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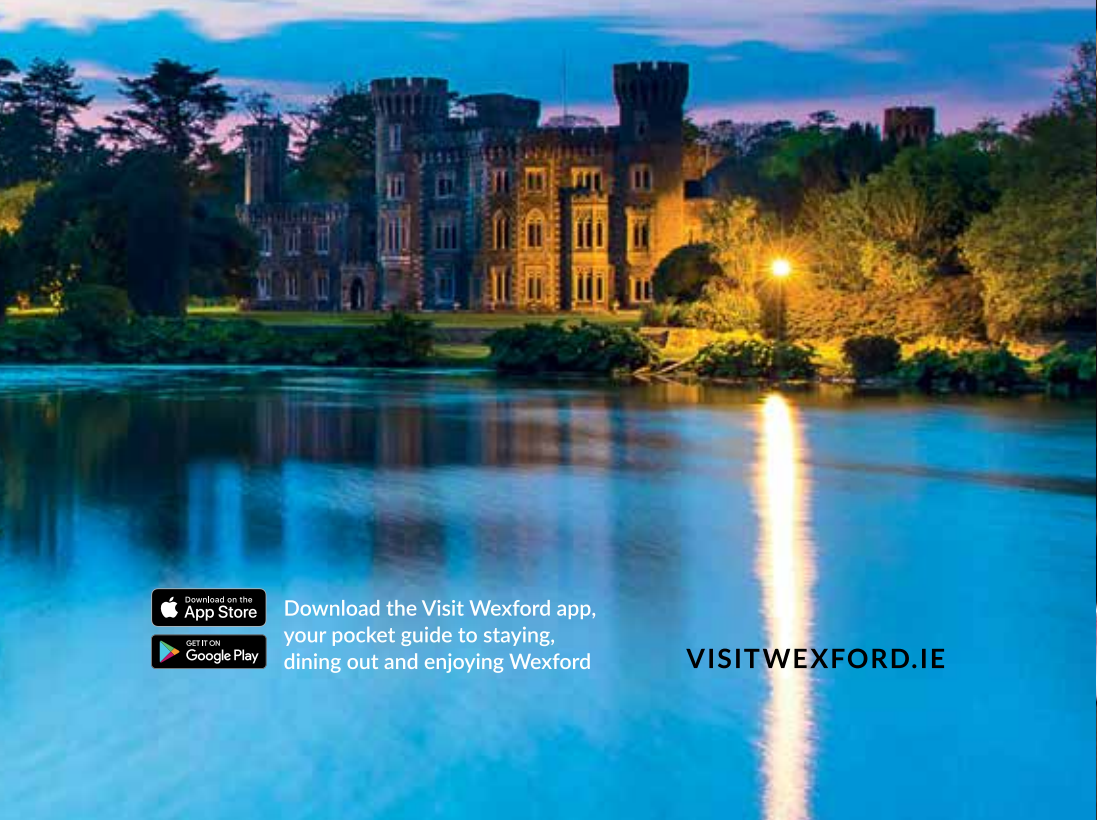
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Welcome to Wexford and to the 71st Wexford Opera Festival for which our Artistic Director Rosetta Cucchi has assembled a magical and musical feast to welcome all our supporters and patrons back to what will be our first 'real' Festival since 2019. Covid restrictions in 2020 and 2021 saw us forced to put on a digital festival in 2020 and allowed a live if somewhat reduced Festival in 2021 so this year we are thrilled to be returning with a full Wexford Festival with three fully staged operas, concerts, pocket operas, lunchtime recitals and of course Pop-up events around Wexford town. The people of Wexford along with all of us who work to create this wonderful Festival will be so pleased to welcome back old friends and make new ones over these seventeen nights. Friends parties have resumed and I am happy to say that the Antique Fair will take place once again. Pubs, cafés and restaurants will be buzzing with that Festival feel and there will be magic and music in the air. Over the past year we have been celebrating 70 years of WFO, from its beginnings

as the idea of Dr Tom Walsh to stage an international opera festival in Wexford town to the professional productions of today, performed in the magnificent surroundings of the National Opera House. There have been exhibitions, reminiscences, a video archive on our website compiled as a labour of love by former Chairman Ger Lawlor, a book on the history of the Festival



Photo: ©2022 Ger Lawlor

MARY KELLY
Chairwoman

FROM THE **CHAIRWOMAN**

by board member Karina Daly and many more events. Topping off our celebratory year were four wonderful international concerts performed for us by some of our most illustrious soprano alumni of Wexford, Eleonora Buratto, Mariangela Sicilia, Angela Meade and Ermonela Jaho, and concluding with an orchestral concert in the National Concert Hall conducted by Michele Mariotti who also conducted at Wexford (*Don Gregorio*, 2006). All of these stars had many happy memories of Wexford and were happy to act as ambassadors for us throughout the world. Everyone who attended was delighted with the concerts and proud to be associated with Wexford.

We move into our eighth decade confident in our past and hopeful for the future. Our ability to identify overlooked operatic works and breathe new life into them, to find promising young singers and artists at the beginning of their careers and showcase their talents in imaginative productions remains strong; added to which we are supporting new work and young composers and are encouraging and showcasing young Irish talent through our Wexford Factory.

We are working hard to develop new and more diverse audiences and to show people that opera as an art form is for everybody by taking it to schools and care homes in the first instance and through streaming and social media.

Of course it is not all plain sailing. Opera is an expensive art form to produce and to produce opera at the quality which Wexford aspires to is extremely expensive. It is only through the generosity of our funders, sponsors and patrons that we can continue to put on a Festival every year. I would like to thank each and every one of our supporters from individual Friends and Benefactors to commercial sponsors and public funders for their continued support for WFO. Your support is hugely appreciated. A particular word of thanks must go to The Arts Council for their continued support and belief in Wexford as a key part of the arts infrastructure in Ireland.

I would like to thank our incredibly hardworking and loyal staff, led by Randall Shannon and Rosetta Cucchi, who give their all to make WFO a truly enjoyable and memorable event for you, our patrons. Huge thanks are due to our wonderful team of Volunteers without whom we simply could not go on and who create the welcoming atmosphere that makes Wexford. A final word of thanks to my fellow Board members who give of their time and expertise so generously throughout the year.

I hope you enjoy our 71st Wexford Opera Festival, *Magic and Music*, and I look forward to meeting you at the door of the Opera House or somewhere around Wexford town over the next few weeks.

MARY KELLY

Dear Friends,

I would like to think that the work we have done over the past two years has set the stage for a 2022 that will finally see the return of our Festival in its full capacity.

As I always say, an artistic director is like a cook, she/he puts together different ingredients to make a superfine recipe. This year there is a multitude of ingredients of the highest quality: four full-stage operas, two pocket operas, a Wexford new commission, a new Artist-in-Residence, many concerts and lectures, and of course the return of the very popular pop-up events.

We welcome a new group of young artists into Wexford Factory, which this year is expanded to include an exciting new course for young repetiteurs. This was a key step for the Factory, as I believe it is the duty of every organisation that creates culture, to train, grow and nurture new talents across the arts. If we ourselves had not had this help, would we be here today?

Probably not.

It is for this reason that your friendship and your support of Wexford Festival Opera are so vital. For it is only with your continued and greatly valued support that we can dare to dream of, and realise, exciting projects like this.

So let us hold hands and let the music and opera pervade our hearts.

Yours,
ROSETTA

A NEW LIFE



Keep Discovering



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WELCOME

Like Mary and Rosetta, I'm pleased to welcome you to the 71st Wexford Festival Opera. It has been a challenging couple of years, and we now enter a post-pandemic world which brings many unknowns and through which we are determined to forge ahead to ever greater heights.

Wexford Opera Festival is an extraordinary achievement, described by Colm Tóibín as one of Ireland's great miracles, brought about by the imagination, commitment and determination of many people over many years and sustained by major funders, primarily The Arts Council, and also Wexford County Council and Fáilte Ireland, together with a range of sponsors, donors and the Friends of Wexford Festival Opera.

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I write this in the afterglow of Wexford Festival Opera receiving the 'Judges Special Recognition Award' at the 2022 Business to Arts Awards. It's always good to receive any award but this is particularly important because it recognises the close relationships we have fostered with our commercial sponsors. We greatly value the friendships we have established with our many supporters and encourage you to look at the Development pages of this programme and find a way in which we might become closer.

We are delighted to present you with the Festival laid out in these pages and invite you to immerse yourselves in the Wexford Experience.

RANDALL



Photo: ©2021 Mark Stedman

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CONTACT DETAILS

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Tel: +353 53 912 2400



WFO 2021
Edmea by Alfredo Catalani





LA TEMPESTA

by Fromental Halévy

Libretto by Eugène Scribe

Adapted in Italian by Pietro Giannone

Grand-Opéra
in Three Acts,
with a Prologue

KINDLY SUPPORTED BY BRENDA & LOCHLANN QUINN

A co-production with Teatro Coccia, Novara

Nikolay Zemlianskikh* | Prospero

Hila Baggio | Miranda

Giorgi Manoshvili* | Calibano

Giulio Pelligra | Fernando

Jade Phoenix | Ariele

Rory Musgrave | Alonso

Richard Shaffrey* | Antonio

Gianluca Moro | Stefano

Emma Jüngling | Sicorace

Dan D'Souza | Trinculo

Francesco Cilluffo | Conductor

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*WEXFORD FACTORY ARTIST

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Anna Laura Miszerak | Assistant Director

Daisy Long | Associate Lighting Designer

Emma Doyle | Stage Manager

Carmen Santoro | Répétiteur

Elizabeth Drwal | English surtitles translation & Surtitles operator

Editing by **CMT-Marco Calderara, Trecate (NO)**

Edition supported by the **Maria Björnson Memorial Fund**

FULLY-STAGED PRODUCTION

Sung in Italian with English surtitles

Friday 21 October | 8 pm
Monday 24 October | 8 pm
Saturday 29 October | 8 pm
Thursday 3 November | 8 pm

O'REILLY THEATRE
NATIONAL OPERA HOUSE

NAMES & DATES

LITERARY SOURCE

William Shakespeare's
The Tempest
(Whitehall Palace, 1611)

FIRST PERFORMANCE

Her Majesty's Theatre
London, 6 June 1850

FIRST CONDUCTOR

Michael William Balfe

FIRST CAST

Filippo Coletti (*Prospero*)
Henriette Sontag (*Miranda*)
Luigi Lablache (*Calibano*)
Carlotta Grisi (*Ariel*)

HALÉVY @ WFO

Never performed before

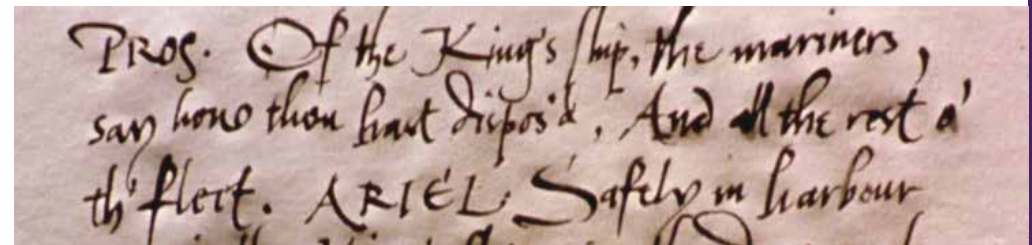
LA TEMPESTA IN 1 MINUTE



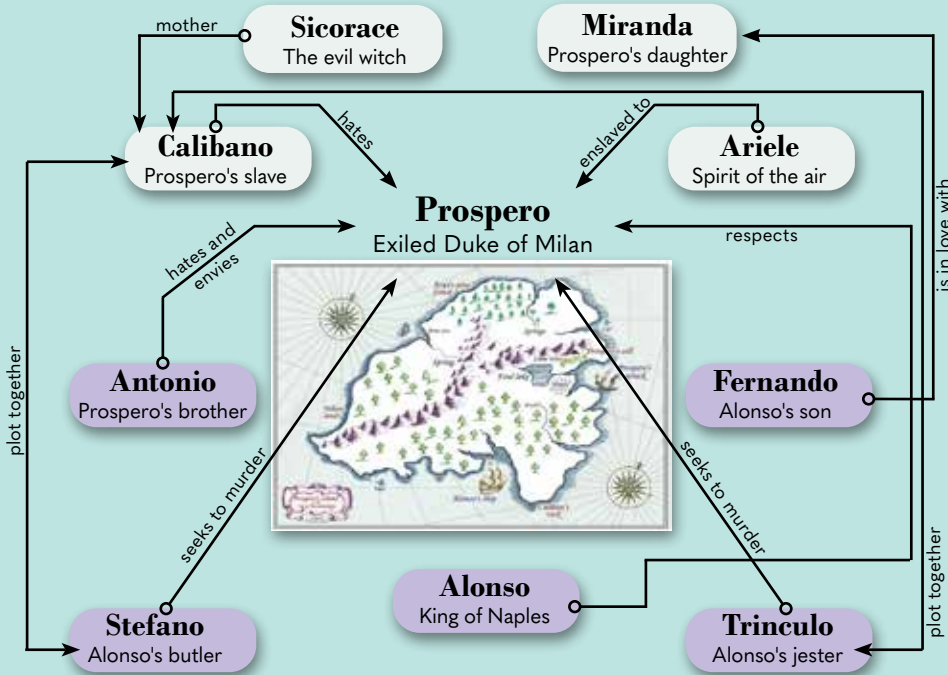
Luigi Lablache as Calibano
Print (1850) - Gallica Digital Gallery

Fromental Halévy's *La tempesta* is among the most intriguing of many half-forgotten adaptations, a work in which several national traditions come together: the creators of one of the most famous French *grand-opéras* of the 19th century take on Italian tradition in London — and appropriate Shakespeare in his own city. Adding to that mix was the then recent memory of Mendelssohn having contemplated a *Tempest* opera for London. But it was Halévy, making a rare excursion away from the Parisian theatres where he was a long-standing fixture, who gave London *La tempesta*, premiered at Her Majesty's Theatre in 1850.

Even though the premiere was judged a success, *La tempesta* soon disappeared from sight, and that despite the high pedigree of its creators. Its libretto (in an Italian adaptation by Pietro Giannone) was by none other than Eugène Scribe, the great wordsmith behind many of the 19th century's most successful operas. Halévy himself — composer of some 40 operas — is a fascinating figure now remembered mainly for *La Juive*, the only one of his *grand-opéras* still heard regularly today. Even Wagner admired him, sparing him the anti-Semitic abuse he directed at Meyerbeer and Mendelssohn. Through the marriage of his daughter Geneviève, Halévy became Georges Bizet's father-in-law, and it was left to Bizet to complete Halévy's last opera, *Noè*, posthumously. As for Geneviève, she was the inspiration for two characters in Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu*. There are many layers of memory here.



LA TEMPESTA AT A GLANCE



WHEN

In an unspecified time

WHO

WHERE

A magic island,
probably in the
Mediterranean

THE STORY

ANTEFACT

Prospero, Duke of Milan, has been treacherously dethroned by his brother, Antonio, with the connivance of Alonso, King of Naples, and, with his infant daughter Miranda, has been hurried aboard a frail boat many miles at sea. He has, however, been safely carried to an island, inhabited by Siorace, an evil-minded witch, and her son, the monstrous Calibano. Prospero, versed in magic lore, delivers, from the bondage of Siorace, a beautiful spirit, Ariel; he imprisons the witch herself in a rock and reduces to slavery Calibano.

PROLOGUE

Many years have elapsed. A ship is carrying the usurpers Antonio and Alonso, with Fernando, Alonso's son, and their suite. A tempest, provoked by Ariel and his Spirits, wreck the vessel. All aboard are cast ashore, where they are separated.

ACT ONE

Prospero tells the lonely Miranda all the secrets of the island. Calibano tries to move him and Miranda to free him and his mother, but they are inflexible. Fernando, seeking for a shelter, meets Miranda and falls in love with her.

ACT TWO

Siorace, in the meantime, orders Calibano from the rock to gather a bunch of magic flowers, which will grant three wishes to the possessor. Calibano obeys, but he then refuses to deliver the flowers to his mother. His first wish is that Ariel, whose power he fears, should be buried in a tree; his next is that Miranda, with whom he is in love, can fall asleep for a quarter of an hour. He then meets the crew of the ship, but he gets drunk with the liquor they give him and falls asleep in turn.

ACT THREE

Alonso and Antonio, who, in their adversity, repent of their past misdeeds, are led into the presence of Prospero. While Calibano is still unconscious, Prospero has freed Ariel from Calibano's spell and dispatches him in search of his daughter. Miranda, meanwhile, awakes from the magic trance, and seizes the enchanted flowers from the drunk Calibano. She flees and arrives at the rock in which Siorace is penned up. The witch advises her to kill Fernando, describing the young man as a desperate enemy. Miranda, in a struggle of filial affection, attempts to stab Fernando, but he reacts on time and disarms her. Meantime, Prospero and Ariel, Alonso, Antonio and their followers arrive; all parties are happily reconciled; Ariel and his kindred spirits are set free from control; Calibano is left as sole possessor of the Island whilst they all embark for Italy.





FLORA WILLSON

OVERSHADOWED BY HIS OWN PERFECTION?

BICCI DI LORENZO

St Nicholas of Bari Banishing the Storm

Tempera and gliding on panel, 1433-35

Photo: Wikimedia Commons

**ÉTIENNE CARJAT****A Caricature of Fromental Halévy**

Photo: Gallica Digital Library

Fromental Halévy does not usually feature in this glittering roster. In fact, even opera aficionados may struggle to place him, beyond perhaps a vague recollection of his most famous work: the five-act behemoth *La Juive*, which was a huge success in mid 19th century Paris, though it is rarely staged today. Yet Halévy wrote more than 30 operas in a career that spanned roughly the same number of years. What's more, those works were produced at all three of 19th-century Paris's celebrated opera houses — the Opéra, the Opéra-Comique and the Théâtre Italien — and were performed to acclaim by some of the era's finest singers.

