (4:58)
- [4] Scene and chorus — *soprano, tenor, baritone, bass and choir* (2:15)
- [5] Women's dance — *orchestra* (4:04)
- [6] Men's dance — *orchestra* (4:16)
- [7] Chorus — *choir* (3:43)
- [8] Duettino — *soprano, tenor* (2:33)
- [9] Scene by the cradle — *soprano, baritone* (4:36)
- [10] Aleko's cavatina — *baritone* (5:26)
- [11] Intermezzo — *orchestra* (3:23)
- [12] The young gypsy's romance — *tenor* (1:33)
- [13] Duet and finale — *entire cast* (14:41)

Aleko: **Vassily Gerello**, baritone

Zemfira: **Olga Guryakova**, soprano

The Old Gypsy: **Mikhail Kit**, bass

The Young Gypsy: **Vsevolod Grivnov**, tenor

Old Gypsy Woman: **Elena Manikhina**, mezzo-soprano

**Moscow Chamber Orchestra**

**Constantine Orbelian**, music director and conductor

**State Academic Choral Capella of Russia**, named after Yurlov

**Stanislav Gusev**, choir director

DISC TWO

**ALEXANDER PUSHKIN** (1799–1837) ***The Gypsies*** — complete poem

- [1] Read in English by **Michael York** (36:39) *text translation by Walter Arndt*
- [2] Read in Russian by **Vassily Lanovoy** (31:40)

TOTAL PLAYING TIME — DISC ONE: 59:26 DISC TWO: 68:20



Opera may not have been of central importance to Sergei Rachmaninoff's long and diverse creative life, but if one looks just at the early years of his professional career a very different picture emerges. Three operas were composed over a thirteen-year period, beginning with *Aleko*, written as a graduation exercise at the Moscow Conservatory in 1892 and performed to acclaim at the Bolshoi Theater the following year. Rachmaninoff's activities in opera set a pattern for later years, when his work as a composer was intertwined with that of a performer. In 1897 he became deputy conductor of the Moscow Private Opera Company of the railroad tycoon Savva Mamantov, where he worked with the young bass Fyodor Chaliapin. Soon he was composing another opera, *Francesca da Rimini*, to a libretto by Modest Tchaikovsky based on Dante. He put it aside temporarily for other projects, including what became his third opera, *The Miserly Knight*, a setting of one of Pushkin's "little tragedies." *Francesca da Rimini* and *The Miserly Knight* — each, like *Aleko*, in a single act — were premiered as a double-bill at the Bolshoi in January 1906. In personal terms, this must have been the high point of Rachmaninoff's two years as chief conductor of Russian opera at the Bolshoi, which had begun in 1904. But a month later he left this position and went abroad, possi-

bly because of political unrest in Russia. Although he continued to compose songs and other vocal music, nearly all of which were written before he left Russia for good in 1917, he never completed another opera.

For any lover of the lyric stage, this is a cause for regret. But speculation about the promise that Rachmaninoff's three operas so clearly demonstrate must not be allowed to obscure the very real artistic achievement they represent in their own right. Too often these operas have been overlooked on account of their youthful origins or perceived deficiencies in their librettos. In the case of *Aleko*, the assignment Anton Arensky gave his composition class of three students to compose a one-act opera was transcended by a work of genius. Indeed, you get the feeling that the task was the perfect stimulus for the nineteen-year-old composer's creative powers. "The libretto has been done very well; the subject is marvelous. I don't know if the music will be marvelous!" he wrote enthusiastically not long after starting work on the opera. The subject in question was Pushkin's long narrative poem "The Gypsies" about a sophisticated urbanite who marries a gypsy girl and joins her people. The playwright and director Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko pruned Pushkin's text severely in preparing the libretto, dispensing with much of the philosophizing about contrasts between the free-



spirited gypsies and the supposedly civilized world. Rachmaninoff composed and orchestrated the entire opera in a twenty-four day burst of energy. He received the grade of "5+" (A+) and also won the Great Gold Medal, awarded for only the third time in the conservatory's history. But the real recognition came with the opera's acceptance by the Bolshoi, where the world premiere occurred on April 27/May 9, 1893, less than a year after Rachmaninoff's graduation. By then the vocal score had already been published.

*Aleko* will probably always be compared to *Cavalleria Rusticana*, which was received enthusiastically in 1891 at the Bolshoi, just as it had been in other major houses in the wake of its premiere the year before; it returned to the Bolshoi when Rachmaninoff was at work on *Aleko*. Like *Cavalleria*, *Aleko* has an intermezzo, which comes at a comparable point in the drama. But the relationship between the two operas involves the librettos more than the music. Each deals with murder by a jealous husband in a localized setting, with Rachmaninoff's gypsy camp substituting for Mascagni's Sicilian village. Both are "number operas;" indeed, the thirteen sections of *Aleko* correspond to a roughly similar number in *Cavalleria*. Some of the criticism of Nemirovich-Danchenko's libretto betrays a post-nineteenth-century bias in favor of operas with "continuous" music, yet *Aleko*

has a number of unifying elements. Most notably, a three-note motive, consisting of a rising and falling semi-tone, is associated with the title character, its rhythm resembling the pronunciation of his name. The motive dominates the beginning of the prelude after the initial haunting statement from flutes and oboes. This statement itself recurs later in the opera and in fact takes the three-note motive for its bass line. The prelude reaches a climax in which a vigorous triplet motive played by the strings in octaves abruptly shifts to emphatic duplets, a passage that returns at the climax of the action, immediately after Aleko stabs his unfaithful wife, Zemfira. In the prelude a consoling, sequential motive in the cellos follows, but when the motive appears in the opera, rather than consoling Aleko, it is transformed to taunt him. It forms the first three notes of the unusual lullaby Zemfira sings to her infant daughter about a wife's disdain for a cruel husband. When Aleko confronts Zemfira, the music drops its brittle woodwind tag and takes a more personal tone, but Zemfira maintains her defiant stand, much like another gypsy girl who dies at the hands of a jealous and more conventional lover — Carmen.

