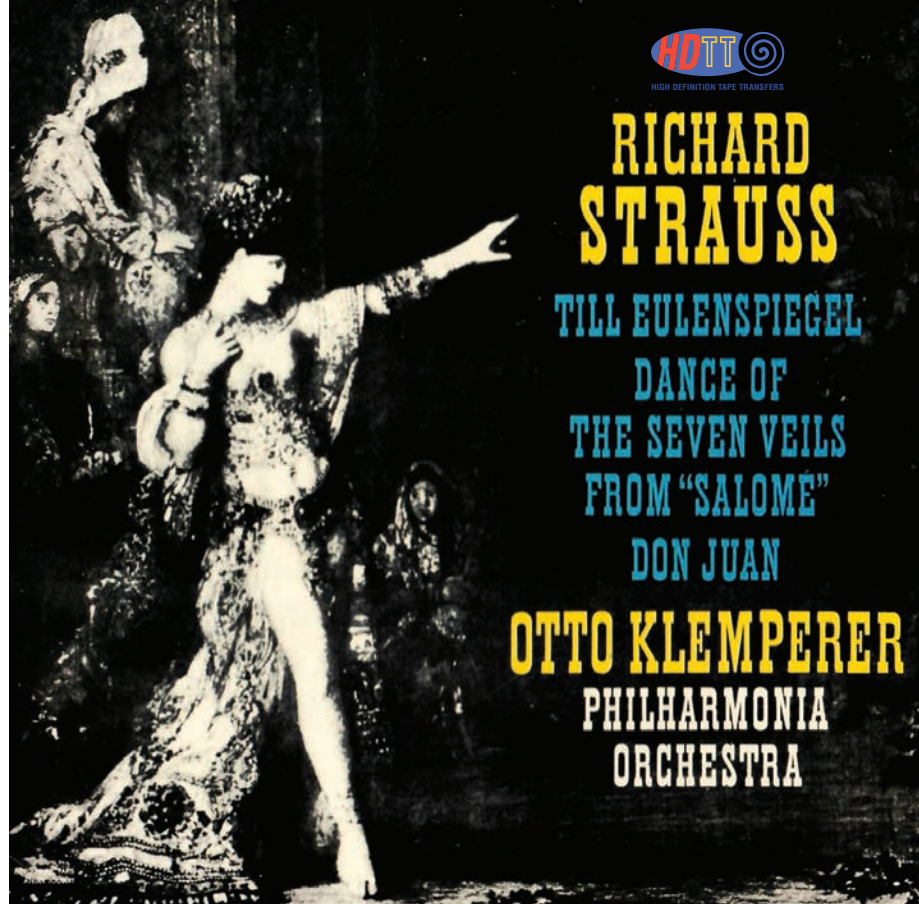


recognizable in various adaptations, just as Strauss' musical depiction in the rondo theme is apparent throughout the musical compositions.

The musical form of Till Eulenspiegel is a large-scale rondo. By identifying the character of Till with the rondo theme, Strauss found a way to demonstrate the recalcitrant nature of the protagonist and also to unify the work. After a brief introduction, often interpreted as an expression of "once upon a time," Strauss states the theme at the very beginning in a bravura passage for horn. The theme recurs between episodes of the rondo, and it is in those episodes that Till Eulenspiegel has his adventures. In terms of musical structure, the rondo-episodes provide contrast and, as they depart further from the main idea, they also set the stage for the return of the familiar rondo theme. The subsequent episodes show Till at odds with the peasants, railing at preachers, wooing a woman and being rejected by her, and making fun of the intelligentsia. Within these sections, Strauss allowed his theme for Till to return in various guises, yet still remain recognizable. Ultimately, Till finds himself brought before judges, who review his career and sentence him to death. Even then Till cannot depart without a mocking gesture, and the piece ends with his theme fully transformed with all its permutations exhausted.

Till Eulenspiegel contains some of Strauss' most brilliant orchestration and makes use of various instruments, including the clarinet in D. Strauss approached the orchestration of this work with a kaleidoscopic hand, often abruptly shifting between instrumental groups. This gives the work its appealing color and also makes it a virtuoso piece for orchestra. In writing program music, Strauss chose a still-new approach to composition and aligned himself with the avant-garde. His brilliantly orchestrated score with its virtuosic instrumentation and colorful dissonances showed Strauss as a modernist. It remains a popular concert piece and one of Strauss' best-known compositions.