Born in 1799 in Paris to a Jewish scholar from Bavaria and his French wife, Halévy was a star pupil at school. After showing early musical promise, he

enrolled at nine years old at the hallowed Paris Conservatoire. By 15, he was teaching there himself; and in 1819, aged 20, following studies with Luigi Cherubini, he won the institution's prestigious *Prix de Rome for composition*. ('As soon as you cross the Alps, French morals disappear', he marvelled on his prize trip, which took him not only to Rome but also to Vienna, where he visited Beethoven.) On his return to Paris, Halévy began producing one-act operas — but the French capital

Genius, trailblazer, master, icon: certain opera composers have long attracted fever-pitched fervour from commentators keen to praise new paths taken, new pinnacles reached and new soundworlds conjured. They are the composers whose works remain the mainstay of opera houses around the world, still regularly staged decades or centuries after they were first produced. Their names are familiar — from Handel and Mozart to Rossini, Verdi to Wagner, Puccini to Tchaikovsky and Bizet (and others besides).

was full of aspiring opera composers and opportunities for staging works by unknowns were few and far between. It thus took seven years for him to see one of his works performed (an *opéra comique*, *L'Artisan*) and another two attempts before he finally scored a success — with another *opéra comique*, *La Dilettante d'Avignon*, in 1829.

It was during the 1830s, though, that Halévy's career took off. More and more of his light works for the family-friendly Opéra Comique were well received, as was an *opéra-ballet*, *La Tentation*, performed more than 100 times at the Opéra itself — at that time unequivocally the world's most celebrated opera house. The hybrid work had detractors as well as fans: Chopin complained to the pianist Ferdinand Hiller that the score 'did not tempt any person of taste; it is as uninteresting as it is out of touch with the spirit of the century — rather like your German cooking.' But Halévy's breakthrough came shortly afterwards, with a commission to produce a full-scale work for the Opéra in its new, flagship genre of grand opéra.

Halévy's *La Juive* (1835) was the latest addition to the house's growing collection of four and five act French-language spectacles, alongside works supplied by Daniel Auber, Gioachino Rossini and Giacomo Meyerbeer. Like so many other

LA TENTATION, ballet-opéra by F. Halévy**Costume by Montjoie**

Role of Astaroth, Chief of emons

Photo: Gallica Digital Library



grand-operas, Halévy's libretto was supplied by the renowned French dramatist Eugène Scribe. The critics were ambivalent at first, suspicious of so much visual splendour. 'We are so sorry for Monsieur Halévy,' one joked. 'His music must have got buried under all those helmets, cuirasses and chains of mail. Audiences loved the

new piece, though, and critics gradually changed their tune. (Indeed, by the end of the century *La Juive* had been performed 550 times at the *Opéra*, as well as being exported internationally.)

Other major successes followed: Hector Berlioz lauded *Guido et Ginevra* (1838) as adding 'a beautiful jewel to M. Halévy's crown' and the writer Théophile Gautier pronounced that the composer had now 'taken his place at the head of the French school'. Even Richard Wagner — not famed for his generosity towards peers and potential rivals — marvelled of Halévy's 1841 *grand-opéra La Reine de Chypre*, 'I have never heard dramatic music which transferred me so completely to a given period in history.' No wonder Halévy was promoted in 1840 to the ultra-eminent post of Professor of Composition at the Conservatoire, where Charles Gounod, Georges Bizet and Camille Saint-Saëns were among his pupils. Meanwhile he had already been elected to the esteemed ranks of the *Institut de France* in 1836 and was made its secretary in 1854: an unmistakable, unbeatable sign of

As soon as you cross the Alps, French morals disappear

Fromental Halévy

then audiences in London — Paris's constant rival in the bid to be seen as the world's cultural centre — needed to hear his music for themselves. And how better to assess his value on British soil than in an operatic adaptation of Shakespeare? Halévy spent seven weeks in London, accompanied by his wife and children, to supervise the premiere of his new work, *La tempesta*, in June 1850. They arrived after an atrocious crossing ('a real tempest', his wife quipped) and stayed in a house on Pall Mall amid a constant whirl of activity. 'I've got lots to tell you about', he wrote to a friend back in Paris: 'a big dinner yesterday, the rehearsals which are going well, *les toasts, les speeches, les clubs* etc. ... my enthusiasm needs more time and paper!'

So why, we might wonder, has Halévy's name largely disappeared from view, *La tempesta* and his many other operas left virtually unperformed? His personality may have played a part. In comparison to many of those still-lionised composers named above — and in contrast to the conventionally difficult, troubled stereotype of 'the genius' — Halévy seems to have

establishment status in France.

It was this Halévy — the *fêté* national treasure — who was approached with a commission from Benjamin Lumley, the impresario at London's Her Majesty's Theatre, for a new opera for production in 1850. In short, if Halévy was considered the leading operatic figure in Paris,

been deeply likeable and widely liked. The director of the *Opéra*, Paris's most prestigious venue, in the early 1830s recalled that 'Halévy inspires just one feeling in everyone who knows him, and that is friendship.' The composer smuggled the young Jacques Offenbach into a performance of *La Juive* and, impressed by the teenager's request to experience the best sound rather than have the best view of the on-stage spectacle, subsequently gave him free composition lessons. The painter Eugène Delacroix wrote in his journal about his evenings chez Halévy: 'Always a big crowd, great play of wit, a true house of Socrates, too small to hold so many friends.'

And even Wagner praised him as 'frank and honest; no sly, deliberate swindler like Meyerbeer.' (Wagner's attacks on Meyerbeer are, of course, another story.) Yet throughout his life, Halévy was also a busy — perhaps even over-committed — multitasker. Alongside producing all those operas (including six vast five-acters for the *Opéra*), Halévy taught numerous students at the Conservatoire, worked as a member of the permanent music staff first at the *Théâtre Italien* and subsequently at the *Opéra*, and from 1837 was appointed second-in-command to the *Opéra's* director. In 1843 Halévy even volunteered for the National Guard, having missed his military





service as a young man as a result of winning the *Prix de Rome*. It was surely a symptom of his impossible schedule that he failed to present himself for his duties, was hauled before a military court and sentenced to 48 hours in prison. Nor should we be surprised that, as his fame and commitments peaked in the 1840s and '50s, some of his composition students complained that he appeared unavailable or uninterested.

Perhaps most damaging, though, for the later fortunes of Halévy's operas was a suspicion among certain contemporary commentators that his skills as an all-rounder — a musician and peacemaker, teacher and administrator — set him apart from 'pure' composers and their claims to creative greatness. Thus the eminent French literary critic Charles Sainte-Beuve suggested Halévy was 'like a bee who, having found himself not wholly at home in the hive, was in search of some place outside where he could make his honey.' And the celebrated poet and sometime Paris resident Heinrich Heine described Halévy's music as 'free of the faults or errors that sometimes occur in the works of an original genius... It is agreeable,

beautiful, respectable, academic, and classic.' It would be naïve these days to simply agree with Heine that Halévy's operas have been overshadowed because they were too perfect. But we might note that with the exception of a tiny handful of works, both of the main genres to which he contributed so much — *opéra-comique* and *grand-opéra* — disappeared from the operatic stage during the early 20th century. *Opéra-comique's* light entertainment mingling speech and singing found a revitalised form in the Broadway musical; *grand-opéra's* breathtaking effects found a new medium in the technical wizardry of cinema. Yet in the early 21st century, the tide has turned again: there is a growing interest in expanding and enriching our operatic lives with rediscovered works and with figures who don't fit our existing measurements for musical genius. Halévy's back catalogue is ready and waiting.

La Salle Favart, Paris

The first Salle Favart, which housed the *Opéra-comique* between 1783 and 1801, was then destroyed by fire in 1838.
Photo: Wikicommons

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La Tempesta



There are many similarities between *La Tempesta* and business today, both set in an era of new age travel and discovery. In the same way this opera adapts for the intrigues of the time, today's businesses face challenges to growth and to differentiate from the competition.

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'The isle is full of noises,
Sounds and sweet airs that give
delight and hurt not.'

William Shakespeare
The Tempest

TEMPTED BY
THE TEMPEST

CLAIRE SEYMOUR

'Be not afeared,' Caliban reassures the comic conspirators, Stephano and Trinculo, when Ariel's tabor and pipe taunt them with a melody spun from air. 'The isle is full of noises, / Sounds and sweet airs that give delight and hurt not.'

The entire action of *The Tempest* takes place upon an island — stolen by Prospero from Caliban's mother, Sycorax — which to Caliban is an earthly utopia, resounding ceaselessly to 'a thousand twangling instruments'. This celestial music, produced by the motions of the stars and planets, is timeless — the quintessential manifestation of the principles of divine order which govern the universe in its entirety. In a play which begins with disorder, separation and loss, and progresses towards reconciliation and the establishment of a new order, music — allied with magic and monstrosity — is the agent of the transformation by which discord is resolved to concord.

It is also the origin of the play's spectacle. From the roaring waters and tempestuous thunder of the storm which brings the Neapolitans to the island, to the 'solemn and strange' music which precedes the banquet laid before them by 'strange shapes'; from the song which Juno and Ceres sing in the masque to bestow blessings on newly betrothed Miranda and Ferdinand, to the 'solemn music' which accompanies Prospero's renunciation of his dark arts; music is the play's magic, its theatre — its opera, one might say. And, its principal singer is Ariel, whom Prospero has released from Sycorax's torments only to enslave in the service of his own vengeful schemes. Almost every appearance by Ariel is accompanied by music of some sort. As W.H. Auden remarked, 'Ariel is song; when he is most himself, he sings.'

Where should this music be? I' th' air or th' earth?

William Shakespeare
The Tempest

and pearls, and its tolling 'Ding-dong' burthen — refrain, deep melody or heavy load. But, with its rocking rhythm and phonetic patterning, Ariel's song has an incantatory power and introduces the verbal motifs which chart the a process of transmutation by which vengeance yields to forgiveness.

Thus, the 'Marvellous sweet music!' which announces the banquet is replaced by thunder when Ariel-as-harpy delivers the climactic oration of Prospero's revenge. As the despairing Alonso acknowledges his

guilt, 'monstrous' sounds reverberate in his ears, reminding the King of his exclusion from the harmony that music exemplifies — 'The winds did sing it to me... That deep and dreadful organ-pipe, pronounced / The name of Prosper: it did bass my trespass.' His own actions have sent his son to the bottom of the ocean, 'and / I'll seek him deeper than éer plummet sounded, / And with him there lie mudded.'

In contrast, it is to strains of 'heavenly music' that Prospero abjures his 'rough magic': 'I'll break my staff, / Bury it certain fathoms in the earth, / And deeper than did ever plummet sound / I'll drown my book.' The verbal echoes are surely not accidental: Prospero will release Alonso from the burden of his past crimes and in so doing will free himself from the burden of his own 'sea-sorrow' and the weight of vindictive recollection and revenge. As he advises Alonso, 'Let us not burden our remembrances with / A heaviness that's gone.' The journey is complete: Prospero will return to Milan to resume his ducal responsibilities and prepare for death. But, before he leaves the island, there is one final action he must carry out: he will set Ariel free. Harmony is restored, at least on the surface.

Given its pervasive musical allusions and underlying conceit, it's no surprise that numerous composers have been tempted to compose incidental music for *The Tempest*. And, that the play observes the unities of time, place and action, and offers scope for theatrical spectacle, also seems to make it ideal for operatic adaptation — though, while the action is compact, there is also much narration which might inhibit operatic expression.

That hasn't stopped composers trying, and operatic settings have often adapted Shakespeare to appeal to new audiences. In 1667, John Dryden and William Davenant added new characters — a second daughter for Prospero and a sister for Caliban — thereby heightening the comedy. Their version was adapted as a semi-opera by Thomas Shadwell in 1774, with music by composers such as Matthew Locke and Pelham Humfrey. It proved popular, and 21 years later Henry Purcell composed his own five-act *semi-opera*, the score including some da capo arias in an Italian style. Dryden and Davenant had subtitled their text,

The Enchanted Island, and it was to this that Jeremy Sams alluded – borrowing, too, some of the earlier playwrights' fleshed-out characters and comedy – when, for the Metropolitan Opera in 2011, he crossed *The Tempest* with *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and set his libretto to a mash-up of arias by Handel, Vivaldi, Rameau, and Purcell.

German composers and writers have been responsible for a large proportion of operatic *Tempests*. Dryden and Davenant's version was the basis for Friedrich Wilhelm Gotter's 1791 libretto, *Die Geisterinsel* (itself a reconstruction of a 1778 version by F.H. von Einsiedel), which was set several times, including by Johann Freidrich Fleischmann in 1798, Johann Friedrich Reichardt in the same year, and Johann Rudolf Zumsteeg in 1805. Winton Dean describes Gotter's text as 'singularly remote from Shakespeare in language and spirit'. There are no Neapolitan usurpers and instead the action pits Sycorax's black arts against Prospero's white magic. Dean remarks that the action, which concludes with the whole company singing a homage to the fatherland is 'typical of contemporary Singspiel'.

Others have put their own spin in Shakespeare's play. In the 18th century, Handel's amanuensis John Christopher Smith set a libretto, reputed to be by David Garrick, which truncates Shakespeare's text, interpolates borrowed airs and excises Caliban and his conspiracy. This *Tempest* was first performed at the Theatre Royal in London on 11 February 1756, and Dean speculates that 'Caliban was evidently too uncouth for Augustan taste'. In Act 3 of Michael Tippett's *The Knot Garden* (1970), Mangus, a psychoanalyst, pretends to be Prospero, 'This garden is now an island', and the characters play out the roles he assigns them in a therapeutic reconfiguration of *The Tempest*.

There are two versions of the Swiss composer Frank Martin's *Der Sturm* (1956), which was based upon August Wilhelm von Schlegel's German translation of Shakespeare's play. In the original, the part of Ariel is performed by a dancer while the text is sung from the wings by a chorus, but in the second the dancer has also to perform the text, which is spoken.

The question of how to dramatise the 'airy spirit', has been answered in the theatre in multifarious ways. In Thomas Adès's *The Tempest*, which was premiered at Covent Garden in 2004, the role of the androgynous Ariel is given

to a stratospheric coloratura soprano who spends the first act circling around a high E, Adès commenting, 'That's where she lives; if she touches the ground, she ceases to exist.'

A similar 'solution' was adopted by Lee Hoiby, in the opera commissioned by Des Moines Metro Opera in 1986, in which the coloratura role of Ariel was described by one critic as 'part Peter Pan, part Tony Kushner angel'. Staying in the US, John Eaton's 1985 opera, to a libretto by Andrew Porter and premiered at Santa Fe, has a mezzo-soprano Ariel whose voice, when manipulated by Prospero, is electronically modified, and whose magical tricks are accompanied by a 'Renaissance ensemble' of recorder, shawm and lute, pitched at a quarter-tone from the orchestra.

There have been some 'near-miss' *Tempests*, too, notably when the impresario Benjamin Lumley proposed that Felix Mendelssohn compose an Italian opera based on Shakespeare's play for Her Majesty's Theatre's 1847 season. Lumley secured nine such premieres from contemporary composers between 1847 and 1852, but Mendelssohn's *The Tempest* would elude both impresario and composer, problems with the libretto and other contractual and linguistic mutual misunderstandings scuppering the plans. Lumley was keen to engage the services of Felice Romani, but Mendelssohn preferred Eugène Scribe. The latter duly began work, but announcements of the new opera's impending premiere – and the planned appearance of Jenny Lind – raced ahead of reality, and on 22 January 1848, the Morning Chronicle announced: 'The opera of Mendelssohn is mere moonshine.' In the end, Scribe's libretto went to Fromental Halévy, whose opera we hear at Wexford this season. There is one other tantalising 'near-miss'.

...I'll break my staff,...

...And deeper than did ever
plummet sound

I'll drown my book

William Shakespeare
The Tempest



Einsiedel and Gotter touted their libretto for *Die Geisterinsel* amongst some of the major composers working in Europe, including Haydn, Himmel and Dittersdorf — and, one Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, who was reported to have accepted it in 1791. Given that Mozart's own *Die Zauberflöte* might be considered close to *The Tempest* in spirit and character — pitting good against evil, low comedy against high ethics, full of magic and myth, populated by young beloved's facing trials, monstrous slaves, stern patriarchs — that's not implausible, perhaps? And, had Mozart lived to complete the opera, then it's tempting to imagine that Shakespeare's *The Tempest* might not have merely assumed a musical setting, but have become a magic-music.