Each of the other principal characters also has a solo number, all of which show the young composer's considerable gift for musical characterization. The Young Gypsy's sere-



nade recalls Turiddu's siciliana from *Cavalleria*, as an off-stage tenor sings ardently to the accompaniment of a harp. This melodic gem is a purely lyrical interlude, whereas the Old Gypsy's narrative near the start of the opera is integral to the plot. To music that shows the skill of a Borodin in evoking a far-away setting, the Old Gypsy tells how his wife abandoned him and their young daughter, Zemfira, years ago for another gypsy, leaving him anguished but accepting of the situation. The scene thus establishes the gypsy code of behavior but also shows that Aleko has not shed his non-gypsy ethic, for he bluntly asks why the Old Gypsy didn't pursue them both with a knife. This clash between the two cultures is at the heart of Aleko's inner conflict, which finds expression in his cavatina, the opera's most famous number. Its broad, open-ended melodies and fluently shifting harmonies point the way to Rachmaninoff's later work and make for a powerful expression of grief as Aleko thinks back on Zemfira's former love for him.

Those essential ingredients of Russian opera, chorus and dance, are also prominent in *Aleko*. The two dance numbers, each lively and melodically distinctive, have sometimes been performed independently of the opera. And the chorus is deeply woven into the fabric of the opera from the very start as it helps establish the gypsies' peaceful, carefree

lifestyle. The chorus is also fundamental to the expertly structured finale, beginning with a fugal passage in which the gypsies react to Aleko's crime and continuing on to Aleko's expulsion from the camp at the tranquil, hymn-like close, a riveting moment reminiscent of the chants in *Boris Godunov* or the execution scene in Tchaikovsky's *Mazeppa*.

Tchaikovsky led the applause at the opera's premiere, and there are indeed moments that recall the lyricism of *Eugene Onegin*, most especially when the voices of Zemfira and the Young Gypsy join in duet. But however skillfully the young composer built on his musical heritage, there is no doubt that *Aleko* announced the emergence of a new and distinctly original musical voice, a circumstance that surely fueled the success it enjoyed for a number of years following its premiere. Chaliapin sang the title role early in his career and retained a life-long love for the opera. Not only did he record the cavatina twice, but he wanted *Aleko* to serve as a vehicle for his farewell from singing in the 1930s and even tried to persuade Rachmaninoff to expand it. But Rachmaninoff refused with the remark that "much water has run under the bridge since the days of Aleko." The composer also declined a request from the Pushkin centenary committee to produce the opera on the anniversary of the poet's death.

In the years since, *Aleko* has too often



been the province of the opera workshop. But it, like Rachmaninoff's other operas, offers rewards that only a top-flight performance can realize. Fortunately, a new generation of performers has discovered, in the words of the conductor Constantine Orbelian, "this miracle by a nineteen-year-old who brought to the creative task not only a fully developed musical intellect but a tremendous vision for the depth of the tragedy." This recording, made in the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory — Russia's equivalent of Carnegie Hall — in

conjunction with an ecstatically received performance in St. Petersburg's Hermitage Theater, initiates a Delos series comprising all three of Rachmaninoff's operas. With a cast that includes some of today's finest Russian singers, all of whom have won substantial international acclaim, and the renowned Moscow Chamber Orchestra under Orbelian, it should help *Aleko* win the recognition it deserves.

George W. Loomis

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### *Aleko — synopsis*

It is evening at a Gypsy encampment and the inhabitants sing of their free and happy lives devoted to work and song. An Old Gypsy reminisces about his youth and the one time he was truly happy: the year he was married, to Mariula, who left during the night with a wandering tribe, abandoning him and their young daughter, Zemfira.

Aleko, a "civilized" outsider who joined the Gypsies to escape from the law and married the much younger Zemfira, reacts violently to this account, appalled that the Old Gypsy did not take revenge. If it had happened to him, he says, he would kill both his wife and his rival without hesitation. Zemfira is frightened by her husband's reaction; she and her Young Gypsy friend sing that youth is free and that love cannot be forced to remain.

As night approaches, there is dancing and while the camp prepares to sleep, Zemfira and the Young Gypsy, now much in love, part, agreeing to meet by the river when the moon rises. With her husband listening, Zemfira now sings of the scorn she feels for him, the graying, cruel man whose love she will deny, and of the love she now feels for a younger man whose identity she defies Aleko to learn. When they are together, she sings, they laugh at the old Aleko. Alone, Aleko sings of the love he feels for Zemfira, recalling the passion of their early days together when she would whisper, "Aleko, forever." Now, he sings, she is unfaithful and cold.



