

Rossini - La Cambiale di Matrimonio (Fasano) [1961]

Written by bluesever

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1. Sinfonia 2. Introduction & Duettino (Norton, Clarina) 3. Cavatina (Mill) 4. Stretta (Norton, Mill, Clarina) 5. Dust (Fanni, Edoardo) 6. Cavatina 7. Duet (Fanni, Slook) & Trio (Fanni, Edoardo, Slook) 8. Aria (Clarina) 9. Duet (Mill, Slook) 10. Recitative & Aria (Fanni) 11. Finale
Fanni - Renata Scotto Clarina - Giovanna Fioroni Edoardo - Nicola Monti Slook - Renato Capecchi Norton - Mario Petri Sir Tobia Mill - Rolando Panerai I Virtuosi di Roma Renato Fasano – conductor Recorded by Mercury in the late summer of 1959 at the Teatro Grande, Brescia

The plot of *La cambiale di matrimonio* (The Bill of Marriage), which Rossini composed when he was just eighteen years old, revolves around the farcical attempts of Tobia Mill, a rich English merchant, to combine business with pleasure by forcing his daughter, the lovely Fanny ('merchandise') to marry Slook, his rich colonial correspondent from America, by means of a bill of exchange. Eventually, it is the gallant Slook himself who persuades Mill to allow Fanny to marry her true love, Edoardo Milfort. ---naxos.com

Rossini's *La cambiale di matrimonio* was his first opera to be performed, premiered in 1810 at the Teatro San Moise in Venice. It ran for thirteen performances, which was not bad in the fast-paced Italian opera business. At the time Rossini was still a student at the Bologna Conservatory and in fact *La cambiale di matrimonio* was his second opera; *Demetro e Polibio*, written for another opera company was not premiered until 1812.

The libretto to *La cambiale* was by the experienced hand of Gaetano Rossi, who wrote the

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librettos for Tancredi and Semiramide. La cambiale isn't quite in that class; it is based on a five-act comedy from 1790 which owes a lot to the comedies of Goldoni. The plot concerns the English merchant, Tobia Mill (Vita Priante), who desires to wed his daughter to a Canadian business contact Slook (Giulio Mastrototaro) very much as a business transaction. The daughter Fanny (Julija Samsonova) is in love with Eduardo Milfort (Daniele Zanfardino). The plot is helped along by Mill's clerk Norton (Tomasz Wija) and the maid Clarina (Francesca Russo Ermolli). Needless to say all ends happily with Slook returning home disappointed.

La cambiale di matrimonio has not been that frequently on disc; not that the work is lacking in the necessary qualities but probably more because of the extensive dialogue – there is a great deal of it. In fact, in another composer's hands it could have become little more than a comic play with songs. Instead Rossini creates a series of brilliant ensembles which certainly make the piece worth hearing.

There are only four solo numbers - arias for Fanny and Clarina, entrance Cavatinas for Mill and for Slook. As was to become his wont in his serious operas, Rossini drives the plot through a series of duets, trios and ensembles with the first of his famous multi-part, dramatic finales.
---Robert Hugill, www.musicweb-international.com

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