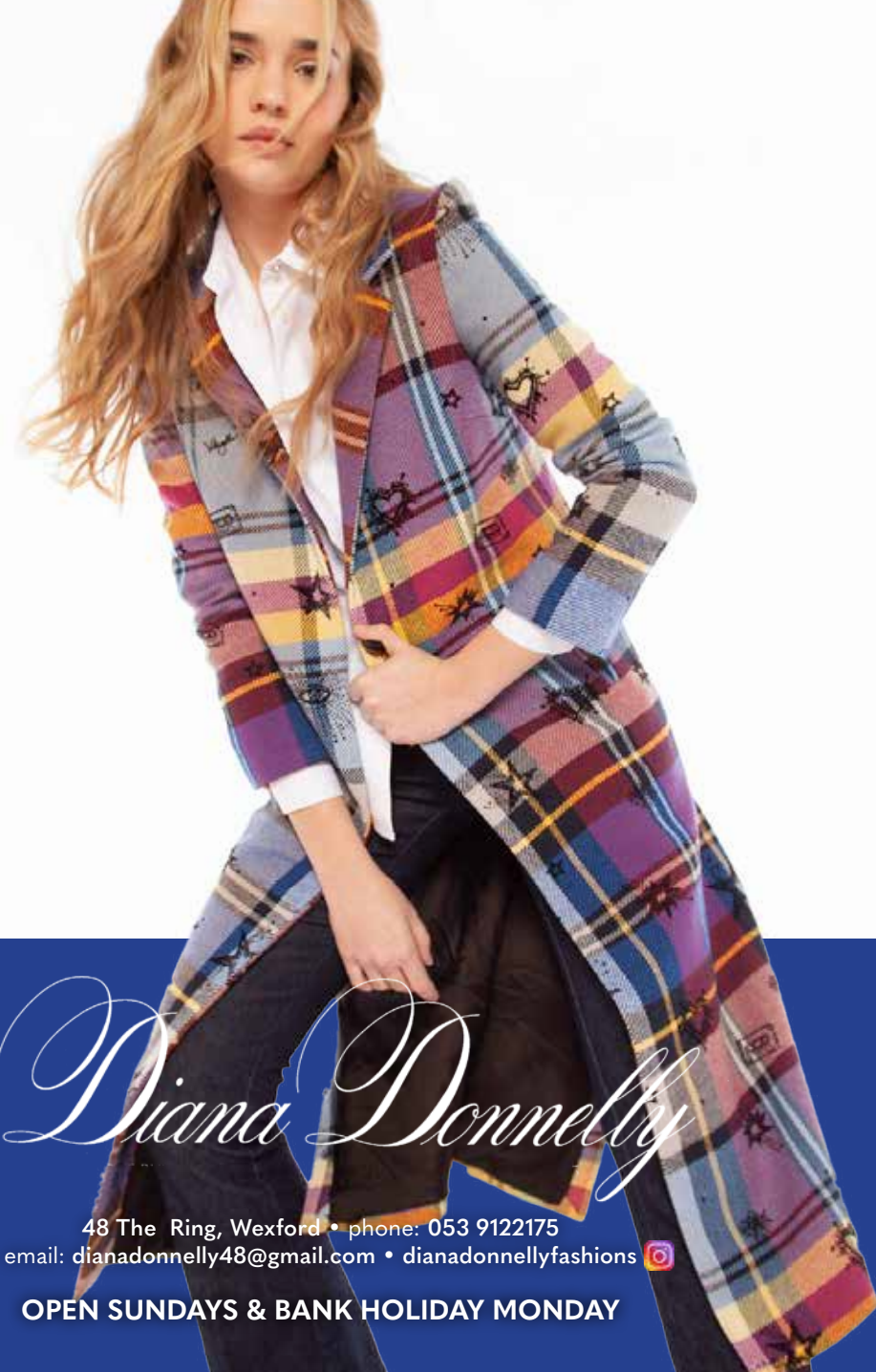


The Watercolours in these pages are from the book
Watercolours - The Pepin Press - Amsterdam

Diana Donnelly

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email: dianadonnelly48@gmail.com • dianadonnellyfashions 

OPEN SUNDAYS & BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY



A storm has risen. From the shores of the island where he landed, Prospero decided to unleash the elements and bring the men responsible for the most painful moment in his life to the place where he will be able to confront them and have his revenge. The storm brings the past back to the island. In the present, the island becomes the construction site of the nostalgia where the painful past can be healed, cementing the wounds which Prospero still carries with him. Prospero has thus built a site which contains his whole past. Having orchestrated the tempest, he is able to take the action necessary to bring into the present the painful moments from his past. At the origin of that movement there is nostalgia, that is an expert voyager, capable of moving freely through time, a feeling that embodies what we have been,

for better or worse, that heals us and gives us back our history and meaning. Fragments of a lifetime appear through the nostalgic site.

There are books, invaluable treasure, meticulously collected by those who want to possess the knowledge necessary to respond to the unpredictability of life.

There is Miranda, still seen as a child through her father's eyes, but who already views the world from an adult perspective.

There is Caliban, mirror image of Prospero, everything that he rejects of himself, his primitive and natural side suffocated by the heaviness of experience and with a repressed vitality.

On the island everything must be rebuilt, reorganised, brought back to new life in order to restore the desired harmony. To repair and rebuild oneself becomes necessary in order to dispose of the

burden, from the compromised living that does not allow us to look to the future as a complete person.

Prospero is the architect who designs life, reinvents it as he would like it to be, creating the amorous encounter between Miranda and Ferrando, staging a storm that won't kill anybody, planning a revenge that will never take place.

Because a man is only a man, and to accept our finite fragile nature, becomes for Prospero the opportunity to learn to let go, to rediscover himself. All of the pain that we suffered, all the struggles to desperately try to repair the irreparable, comes down to the rediscovery of our tender fragility. In this site of nostalgia which contains a wounded past, giving up by revenge and the magical power, Prospero liberates everyone by freeing himself; this sudden loss of burden allows

us to look at everything with new eyes.

The concrete laid on the cracks, the magnificent architecture of which life is made, the laborious attempt to rise above everything and rebuild oneself, culminates in the creation of something extremely light.

Because light we will pass, as if we were sailing on a paper boat in the boundless sea of time, where we will always try, by scattering traces, to show that from there, we have

ILARIA ARIEMME - Ariel
Costume Sketch for the 2022
Wexford Festival Opera
production of *La tempesta*.

ROBERTO CATALANO

THE SITE OF NOSTALGIA

DI^N
DIRECTOR'S
NOTES



PRODUCTION SPONSOR



Despite the clear inspiration to the *One Thousand and One Nights* tales, all the exoticism in David's *Lalla-Roukh* is based on one of the most famous works of Thomas Moore, the celebrated Irish poet (and musician).

LALLA-ROUKH

by **Félicien David**

Libretto by Michel Carré and Hyppolyte Lucas
(after Thomas Moore's poem *Lalla Rookh*)

Opéra-comique
in Two Acts

LALLA-ROUKH IS GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY
MICHAEL MAUDE

Steven White | Conductor

Orpha Phelan | Director

Madeleine Boyd | Set & Costume Designer

D.M. Wood | Lighting Designer

Amy Share-Kissiov | Choreographer

Timothy Knapman | Text

Gabrielle Philiponet | *Lalla-Roukh*

Pablo Bensch | *Nourreddin*

Ben McAteer | *Baskir*

Emyr Wyn Jones | *Bakbara*

Thomas D Hopkinson | *Kaboul*

Niamh O'Sullivan | *Mirza*

Lorcan Cranitch | *Narrator*

Chorus of Wexford Festival Opera

Andrew Synnott | Chorus Master

Orchestra of Wexford Festival Opera

Fionnuala Hunt | Concertmaster



**Luisa Baldinetti, Sara Catellani,
Andrea Di Matteo,
Nicola Marrapodi, Giada Negroni,
Andrea Carlotta Pelaia,
Alessandro Sollima** | Dancers

Sarah Baxter | Assistant Stage Director

Ambra Zattoni | Stage Manager

Mairéad Hurley | Répétiteur

Gioele Mugliardo | Répétiteur

Jonathan Burton | English surtitles translation

Elizabeth Drwal | Surtitles operator

FULLY-STAGED PRODUCTION

Sung in French with English surtitles

Saturday 22 October | 8 pm
Tuesday 25 October | 8 pm
Sunday 30 October | 5 pm
Friday 4 November | 8 pm

O'REILLY THEATRE
NATIONAL OPERA HOUSE

NAMES & DATES

LITERARY SOURCE

Lalla Rookh (1817) by Thomas Moore

FIRST PERFORMANCE

12 May 1862
Opéra-Comique (Salle Favart)
Paris

NUMBER OF PERFORMANCES

376 (Paris, 1862-1898)
Translated and performed in many
translations, including German,
Hungarian, Polish, Swedish, Italian
and Russian

FIRST CAST

Marie Trotté-Cico (*Lalla-Roukh*)
Emma Bélia (*Mirza*)
Achille-Félix Montaubry (*Noureddin*)
Alexandre Gourdin (*Baskir*)

DAVID @ WFO

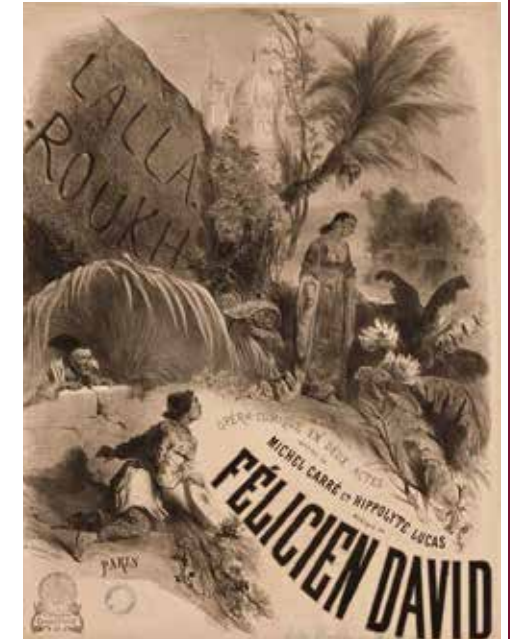
Herculanum (2016)

LALLA-ROUKH IN 1 MINUTE

For all the exoticism in *Lalla-Roukh*, there's some local interest here: Félicien David's opera is based on one of the most famous works of Thomas Moore, the celebrated Irish poet (and musician) who died 170 years ago this year. Born in Dublin to a mother who came from Wexford, Moore enjoyed immediate success with his *Irish Melodies*, and his 'Oriental romance' *Lalla Rookh* increased that fame.

David's work stands out for its delicate evocation of Kashmir and Samarkand. It has been praised for its 'dreamy atmosphere and aromatic orchestration'. The hard-to-please Hector Berlioz was quick to admire *Lalla-Roukh* and it was almost instantly recognised as the composer's masterpiece.

David enjoyed an unusual career, beginning with his apprenticeship as a young boy in the cathedral choir at Aix-en-Provence. Most of his creative work was done in Paris, but when it came to musical exoticism he knew what he was talking — or, rather, writing — about. Having joined the radical religious sect



of the Saint-Simonians, when it was disbanded by the government he travelled with a group of friends preaching its gospel in the Ottoman lands and going as far as Egypt. His remarkable ode-symphonie *Le Désert* was an early musical manifestation of this, but *Lalla-Roukh* is a more mature example of his talent for evoking the picturesque.



WHY I SUPPORT LALLA-ROUKH

During the Second World War, I was taken on a school party to see *Lohengrin* at the Metropolitan Opera in New York. You might

think this an odd choice to introduce a child under ten to opera. However my love of opera was ignited because I already knew *Here Comes the Bride* which suddenly burst forth just as I was going to sleep.

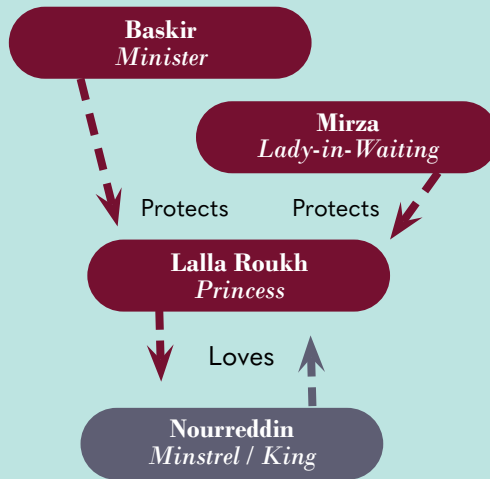
My mother Sylvia Brewster grew up in a family of keen supporters of the Metropolitan. Towards the end of his life her father became its President and was responsible for initiating the planning of the move to Lincoln Centre but did not live to see it accomplished. My interest in the revival of *Lalla-Roukh* was stimulated by my introduction to Félicien David at Wexford followed by the recollection of my mother's liking of Tom Moore as a poet and his poem *Lalla Rookh* in particular. In addition Tom Moore spent many years in Wiltshire and is buried there in Bromham just down the road from my own home for 40 years. My support for this production is a tribute to my mother's memory and her introducing me to the joys of music early in life.

To be fair to my father I also inherited a taste for music from him. His own father whom I never knew was an accomplished amateur pianist and while accompanying them on the piano would sing all the latest music hall songs to his children.

MICHAEL MAUDE

LALLA-ROUKH AT A GLANCE

WHO



WHEN

In the distant past...

WHERE

Somewhere, in the desert of Uzbekistan

THE STORY

ACT ONE

Lalla Roukh, daughter of the Moghul emperor Aurangzeb, has been promised in marriage to the King of Bukhara (today Uzbekistan). The latter has sent Baskir to Delhi to accompany and assure the safety of the young princess, her lady-in-waiting Mirza, and her retinue on their journey to Bukhara. On the way, a mysterious minstrel, eluding all attempts by Baskir to chase him away, woos the princess with his songs. Thanks to the complicity of Mirza, who distracts Baskir from his watch, he is able to declare his love to Lalla-Roukh.

ACT TWO

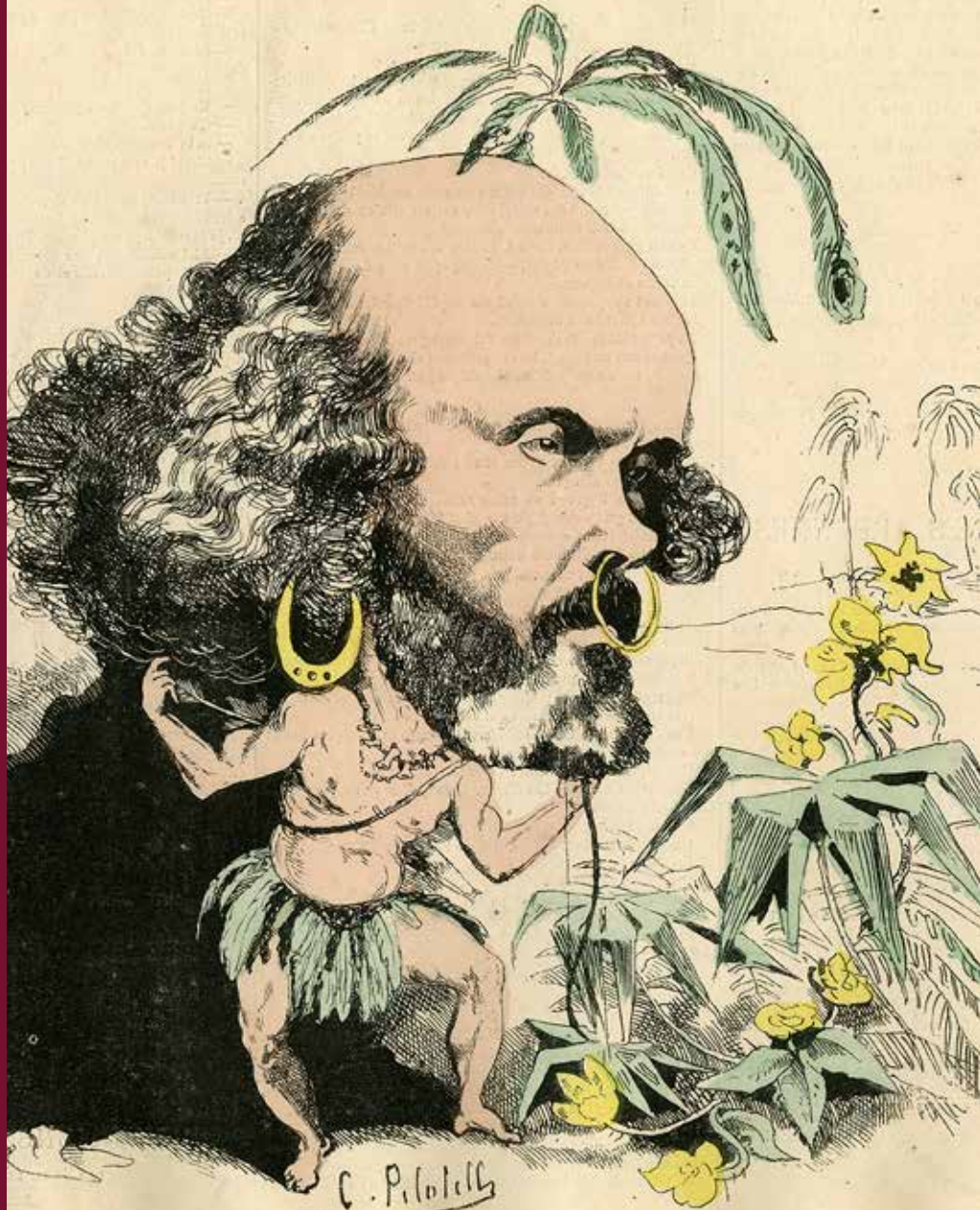
Having arrived at the summer palace of the King of Bukhara, Lalla-Roukh, who already had misgivings about the wedding engagement, resolves to break it, return to Delhi, and marry the minstrel. Slaves bring presents and jewels from the king, which she refuses. Instead, she asks Baskir to inform the king of her decision to break her engagement. Baskir is afraid that such a message will cost him his life, but Lalla-Roukh tells him that if he refuses, she will tell the king herself. Baskir chases on the minstrel and arrests him. Baskir then blackmails the minstrel into renouncing the

princess in exchange for his life. The minstrel feigns acceptance of Baskir's terms in order to see Lalla-Roukh one more time. They renew their love pledges, and Lalla-Roukh prepares to renounce her engagement to the king before his court. Realising that he has been duped, Baskir orders the guards to arrest the minstrel and threatens Lalla-Roukh with the minstrel's execution, should she carry out her decision. Thereupon, the king makes his grand entrance with all his courtiers. He is none other than the minstrel, now in royal regalia, who had wanted to discover if Lalla-Roukh would love him for his own merit rather than for his wealth.



FÉLICIEN DAVID

PAR PILOTELL



Pilotell - Félicien David

Caricature of the French composer.

Cover to *Le Hannequin*.

Lithography on Wove Paper.

Photo: Gallica Digital Library.

Félicien David (1810-76) was widely performed, hailed, and honoured during his lifetime. He has been described as a 'satellite' of Berlioz, because two of his major concert works for soloists, chorus, and orchestra are highly programmatic (descriptive), in the manner of the *Symphonie fantastique* and *Roméo et Juliette*. But performers are now also reviving his operas, songs, and piano and chamber music, in the process revealing an immensely talented and varied composer with a strong gift for lyricism, drama, and orchestral colour.