As the Young Gypsy sings of the uncertainties of love, he is joined by Zemfira, who is fearful Aleko might awaken and find her gone. This fear is well-founded as Aleko appears, furious, but imploring Zemfira for the return of happier times together. When Zemfira and her suitor laugh at the "pitiful" Aleko, he is overcome with rage and stabs the young man, defying his wife to now "breathe his love." Through her tears, Zemfira curses Aleko, at which point his rage boils again and he stabs her as well. As she utters her dying breath, Aleko cries with remorse.

The community converges on the scene of the dead bodies. The Old Gypsy Woman tells the men to dig two graves and the women to kiss the eyes of the dead. The Gypsies then tell Aleko that while they live free of laws, they do not condone revenge and cannot live with a murderer: "We are gentle and have kind hearts; you are brutal and rash." They force him to leave, bidding farewell as he enters a life of solitude.

*Aleko — libretto by Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko*

*Russian transliteration*

1. INTRODUCTION (ORCHESTRA)

2. GYPSIES

Kak volnost, vesel nash nochleg  
I mirnyi son pod nebesami,  
Mezhdu kolyosami teleg,  
Poluzaveshannykh kovrami.  
Dlya nas vezde, vsegda doroga,  
Vezde dlia nas nochlega sen,  
Prosnuvshis poutru, my otdayom svoi den  
Trudu i pesnyam.

3. THE OLD GYPSY

Volshebnoi siloi pesnopenia  
V tumannoi pamyati moei  
Vdrug ozhivliayutsa videnia  
To svetlykh, to pechalnykh dnei.

GYPSIES

Povedai, starik, pered snom  
Nam skazku o slavnem bylom.

THE OLD GYPSY

I nashi seni kochevie  
V pustyniakh ne spaslis ot bed.

*English translation by Constantine Orbelian*

1. INTRODUCTION (ORCHESTRA)

2. GYPSIES

How happy and free we are in our camps,  
Our blissful slumber beneath the stars untroubled,  
Amid the wheels of van and dray,  
Their sides with hanging carpets doubled.  
Their sides with hanging carpets doubled.  
Our road is far and wide — and we spend our  
nights where we desire,  
As morning dawn arrives, we wake and devote  
our days to work and song.

3. THE OLD GYPSY

Through the magical strength of song  
Distant memories return, and suddenly a vision  
appears before me of those happy and saddened days.

GYPSIES

Tell us, old man, before we sleep... a story of  
those bygone days.

THE OLD GYPSY

Our peaceful camps were not spared misfortune;  
Fatal passions brewed among us, and fate and  
destiny one cannot escape.



I vsudu strasti rokovie,  
I ot sugeb zashchity net.  
Akh, bystro molodost moya  
Zvezdoi paduchey melknula!  
No ty, pora lubvi, minula,  
Eshchio bystrei: tolko god  
Menya lubila Mariula.  
Odnazhdy bliz kagulskikh vod  
My chuzhdyi tabor povstrechali,  
Tsygane te, svoi shatry  
Razbiv bliz nashikh, u gory,  
Dve nochi vmeste nochevali.  
Oni ushli na tretyu noch, —  
I, brosy malenkuyu doch,  
Ushla za nimi Mariula.  
Ya mirno spal; zarya blesnula,  
Prosnulsya ya, — podrugi net!  
Ishchu, zovu, propal i sled.  
Toskya, plakala Zemfira,  
I ya zaplakal!... S etikh por  
Postyli mne vse devy mira,  
Dlia nikh navek ugas moi vzor.

4. ALEKO

Da kak zhe ty ne pospeshil  
Totchas vosled neblagodarnoi  
I khishchniku, i ei, kovarnoi,  
Kinzhal v sertse ne vonzil?

ZEMFIRA

K chemu? Volnee ptitsy mladost.  
Kto v silakh uderzhat lubov?

YOUNG GYPSY

Chredou vsem dayotsa radost,  
Shto bylo, to ne budet vnov.

ALEKO

O net, kogda nad bezdnoi morya  
Naidu ya spishchego vruga  
Klianus, ya v bezdnu ne bledneya,  
Stolknu prezrennogo zlodeya.

ZEMFIRA

O moi otets! Aleko strashen.  
Smotri, kak vid uzhasen.

THE OLD GYPSY

Ne tron evo, khrani molchanie.

How quickly my youth has passed; my falling  
star shone

For only one year — Mariula loved me...

It all happened on the riverbank, when an  
unknown Gypsy tribe came and set up camp.  
They pitched their tents near ours and spent two  
nights with us.

The third night they were gone

And, leaving our little daughter, Mariula  
followed them.

I was peacefully asleep, and the dawn had come  
— I awoke — but gone was my mate. I looked  
for her — Zemfira was weeping — weep did I.  
Since then, loathsome are all the girls in the  
world — for them, forever my heart is still.

4. ALEKO

How was it that you didn't pursue them in haste  
— that thankless wench and those abductors —  
and thrust a knife in their hearts?

ZEMFIRA

And why? Youth is free as a bird, and who can  
force love to remain?

YOUNG GYPSY

Everyone deserves happiness — what has passed  
will never return.

ALEKO

Oh no! If I were to find my foe at a cliff with the  
sea below — my sleeping enemy — I swear,  
without regret, I would push that hated villain  
into the void!

