



Tchaikovsky's Eugene Onegin: A Short Guide to a Great Opera (Great Operas)

By Michael Steen

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The great Russian poet Pushkin's novel in verse tells the story of Tatyana, a love-struck country girl who unwisely wrote to the arrogant city-slicker Yevgeny Onegin professing her love. The tale resonated with Tchaikovsky when he found himself callously dismissing the suit of a student who similarly approached him out of the blue: within weeks, Tchaikovsky then married her! It was a disastrous decision; except that it inspired him to write his great opera. Onegin's future was different. Having shot his best friend, he returns to find that the naïve girl he rejected is now a great lady, married to a distinguished general. He is passionately in love, but it is too late. The opera includes Tatyana's emotional letter scene, as well the reckless and tragic duel, and the country house dance and the great ball in St Petersburg give Tchaikovsky the opportunity to provide us with some truly memorable dances such as the waltz, mazurka, and polonaise. Written by Michael Steen, author of the acclaimed *The Lives and Times of the Great Composers*, 'Short Guides to Great Operas' are concise, entertaining and easy to read books about opera. Each is an opera guide packed with useful information and informed opinion, helping to make you a truly knowledgeable opera-goer, and so maximising your enjoyment of a great musical experience.

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- Rank: #1571228 in eBooks
- Published on: 2012-05-31
- Released on: 2012-05-31
- Format: Kindle eBook



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