RALPH P. LOCKE

A MASTER OF OPERA REDISCOVERED

David led an adventurous early life. His father was a goldsmith; his mother, the daughter of the goldsmiths' guild in Marseilles. David's parents died when he was young. He was taken in by an elder sister in Aix-en-Provence and then joined the choir school of the cathedral in that city, where his talents as singer, conductor, and fledgling composer were quickly recognised. Several Latin motets that he composed, and wrote out by hand, are still in the church's archives.

David soon moved to Paris to study at the Conservatoire, where he remained for less than two years and then dropped out to join an early socialist movement: the Saint-Simonians. The Saint-Simonians were ahead of their time in a variety of ways, urging greater rights for women and for members of the working class and stressing the importance of international trade and cooperation instead of war. The Saint-Simonians were soon accused of offending public morality by their support for the right to divorce and other adjustments to current social arrangements. Forty male members of the movement established a commune outside of Paris, where they raised and prepared their own food and proudly undertook other forms of manual labour.

David organised a choir within the all-male commune and wrote pieces for it to perform. The texts that David set embraced all of French society: 'Soldats, ouvriers, bourgeois, aimez-nous, aimez notre Père'—Soldiers, workers, and bourgeois alike, love us and love our Father. The 'Father' that all Frenchmen were being urged to love was not God above but the leader of the Saint-Simonians, Prosper Enfantin. The tune of this choral number is folklike and easy



FÉLICIEN DAVID

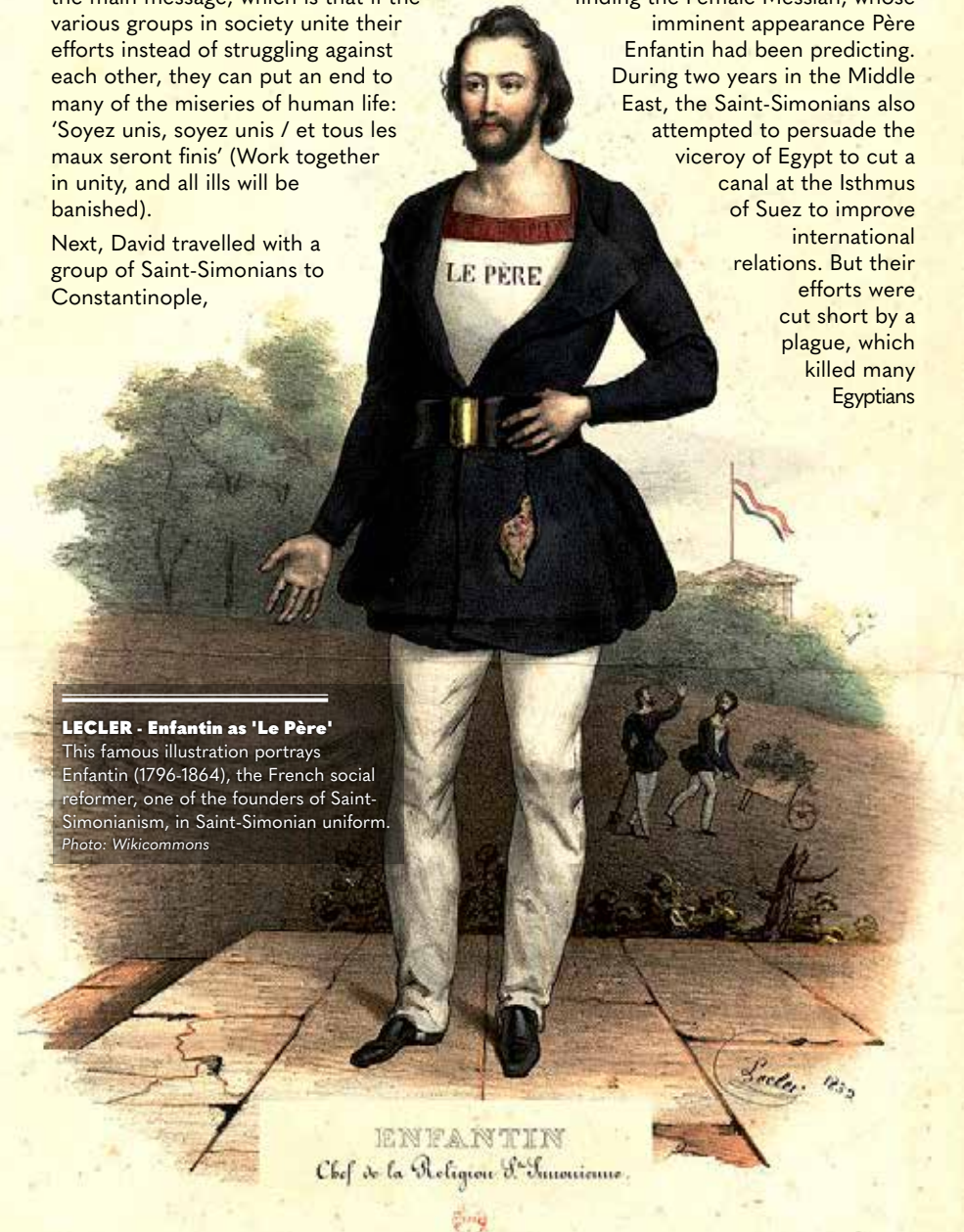
The Author is here portrayed in a Woodburytype, a unique fully continuous-tone photomechanical process, patented in 1864.

Photo: Wikicommons

to learn, and the refrain nicely stresses the main message, which is that if the various groups in society unite their efforts instead of struggling against each other, they can put an end to many of the miseries of human life: 'Soyez unis, soyez unis / et tous les maux seront finis' (Work together in unity, and all ills will be banished).

Next, David travelled with a group of Saint-Simonians to Constantinople,

Smyrna and Egypt, in hopes of finding the Female Messiah, whose imminent appearance Père Enfantin had been predicting. During two years in the Middle East, the Saint-Simonians also attempted to persuade the viceroy of Egypt to cut a canal at the Isthmus of Suez to improve international relations. But their efforts were cut short by a plague, which killed many Egyptians



LECLER - Enfantin as 'Le Père'

This famous illustration portrays Enfantin (1796-1864), the French social reformer, one of the founders of Saint-Simonianism, in Saint-Simonian uniform.

Photo: Wikicommons

ENFANTIN
Chef de la Religion d'Amour.

and some of the well-intentioned Saint-Simonians as well. David survived and returned to France, where he published a collection of piano pieces, *Mélodies orientales*, inspired by his two years in Egypt. (The collection was later republished—and have now been recorded—under the titles *Brises d'Orient* and *Les Minarets*.) 'Le Harem' is by turns fierce and sorrowful—clearly indicating David's view of that cultural practice as oppressive, not titillating. Several of the *Mélodies orientales* included melodies and drumbeat-derived rhythms that he had heard during his two years in the Middle East.

David finally came to the attention of the musical world in 1844 with a much-praised concert of instrumental and vocal works, the longest of which was *Le Désert*, a kind of secular oratorio in which a caravan of Arabs treks through the desert, is hit by a blinding sandstorm, stops for the night by an oasis, prays to Mohammed in the morning, and then takes off again into the sandy wastes. This amazing work was hailed at length by Berlioz and was soon being performed and published in numerous countries, sometimes in the local language — except of course for the muezzin's call to worship, which remained in Arabic. The next few works by David were not as well received, though one — *Christophe Colomb* (1847), about Columbus's 'discovery' of the New World — contains some strikingly successful arias, choruses, and orchestral episodes.

David found his groove again in 1851 when he wrote the first of his five operas, *La Perle du Brésil*. The treasurable pearl of the title is of course a native Brazilian woman. Indeed, the single best-known item from any of David's operas is an aria for the pearl herself, named Zora. It has



Amelita Galli-Turci (1882-1963)



Luisa Teatrzzini (1871-1940)



Lily Pons (1898-1976)

been recorded repeatedly across the decades by sopranos ranging from Galli-Curci and Tetrzzini to Lily Pons, Mado Robin, and Sumi Jo. (Also by the rivetingly inept amateur singer Florence Foster Jenkins.)

David's first and only all-sung stage work, *Herculanum* (in four acts, 1859), was one of the more successful new French operas of the mid-19th century and got produced in opera houses as far afield as St Petersburg. In recent years, it has received a fine recording (through the good offices of the Palazzetto Bru Zane) and a much-hailed production right here at Wexford in 2016. Three more operas followed: *Lalla-Roukh* (1862), *Le Saphir* (1865), and *La Captive* (which only got performed seven years after his death). The best of David's five operas, as critics and audiences at the time agreed, is *Lalla-Roukh*. (Yes, even better, at least sometimes, than the remarkable *Herculanum*.) David here seems to have responded with creative freshness to the opera's characters and to its setting in what are today the Indian subcontinent and Uzbekistan, lands even further East than the ones he had visited himself.

The special qualities of *Lalla-Roukh* are particularly embodied in its gentle, touching heroine, a role written for a warm lyric soprano or mezzo-soprano, rather than the light coloratura so typical of *opéras-comiques* of David's day, such as Auber's *Fra' Diavolo* or Delibes' *Lakmé*. As a result, *Lalla-Roukh* keeps veering toward the wistfulness that we find in certain other French operas of the period whose heroines have a similarly rich, somewhat dark voice, such as Ambroise Thomas's *Mignon*, Bizet's *Djamileh*, and Massenet's *Cendrillon* and *Werther*. But the other

main roles are also well 'drawn' by the composer. Any of several arias and duets could make excellent fare for vocal recitals yet are even more entrancing when heard in their dramatic context.

Audiences at the time (and at the Opera Lafayette performances in 2013, discussed below) enjoyed the highly varied writing for the opera's comic couple (Mirza and Baskir) and for the tenor hero (sensitive, like Nadir in Bizet's *Les Pêcheurs de perles*, but, at times, also wily and imperious). There are wonderful numbers involving the chorus and dancers. In one scene a chorus of guards, semi-comically, drinks wine to excess. Presumably their surreptitious pleasure at 'ce bon vin' (this excellent wine) was intended to be a somewhat smug commentary on the Koran's repeated prohibitions against the imbibing of fermented beverages.

My favorite comic number in *Lalla-Roukh* is a duet in which the tenor hero and the comic baritone — Nouredin and Baskir — launch a plan to trick the king of Samarkand. Baskir is a government functionary who has never met the king, and so he doesn't realise that the person he is singing the duet with about tricking the king is the king (disguised as a minstrel).

But the best numbers are probably the arias for *Lalla-Roukh* herself, near the beginning of each act; Nadir's two numbers, one of them almost Donizettian in style; and the duet for these two forbidden lovers — Nadir and *Lalla-Roukh* (or at least she thinks that their love is forbidden!) — in the middle of Act One. The love duet, like several other notable moments in the score, makes use of drumbeat-type rhythms in the strings and other features that remind us that

we are in Kashmir and, finally, Central Asia. There are, though, no actual quoted tunes from the region, of the sort that David had used in *Le Désert*. Instead, the setting, the sensuousness of the vocal writing for the male and female leads, the nicely individuated comic roles, the exquisite touches of solo oboe and clarinet in various numbers — all of this transports us to an imaginary world not far from fairy tale: not far, that is, from the 1,001 Nights and from the world of Mughal miniatures.

Lalla-Roukh was one of the most successful French comic operas of its period, reaching 100 performances in the 12 months after its premiere in 1862 and nearly 400 by the end of the 19th century. It has had, to my knowledge, only one modern staging (in 2013): a modest but apt and imaginative one, by the US-based Opera Lafayette. The same performers also made a fine recording of the work for Naxos, though the record company omitted the spoken dialogue



that had made such a good effect in the performances. How lucky audiences at Wexford Festival Opera are to be present for the first European staging of this work in, perhaps, more than a century.



LALLA-ROUKH - Act Two

Set design by Jean-Pierre Moynet (1862)
for the first performance of
Lalla-Roukh in Paris
Photo: Wikicommons

Pierre-August Renoir - Odalisque

1870, oil on canvas.
Photo: Wikicommons



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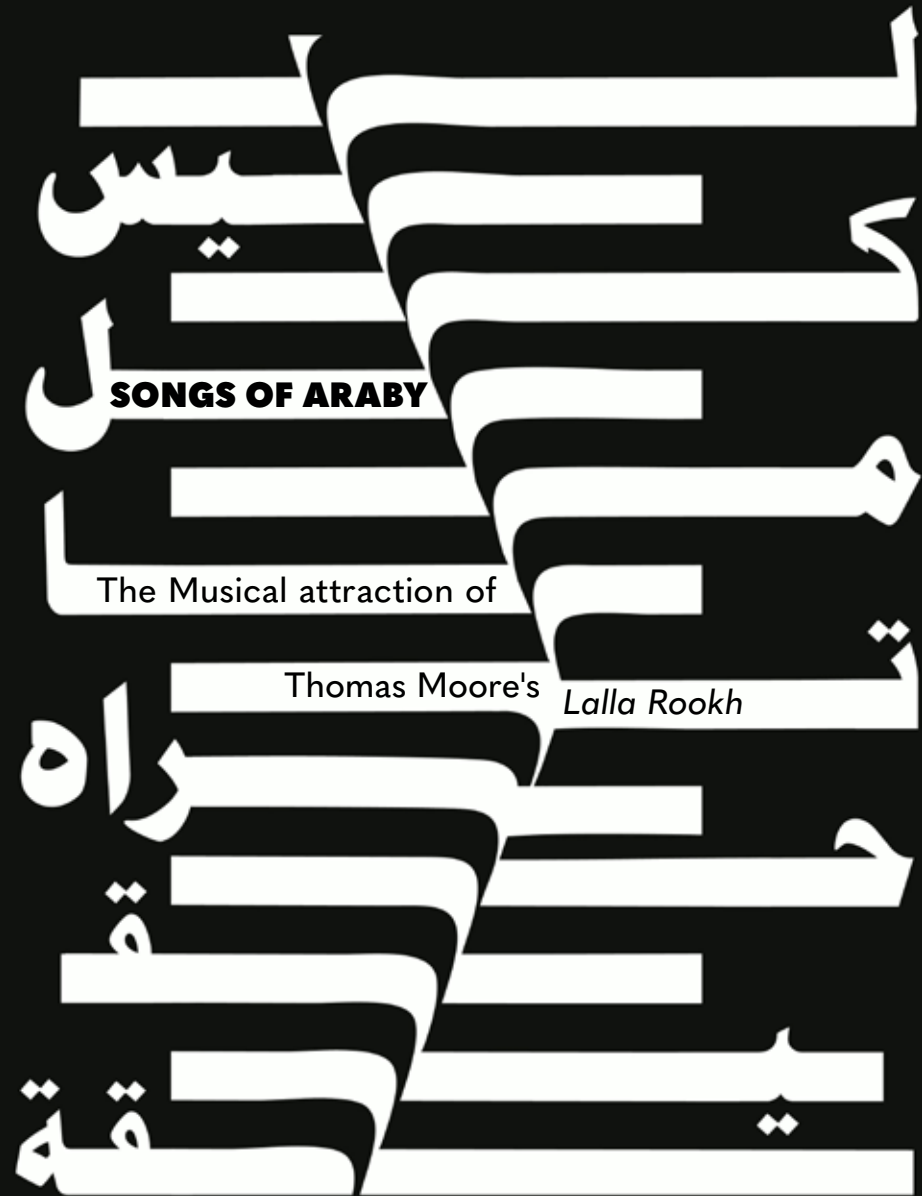


SARAH McCLEAVE

Oft in my fancy's wanderings,
 I've wish'd that little isle had wings,
 And we, within its fairy bow'rs,
 Were wafted off to seas unknown,

Thomas Moore, *Lalla Rookh*

Thomas Moore (1779-1856) was a celebrated writer of musical lyrics whose 1817 'oriental romance' *Lalla Rookh* was the foundation for Félicien David's 1862 *opéra comique* *Lalla-Roukh*. By the early 1860s *Lalla Rookh* had inspired dozens of song settings, numerous substantial works for the theatre or chorus and orchestra, and editions of the original text illustrated by popular artists such as John Tenniel. How did this Dublin-born man, son of a grocer and among the first generation of Catholics to be educated at Trinity College Dublin, become the toast of Europe and America in his lifetime and beyond? Moore's profound response to music, and his unique expression of this in poetry and



prose,
gifted
his
peers and
subsequent
generations
with material
stimulating emulation
and adaptation.

Moore's interest in music stemmed from childhood, where a lack of diligence regarding piano practice did not deter him from developing a lifelong love of the artform. Indeed, his diaries and letters chronicle a keen attendance at musical events — and as time went on, young Tom Moore the avid listener became *the* Thomas Moore, famous lyricist of the Irish Melodies and a most affecting performer of the same in both the private dwellings and public places where his patrons and admirers gathered. Originally a publisher's concept that came to fruition in 1808, the Irish Melodies through Moore's enthusiastic commitment became a thriving ten-part series (1808-1834), with the poet selecting existing tunes that inspired his creation of original lyrics; these spoke of Ireland's historical and mythic past, of the beauties of her present landscape, and of wider human concerns such as love, longing, and loss. Moore's inherent sociability enabled him to tap into the zeitgeist of his day while creating little gems that stood the test of time for over 100 years — inspiring translations, stylistic homages, and further commissions from music publisher James Power for a six-volume song series of selected National Airs (1818-27) and another two volumes devoted to Sacred Songs (1816-24).

While today Moore is primarily remembered as a lyricist, he

Ronald Egerton Balfour - *Rubáyát*

The Illustrator Balfour (1896–1941) is remembered for his 1920 edition of the *Rubáyát* of Omar Khayyám, a splendid example of the post-Beardsley style

Photo: Wikicommons

George Barbier - *Schéhérazade*

Vaslav Nijinsky and Ida Rubinstein in the famous ballet by Nikolai Rimski-Korsakov witness the popularity of Orientalism.