ZEMFIRA

Oh father! Aleko frightens me — look, how terri-  
ble is his gaze.

THE OLD GYPSY

Don't touch him! And keep your silence — it is



Byt mozhet, to toska izgnania.

ZEMFIRA

Evo ljubov postyla mne,  
Mne skuchno, sertse voli prosit.

YOUNG GYPSY

Revniv on, no ne strashen mne.

ALEKO

Mne tiazhko: sertse mesti prosit.

GYPSIES

Skuchny eti skaski,  
Zabudem my ikh  
V veselii i pliaske.

5. WOMEN'S DANCE (ORCHESTRA)

6. MEN'S DANCE (ORCHESTRA)

7. GYPSIES

Ogni pogasheny. Odn luna siyaet  
S nebesnoi vyshiny i tabor ozariaet.

8. YOUNG GYPSY

Eshcho odno, odno lobzanie!  
Odn, no dole! Na proshchanie!  
Skazhi, pridiosh li na svidanie?  
Obmanet, ne pridyot ona!

ZEMFIRA

Idi! Moi muzh revniv i zol.  
Proshchai, pokamest ne prishol!  
Kogda podnimetsya luna...  
Tam, za kurganom nad mogiloi.  
Begi, vot on! Pridu, moi milyi.

9. ZEMFIRA'S ARIA — SCENE AT THE CRADLE

Staryi muzh, groznyi muzh,  
Rezh menya, zhgi menya:  
Ya tverda, ne boius,  
Ni nozha, ni ognya.  
Nenavizhu tebya,  
Preziraiu tebya:  
Ya drugova lublu,  
Umiraiu, lubya.

the pain of exile that makes him that way!

ZEMFIRA

His love leaves me cold — and my heart yearns  
for freedom.

YOUNG GYPSY

He's jealous, but cannot frighten me.

ALEKO

I suffer; my heart begs for revenge!

GYPSIES

These stories bore us;  
Forget them we will  
In happiness and dance.

5. WOMEN'S DANCE (ORCHESTRA)

6. MEN'S DANCE (ORCHESTRA)

7. GYPSIES

The candles and fires have been put out  
Only the moon is shining from the heavens  
above and gives a gleam  
Of light to our camp.

8. YOUNG GYPSY

Once again — just one more kiss  
Just one — as we part!  
Will you come to meet me?  
You lie to me — you will not come.

ZEMFIRA

Go! My husband is jealous and cruel.  
Farewell! Go before he comes!  
When the moon rises, I will meet you near the river  
Near the grave.  
Run! There he is... Yes, I will come, my love.

9. ZEMFIRA'S ARIA — SCENE AT THE CRADLE

*Graying man, Cruel man,  
Stab you can, Burn you can,  
Firm I am — Spurn your strife,  
Your love I deny — I hate you  
Your wrath I defy and I despise you.  
For another I do love,  
For his love I would die.*



ALEKO  
Dusha tomitsia grustiu tainoi...  
Gde sh radosti lubvi sluchainoi?

ZEMFIRA  
*Rezh menia, zhgi menia,  
Ne skazhu nichevo,  
Staryi muzh, groznyi muzh,  
Ne uznaesh evo.*

ALEKO  
Molchi! Mne penye nadoelo.  
Ya dikikh pesen ne lublu.

ZEMFIRA  
Ne lubish? Mne kakoe delo?  
Ya pesnyu dlia sebya poyu.  
(continues singing)  
*On svezhee vesny,  
Zharche letnevo dnya.  
Kak on molod, kak on smel!  
Kak on lubit meya!*

ALEKO  
Molchi, Zemfira, ya dovolen...

ZEMFIRA  
Tak ponyal pesnyu ty moyu?

ALEKO  
Zemfira...

ZEMFIRA  
Ty serditsa volen.  
Ya pesnyu pro tebya poyu.  
(continues singing)  
*Kak laskala evo la v nochnoi tishine!  
Kak smeyalis togda My tvoei sedine!*

*On svezhee vesny,  
Zharche letnevo dnya;  
Kak on molod, kak on smel!  
Kak on lubit meya!*

*Kak laskala evo  
la v nochnoi tishine!  
Kak smeyalis togda My tvoei sedine!*

ALEKO  
Your singing wearies me...  
Where is the happiness of fleeting love?

ZEMFIRA  
*Stab you can, Burn you can,  
I will not say a word,  
Old man, Graying man,  
You will not find out who he is.*

ALEKO  
Quiet! I am tired of your singing.  
I don't like those wild songs.

ZEMFIRA  
You don't like them? What do I care?  
I'm singing this song for you.  
(continues singing)  
*He is fresher than spring,  
Hotter than a summer's day.  
He's so young and so bold!  
How he loves me.*

ALEKO  
Quiet! Zemfira, that's enough.

ZEMFIRA  
Did you understand my song?

ALEKO  
Zemfira!

