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Opera may not have been of central importance to Rachmaninov's long and diverse creative life but, relatively early in his career, he completed two one-act operas. The intense psychological study *The Miserly Knight* takes as its source of inspiration a tragic tale by Pushkin. *Francesca da Rimini* is based on an episode at the end of *Canto V* of Dante's *Inferno*. The earlier *Aleko*, based on a tale of love and jealousy in a gypsy camp, won the composer the gold medal for composition at the Moscow Conservatory in 1892. All three works demonstrate Rachmaninov's gift for yearning melodies, as well as his mastery of orchestral colour and drama.

Sergey  
**RACHMANINOV**

(1873–1943)

**Aleko**

Zemfira ..... Mariana Zvetkova, Soprano  
 Old Woman ..... Andreana Nikolova, Mezzo-Soprano  
 Young Gypsy ..... Boiko Zvetanov, Tenor  
 Aleko ..... Alexander Tekeliev, Bass-Baritone  
 Old Gypsy ..... Peter Naydenov, Bass

**The Miserly Knight**

Albert ..... Boiko Zvetanov, Tenor  
 Duke ..... Niko Isakov, Baritone  
 Baron ..... Plamen Beykov, Bass

**Francesca da Rimini**

Francesca ..... Mariana Zvetkova, Soprano  
 Paolo ..... Boiko Zvetanov, Tenor  
 Lanceotto ..... Peter Naydenov, Bass

**Sofia National Opera Chorus and Orchestra • Nayden Todorov**

1–13 Aleko (excerpts)

14–19 The Miserly Knight  
(excerpts)20–32 Francesca da Rimini  
(excerpts)

Recorded in the National Palace of Culture, Sofia, Bulgaria, from 16th to 27th May, 2005.

Producer: Nayden Todorov • Engineer: Ivailo Janev • Editors: Rumania Stoyanova and Minko Krastev

Booklet Notes: Keith Anderson • Please see the booklet for a detailed track list • Editions: MUZYKA (Moscow)

Cover Picture: *The figures of Francesca and Paolo appear to Dante and Virgil (Illustration of Dante's Inferno, Canto V) by Ary Scheffer (1795–1858) (Louvre, Paris, France / Bridgeman Art Library)*