HD TT 
HIGH DEFINITION TAPE TRANSFERS

**RICHARD
STRAUSS**

TILL EULENSPIEGEL

**DANCE OF
THE SEVEN VEILS
FROM "SALOME"**

DON JUAN

OTTO KLEMPERER

**PHILHARMONIA
ORCHESTRA**

Don Juan (1888) stands out among Strauss' early tone poems for its almost perfect structure and concise design. Taking Nikolaus Lenau's fragmentary play of the same title as his starting point, Strauss fashioned a tone poem which would convey the story of the legendary inveterate womanizer. The connection with Lenau's version of the story is confirmed by the quotation of text as an incipit in the score.

Strauss quickly captures the impetuous nature of Don Juan in the soaring theme which opens the piece. While Strauss did not allow a narrative description to be printed at the premiere (as was then often the case with program music), the story is easy enough to follow. Taking the more lyrical sections as depictions of various women, one after another, one hears the exuberant opening theme that occurs between them, and which opens the work, as Don Juan's own. This theme intensifies and becomes more ardent throughout until, near the end, it dissolves into the stormy music associated with the Commendatore, the father of a woman Don Juan had seduced. As in Mozart's similarly themed opera Don Giovanni (1787), the Don meets his end at the hands of the Commendatore. In Strauss' treatment, however, the spirit of Don Juan emerges even after his defeat.

Strauss himself conducted the premiere of the work in fall 1889, and it was well received from the start. In its exceedingly vivid orchestration, use of short motives, and intense lyricism, Don Juan provides a striking and enduring encapsulation of Strauss' musical language.

Richard Strauss' opera Salome stirred wide controversy when it was premiered in 1905, both for the advanced nature of its music and for its decadent story line. Salome's seductive dance was certainly one of the more notorious scenes from this convention-shattering work. In the opera it comes after Salome, stepdaughter of King Herod, is rebuffed by John the Baptist,

who is held in the King's dungeons. Angered by the rejection, Salome agrees to dance for Herod on the condition that he grant her wish, which turns out to be the presentation to her of John the Baptist's head on a silver platter. After her dance she is granted her wish, but is later sentenced to death by Herod.

The dance opens in a frenzied mood, the music propelled by anxious drums and tambourine, but the tempo slows quickly and a sinister waltz rhythm is presented. The mood is exotic, the oboe singing Eastern-flavored music, with the strings and tambourine soon joining in to impart a dreamy, yet seductive character. Gradually, the music becomes more animated, more sensual, and more sinister, the whole writhing in a colorful decadence, in a deliciously twisted sense of festivity. The music turns frenzied and utterly fanatical in its driving rhythms as it reaches its powerful climax, after which it relaxes for a brief moment, before rushing toward an ambivalent though colorful ending.

One of Strauss' most popular symphonic poems is Till Eulenspiegel, a single-movement work for orchestra. It was composed between 1894 and 1895, shortly after the premiere and critical debacle of his first opera Guntram. In choosing the popular tale of Till Eulenspiegel as the basis for the tone poem, Strauss found an effective vehicle for responding to his critics, who treated his first opera unfavorably.

The character of Till Eulenspiegel is a chronic prankster, whose unrelenting sense of the sardonic continually challenges his peers and lands him in trouble. Till would never learn from his mistakes and constantly thumbed his nose at convention and any criticism. The tone poem is based on a German folktale that has appeared in various versions since its first appearance in the fourteenth century. Some have found a historical basis for the character, but he is best understood as a kind of folk hero who challenges the establishment. While no single source contains all the adventures of Till Eulenspiegel, the character is

Richard Strauss Music

Otto Klemperer Philharmonia Orchestra

1 Symphonic Poem Don Juan, Op. 20 9:00

2 Dance Of The Seven Veils From Salome 15:02

3 Symphonic Poem Till Eulenspiegel's Lustige Streiche, Op. 28 17:00

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