ZEMFIRA  
You are free to be as angry as you wish.  
I am singing this song about you!  
(continues singing)  
*How I loved him in the still of the night!  
How we laughed at your gray hair!*

*He is fresher than spring,  
Hotter than a summer's day;  
He's so young, and so bold!  
How he loves me!*

*How I caressed him  
In the still of the night!  
How we laughed at your gray hair!*



10. ALEKO (ALEKO'S CAVATINA)

Ves tabor spit. Luna nad nim  
 Polnochnoi krasotoyu bleshchet.  
 Shto sh sertse bednoye trepeshchet?  
 Kakou grustyu ya tomim?  
 Ya bez zabot, bes sozhalenja  
 Vedu kochuyushchie dni.  
 Prezrev okovy prosveshchenja,  
 Ya volen tak zhe, kak oni.  
 Ya zhil, ne priznavaya vlasti  
 Sudby kovarnoi i slepoi.  
 No, bozhe, kak igraut strasti  
 Moei poslushnou dushoi!..  
 Zemfira! Kak ona lubila!  
 Kak nezhno, priklonias ko mne,  
 V pustynnoi tishine  
 Chasy nochnye provodila!  
 Kak chasto milym lepetaniem,  
 Upoitelnym lobzanyem  
 Zadumchvost moyu  
 V minutu razognat umela!  
 Ya pomnu: s negoi, polnoi strasti,  
 Sheptala mne ona togda:  
 "Lublu tebia! V tvoei ya vlasti!  
 Tvoia, Aleko, navsegda!"  
 I vsyo togda ya zabyval,  
 Kogda recham eyo vnimal  
 I, kak bezubnyi, tseloval,  
 Eyo charuyushchie ochi,  
 Kos tchudnykh pryad, temnyee nochi,  
 Usta Zemfiry... A ona,  
 Vsya negoi, strastyu polna,  
 Prilnuy ko mne, v glaza gliadela.  
 I shto zh? Zemfira neverna!  
 Moya Zemfira okhladela!

11. INTERMEZZO (ORCHESTRA)

12. YOUNG GYPSY

Vzgljani: pod otdalionnym svodom  
 Guljaet volnaya luna;  
 Na vsu prirodu mimokhodom  
 Ravno siyanie lyot ona.  
 Kto v nebe mesto ei ukazhet,  
 Promolvya: tam ostanovis!

10. ALEKO (ALEKO'S CAVATINA)

The camp is asleep. The moon above in midnight  
 splendor shimmering.  
 Why is my poor heart yearning and suffering?  
 What is this pain and sorrow?  
 Without cares or regrets, I lead a nomad's life.  
 Having scorned the shackles of civilization  
 I am as free as they are — I lived not recognizing  
 the power of treacherous blind fate!  
 But, God! How passion took hold of my obedient soul.  
 Zemfira — how she loved me!  
 How tenderly she caressed —  
 In that desert quiet,  
 Those long night hours,  
 Those sweet murmurs,  
 Those passionate kisses — made gloomy  
 thoughts disappear in an instant.  
 I remember her caresses. Full of passion, she  
 would whisper to me:  
 "I love you! I am in your power! I am yours,  
 Aleko, forever!"  
 I would forget everything, hearing her words,  
 and mad with love, I would kiss her  
 Bewitching eyes and tresses blacker than night,  
 and her lips.  
 And she, passionately huddled against me,  
 gazed into my eyes...  
 And now...?  
 Zemfira is unfaithful!  
 My Zemfira has become cold!

11. INTERMEZZO (ORCHESTRA)

12. YOUNG GYPSY

Look, how beneath the infinite vault, the moon  
 freely sails;  
 It sheds the same glow evenly on all of nature.  
 Who will tell it where to stop in the sky?  
 And who will tell a young girl's heart to obey?  
 "You must love only one, forever"?



Kto sertsu devy yunoi skazhet:  
Lubi odno, ne izmenis!

13. ZEMFIRA  
Pora!

YOUNG GYPSY  
Postoi!

ZEMFIRA  
Pora, moi milyi, pora!

YOUNG GYPSY  
Net, net, postoi! Dozhdyomsya dnya.

ZEMFIRA  
Ush pozno.

YOUNG GYPSY  
Kak robko ty lubish.  
Minutu!

ZEMFIRA  
Ty menya pogubish.  
YOUNG GYPSY  
Minutu!

ZEMFIRA  
Esli bez menya  
Prosnyotsya mush...

ALEKO  
Prosnulsya on...  
Stoite! Kuda vy? Stoite!  
Il vo sne ya grezhu?  
(to Zemfira)  
Gde sh tvoya lubov?

ZEMFIRA  
Otstan! Ty opostylel mne.  
Byloe ne vernyotsa vnov.

ALEKO  
Zemfira! Vspomni, milyi druk!  
Vsu zhizn ya otdal za zhelanie  
S toboi delit lubov, dosuk  
I dobrovolnoe izgnanie.

ZEMFIRA AND YOUNG GYPSY  
Smeshon i zhalok on!

ALEKO  
Lubov proshla, kak son!

13. ZEMFIRA  
It's time!

YOUNG GYPSY  
Wait!

ZEMFIRA  
It's time, my sweetheart, it's time!

YOUNG GYPSY  
No...No, let's wait! Until dawn let's wait.

ZEMFIRA  
It's late.

YOUNG GYPSY  
How tenderly you love!  
Just one minute!

ZEMFIRA  
You will cause my death!  
YOUNG GYPSY  
Just one minute!

ZEMFIRA  
If my husband awakes without me...

ALEKO  
I have awakened!  
Stand there! Where are you going? Stand there!  
Or is this a dream that I am having?  
(to Zemfira)  
Where's your love?