Photo: Wikicommons

was a prolific and diverse writer of short political satires for the newspapers, more extended social satires in the form of epistolary novels (the Fudge Family series), and other fictional formats that might mix poetry and prose. *Lalla Rookh* falls into this last category. The title character, a Moghul princess, journeys to Delhi to marry the Crown prince of Bucharia. Her accompanying train of courtiers including her father's Vice-Chamberlain Fadladeen (this character becomes Lord Baskir, employed to represent Bucharian interests, in the French *opéra comique*). Fadladeen, a fussy and self-important man, takes his role as Lalla Rookh's official chaperone very seriously indeed. Lalla's train also includes a handsome young poet named Feramorz (Noureddin in the *opéra comique*), who beguiles the princess by narrating four exotic tales as they travel. Between these poetic episodes, Moore returns to the story of Lalla Rookh and Feramorz, so we learn of her growing attraction for the handsome young man. By the time they reach Delhi Lalla Rookh is hopelessly in love. As for the poet, his feelings are expressed in a single song — 'Tell me not of joys above' — a plaint that he directs at the princess from a tree-top when he fears he is losing her. (Oddly this song lyric does not seem to ever have

been set.) On the day of the arranged marriage, Feramorz reveals himself as the Crown Prince of Bucharia; he had deliberately assumed a disguise to court his future bride. And so, as true lovers, Lalla Rookh and Feramorz choose to marry and live happily ever after.

The over-arching love story of Moore's *Lalla Rookh*, embracing as it did four exotic tales within which songs and choruses abound, attracted dozens of musical settings across the 19th century. Some 23 separate lyrics were set by composers based in London, Dublin, and America during Moore's lifetime and into the later Victorian period. Of these, *Bendemeer's Stream* from Feramorz's first tale, *The Veiled Prophet*, was the most popular:

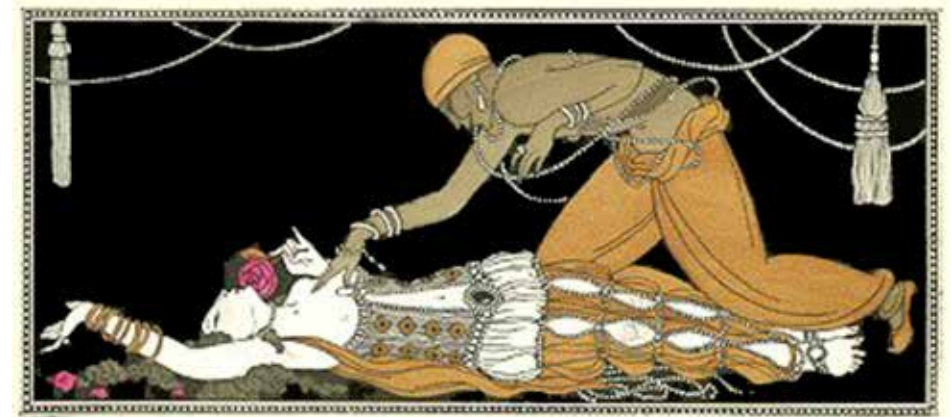
*There's a bower of roses
by Bendemeer's stream*

*And the nightingale sings round it
all the day long*

*In the time of my childhood
it was like a sweet dream*

*To sit in the roses
and hear the bird's song.*

This nostalgic lyric is sung by the concubine Zelica to fulfil the corrupt prophet's demands that she seduce her former lover Azim. James Power published settings by Lord Burghersh, William Hawes,





and Lady Flint shortly after Moore's 'oriental romance' came out; at the same time, American settings (as 'Bower of roses')

by J. Wilson (New York, 1817) and also R.W. Wyatt and S. Wetherbee (Boston, 1820), appeared (McCleave, <https://blogs.qub.ac.uk/erin/>).

'Bendemeer's Stream' also featured in Charles Villiers Stanford's 1881 opera, *The Veiled Prophet*, revived by Wexford Opera in 2019.

Most individual songs from *Lalla Rookh* were published between 1817 and 1826 — when the solo song was the most prevalent form of domestic music across Europe. Professional musicians such as George Kiallmark, Thomas Attwood, Sir John Stevenson, and Henry Bishop — as well as amateur composers Lady Flint and the diplomat John Fane Lord Burghersh — were attracted to Moore's immediately popular 'oriental romance'. Moore's correspondence does not reveal anything of their origins, but it seems likely that James Power commissioned some of these settings: the Gibson-Massie Moore collection at Queen's University Belfast has a copy of 'The Spirit's Song' set by John Clarke-Whitfield with a watermark date (embedded in the paper) of '1815' — a good two years before *Lalla Rookh* was

finally published, but during a protracted period when Moore's correspondence reveals that he was perpetually promising copy to his publisher Thomas Longman. Songs derived from its text promoted *Lalla Rookh*, and the text publication in turn created a public appetite for the music.

The first stage work inspired by *Lalla Rookh* — M. J. Sullivan's adaptation of Moore's text as *Lalla Rookh; or the Cashmerian Minstrel* — opened at the Theatre Royal, Dublin on 10 June 1818, with music by the popular singer-composer Charles Edward Horn. The *New York Mirror* (Vol. 12, 1834, pp. 294-95) credits Horn with setting at least a dozen theatrical works performed in London, including Moore's 1811 comic opera, *The MP; or, The Bluestocking*. On 27 January 1821, Gaspare Spontini, as Kapellmeister to the Prussian monarch Karl Wilhelm III, produced a *Festspiel* or *tableau vivants* entitled *Lalla Rûkh* at the Royal Palace in Berlin. Created to mark the nuptials of the Grand-Duke Nicholas to the Grand Duchess Alexandra Féodorovna, its performers were drawn from the Royal families and nobility of Britain, Prussia and Russia. The sumptuous costumes are recorded in 23 colour plates appearing in a contemporary pamphlet; a copy was purchased by the Royal Irish Academy in 2019 (Siobhán Fitzpatrick, 'A King of Prussia, a Russian Grand Duke, an Indian Princess — and Thomas Moore — Ireland in Europe in 1821', available at: <https://www.ria.ie/ga/node/98347>). Moore's *Lalla Rookh* also stimulated no fewer than three grand operas, a ballet, and numerous pantomimes (see McCleave, 'The tales and travels of Lalla Rookh', at www.erin.qub.ac.uk).

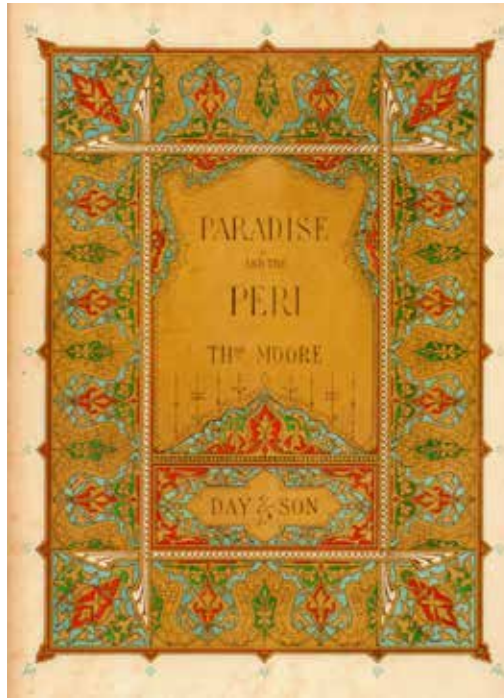
From the 1840s, Moore's *Lalla Rookh* also inspired large scale works for chorus and orchestra, written to accommodate thriving amateur choral societies.

The first and most famous such work was Robert



Schumann's *Das Paradies und die Peri* (Leipzig 1843); this was subsequently performed in America (from 1847), Dublin (1854), London (1856), and Paris (1869) — sometimes in English (H.W. Dulcken) or in French (Victor Wilder) translation. This setting adapted Moore's story of a fallen Persian angel who undertakes three quests in Africa and Asia to source the 'perfect gift' which will gain her entrance to heaven. Schumann's adaptation of the second tale told by Feramorz to Lalla Rookh seems to have planted a seed at the Leipzig Conservatory — of which he was a founding member — that saw further settings of Moore by British musicians who trained there, including John Francis Barnett's cantata, *Paradise and the Peri* (Birmingham Triennial Musical Festival, 1870). In 1877 Frederic Clay's setting of W.G. Wills's *Lalla Rookh* was premiered at the Brighton Festival. As was the case with David's *opéra comique*, this cantata was loosely based on Moore's love story between the princess and her poet, with added characters and a series of imagined interactions. Clay's 'I'll sing thee songs of Araby', the poet's wooing song to the princess, became a popular number recorded by Irish tenor John McCormack in 1908 (available at <https://youtu.be/xum7gz6m0uQ>).

Appealing as its exotic locales may have been, Moore's promotion of political and personal freedoms in *Lalla Rookh* — values so dear to the romantic era — offered a more profound attraction. Songs, operas and choral works derived from *Lalla Rookh* are united in their exploration of Moore's compelling depiction of human vulnerability — our hopes, dreams and fears. Love, longing and loss are universal feelings enhanced by expression through music. Moore's gift as a lyricist was to render these timeless emotions with immediacy and authenticity.



Thomas Moore - *Paradise and the Peri*

Robert Schumann and Emil Flechsig translated Moore's *Lalla Rookh* into a secular oratorio for soloists, choir and orchestra. The work was published as Schumann's Op. 50.

Photo: Wikicommons



Erin Project website.



A King of Prussia,... by Siobhán Fitzpatrick.

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OPEN SUNDAYS & BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY



One of the first things Rosetta Cucchi mentioned when she approached me about directing *Lalla-Roukh* a couple of years ago, was this year's theme, *Magic and Music*. As I began to study the opera, I understood why it fitted so well: based on a Persian fairy story, it was inspired by one of the great works of the Irish poet Thomas Moore.

Lalla-Roukh is a princess, promised in marriage to the king of a far-off land whom she has never met. The story is complicated (she's in love with someone else, a wandering minstrel) but love triumphs and, as in a fairy story, we have a happy ending.

The music is absolutely gorgeous – as lyrical and tuneful as you can imagine! – but I had reservations about the world in which the opera is set. I had no interest in replicating a nineteenth century French *oriental* opera, with singers dressed in exotic *Mughal* and *Kashmiri* costumes. It may have been very fashionable when the work premièred in Paris in 1862, but it's not so appropriate in 2022. This was

a problem that needed to be dealt with sensitively. It had to be solved.

The other issue with the opera was that in between the musical numbers there were long, and rather convoluted, French dialogue scenes. Again, *de rigueur* in the world of the French *Opéra comique* when the piece was written, but I felt we could offer something more immediate and entertaining to a modern-day Wexford audience.

The mother of invention provided me with a solution for both challenges at once. What, I wondered, if we were to create the role of a Narrator? He could be a sort of framing device, outside the drama, and fill us in on the bits of plot that would otherwise be covered in the dialogue scenes.

Going back to Thomas Moore, it felt right and

ORPHA PHELAN

WHEN AN IRISHMAN GOES EAST



MADELEINE BOYD - *Lalla-Roukh*

A detail of the sets and two costume sketches for the Wexford production of the rediscovered opera by Félicien David.



proper for our Narrator to be steeped in the great tradition of Irish storytelling.

A wandering *seanchaí* (not unlike the princess's lover, you might say to yourself) he would have the power to conjure mythical characters and magical creatures from our pasts and employ them to tell us his own particular story of Lalla-Roukh, making her as much Irish warrior as Persian princess. And, crucially, he could present an exotic world that would sit better with contemporary sensibilities.

For fairy tales are wanderers too. They don't respect boundaries or any form of exclusivity, and

find their way from one culture, religion and nation to another. We can never be certain where they are from, or who they are really about – that's one of the reasons, surely, why they're so compelling. All good storytellers, Irish or otherwise, make us wonder if theirs are personal stories. So as he tells his tale, perhaps our Narrator will get us thinking...This may be a Persian story, or a legend from the world of Irish mythology, but might it also be our Narrator's very own story, improvised and relayed especially for us, tonight?

I'm excited by the prospect of our Narrator's mesmeric storytelling conjuring something out of what might seem like nothing, which is truly one of the greatest thrills of live theatre. As he draws us into an imagined and exaggerated world, opera – the most extraordinary form of live art – will make his characters visceral and real, and put our production of *Lalla-Roukh* at the heart of this year's festival of Magic and Music.





PRODUCTION SPONSOR

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Dvořák's last opera has been neglected for reasons that are at once hard to fathom and easily understandable. An ideal 'Wexford work', then, it ties together many strands from across operatic history.

ARMIDA

by Antonin Dvořák

Libretto by Jaroslav Vrchlický

(after Torquato Tasso's *La Gerusalemme liberata*)

Opera
in Four Acts

PRESENTED WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE BRAVURA FRIENDS OF WFO

A co-production with J.K. Tyl Theatre, Pilsen

Jozef Benci | King Hydrat of Damascus

Jennifer Davis | Armida

Stanislav Kuflyuk | Ismen

Jan Hynk | Petr

Rory Dunne | Bohumir, Muezin

Gerard Schneider | Rinald

Josef Moravec | Sven

Thomas Birch | Roger

Andrii Kharlamov | Gernand

Libuse Santorisova | Siren, A Nymph

Chris Mosz | Dudo

Josef Kovačič | Ubald

Norbert Baxa | Conductor

Hartmut Schörghofer | Director,
Set & Costume Designer

D.M. Wood | Lighting Designer

Chorus of Wexford Festival Opera

Andrew Synnott | Chorus Master

Orchestra of Wexford Festival Opera

Fionnuala Hunt | Concertmaster



Sunday 23 October | 8 pm
 Friday 28 October | 8 pm
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 Saturday 5 November | 8 pm

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FULLY-STAGED PRODUCTION

Sung in Czech with English surtitles

NAMES & DATES

LITERARY SOURCE

La Gerusalemme liberata
 by Torquato Tasso

FIRST PERFORMANCE

25 March 1904
 National Theatre, Prague

FIRST CAST

Emil Pollert (*King Hydraot*)
 Růžena Maturová (*Armida*)
 Bohumil Benoni (*Ismen*)
 Václav Kliment (*Petr*)
 Václav Viktorin (*Bohumir*)
 Bohumil Pták (*Rinald*)
 Bedřich Bohuslav (*Dudo*)

DVOŘÁK @ WFO

The Devil and Kate (1988)
Jakobín (2001)
Rusalka (2007)

ARMIDA IN 1 MINUTE

Armida, the story of the Saracen sorceress that inspired around 100 operas and ballets, tells of her love for the Christian warrior Rinaldo. Dvořák's version was premiered four years after the much more famous *Rusalka*, with the same soprano creating both title roles. The difficult-to-understand aspect of the opera's neglect has to do with Dvořák's music, some of it very characteristic of the composer's finest work — especially the music of his American period. It also represents the peak of his admiration for Wagner: with its cast of Christian knights pitted against a pagan magician and female sorceress, to say nothing of an enchanted garden, *Parsifal* is not the most improbable model.

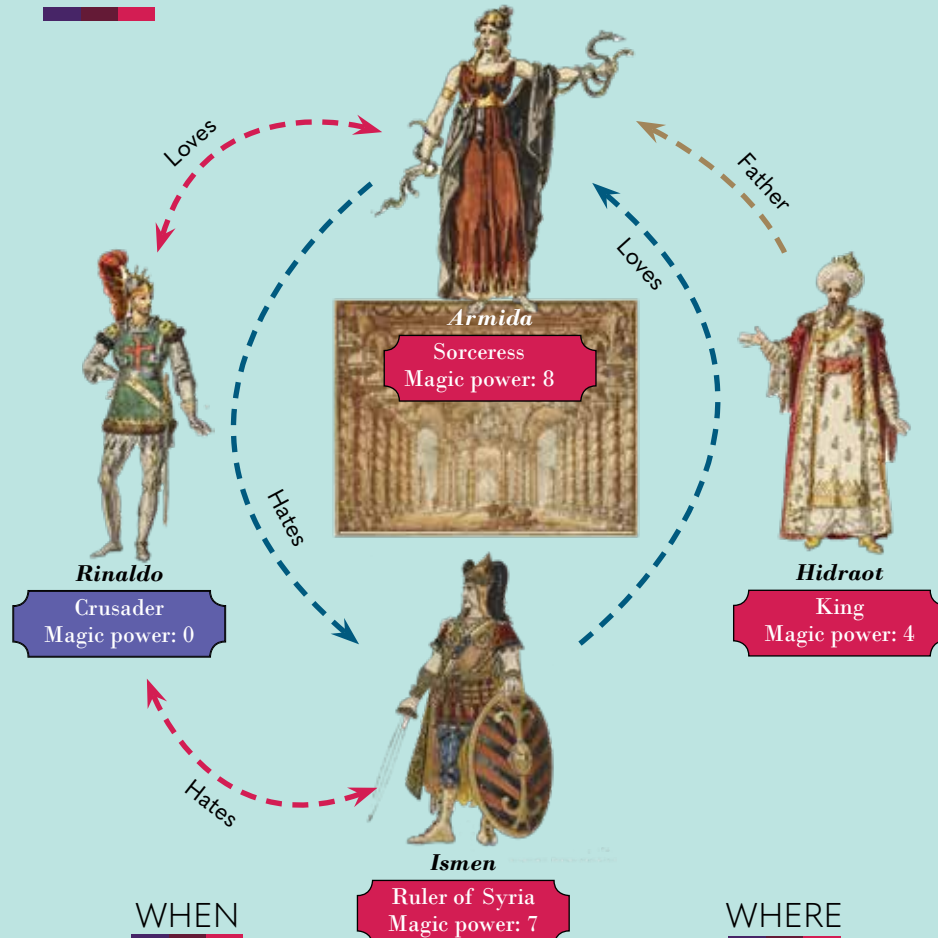
So one must conclude that its neglect has more to do with the old-fashioned nature of the libretto — a throwback to Quinault's text for Lully's *Armide* — and it is hardly surprising that the story found little favour in fin de siècle Prague, where the opera was premiered in 1904. Although the librettist Vrchlický — a poet nominated for the Nobel Prize eight times — had already translated the whole of *Gerusalemme liberata* into Czech, it's fair to say that he was better at oratorio texts than opera librettos. Not since his first opera, *Alfred*, had Dvořák set a non-Slavonic subject, making this perhaps something of a surprise turning in his last opera, but a fascinating one nonetheless.



