

Capriccioso Recordings

New Release

James Strauss play's

Tchaikovsky

Flute Concerto (1893)

"World première recording"

James Strauss, flute

Ada Peleg - conductor

Israeli Virtuosi



Tchaikovsky and the flute

James Strauss plays Tchaikovsky

For years, many flutists have heard stories about the existence of a flute concerto by Tchaikovsky. The "**Concertstück**" was composed in 1893, the same year that Tchaikovsky composed the Symphony in B minor, later titled *Pathétique* by his brother Modeste. The last movement, *Adagio lamentoso*, has been considered Tchaikovsky's Requiem; however it may be that the Flute Concerto postdated this great symphony. The flutist James Strauss and the Israeli Virtuosi were poised to make musical history in January 2006 by recording the world premiere of this newly discovered work. Although it lacks armed bandits or secret societies, the story of its discovery by Brazilian flutist James Strauss rings of an Indiana Jones adventure or "The Da Vinci Code." In 1998, Strauss was but 23 years old, just out of college when he began his private studies with the legendary Jean-Pierre Rampal, widely considered to be one of the leading flute players of the 20th century. One day, Rampal told Strauss of the existence of a flute concerto by Tchaikovsky. Rampal was in St. Petersburg in the 1960s and after a concert someone mentioned to him that Tchaikovsky had written a flute concerto. He saw barely a glimpse of the score, and he wasn't allowed to have a copy or even examine it closely. So Strauss set out to find it. In his early research he saw a letter Tchaikovsky had written to a cellist friend, "I have the concert for flute ready in my mind and it will be for the flute of Taffanel," referring to the French flutist Paul Taffanel, the most famous flute player of the day. The letter was dated Oct. 7, 1893. Tchaikovsky died three weeks later, but it confirmed that Tchaikovsky was at least working on a flute concerto before he died. In 1999 Strauss moved to Finland and decided to take advantage of the proximity to St. Petersburg, a five-hour train ride away. Strauss found his way to the house where Tchaikovsky died. It was a run-down neighborhood and the house, in spite of its historical value, was occupied by squatters. Strauss asked the squatters about Tchaikovsky's papers, if the family knew anyone who had any documents that had belonged to him. "They knew of a guy who had some manuscripts who lived not too far from the house, near McDonald's in St. Petersburg," Strauss said, "It was a very weird house. The person showed me a lot of papers and sheet music." There was one sheet in particular that caught Strauss' eye. It was unsigned, but the title was written in the Western alphabet "Concertstück dlya fleyti". They wouldn't let him photograph it, but said that he could make a

copy by hand — for a price. Strauss phoned Finland and told his wife to sell his flute and send him the money immediately via Western Union. He went back to the house with a brick of \$20 bills, \$6,000 in all, and made a copy by hand of the page of notation. "It hurt a lot to sell the flute," Strauss said. "It was only one sheet of paper, and I went back to Finland wondering if I was crazy. But Rampal told me that if you are a true artist, you must take risks. And so I did it." When he got back to Finland, he chased down another rumor that there was a German flute player by the name of Theodor Wateerstrat who had played in the orchestra at a theater in St. Petersburg during Tchaikovsky's time. The search led him to a second-hand music store that had a big stack of Wateerstra's papers. Among them was a manuscript with the same title, "*Concertstück dlya fl.*," as well in the Western alphabet. It, too, was incomplete, but Strauss found it to be an elaboration of the one-page manuscript he had found in St. Petersburg. "It was something that (Tchaikovsky) wrote when he was still a student, but a more recent copy than the paper I spent \$6,000 on," Strauss said. With these two incomplete manuscripts now in hand, Strauss also discovered in the Russian town of Klin where the official Tchaikovsky archives are located, and there he found proof that the two fragments did contain notation by Tchaikovsky: A manuscript written in the composers own hand with the "Concertstück dlya fleyti," again in the Western alphabet, the very same manuscript that Rampal had caught a brief glimpse of in the 1960s. "It was a very short excerpt of the same piece," Strauss said. "I had spent four years searching for this final proof, but now I had some big work on my hands because I only had excerpts, not a full composition. So I took the first piece as a model (Introduction and Allegro) to put together the other parts of the puzzle." For the missing cadenza Strauss substituted a flute solo from Tchaikovsky's opera "Maid of Orleans". "It fit perfectly," he said. "It was just a coincidence, but it felt right." Because he was also missing a second movement for "Concertstück for flute," he went back to Taffanel's famous arrangement of the "Song without words (Chanson sans paroles) op.2 from souvenir of Hapsal. Finally, to fill in the gaps and make the concerto flow better; Strauss himself composed some bars of transitional music. Newly restored, this flute concerto is a wonderful new addition to the romantic flute repertoire. The Concertstück it's published by the Falls House Press Company (www.fallshousepress.com).