ZEMFIRA  
Leave me alone! I've had it with you!  
You can't return what is gone!

ALEKO  
Zemfira... please remember my dear mate!  
My entire life I have devoted to your love, life  
and our willful exile.

ZEMFIRA AND YOUNG GYPSY  
How laughable and pitiful he is!

ALEKO  
Love has passed like a dream!



O net, zlodei! ya pred toboi  
Ot praf moikh ne otkazhus  
Il mshcheniem naslazhus.

ZEMFIRA (to Young Gypsy)  
Begi, moi gruk, begi...

ALEKO  
Postoi!  
Kuda, krasavets molodoi?  
Lezhi!  
(Stabs the Young Gypsy)

ZEMFIRA  
Aleko!

YOUNG GYPSY  
Umiraiu!

ZEMFIRA  
Aleko, ty ubil evo!  
Vzglyani, ty ves obryzgan krovyu!  
O, shto ty zdelal!

ALEKO  
Nichevo!  
Dyshy teper evo lubovyu...

ZEMFIRA (to Young Gypsy)  
O milyi moi! Prosti menya!  
Moia lubov tebia zgubila.

ALEKO  
Ty plachesh?

ZEMFIRA  
Ne bous tebia.  
Tvoi ugrozu prezirayu,  
Tvoyo ubiisto proklinayu.

ALEKO  
Umri sh i ty!  
(Stabs Zemfira)

ZEMFIRA  
Umiraiu, lubya!...

GYPSIES  
O chem shumiat? Shto tam za krik?  
Kovo trevozhit eta noch?  
Shto zdes sluchilos?

Oh, no! You scoundrel! I will not renounce my  
rights and I will get my revenge!

ZEMFIRA (to Young Gypsy)  
Run, my friend, run...

ALEKO  
Stand there!  
Where do you think you are going, handsome lad?  
Lie there!  
(Stabs the Young Gypsy)

ZEMFIRA  
Aleko!

YOUNG GYPSY  
I'm dying!

ZEMFIRA  
Aleko, you have killed him!  
Look, your clothes are covered with blood!  
Oh, what have you done!

ALEKO  
It's all right!  
Now you can breathe his love....

ZEMFIRA (to Young Gypsy)  
Oh, my sweet one! Forgive me!  
It is my love that has killed you!

ALEKO  
Are you crying?

ZEMFIRA  
I'm not afraid of you.  
I scorn your threats  
And I curse your deeds.

ALEKO  
So, you will die as well.  
(Stabs Zemfira)

ZEMFIRA  
I am dying in love....

GYPSIES  
What is all of this commotion? What were those  
screams?  
What has this night brought upon someone?



Vstan, starik!

THE OLD GYPSY

Aleko! Zemfira! Doch!  
Smotrite, plachte, vot ona!  
Lezhit, v krovi obagrena.

GYPSIES

Uzhasnoe delo luch sontsa vstrechaet.  
Za chyi prestuplenya nash tabor stradaet?

ZEMFIRA

Otets! Evo revnost zgubila...

GYPSIES

Uzhasnoe delo...

ZEMFIRA

Umirau!..

OLD GYPSY WOMAN AND GYPSIES

Naveki pochila.

ALEKO

Zemfira! Zemfira!  
Vzgliani pred soboi na zlodeya.  
Za mig tvoei radostnoi zhizni  
Svoyu ya otдам, ne zhaleya.

OLD GYPSY WOMAN

Muzhya! Idite nad rekoj  
Mogily svezhie kopat.  
A zhony skorbnoi cheredoi  
Vse v ochi mertvykh tselovat.

OLD GYPSY AND GYPSIES

My diki, net u nas zakonov,  
My ne terzaem, ne kaznim.  
Ne nuzhno krovi nam i stonov,  
No zhit s ubiitsei ne khotim.  
Uzhasen nam tvoi budet glas.  
My robki i dobry dushoi.  
Ty zol i smel, ostav zhe nas.  
Prosti! Da budet mir s toboi!

ALEKO

O gore! O toska!  
Opiat odin, odin!

What has happened here?  
Get up old man!

THE OLD GYPSY

Aleko! Zemfira! My daughter!  
Look... Weep... here she is!  
Lying there in a pool of blood.

GYPSIES

A terrible thing the dawns have met  
Because of whose crime must we suffer?

ZEMFIRA

Father! It is his jealousy that has killed...

GYPSIES

A terrible deed!

ZEMFIRA

I'm dying...

OLD GYPSY WOMAN AND GYPSIES

Farewell, forever.

ALEKO

Zemfira! Zemfira! Before you stands a murderer!  
For a moment of your happiness, I would give  
my life without regret!

OLD GYPSY WOMAN

Men! Go to the river and dig some fresh graves.  
And women, in sorrow's tide,  
Kiss the dead ones on their eyes.

OLD GYPSY AND GYPSIES

We are wild and we have no laws,  
We will not torture or punish.  
We need no blood and screams  
But, to live with a murderer we will not.  
To hear your voice would be unbearable.  
We are gentle and have kind hearts.  
You are brutal and rash.... leave us.  
Farewell! May peace be with you!

ALEKO

Oh grief! ... Oh sorrow!  
Once again I am alone!