MARIE SPARTALI STILLMANN
A Rose from Armida's garden
 watercolour with bodycolour on
 paper (1894).

ARMIDA AT A GLANCE

WHO



WHEN

At the time
of the First Crusade
(1096-1099)

WHERE

Damascus
and the Desert
around Jerusalem

ACT ONE

In Damascus, at the court of King Hidraot, the idyllic quietness is interrupted by Ismen, the ruler of Syria, who brings news of an approaching attack by the crusaders. Ismen believes that the forces of Damascus and Syria are insufficient. He has learnt that Armida, Hidraot's daughter, obstinately rejects his courtship and yet has fallen in love with a Frankish knight. He advises guile and wants to send Armida, who like him has magic arts at her command, into the enemy camp, to cause confusion among the knights. But Armida refuses to join the plan: the memory of the handsome and unknown knight is too strong.

ACT TWO

In the Christian camp near Damascus, the knights are preparing for the attack. The crusaders' leader, Bohumir, asserts that he has received from God the mission to capture the Holy City. But a veiled woman (Armida in disguise) has wormed her way into the camp and wants to meet Bohumir. She offers to lead the crusaders by secret routes to Damascus. She aims to revenge the wrong done to her family and restore freedom to her father. Bohumir accepts and Armida rejoices: finally an opportunity arises for a meeting with Rinald. They decide to flee together, but Petr, the watchful hermit

THE STORY

frustrates their intention. The knights, entering, range themselves against Rinald; at the climax of the tumult Ismen, endowed with magic powers, appears from a fissure in the ground and abducts the lovers in his dragon-drawn carriage.

ACT THREE

Ismen has carried the two lovers off to Armida's magic garden, where the two can now devote themselves to their love in the most splendid surroundings. Sirens, nymphs and fairies indulge in their sports, while Ismen, transformed into an old man, watches the pursuits. Although Armida knows that Ismen has rescued her, she will listen only to Rinald. Ismen in his true shape steps between them and demands Armida for himself. With a magic word Ismen is about to make the castle and magic gardens disappear, but Armida, equally skilled in magic, at once forestalls him and makes everything rise again. In the meantime, Ubald and Sven, two crusaders, are searching for Rinald, with an account of the miraculous powers of the miraculous diamond shield of Archangel Michael. With the aid of this shield the two knights lure Rinald away from Armida and the magic castle. A sign from Ismen again makes the castle fall in ruins.

The Siege of Jerusalem

as depicted in a medieval manuscript by Unknown author.
Photo: ©Wikicommons

ACT FOUR

At the edge of the desert, Rinald dreams of the strange events of the last hours, including the wild ride under the dominion of the miraculous shield. He just wants to join the Crusade again, and the magic shield restores his strength. Once more Ismen appears, but this time he is killed in combat by Rinald. A mysterious knight in black armour appears and challenges Rinald in combat. Too late he recognises Armida in the knight's armour. The killing blow leaves the girl lifeless.





CHRISTOPHER WEBBER

THE MAN WHO COULD DO ANY THING

D V O Ř Á K A N D O P E R A





Charles Mackerras was fond of saying that next to Mozart, Antonín Dvořák was the greatest of all musicians, 'because, like Mozart, he could do anything'. Indeed he could, as his precious legacy of orchestral, chamber and choral works shows. Yet surprisingly, Dvořák himself would have none of this: as he put it, with disarming directness, 'any fool can write a symphony!' He had no doubt that his most important compositions were his operas. Managements in Europe and America begged to differ, and more than a century after his death, they still do. Wexford, now staging its fourth Dvořák opera, has done the composer proud; but only *Rusalka* has become a regular fixture in the global repertoire. Most of the rest are seldom revived, even in his Czech homeland.

Why? Paradoxically, one reason is their deep musicality. Though his operas are bursting with melodic quality, Dvořák's development of his material is symphonic, rather than vocal. Neither built around stand-alone numbers in the Italian way, nor systematically around Wagnerian leitmotifs, his stage works are not well geared to the rapid changes of mood which make for conventional 'good theatre'. His structures comprise whole scenes or acts, which makes extracting arias or duets from their context difficult — even *Rusalka*'s celebrated 'Song to the Moon' dissolves mid-stream, and its cobbled concert ending sounds perfunctory.

Dvořák's symphonic style has other consequences. Like distant people dotted

ANTONIN DVOŘÁK - *Rusalka*

A scene from Wexford 2007
production directed by Lee Blakeley,
and designed by Joe Vanek.

Photo: ©2007, Derek Speirs

around a painted landscape, his characters are rarely so vividly present as those of his older contemporary Smetana: even at their most realistic, they seem closer to hazy figures encountered in dream. Perhaps in other ways they reflect their composer's own personality. As his son-in-law, Josef Suk, wrote:

'Truth without superficiality, true democracy which doesn't court the powerful or elevate its own greatness above those "lower down", self-confidence of the Chosen One without conceit, the most profound emotion without sentimentality ... these were the qualities of his soul. But still the constant creative unease!'

These are the 'soul-qualities' of his operas, too. As for 'creative unease', this reticent man made life hard for himself by refusing to bully his librettists, often respectfully setting texts more or less as received, without subjecting them to ruthless pruning or revision. And unlike Smetana, Dvořák was no hands-on man of theatre, which led to many of his operas (including *Armida*) being staged in slipshod manner. Given all this, it's no accident that few of his ten or eleven outlived their Prague premieres, while one vanished even before the event. No wonder he felt so fiercely protective about them.

Alert readers will have spotted the imprecise 'ten or eleven'. That's because Dvořák wrote one of his earliest operas, *King and Charcoal Burner*, twice. The first, heavily Wagnerian version of this

Růžena Maturová as *Rusalka*

At the world premiere of *Rusalka*, the title role was entrusted to the soprano Růžena Maturová (1869-1938).

Photo: Wikicommons



dalliance between a Bohemian King and a forest collier's daughter limped into rehearsals at Prague's Provisional Theatre during 1871. After four painful weeks, the theatre's director Smetana declared, 'It is a serious work, full of ideas and genius, but I don't believe it can be performed'. The composer promptly burned his manuscript, only to reset Bernard Lobeský's libretto to entirely new music — in a simpler style, influenced by Weber, Mendelssohn and Smetana himself — three years later. In 1887 he had a third go, furnishing the entire last act with a new plot and music in his mature manner. Broken-backed though it is, the hybrid 1874/87 version contains a great deal of good music, including a gorgeous tenor aria which clearly meant much to the composer, who lovingly quoted it in his Cello Concerto.

King and Charcoal Burner was to be the first of five operas which might loosely be classed as 'peasant comedies', though that sells their variety short. *The*

Stubborn Lovers (1874) and *The Cunning Peasant* (1877) are attractive if somewhat anonymous scores, conforming most closely to the rural pattern set by Smetana. Their problems stem from clichéd libretti: *The Cunning Peasant* recycles a couple of character names from *The Bartered Bride*, but lacks that opera's timeless brio; while *The Stubborn Lovers* clones the story of *The Kiss*, without approaching that masterwork's depth or daring.

The Jacobin (1889/97) is a different matter, as those who saw Wexford's 2001 production may agree. Setting a complex libretto by Marie Cervinková-Riegrová, shaded with political paranoia of the time of the French Revolution, it is much the most subtle of Dvořák's rural comedies. The happy-end melodrama of

ANTONIN DVOŘÁK - *The Devil and Kate*

A scene from the 1988 production at the WFO.

Photo: ©RTÉ Archives - John Rowe.

the main plot, where truth quietly wins out over deception, allows full play to the composer's gift for painting profound yet muted emotions in operatic form; while the portrait of the old schoolteacher and choirmaster Benda — named to honour the famous family of 18th and 19th-century Bohemian musicians — is an endearing creation, gently devoted to his art.

If *The Jacobin* took rural comedy in an unusual direction, *The Devil and Kate* (1899, Wexford 1988) blew the doors off. Adolf Wenig's youthful libretto — drawn from a story by the illustrious Czech Romantic writer, Božena Němcová — combines folk with fairy-tale opera, in a boisterous plot showing the descent of a loud-mouthed peasant woman to hell, where even Lucifer finds her too hot to handle. Dvořák finds delicious humour in this sun-and-shade fantasy, where Hell is right next door to Bohemia's woods and fields: the devils' chorus, as they drop their pitchforks to down a glass or two of Pilsner, reveals that harvesting souls is just as thirsty work as harvesting grain. It used to be said that the opera's total lack of love interest mitigated against frequent performance. Nowadays its no-platforming is more readily explained by the politically incorrect portrait of its leading lady.

The Devil and Kate reflected the composer's growing attraction to folk legends, which had already borne fruit in four orchestral tone poems, written after his return from America. These were inspired by the poetic tales of Karel Jaromír Erben; and more Erben magic lay behind his operatic masterpiece *Rusalka* (1901, Wexford 2007). Jaroslav Kvapil's libretto also drew on other retellings of the Undine story, in which a water nymph falls in love with a human prince,



BOHUMIL PTÁK

The Czech Tenor Bohumil Pták (1869-1933), began his career as an actor. He was the first Prince in *Rusalka*.

Photo: Wikicommons

with tragic consequences for both. We would never guess that the text was not devised with Dvořák specifically in mind, for it fits his operatic strengths — the symphonic evocation of nature, the hazy distancing of archetypal characters, the poetic profundity of his emotions — like a glove. Though the outstanding beauty of its score was immediately recognised, the opera's bearing on questions of female sexuality, identity and ecology has only recently seen it catapult towards the top of the operatic charts.

All these operas may be considered 'national', in so far as they evoke a pastoral dream of the Bohemian countryside as it never was. *Rusalka* can also be interpreted





allegorically, as turn-of-the-century Bohemia yearning for independence from Austro-Hungary, represented in the opera by the sinister figure of the Foreign Princess, with her overbearing vocal lines and ballroom rhythms. At a time when Czechs were looking to Russia and Pan-Slavist associations to free themselves from the Austrian yoke, it is unsurprising that two of Dvořák's operas delved into Slav nationalism on a broader front. First came the Wagnerian *Vanda* (1875), a very stately, five-act affair, retailing the tragic life and loves of a legendary Polish princess. Fitfully inspired and oft-revised, it makes up in quantity what it lacks in quality.

Dmitrij (1882) is on another level. Its ambitious libretto by Cervinková-Riegrová is best summed up as a domestic sequel to *Boris Godunov*, tracing the tangled paths of the pretender Dmitri and his Polish wife Marina, Boris's daughter Xenia and the tricky politico Prince Shuisky. Though the action, drawing on an unfinished play by Schiller, is imagined rather than historical, its brooding, conflicted emotions fired Dvořák's enthusiasm — as witness his rare insistence (as later with Cervinková-Riegrová's *Jacobin*) on major textual revisions, to humanise her grandly Meyerbeerian first draft. The result is an opera of cumulative power and twilit beauty, which languishes unfairly in the shadows behind Mussorgsky's epic.

Only two of the operas break away completely from Slav national concerns, and it is significant that they were Dvořák's first and last. His 1870 'study setting' of *Alfred* was a conscious experiment to write an opera about the great Anglo-Saxon king in mythical mode, marking its young composer out as a true son of Wagner,

with ambitions beyond his Czech national bounds. Written to a German-language text conspicuously lacking in cakes, this lively prentice work was quietly hidden away in a back drawer, remaining unheard in its original form until 2014.

With *Armida* (1904) the composer came full circle, once again consciously choosing an 'international' subject, this time taken from a perennial renaissance classic, but just as surely intended to advertise his pan-European, operatic credentials. Whether or not that hope was realised, his final opera is a last testament to that 'creative unease' which drew Dvořák repeatedly to the one genre in which he rarely tasted popular success. Beyond *Rusalka*, 'the man who could do anything' left us an underprized operatic legacy of sterling quality.



IN THE CLUTCH OF AN ENCHANTRESS

After a creative lifetime of almost uninterrupted success, the failure of his last opera *Armida* was for Dvořák a devastating blow. The view of Bohumil Benoni, the baritone who created one of the opera's key roles, the magician Ismen, that '*Armida* was Dvořák's tragedy' seems justified. After the triumphant debut of *Rusalka* on 31 March 1901 the premiere of *Armida*, almost exactly three years later was greeted with polite puzzlement from a loyal audience and frustrated disapproval from the critics.

The opening night was decidedly unpromising. The premiere was entrusted to the relatively inexperienced František Picka since the National Theatre's excellent musical director, Karel Kovařovic, was *hors de combat* with exhaustion. Rehearsals were fractious, the sets for such an exotic opera were ineffective as, according to the critics, was Robert Polák's direction. The dress

rehearsal on 1 March 1904 was a near disaster with inadequate coordination between conductor and orchestra, insubordination among cast members and to crown it all the absence of Bohumil Pták, the lead tenor singing Rinald, laid low by a throat infection. Janáček who was present recounted that he had never seen Dvořák 'more irritated'. The premiere was postponed for three weeks and even then was given after another turbulent dress rehearsal. There were supportive ovations from an audience clearly devoted to the composer, but there was no concealing that the premiere was close to a flop. *Armida* was taken off after only seven performances; disgruntled and feeling unwell, Dvořák left before the end.

The question of *Armida*'s failure has long troubled the composer's admirers given the excellence of so much of the score. While it is tempting to apportion blame to the disastrous premiere, the opera's

JAN SMACZNY



performance history bears out the uneasy reception of the first night. Notwithstanding the efforts of such great Czech conductors as Otakar Ostrčil in 1928 and Václav Talich in 1941, and Václav Jiráček's superb 1956 recording for Czech Radio, *Armida* has never approached the popularity of his other late operas, *The Jacobin*, *The Devil and Kate* and *Rusalka*, nor even gained serious traction in the Czech or international repertoire (an interesting footnote is that a young Montserrat Caballé took the title role in the first foreign production of the opera, in Bremen in 1961).

Dvořák's apparently maverick decision to take on a libretto that had been turned down by others is a reasonable place to start. Throughout a long composing career, he usually had some form of operatic project in hand and by the premiere of *Rusalka*

was the veteran of ten operas. Moreover, he intended to devote his remaining years exclusively to the composition of opera, stating to the Viennese newspaper, *Die Reichswehr* of 1 March 1904, as part of the publicity prior to the premiere of *Armida*, '... In the last five years I have written nothing but opera. I wish to devote all my powers, as long as God gives me health to the creation of opera' adding portentously that opera was '... the most suitable form for the nation'. Not only had the success of *Rusalka* fired Dvořák's appetite for another



libretto, he wanted one with, according to *Rusalka*'s librettist Jaroslav Kvapil '... an especially fine role for [Růžena] Maturová', the soprano who had created the lead.

Kvapil was unable to oblige and with no text to hand, Dvořák entered a period of unusual creative torpor. Early in 1902 he settled on what from many points of view was an unlikely solution in the form of Jaroslav Vrchlický's *Armida*. Vrchlický (the pen name of Emil Frida, 1853-1912) was a well-respected poet and playwright valued in particular for his translations from German, English and Italian with whom Dvořák had already collaborated on the oratorio *St Ludmila*. Originally intended for Karel Kovařovic and later offered to Bendl and Fibich, *Armida* for all its abundant magical effects lacked the enchantment and passion of *Rusalka* not to mention its sheer literary distinction. Based on episodes relating to the enchantress Armida from his own translation of Tasso's epic *La Gerusalemme liberata* (1581), Vrchlický produced a rather literal, not to say plodding four-act libretto.

While *Armida* had proved durable operatic subject matter for over 200 years and providing libretti for the likes of Lully, Handel, Haydn and Rossini, Vrchlický's version of this story of chivalry, religion and magic wrestled into the format of *grand opéra* complete with conjurations, a ballet *divertissement* and stately set pieces seemed an unlikely recipe for late 19th century audiences more

receptive to the new Italian realism. Benoni suggested that Dvořák was '... swayed by the name of the writer of his unfortunate libretto'; he may have been impressed by *Armida*'s provenance, but Dvořák was by no means uncritical of the libretto. In a letter to a Viennese acquaintance, the composer proclaimed himself happy enough working on the opera, but the process of composition does not really bear this out. A crude comparison shows that he spent 17 months on *Armida* by comparison with eight on *The Devil and Kate* and only seven on *Rusalka*. Moreover, the sketches of these two most recent operas show every sign of fluency unlike those of *Armida* in which there are two false starts to the first act and three different versions of its end.

ANNIBALE CARRACCI - *Rinaldo and Armida*

Oil on canvas (1601-1602) - Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte (Galleria Farnese), Naples





ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

The Composer with his wife, Anna Čermáková (1873-1904). They had nine children, the first three of which died in infancy. The oldest child, Otilie – “Otilka”, inherited her father’s talent for music.



JARUSLAV VRCHLICKÝ

The Czech poet portrayed with his family. Vrchlický’s life was the subject of a 1997 novel, *Za trochu lásky...* (For a little love...) by František Kožík.

In fact, the working copy of the libretto that indicates Dvořák expended considerable energy revising Vrchlický’s text. A key alteration concerned *Armida*’s first entry. Vrchlický’s decidedly unoperatic intention was to introduce her during a conversation between her father and the magician Ismen. Dvořák cut three pages of dialogue and a brief chorus of slaves in order to give *Armida* the entry she deserved singing her rapturous first aria (‘*Za štíhlou gazelou*’) about her dream of a knight ‘like a radiant archangel’ clad in golden armour while hunting a gazelle. Dvořák made further forensic alterations to Vrchlický’s rambling libretto all designed to add focus to the drama. The change that would have satisfied the composer most, however, would have drawn *Armida* closer to the operatic expectations of 1904, but it proved a step too far for the author. According to the composer’s son, Otakar, Dvořák asked Vrchlický to reduce the opera’s four acts to three thus almost certainly putting paid

to much of the ornamental first part of the third act – Dvořák had a strong track record of at being fearless in making radical revisions to his operas. Given *Armida*’s decidedly equivocal premiere, it seems almost inconceivable that Dvořák would not have undertaken root and branch changes to the work. Unfortunately, he died, quite unexpectedly, just five weeks after the premiere.

