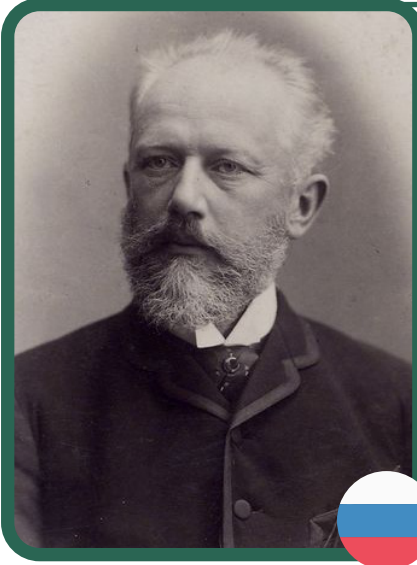




COMPOSER BIOGRAPHY

**PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY**

BORN: May 7, 1840

ERA/STYLE: Romantic

DIED: November 6, 1893

HOMETOWN: Votkinsk, Russia

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky was born in Russia in 1840. He started to study music at the age of 5 and soon revealed his amazing musical talents. Although his parents loved music, they did not expect him to have a musical career. They wanted him to become a lawyer. Tchaikovsky graduated from law school when he was 19 and went to work for the government. When he was 22 he decided to enter the St. Petersburg

Conservatory where he began to study music seriously.

In 1866, Tchaikovsky moved permanently to Moscow where he accepted a teaching position at the Moscow Conservatory. It was there that his first symphonies and other shorter works were created. In addition to composing and teaching, he also wrote about music and was a music critic for a Moscow paper. A wealthy widow, Mrs. Nadezhda von Meck, was especially taken with Tchaikovsky's music. She paid him large sums of money to concentrate on composing, and he resigned from the Moscow Conservatory in October 1878. He worked for Mrs. Nadezhda von Meck for 13 years. One of his most popular works, the Fourth Symphony, was dedicated to her.

Tchaikovsky also became a great conductor. After a concert tour of Europe, he visited the United States, where he conducted at the dedication of Carnegie Hall in New York City. After a successful concert tour of six American cities, he returned home to Russia to compose his famous ballet, *The Nutcracker*.

Many of Tchaikovsky's works are the most popular classical pieces of today, including the opera *Eugene Onegin*; the ballets *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker*, and *The Sleeping Beauty*; the overtures *Romeo and Juliet* and *1812 Overture*; and his First and Sixth Symphonies.