James Strauss

Audiences fortunate enough to hear flutist James Strauss in concert know first-hand that they are witnessing something extraordinary. Mr. Strauss is one of those rare musicians who melds technical prowess with a wondrous musical and communicative gift. A flutist with an equal flair for the dramatic, intimacy, sweetness and eloquence, often adding unsuspected, his range of repertoire perfectly reflects the varied facets of his solo, chamber music, or concerto performances. James Strauss is the first Brazilian flutist to ever be conceded a *diplomme de concertiste* by the *Ecole Normale de Musique de Paris*. He was one of very few last disciples of Jean Pierre Rampal. Strauss was laureate with a scholarship by the French government for the *Conservatoire de Paris* and for the *École Normale de Musique* where he studied with Pierre-Yves Artaud, Alain Marion, Geneviève Martigny, Alain Menard and Maurice Pruvot. Mr. Strauss has a special interest in new music and unconventional repertoire, which has led many composers to dedicate works to him including Dedicated to contemporary music, Mr. Strauss gave the world or local premières of works by Nicole Chamberlain, João Linhares, Solfa Carlile, Sean Hickey, Ernani Aguiar, Armand Frydman, Glenn Roger Davis, Ricardo Tacuchian, Philip Czaplowski, Antonio Ribeiro, Dimitri Cervo, Julio Medaglia and many others. He is regularly featured in the international press, as guest on NPR's "Performance Today, Bowed Radio, and Cultura FM" and he was host and performer on the Musical TV show *Musicas que elevam* at the REDE MUNDIAL. The Theodore Presser Company publishes James Strauss' discovery and reconstruction of the "Concertstück for flute" by P.I. Tchaikovsky. Mr. Strauss has been guest soloist with orchestras including: Capriccioso Chamber Ensemble (Finland), Orchestre Symphonique de Cretail (France), Israel Virtuosi, Orchestre Philharmonic de Sibiu (Romania), Oxford Chamber Orchestra (USA), Orquestra Sinfonica do Recife, Orquestra Sinfonica de São José dos Campos, Bachiana Chamber Orchestra, Camerata Florianópolis, Orquestra de Camara UNISINOS, Orquestra de Camara do Theatro São Pedro and many others. He is a guest teacher at the Londrina Music Festival since 2007. Respected for his inspiring teaching, Mr. Strauss has taught master classes and performed recitals for universities and flute societies, such as Miami University (USA), Verões Musicais (Brazil), Londrina Music Festival (Brazil), he teaches privately in São Paulo. For this recording

Mr. Strauss plays a 14 karat golden flute and a wooden flute both provided by POWELL FLUTES.

Israeli Virtuosi

Hailed as Israel's best string team, the Israeli Virtuosi is comprised of the other top ranking Israel Philharmonic principal players and soloists. Under the direction of its Music Director and Conductor Ada Pelleg, the Ensemble has been distinguished for its exceptionally beautiful string sound, the commitment of its players and its consistently high artistic standards. The Israeli Virtuosi's repertoire ranges from the late Baroque to the present. The Ensemble performs regularly at the Haifa International Music Festival and has been recorded for broadcasting. The Ensemble has toured the USA and Europe, including concerts in Baltimore, Philadelphia and London.

Ada Pelleg

Israeli born conductor Ada Pelleg is currently Music Director/Conductor of the Israel String Ensemble, which is comprised of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra's principal players and other top ranking principal players and soloists. Furthermore she acts as Director of the Safed Music Festival, the Haifa Music Center and the Israel International Flute Competition and has been chosen "Woman of the year 2006" by the Israeli Association of Women in Management. Ada Pelleg studied conducting with Henry Mazer, Associate Conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. She was awarded a conducting fellowship to the Aspen Music Festival, a scholarship to study with Frederick Prauznitz at Peabody Conservatory at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, and a fellowship to a special master class with Max Rudolph at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. In addition, she participated in master classes with Charles Bruck, Sergiu Celibidache, Janos Furst, Gustav Meier, Colin Metters and Gennady Rozhdestvensky. In 1987 Ada Pelleg served as Music Director and Conductor of the Columbia International Music Festival and taught composition and music theory at the Frederick College in Maryland. She returned to Israel in 1991 and served as Music Director of the Jezreel Valley Conservatory, taught at Haifa University and published articles in various professional publications. In 1996 she founded the Haifa Music Center. More recently, she has conducted the Israel Chamber Orchestra, the Moscow Symphony Orchestra, the St. Petersburg State Orchestra and the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra.

Israeli Virtuosi – ADA PELLEG

The Israeli Virtuosi (Members of the Israel Philharmonic)

Music Director & Conductor: Ada Pelleg

Violin I Alexander Stark (Principal), Ella Lutzky, Igor Frug, Lena Tishin

Violin II Elyakum Zaltzman (Principal Solo), Shmuel Glazer, Ella Lewis, Vladimir Shmulenson

Viola Miriam Hartman, Evgenya Oren-Malkovsky (Principal), Liora Kosov

Cello Marcel Bergman (Principal), Felix Nemirovsky, Kiril Michanovsky

Double Bass Gabriel Volé (Solo)

Producer: Yuval Carin

Direction: Yuval Carin

Executive director: Ângela Nogueira

Intrumentarium: Powell wooden flute / Brannen Brothers Silver flute N° 686

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Executive producer: Point Comunicação e Marketing

Recording supervision, editing and mastering: Yuval Carin

Recording engineer: Eitan Shamai

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