

OPERA EXPLAINED

This series introduces, in words and music, the plot and background of major operas. Using the principal themes and arias, taken from the Naxos recording of the complete work, Thomson Smillie is informative yet entertaining, enabling the listener to get more from this remarkable art form.

An Introduction to...

ROSSINI

Tancredi

written by Thomson Smillie
narrated by David Timson

Rossini's comic operas, like *The Barber of Seville*, are better known than his tragedies though he wrote in fact many more tragedies than comedies. One of them, his last, *William Tell*, is actually credited with launching the whole age of *Grand Opéra*. *Tancredi* is an early work – indeed his first smash hit – and it established his international fame. It has all the youthful verve of the comedies allied to a sure dramatic sense, and several of the arias, including the famous 'Di tanti palpiti', are magnificent examples of the sort of virtuoso vocal writing that earns the title *bel canto*: 'beautiful singing', first and last.

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