Setting aside regrets about the revision that might have been, there is still so much to admire in *Armida*. A brief, unashamedly attention-grabbing overture contrasts *Armida*’s superbly lyrical first aria with the crusaders’ stately chorale. The curtain rises on the palace in Damascus in which courtiers enjoy the surroundings punctuated by the Muezzin’s call to prayer. While musically charming, this scene setting is symptomatic of a libretto in which dutiful business often gets in the way of the progress of the drama. The demonic magician Ismen is the dominant character

in the act and his threatening power and evident obsession with *Armida* is brilliantly depicted by Dvořák. *Armida* herself emerges more strongly in the second act, but her signature aria, clearly designed to reprise the success of *Rusalka*’s ‘*Song to the Moon*’, is an undoubted high point. Dvořák comes into his own, however, when his symphonic instincts are unleashed at the end of the act: Ismen’s satisfaction that his schemes have triumphed and *Armida*’s joy at the being able to see the ‘knight of her dreams’ create a powerful finale unexpectedly dominated by a sinister masterstroke in which the Muezzin’s call to prayer wrenches the music to a savage minor-key conclusion.

The second act is more lyrically expansive. *Armida* is seen as both the ardent lover and, in a splendidly rabble-rousing aria whipping up the indignation of the crusaders on her behalf as the powerful disruptive force Ismen intended her to be. There is rather too much stern music lavished on the Hermit Petr’s disapproval of a woman at the heart of an army of Christian warriors and intervening marches and fanfares come a little too frequently, but Dvořák’s handling of the crusaders’ discontent at the inaction of their leaders is credible and gripping. The latter parts of the act see the temperature rising with the inevitable duet for *Armida* and Rinaldo leading from breathless anticipation to a declaration of love in a central section (‘*Molto tranquillo*’) that contains some of Dvořák’s loveliest operatic music. The finale in which Ismen arrives to rescue the lovers in a chariot drawn by dragons may seem more

appropriate to Baroque opera, but Dvořák’s superb control of the huge forces produces a surprisingly powerful denouement.

Unfortunately, the third act saps the energy generated by the spectacular end of the second.

GIANBATTISTA TIEPOLO

Rinaldo Abandoning Armida

Detail of *Armida* from the fresco (1757) preserved in the Villa Valmarana ai Nani - Vicenza.



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The depiction of the gardens of Armida's magical palace interspersed with the lovers' languorous music is a rich mix of vintage Dvořákian melody, hints of Wagner and occasional, almost impressionist harmonies. One particularly lovely episode has Rinald serenading Armida while Ismen fulminates in the background. While undeniably beguiling, the sheer richness becomes a touch cloying and the dramatic imbalance is emphasised when action gives way to ornament with the appearance of two knights in search of Rinald. The finale, which sees Rinald drawn back to the ways of righteousness by the magical power of the Shield of St Michael followed rapidly by Ismen's destruction of the palace with Armida left distraught in the ruins is almost comically hasty.

The fourth act is far better balanced prompting music of much greater distinction. Vrchlický also enhances the drama by replacing the rather weak conclusion of the Armida episodes from Tasso's original with Rinald challenging and fatally wounding Armida dressed as an unknown warrior (borrowed from 'The combat of Tancredi and Clorinda' also from Tasso's epic). This credibly operatic alteration allows for an affecting duet for the lovers before Rinald, to music of exquisite delicacy, baptises the dying Armida.




EDUARD MULLER - *The Garden of Armida*

Two panels of the wallpaper (1854). The French painter (1823-1876) was inspired by Armida's garden in *La Gerusalemme liberata*.



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BOODLES 1798

A FAMILY STORY

Yasmin and Amber Le Bon wear ASHOKA

HARTMUT SCHÖRGHOFER

THE PHANTOM LOVER

My production focuses on the real-life conflict situations that are the subject of *Armida*. The fairytale aspects of this magic opera are not reduced to banal everyday realities, but are perceived as an additional level of interpretation - precisely because theatre and theatre technology have the ability to create magical moments and to negotiate topics in an unusual way.

The principle of the *Pepper's Ghost Illusion* serves as a fundamental element of the stage design - an invention in the mid-19th century: the combination of a projection surface and a translucent mirror wall allows the superimposition of images, which dissolve the definition of real space and enable surreal phenomena.

It's very interesting that the plot initially takes the oriental point of view on Western society - especially considering the time the opera was written. It is the crusaders coming from the west who are portrayed as aggressors invading a peaceful region. But in the end the point of view changes and the perspective of the crusaders and thus the western position come into focus. In this context, it is not without significance that the opera is set in regions of today's Lebanon, Syria and Gaza - countries in which armed conflicts are

DI^N
DIRECTOR'S
NOTES



THE PEPPER'S GHOST

The impressive theatrical effect is named after his inventor, John Henry Pepper, a British scientist.

part of everyday life and which never rest. Current world events thus force a reflective examination of this topic.

The war situation is contrasted by the embedding of the drama of love and jealousy between Armida, Rinald and Ismen. Armida and Ismen, despite their superhuman abilities as magicians, fail to achieve - or manipulate - their love dream, which raises several questions: How does Rinald lose his love for Armida? Why does he end up finding his love for Armida to be manipulation? Is it martial and religious fanaticism that wins last? In the end, we have to acknowledge that true love obviously can't be forced with magic either.





CINDERELLA

Music and Lyrics by
Alma Deutscher

Arrangement for Ensemble by
Giuseppe Montesano

Opera
in Four Acts

Andrew Synnott | Conductor

Davide Gasparro | Director

Eleonora Rossi | Set Designer

Frances White | Costume Designer

Daisy Long | Lighting Designer

Megan O'Neill | Cinderella

Ami Hewitt, Corina Ignat | Stepmother*

[26 OCT, 31 OCT] [29 OCT, 4 NOV]

Hannah O'Brien, Leah Redmond | Griselda*

[26 OCT, 31 OCT] [29 OCT, 4 NOV]

Emily Hogarty, Sarah Luttrell | Zibaldona*

[26 OCT, 31 OCT] [29 OCT, 4 NOV]

Michael Bell, Richard Shaffrey | Prince*

[26 & 29 OCT, 4 NOV] [31 OCT]

Peter Lidbetter | King

Deirdre Arratoon | Fairy

Peter McCamley | Royal Minister
(speaking role)

Eoin Foran, William Kyle | Ensemble

*When not singing a principal role,
the Artists will join the Ensemble

Wexford Festival Children Chorus

Elizabeth Drwal | Chorus Master

Wexford Festival Ensemble

Lynda O'Connor | Concertmaster

ALMA DEUTSCHER
CINDERELLA

WEXFORD FACTORY
SPONSOR



From Rossini's *La Cenerentola* to Massenet's *Cendrillon*, the Cinderella story has enjoyed a successful operatic life. This new version, written by Alma Deutscher when she was eleven years old, will not fail to thrill.



Zoe Morgan | Stage Manager

Giorgio D'Alonzo | Repetiteur

Andrea Pecchio | Surtitles operator

Wednesday 26 October | 11 am

Saturday 29 October | 3 pm

Monday 31 October | 5 pm

Friday 4 November | 3 pm

O'REILLY THEATRE
NATIONAL OPERA HOUSE

NAMES & DATES

LITERARY SOURCE

Cinderella is a very popular folk tale, which can be traced back to the Greek theatre (*Rhodopis* by Strabo AD 23) passing through the *Pentamerone* (1634) by Gianbattista Basile, up to Charles Perrault (*Histoires ou contes du temps passé*, 1697), Brothers Grimm (*Grimm's Fairy Tales*, 1812), Rossini (*La Cenerentola*, 1817), Massenet (*Cendrillon*, 1894), Walt Disney (*Cinderella*, 1950), Andrew Lloyd Webber (*Cinderella*, 2021) and many, many others.

FIRST PERFORMANCE

Israel, 2015
(Chamber version)

Vienna, 2017
(Orchestral version)

FULLY-STAGED PRODUCTION

Sung in English with surtitles

CINDERELLA IN 1 MINUTE



Alma Deutscher's version of the famous fairy-tale involves a modification of the plot, to revolve around music. Her treatment of music has something of an enchanting child's play about it. She has set it in an opera house inhabited by a crowd of creative people – Cinderella herself being a talented composer consigned to the drudgery of being a copyist. The Ugly Sisters – less talented, of course – are a couple of would-be divas. The Prince is a poet who is mocked at court for his artistic leanings, and after her midnight flight from the palace he seeks her out using not a slipper, but one of her melodies as the identifying proof. They find each other 'like lyrics find melody'. Even at such a young age, Deutscher has felt the need to defend her love of beautiful melody. 'If the world is so ugly,' she has said, 'then what's the point of making it even uglier with ugly music?'

Alma Deutscher's *Cinderella* is not your conventional tale of a beautiful maiden whose future is secured by a prince and the happenstance of a lost shoe. But Alma Deutscher is not a conventional composer or individual.

Driven by a sense of musicality that spoke to her from the earliest age, and a deep determination to maintain music as a force of beauty in a world awash in conflict and destruction, she refuses to bend to anyone else's idea of who she should be or how the music she composes should sound. An accomplished violinist and pianist before she entered her

teens, Alma has in the past year also taken up conducting,

gaining the possibility to translate the works she creates exactly as she hears them.

If there is a message that is woven throughout Alma's growing body of work, it is to trust in the power of your inner voice, whether it speaks to you through a sparkly pink skipping rope, or the wail of a Viennese police siren. Nowhere, perhaps is this message clearer than in her opera *Cinderella*, where the lead character is not a scullery maid, but a composer, and the prince is searching for a melody, not the perfect foot to fit a lost shoe.

Alma received her first violin at three. Her first teacher showed up wondering if her small student could concentrate for all of twenty minutes.

An hour later, she was the one who needed a break, fully exhausted by Alma's steely determination to make the beautiful sounds that she could already hear in her head and wanted to share with the world.

By four she would sit at the piano for hours, playing melodies that she insisted came to her via a world that she called 'Transylvanian'. It was then that her parents recognised their child held a unique gift. It was not easy trying to find teachers for a toddler whose innate musical abilities already exceeded those of students many times her age. But they were brave enough to persist in support of their daughter. They entered her world of melody-spinning characters and scoured the globe for other adults who would take their child as seriously as she took herself, helping her to channel her creativity and develop her technical abilities.

Perhaps equally important, they gave her the space, both physical and spiritual, in which to create. If her world indoors was filled with music and the stories of classic fairy tales, out of doors an English garden offered trees to climb, swings on which to soar

and wide, green lawns for skipping and twirling a sparkly pink skipping rope that young Alma believed linked her to a world of magic, where they melodies lived.

As she grew, the rope remained a constant in her creative walks, by then in the hills surrounding Vienna where her family had moved. But by 14 she knew the melodies that filled her mind sprang from the core of her own inner being. They would come to her while she rode the *U-Bahn* to meet friends for a slice of Sachertorte in a café.

The story of her first mini-opera, *The Sweeper of Dreams*, composed when she was 7,

IF THE MUSICAL SHOE FITS

MELISSA EDDY INTRODUCES ALMA DEUTSCHER

reflects the power of the creativity that would come to her in the night. But throughout her childhood, *Cinderella* remained her favourite tale. She says the idea of composing an opera for the story first came to her at three.

It would take her until she was eight to begin setting the first melodies for her take on the classic tale of a young woman finding her prince to paper. In 2015 a first version of *Cinderella* was complete. Over the next five years, it was successively revised. Following its premiere in Hebrew in Israel — her father's native land — a German-language version was developed for the first Vienna performance in 2016. The following year, a version in English debuted at San José in the United States, followed by a new production for Salzburg's Landestheater in 2020.

Over the course of the years, as Alma grew, so did her comprehension of musical technique and orchestration. She says that careful studying of Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* helped her understand how to use different sections of the orchestra to convey the drama and emotion she sought to bring to life on the stage. Yet Alma's *Cinderella* is also perhaps her most personal of her compositions. At 17, she has composed half a dozen orchestral works, including her violin concerto, several chamber works, pieces for piano and songs. Last year she finished her second full-length opera, *The Emperor's New Waltz*,

which will be premiered in Salzburg next March. But it is in her take on the classic fairy-tale that Alma gives an audience a peek into her musical mind. Even as a little girl, Alma was keenly aware the advantage of having been born in the 21st century. A picture of Maria Anna Mozart (known as 'Nannerl'), the famous composer's older sister, hung on the wall over her own piano. Alma had internalised the story of how Nannerl, a talented musician and in her own right, was forced to abandon music as she grew older, because women were valued for their abilities to become accomplished housewives, not pianists or composers.

Aware that in an earlier point in history this could have been her own fate, Alma celebrates her own 'girl power' by infusing her *Cinderella* with the same gift that she has herself — the ability to create beautiful music. In Alma's opera, *Cinderella* ultimately has control of her own fate, as she composes the melody that haunts the

Prince, driving him to seek her out. Their union, when he succeeds, is more than a male conquest of female beauty, it is a celebration of the force of creativity and collaboration.

Last February, when the singer in the title role of Salzburg's *Cinderella* production tested positive for coronavirus on the morning of the performance, the director called Alma. Would she be able to jump in and sing the lead, in German with three hours to learn the part? Alma had consulted on the production and played the opening violin solo, but never *Cinderella*. But she agreed, realising it wouldn't be too difficult: 'she's a character I've composed and created myself, I know her quite well.'

W



CAUGHT IN A LIBERTY DREAM

DAVIDE GASPARRO

A contemporary opera in its already 'classic' way, written in English by tracing one of the most famous fairy tales of the western tradition: in my view there are all the ingredients for a very interesting challenge that this year WFO has decided to undertake.

One of the central themes of *Cinderella* by Alma Deutscher is the meta-theatrical element that acts as a cardinal for the whole rewriting: a composer, orphaned of an impresario of the opera, who writes music under the influence of a magical inspiration, meets her love by recognising him in a boy (the Prince) who writes poems under the flame of love. The metaphorical meeting of poetry and music is nothing more than the opera itself, that is, that particular territory where passions, dramas, conflicts, ultimately life, manifest themselves in the most heated way.

A very interesting element of this particular version of *Cinderella* is that it was written by her author at the age of ten, remodelled and rewritten over and over again: it can

be said that it has accompanied her growth to adulthood. This particular detail reveals how predominant the autobiographical component is in the drafting of the subject. Without making trivial psychologisms, I decided in my reading to enclose the dimension of the actual fairy-tale inside a dreamlike narrative frame, therefore to imagine it as a dream, and, in a game of continuous refinements, to overlap the author with the experience of each of us, transported to a different level from the real one: that is, I had fun imagining how beautiful and satisfying it can be for a contemporary girl to look back in her past and to relive in a time and space that do not belong to her - feeling part of the most beautiful of the stories, the one that speaks of a redemption, a recognition, a story that tells how it is possible to find your place in the world.

We decided to make our *Cinderella* dream of a distant world, always seen as a shimmering and fairy period: that of

the 1920s. In this light, but not frivolous, atmosphere our characters will move in a space that from time to time will evoke the different situations, but which will always start from a single starting idea, essential, that is, the bed of Cinderella, the place from which our protagonist, but basically each of us, is dreaming of his Liberty dream, his great love story, his fairy-tale of music and magic.

This *Cinderella* staged with the Wexford Factory singers must be read following two tracks. The first concerns the subject of the dream and its rules: in a dream everything is possible, the rules of logic are completely subverted and indeed often and willingly there is the magical element that makes plausible what in our reality would be impossible to accept. The second has to do with looking, through the few scenic signs you will see, to read this story as if it were a comic strip, observing every single picture in a total way but enjoying every single moment of the work of each character on stage. All the elements of this production (the reduced space, the light setting, the evocation given by the costumes) should evoke the particular atmosphere of a living comic.

The strips of *Little Nemo in Slumberland* often came to my mind, where each adventure dreamt by the young protagonist become fun because we readers accept that everything can happen in dreams. But, what's more, in a dream what happens appears as it is more true of true life.

WINDSOR McCAY - *Little Nemo...*

Little Nemo in Slumberland, header of the full-page weekly comic strip created in 1905 for *The New York Herald*.

I hope something similar can happen even to our audience, and that *Cinderella* can bring a pinch of magic and healthy madness into our lives.



ELEONORA ROSSI - *Cinderella*

Model of Act 1 - Scene 1b

Di
DIRECTOR'S
NOTES





A new chamber opera by Alberto Caruso to a libretto by the Enniscorthy born and WFO-lover Colm Tóibín. A story about Henry James that tells a lot about the inner world of the playwright. A world premiere for the WFO patrons.

