

## **NOCH' PERED ROZHDESTVOM**

(Christmas Eve)

Rimsky-Korsakov

Solokha, a witch, has taken a fancy to the elderly Cossak Chub, but is greatly hampered by her son Vakula's courtship of Oxana, the Cossak's daughter. Anticipating that during Chub's visit to the sacristan there will be a meeting between the lovers, Solokha arranges with the Devil, whose ire has been aroused by a caricature drawn by Vakula on the wall of the village church, to steal the moon and stars. In the darkness Chub, travelling in a circle, arrives back home and is refused admittance by Vakula, who imagines him to be a rival. Meanwhile, Oxana accepts Vakula on condition that he will secure for her a pair of the Empress's shoes. Nothing daunted, Vakula seeks the Imperial Presence, and is duly rewarded, first with the shoes, and then by his lady's favour.