Now living in St. Petersburg, Russia, **Vassily Gerello** was born in 1963 in Vaslovitsy, in the Chernovitsky district of the Ukraine. He began his vocal study in Chernovitsky before spending six years at the Conservatory in St. Petersburg. Since 1990, Mr. Gerello has been a member of the Mariinsky Opera Company (formerly the Kirov Opera) and has toured with them in Spain, Italy, Finland, France, Portugal, and Scotland. In 1993 he was the first-prize winner in the BBC Opera Competition at Cardiff and the next year won top honors at the Rimsky-Korsakov International Competition of Young Singers. He then debuted in North America in *Eugene Onegin*, at the Toronto Opera; at la Fenice, Venice, in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*; the Teatro Colon in *Queen of Spades*; and at the Deutsche Oper Berlin in *Beatrice di Tenda*. In addition to Mr. Gerello's work at the Mariinsky Theatre, he continues to pursue a successful international concert and recital career.

Born in 1971 in Novokuznetsk, Siberia, **Olga Guryakova** is a graduate of the Moscow Conservatory, where she studied with I. I. Maslennikova, and is an alumna of Moscow's Musical Theater. Among her honors are 1st prize in the 1996 Rimsky-Korsakov Competition in St. Petersburg and winning La Scala's "Golden Mask" in 1997 for her portrayal of Mimi in *La Boheme*. The latter perfor-

mance also earned her the Journalists' Prize.

At the time of this recording, Guryakova has already sung over 20 roles and appeared at many major opera houses, including Covent Garden, La Scala, the Vienna State Opera, the Opera Bastille, the Mariinsky Theater and in Turin, Frankfurt and Brussels. In June 2000 she returned to Covent Garden and drew tremendous acclaim for her portrayal of Marina in the Kirov's production of Tchaikovsky's *Mazeppa* conducted by Valery Gergiev. It was in this same Kirov production, in 1998, that she first appeared on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera. Later that year, she made her Carnegie Hall debut singing the title role in a concert version of Tchaikovsky's *Iolanta*. During the 2000-2001 season, she will make her debut with the Metropolitan Opera singing Pauline in Prokofiev's *The Gambler*.

Her second Delos recording, a spring/summer 2001 release, is a collection of Italian and Russian arias in which she is accompanied by Constantine Orbelian and the Moscow Chamber Orchestra.

**Vsevolod Grivnov** was born in 1967 and graduated from the Russian Academy of Music. In 1991, while still a student at the academy, he was invited to join the Moscow City Opera, where he performed in numerous productions, including Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, Stravinsky's *Mavra*, Verdi's *I*



*due Foscari*, Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda* and Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*. He made his Bolshoi debut in *Boris Godunov* and later sang Alfredo in *La Traviata*. In recent years he has sung regularly at the Bastille Opera in Paris, appearing in productions of Stravinsky's *The Nightingale*, Tchaikovsky's *Queen of Spades*, Prokofiev's *War and Peace*, Verdi's *Macbeth* and Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*. He has performed at the Danish Royal Opera, the Opera Theatre of Nice, the Israeli National Opera, Geneva's Grand Theatre and in the United States, at the Houston Opera. In addition to his wide operatic repertoire, Grivnov sings the lieder of Schumann and Schubert and has a large symphonic/oratorio repertoire, including music of Bach, Beethoven, Dvořák, Glinka, Medtner, Mozart, Rossini, Rachmaninoff and Tchaikovsky.

One of Russia's leading opera basses, **Mikhail Kit** was born in Kolomya, Ukraine, and graduated from the Odessa State Conservatory in 1973, the same year he joined the Perm Opera Theatre. In 1978 he won the Grand Prix at the Winias International opera singers competition and in 1986 was invited to join the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, where he has since sung in dozens of productions. His repertoire includes the major (and multiple) roles in many Russian operas, including

*Boris Godunov*, *Prince Igor*, *The Fiery Angel*, *Mazeppa*, *Iolante*, *Ruslan and Ludmilla*, *Khovanshchina*, *War and Peace*, and *Eugene Onegin*. Kit's Italian and German repertoire includes *Parsifal*, *Lohengrin*, *Barber of Seville*, *Faust*, *Aida*, *Otello*, *The Magic Flute*, *Don Carlos* and *Lakmé*, while his symphonic repertoire includes music of Mozart, Shostakovich, Beethoven and Verdi.

Outside of Russia, Kit has appeared on many of the leading opera stages, including the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, Covent Garden and the Bastille Opera. His is featured on several Mariinsky Theatre recordings under the direction of Valery Gergiev.

The brilliant pianist and conductor **Constantine Orbelian** is the first American ever to become music director of an ensemble in Russia. His appointment in 1991 as Music Director of the celebrated **Moscow Chamber Orchestra** was a breakthrough event, and came in the midst of Orbelian's successful career as a concert pianist.

Born in San Francisco to Russian and Armenian emigré parents, Orbelian made his debut as a pianist with the San Francisco Symphony at age 11. In his early teens he went to the Soviet Union on a musical scholarship; at the age of 18, after graduating from Juilliard, Orbelian embarked on a solo career often playing 85 to 90 concerts a year.



His solo appearances with orchestra have included the Symphony Orchestras of Boston, Detroit, San Francisco, and St. Petersburg, the Moscow Philharmonic, Scottish National and Russian State Symphony Orchestras, the Moscow Virtuosi, the Budapest Chamber Orchestra among many others. His piano recordings include concertos of Tchaikovsky, Shostakovich, Bach, Mozart, Beethoven and Khachaturian, the latter winning "Best Concerto of the Year" award in the United Kingdom.

