Gioachino Rossini – Guglielmo Tell (Chailly) [1986]

CD1 *1. Rossini: William Tell - Overture 12:21 2. Act 1 - "E il ciel seren, sereno il giorno" Ambrosian Opera Chorus 4:35 3. Act 1 - "Il piccol legno ascendi" Cesar Antonio Suarez 5:08 4. Act 1 - "Oh! quale alta d'intorno" - "Pastori intorno ergete il canto!" Della Jones 6:37 5. Act 1 - "Al fremer del torrente" Ambrosian Opera Chorus 2:38 6. Act 1 - "Contro l'ardor del giorno" Sherrill Milnes 1:06 7. Act 1 - "Il mio giuro egli disse" Luciano Pavarotti 3:14 8. Act 1 - "Arresta! Qual dolor" Sherrill Milnes 9:02 9. Act 1 - Il sol che intorno splende Elizabeth Connell 2:17 10. Act 1 - Oh smania! Luciano Pavarotti 4:08 11. Act 1 - Delle antiche virtudi l'esempio rinnovate John Tomlinson 3:11 12. Act 1 - "Cinto il crine di bei fiori" Ambrosian Opera Chorus 4:25 13. Act 1 - Passo a sei The National Philharmonic Orchestra 5:23 14. Act 1 - "Gloria e onore al giovinetto" Della Jones 3:55* CD2 *1. Act 1 - "Egro e tremante" Della Jones 3:52 2. Act 1 - "Nume pietoso" Piero de Palma 3:13 3. Act 1 - "Che sento, ohimè!" Della Jones 2:48 4. Act 1 - "Ciò ch'ei fece John Tomlinson 4:08 5. Act 2 - "Qual silvestre metro intorno" Ambrosian Opera Chorus 4:09 6. Act 2 - "S'allontanano alfine!" Mirella Freni 3:28 7. Act 2 - "Selva opaca, deserta brughiera" Mirella Freni 5:36 8. Act 2 - "Se il mio giunger t'oltraggia" Luciano Pavarotti 3:02 9. Act 2 - "Tutto apprendi, o sventurato" Mirella Freni 10:28 10. Act 2 - "Alcun vien...Separiamci" Luciano Pavarotti 2:58 11. Act 2 - "Allor che scorre de'forti il sangue" Sherrill Milnes 11:13 12. Act 2 - "Confuso da quel bosco" - "Con ardor richiese il cor" Sherrill Milnes 4:09 13. Act 2 - "Domo, o ciel, da un stranier" Sherrill Milnes 4:50 14. Act 2 - "De'prodi ascolta, è già compiuto il patto" Nicolai Ghiaurov 2:48 15. Act 2 - "La valanga che volve" Sherrill Milnes 3:21 16. Act 2 - "Giuriam, giuriam pei nostri danni" Sherrill Milnes 3:26*
Mirella Freni (Soprano) Piero de Palma (Tenor) Sherrill Milnes (Baritone) Luciano Pavarotti (Tenor) Elizabeth Connell (Soprano) Ferruccio Mazzoli (Bass), Nicolai Ghiaurov (Baritone) Della Jones (Mezzo Soprano) John Tomlinson (Bass) Richard Van Allan (Bass) John Noble (Tenor) Ambrosian Opera Chorus National Philharmonic Orchestra Riccardo Chailly - conductor, 1979

William Tell, best known for its overture, which was used as the Lone Ranger's theme song, was Rossini's final opera, and a magnificent, four-hour singfest it is. Tell is a baritone role, handsomely sung here by Sherrill Milnes, and the heroine is Matilde, who, as performed by Mirella Freni, has every bel canto trick in her repertoire and keeps her cool even during some

wickedly fast and high music. But the most challenging role--and the reason the opera is rarely performed--is for the tenor, Arnold, who must sing 2 high C-sharps, 28 high Cs, and an undisclosed number of Bs and B-flats. And the role is as long and expressive as it is high. This is, arguably, Pavarotti's greatest perfomance on discs (he once said it was his best recording) and is a must for all opera lovers to boot. ---Robert Levine, amazon.com

Guglielmo Tell, originally Guillaume Tell as Gioachino Rossini's second French opera, premiered on August 3, 1829, at the Paris Opéra. Although Rossini composed works in other genres after 1829, Guglielmo Tell was his last opera. As director of Paris' Théâtre Italien, Rossini led this organization to great heights; his goal was to compose French operas, the greatest of which came to be his Le comte Ory (1828) and Guillaume Tell. Personal illness, political troubles, and Meyerbeer's ascent in the world of French opera in the early 1830s possibly conspired to bring about Rossini's retirement as an opera composer. Etienne de Jouy, Hippolyte Louis-Florent Bis, and Armand Marrast collaborated on the libretto for Rossini's Guglielmo Tell, basing it on Friedrich von Schiller's play Wilhelm Tell (1804). Received well by the contemporary Parisian public and press, Guglielmo Tell remains today a popular work.

Although Guglielmo Tell was originally a French opera, it was translated into Italian in the early 1830s, making it accessible to Italian audiences. After the Italian premiere of Guglielmo Tell in Lucca in 1831, the Italian version was more frequently performed than the original French one.

A cello solo begins the overture to Guglielmo Tell, in a sectional arrangement typical of Rossini's overtures. Trumpet fanfares introduce the final section of the overture, which features a galloping tune, perhaps Rossini's most famous music, stated first by the violins, and adding sections of the orchestra in a crescendo to the end of the overture. After the overture a lilting chorus of villagers sets a pastoral scene with a gracefully simple instrumental tune supported by a perfect fifth drone in the horns. The 6/8 time, simple harp accompaniment, and modified strophic form and arrangement of the fisherman's song ("Il piccol legno ascendi o timida donzella") reinforces this opening pastoral image. The finale of Act One virtually enacts the plot's festivities, with a chorus of young people ("Cinto il crine di bei fiori"), a chorus of villagers ("Gloria, onore al giovinetto" and the chorus "Di destrezza il premio ottiene"), diagetic dance music, and pantomime music accompanying an archery competition. The chorus of villagers returns in a stormy minor mode supplication for Leuthold ("Nume pietoso, Dio di bontà!"). A lengthy, large ensemble passage for soloists and choruses closes the act. The extent to which Rossini relied on the chorus in Guglielmo Tell is evident in Act Two, which begins with a chorus of huntsmen ("Qual silvestre metro intorno"), accompanied by a bombastic orchestra featuring

prominent horn motifs, and which is extended by choruses of men of the Swiss cantons, and also in Act Three, in which various groups of soldiers and Swiss people occupy a central position in triumphant choruses ("Gloria al poter supremo!"). Arnoldo's recitative and aria at the beginning of Act Four ("Non mi lasciare, o speme di vendetta"/"O muto asil del pianto") is a fine example of Rossini's treatment of this operatic convention, an expressive bel canto vocal idiom forming the basis for the ternary form aria.

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