One of the world's great chamber orchestras, the Moscow Chamber Orchestra was created in 1956 by renowned conductor and violist Rudolph Barshai, and has been an inspiration to important Russian composers such as Dmitri Shostakovich, who entrusted the first performance of his 14th Symphony to the orchestra.

The appointment of Constantine Orbelian as Music Director of the MCO in 1991 brought the orchestra into a new era of international activity and acclaim. Under Orbelian's direction, the MCO performed at the 50th Anniversary Celebrations of the United Nations in San Francisco and has made extensive international tours in France, Germany, Italy, Holland, Finland, Sweden, Korea, Japan, South Africa, South America, Canada and the United States. Maestro Orbelian and the MCO now perform more than 120 concerts per year,

including three Carnegie Hall appearances in 1998 and 1999, and a sold-out subscription series in the Great Hall of Moscow's famed Tchaikovsky Conservatory. It is also under Orbelian's leadership that the orchestra was accorded the honor of "Academic" in its official Russian title (Russian State Academic Chamber Orchestra).

It has often been noted that the Moscow Chamber Orchestra under Orbelian's direction has a special "luminous" sound and that they play "with one voice." As London's *The Daily Telegraph* put it, "The musicians channel all of their emotion into the music and give performances of such passion and musicality... producing music making of both subtlety and verve."

Maestro Orbelian's ambitious new series of recordings on Delos with the MCO includes Shostakovich's Chamber Symphony and Schnittke's Concerto for Piano and Strings, with Orbelian also at the keyboard (DE 3259); the Tchaikovsky Serenade and The Seasons (DE 3255); Shostakovich Waltzes (DE 3257); Russian Soul (DE 3244); Piazzolla Tangos, with Italian saxophonist Federico Mondelci (DE 3252); and Mozart Adagios (DE 3243).

The release of Orbelian's new recording of Handel arias with the remarkable Polish soprano Ewa Podles (DE 3253) coincides with their return together to Carnegie Hall in



January, 2001, in a program featuring Handel and other Baroque arias. An aria album with Olga Guryakova and an aria album with Vassily Gerello are spring/summer 2001 Delos releases.

Constantine Orbelian is Founder and Music Director of the annual Palaces of St. Petersburg International Festival, a three-week event featuring concerts in many of St. Petersburg's magnificent, lavishly restored palaces. Orbelian also founded Moscow's unique concert series, "Musical Treasures at the Museums of the Kremlin."

Over a 36-year career, **Michael York** has become a household name to theater, film, and television audiences the world over. From Shakespeare's tragically tormented Hamlet to the unflappable Basil Exposition of the Austin Powers films, York is lauded as much for his versatility as for his consummate mastery of the acting craft.

Less known but equally significant is York's work in the recording studio as a one of the most sought-after narrators of audio books. His 50-plus audio credits include *Remains of the Day*, *The Vampire Lestat*, the Delos recording of *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* (DE 3168), *The English Patient* and *Treasure Island*, which earned a Grammy® nomination in 1997.

York has appeared in over 50 films,

including Bob Fosse's Oscar®-winning *Cabaret*, with Liza Minelli and Franco Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet*. He has also worked with Billy Wilder, James Ivory, George Cukor and Sydney Lumet. Recent films include the high-tech thriller *The Omega Code* and the independent film *Borstal Boy*.

York made his Broadway debut in the 1973 world premiere of Tennessee Williams' *Outcry*, and last appeared there in *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* (1993). His television credits include the BBC, French and Australian television, PBS and American network programming, including the 1998 comedy with Whoopi Goldberg, *A Knight in Camelot*.

York was born at Fulmer, Buckinghamshire, England, in 1942, and was graduated from University College, Oxford, with Honors in English. His autobiography, *Accidentally on Purpose*, was published in 1991 and his most recent book, *A Shakespearean Actor Prepares*, co-written with director Adrian Brine, was published in 2000.

With over 60 films to his credit, **Vassily Lanovoy** is one of Russia's most widely-known and distinguished actors. He is best known for his unforgettable performance as Vronsky in the 1967 screen adaptation of Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* directed by Aleksandr Zarkhy, and as Anatoly in the same author's



adaptation of *War and Peace* directed by Sergei Bondarchuk, which won the Academy Award® for Best Foreign Film in 1968.

Lanovoy is also one of Moscow's most popular stage performers and a prominent member of the Vakhtangov Dramatic Theater, where

he has starred in productions of *Turandot* and *The Three Lives of Casanova*. Named People's Artist of the former U.S.S.R, Lanovoy is a professor of dramatic studies at the Shukshin Academy and the recipient of numerous prizes from international film festivals.

For more information about Rachmaninoff's *Aleko*, visit **[www.delosmus.com](http://www.delosmus.com)**, where you will find the complete Pushkin poem, *The Gypsies*, full-length biographies of the singers and narrators, artist photographs and links to other Rachmaninoff sites.

In addition, **[www.delosmus.com](http://www.delosmus.com)** has streaming audio excerpts and information of current releases, details about coming releases, articles about recording technologies used by Delos engineers, catalogs and biographies of Delos exclusive artists, an interview with Delos founder, Amelia Haygood, and more.

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