Sung in English

Saturday 22 October | 11 am
 Sunday 23 October | 11 am
 Thursday 27 October | 3 pm
 Saturday 29 October | 11 am
 Sunday 30 October | 11 am
 Tuesday 1 November | 3 pm
 Thursday 3 November | 3 pm
 Saturday 5 November | 11 am

JEROME HYNES THEATRE
 NATIONAL OPERA HOUSE

THE MASTER

by Alberto Caruso

Libretto by
 Colm Tóibín

Opera
 in One Act

Thomas Birch | Henry James

James Wafer | Hammond, Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr

Annabella-Vesela Ellis | Constance Fenimore Woolson

Lawrence Gillians | William James, Edmund Gosse

Andrii Kharlamov | Johnston, the butler

Dan D'Souza | Hendrik Christian Andersen

Isabel Araujo | Alice James

Anna Gregg | Alice Gibbens James

Zita Syme | Mrs Edward Saker

Emma Walsh | Maude Howe Elliott

Arlene Belli | Lady Louisa Wolseley

Dominica Williams | Miss Katharine Loring

Gabriel Seawright | Mr Webster

Stephen Walker | Mr Smith

Chris Mosz | Tito

Emma Jüngling | Ensemble

Deirdre Higgins | Ensemble

Alberto Caruso | Music Director

Conor Hanratty | Stage Director

Lisa Krugel | Set & Costume Designer

Patrick McLaughlin | Lighting Designer

MORE OF THAT EMOTION

COLM TÓIBÍN TALKS TO JOHN ALLISON
ABOUT HIS OPERATIC LIFE

‘Sometimes you want to find a metaphor, to find something that has the shape as your own experience but isn’t your own experience — emotions and things you know, rather than facts.’ Colm Tóibín, whose novels may not be autobiographical but do reflect his own biography, talks about ‘finding new facts and adding old emotions, rather than working directly from life.’ It’s little wonder, then, that so many of the themes associated with his work — exile and home, Irish society, Catholicism, Catalonia, loss, masculinity, gay identity and the processes of creativity — are inter-connected. But as Wexford Festival Opera stages an opera based on his novel *The Master*, to his own libretto, it’s worth remembering that music is a big theme in his life and work too.

Even though Tóibín sees most of his opera these days at the Metropolitan in



Henry James

New York, Wexford will always remain his home company — and not just because, having been born in 1955 in Enniscorthy, he grew in the shadow of the Festival and recalls being told how his aunt had been at the very first meeting when talk began of starting the event. As a writer who has now scooped up many of the world’s literary prizes — earlier this year he was also appointed as the Laureate for Irish Fiction — he remembers winning an essay competition promoted by the festival after attending *Les Pêcheurs de perles* there with a group of fellow boarders from St Peter’s College in the town.

‘I was about 15 and word came that we could go to a dress rehearsal at the Festival, but only if we went in leisure time and listened to the opera in full and attended lectures on

it — every day for a week. I must admit I didn’t get anything special from the week of listening to the recording, but when I got to the opera, starring Christiane Eda-Pierre, I was overwhelmed by it all. I didn’t know you could feel that way. Coming out of the dress rehearsal that night, after the soaring ending, I felt that whatever that world of opera was, I wanted that world. Whatever that emotion had been, I wanted more of it. I went back to boarding school thinking there was something there, a very powerful business. So I was very happy that my essay won the competition, especially that part of the deal was a ticket for the following year, when I saw *Oberon*. In those early years I also saw *Thaïs*.’

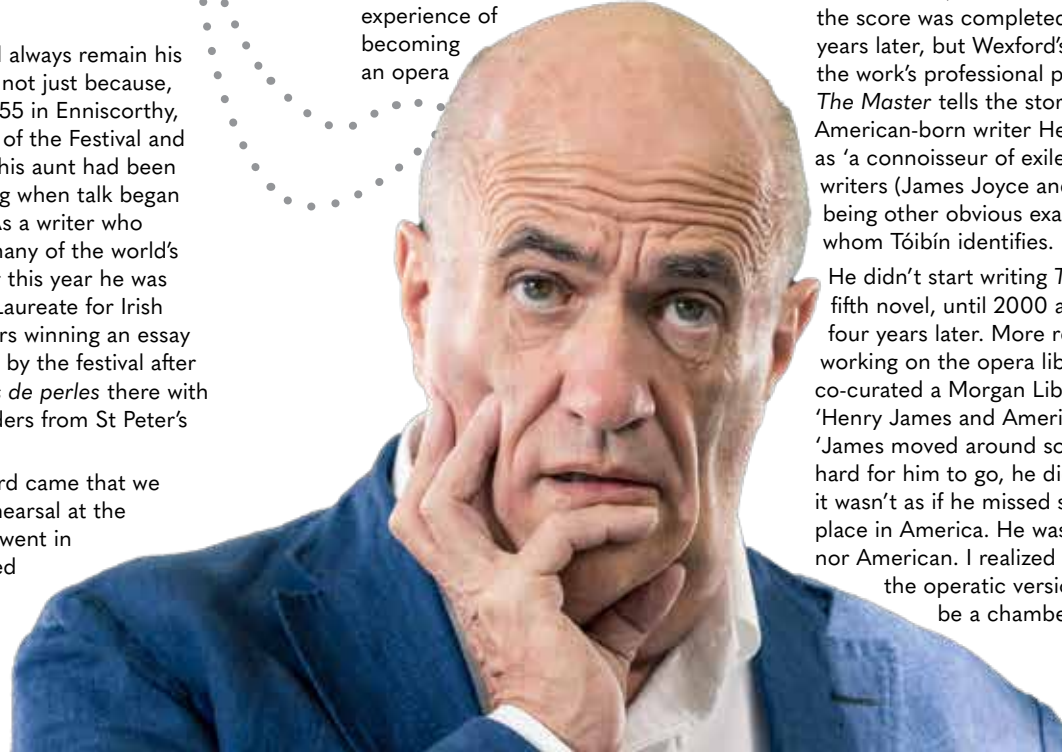
Tóibín himself is now part of that ‘business’, but did the experience of becoming an opera

librettist himself increase Tóibín’s respect for operatic wordsmiths, or leave him frustrated about what he had to cut from his own book?

‘The proposal came out of the blue. It was the composer Alberto Caruso who approached me, not with the general idea of doing an opera but emphatically to do *The Master*. I met him and we talked about it and I said let’s have a go... When it came to trying to find an operatic way into the story, and the question of what to leave out, we were greatly helped by the director Ron Daniels. He was really good at putting shape on it all and suggested cutting about a third of the story — and I realized how perceptive he was.’

The results were workshopped in 2014 with students at the University of Boulder in Colorado (available on YouTube) and the score was completed a couple of years later, but Wexford’s production is the work’s professional premiere. *The Master* tells the story of the American-born writer Henry James, who as ‘a connoisseur of exile’ is one of those writers (James Joyce and Thomas Mann being other obvious examples) with whom Tóibín identifies.

He didn’t start writing *The Master*, his fifth novel, until 2000 and published it four years later. More recently, and since working on the opera libretto, in 2017 he co-curated a Morgan Library exhibition, ‘Henry James and American Painting’. ‘James moved around so much. It wasn’t hard for him to go, he didn’t have a locus, it wasn’t as if he missed some particular place in America. He was neither English nor American. I realized in approaching the operatic version that it had to be a chamber piece; you can’t



make a panorama from it, and the smaller you make it the more you can get from it. It's really about a single man having these experiences, none of them particularly life-changing — it's not even as if he converts to Catholicism or runs away with the maid. So I made it into almost a mood piece, and decided to go more and more for intimacy. In trying to find a shape, I used Constance Fenimore Woolson as the key figure. At the beginning she comes back from the dead, and it ends with her death, so it's really shaped around her telling the story, her seeing things and warning him. In the opera it became her piece.'

Did Tóibín find it a wrench to lose so many of his words? Did revisiting *The Master* make him wish he could change anything in the book?

'No! Although it did make me realize that I could have moved further into intimacy, further into interiority if I had thought of it originally. I wasn't bothered by the cuts. It was harder to work out the large technical questions, to work out how to shape the narrative, so cutting through my novel didn't really become an issue. Being so close to the story, I enjoyed telling it again. But yes, if someone else had done all that, I would have come out pale-faced!'

And has being a librettist changed his writing in any way?

'Well, since finishing the opera — in fact earlier this year — I've published my first book of poetry, *Vinegar Hill*. I suppose I wasn't exactly counting the syllables while working on the libretto, but I was aware that they needed to have a sort of openness for Alberto to work with, that they couldn't be prose, and that they had to have their own rhythm. Rather than producing sentences, as in the novel, I

was writing lines of poetry for him to work with, lines containing as many images as possible.'

Tóibín has followed this up with a second libretto, for Ludovico Einaudi's *Winter Journey*, an opera exploring the conflicts felt by those caught up in Europe's migrant crisis and premiered at the Teatro Massimo in Palermo in October 2019. He admits that he has been thinking for a long time about an operatic version of *The Testament of Mary*, his 2012 novel articulating the inner life of the Virgin Mary.

'I've learnt that everything in the opera business takes a long time, even longer than in film. Still, if someone had said to me at 15, you'll write an opera libretto and it will be performed here, in Wexford, I wouldn't have believed them. It would have seemed beyond any possibility, but here we are.'



The Composer
ALBERTO CARUSO

THE CLIMATE HAS CHANGED. WHEN WILL WE?

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‘Live All You Can!’,

Henry James’s collected works include twelve plays, but he is certainly not remembered as a playwright. Despite a great love for the theatre, and excellent commentary on the plays of his time, James had little success as a writer for the stage. The successful novelist encounters a unique pressure when attempting to write in a different medium. *The Master* deals sensitively with the anger and pain James felt when his play *Guy Domville* was booed off the stage - while Oscar Wilde enjoyed immense success around the corner. Wilde is a shadowy presence, but does not personally appear in the opera. His stage successes, his sex life and his sentencing were all experiences that escaped Henry James; Oscar lived defiantly out in the open, but Henry stayed at home at night, exploring life, love and vice primarily with his pen. Adapting a novel for the stage is a challenging enterprise; James himself wryly commented that his *Portrait of a Lady* could not work on stage because its most dramatic scene takes place inside the mind

of a woman sitting in a chair. *The Master* is a novel about a novelist, here reworked as a ghost story, a sequence of scenes and memories conjured on a cold winter’s night. The book paints a portrait of Henry James and his working life, tracing how certain events and encounters shaped his experience, and it is haunted by the suicide of his friend Constance Fenimore Woolson. The opera reframes the story as a kind of ghostly interview, wherein Constance appears to Henry on New Year’s Eve 1899. Henry and Constance remember and revisit several scenes from Henry’s life; the crushing failure of *Guy Domville*, parties in Dublin, visits to his family in New England. There are encounters with friends and artists, in scenes set in London, Rome and eventually Venice, where Constance died. Dance, sculpture, music, sex, love and death all fade in and out of memory, their glimpses hinting at the origins of some of James’ most famous stories and characters. On this strange night, Henry and Constance conjure up a company of ghosts, returning from the ‘visitable past’.

CONOR HANRATTY

What better place than the theatre for such a conference of ghosts? Our customs and our superstitions insist that we acknowledge them: every theatre leaves a ghost light shining when the theatre is dark. The idea is that in this quiet time, the ghosts can perform on stage, living or re-living their great dramas. His own failure notwithstanding, Henry James loved the theatre, and he certainly loved ghost stories: few writers of the late nineteenth century created more chilling but moving encounters between the living and the dead. By December 1899, James doubtless would have seen Henrik Ibsen’s final play *When We Dead Awaken*, which premiered that month at the Haymarket. James himself had written elsewhere that ‘we get the feeling, in Ibsen’s plays, that... his characters are all too busy learning how to live.’ Like *The Master*, *When We Dead Awaken* features a woman visiting an artist; a troubled muse who has returned to question her depiction in his work. It is a violent, poetic and ironic play, full of characters desperate to live life rather than merely experiencing it. ‘When we dead awaken’, its heroine opines, ‘we find that we have never lived’. *The Master* stages this very crisis; what is it to be alive? As Constance questions the circumstances

of her death, Henry contemplates the gap between his own life and the life in his work. Constance encourages him to embrace life - and love - instead of living only vicariously through art. On this ‘night for the dead’ (as Henry’s brother calls it) the two great friends remember and capture and hold the past, imagining what new stories the dawning century may bring.

W

Di
DIRECTOR'S
NOTES



Sunday 23 October | 3 pm
 Monday 24 October | 3 pm
 Wednesday 26 October | 3 pm
 Friday 28 October | 3 pm
 Saturday 29 October | 11 am
 Monday 31 October | 11 am
 Wednesday 2 November | 3 pm
 Saturday 5 November | 3 pm

WEXFORD ARTS CENTRE

THE SPECTRE KNIGHT

by Alfred Cellier

Libretto by
James Albery

Dialogues by Sinéad O'Neill, based on the original script.

Fanciful Operetta
in One Act

First performance:
Opera Comique, London, 1878

Artwork by
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Thomas Bennett | *The Grand Duke*

Monwabisi Lindi | *His Lord Chamberlan*

Grace Maria Wain | *First Lady*

Erin Fflur | *Second Lady*

Jennifer Lee | *Viola*

Matthew Nuttall | *Ghost, Otho*

Gioele Mugliardo | *Music Director*

Sinéad O'Neill | *Stage Director*

Lisa Krugel | *Set & Costume Designer*

John Comiskey | *Lighting Designer*



A haunted glen, an eccentric Grand Duke, a young girl, a nephew in disguise, a much-talked spectre. These are all the ingredients for a tragedy or for... a fanciful operetta.

Sung in English

DAVID CHANDLER

The first thing anyone should know about Alfred Cellier (1844-91) is that he composed the music for *Dorothy* (1886), a comic opera with a libretto by B C. 'Charlie' Stephenson (1839-1906). The second is that *Dorothy* had an initial run of 931 performances, smashing all records for longevity, and easily outperforming the Gilbert and Sullivan works. It is important to keep this in mind, as Cellier is remembered, if at all, as one of the 'also-rans' of the Gilbert and Sullivan era, but at his best, and strictly in the field of comic opera, he could compete with Sullivan on equal terms. Indeed, despite being two and a half years younger, Cellier soon caught up with Sullivan in this arena, and with his three-act *Sultan of Mocha* (Manchester 1874, London 1876, the score dedicated to Sullivan) arguably established himself as the more promising composer for the popular stage. The tragedy of Cellier's career as a composer, simply stated, is that he was unable to build meaningfully on the promise of *The Sultan of Mocha* until *Dorothy* appeared 12 years later; and by the time *Dorothy* had proved its staying power by running into 1888, he had little time left to establish himself as a distinctive voice in the world of light musical theatre.



Sullivan had the inestimable advantage of his regular partnership with W.S. Gilbert that commenced with *Trial by Jury* in 1875 and continued with slight interruptions until the appearance of *The Gondoliers* in 1889. Only then, with the partnership seemingly in ruins, did Gilbert turn to Cellier, and they worked on *The Mountebanks* together: but this proved to be Cellier's final composition, and he died before completing it. It is impossible not to feel that, had things turned out slightly differently, we might be talking about the 'Gilbert and Cellier canon' today, with Sullivan remembered — as he hoped to be — more for 'serious' music, like his 1886 cantata *The Golden Legend*. In any case, the 'what might have been?' speculations that Cellier naturally prompts can be rewardingly focused on the score

DAVID CHANDLER

THE GHOST OF Shakespeare

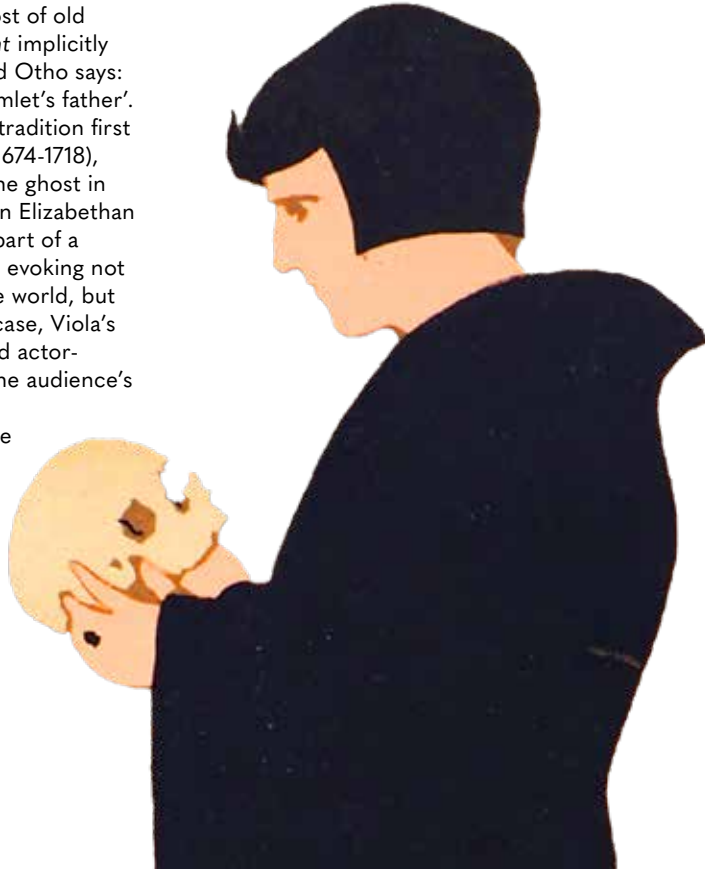
of *The Spectre Knight*, first performed at London's Opera Comique on 9 February 1878 as a 'curtain-raiser' for the Gilbert and Sullivan *Sorcerer*. The libretto for this 'fanciful operetta', as it was billed, was supplied by James Albery (1838-89), a writer mainly known for his popular spoken plays. It is a fine piece of comic writing paying delightful tongue-in-cheek homage to Shakespeare.

Consideration of the *The Spectre Knight's* relationship to Shakespeare can start with the date of the action, cryptically announced in the libretto as a time 'The educated will perceive, the uneducated will not require to know'. But we are also told of a certain knight, buried in 1294, whose ghost still walks, and when Otho pretends to be that ghost, he announces: 'I was but twenty-eight when I was slain, / But I've been buried for three hundred years'. In other words, the story takes place in or around 1594, and it seems clear it was originally presented in what was meant to pass

for Elizabethan costume. But why 1594? This was the year Shakespeare turned 30, and when, in the judgement of most Victorian critics (and many since), he either reached the end of his apprentice period or commenced his 'maturity', soaring above the achievements and capabilities of his contemporaries. This 'maturity' was understood as not just a matter of literary refinement, but as involving more psychological depth and all-round seriousness. Seriousness has its place in the theatre, of course, but so does unseriousness — at least Albery thought so, and what he does in *The Spectre Knight* is to present us with a sort of kaleidoscope of scenes from Shakespeare's mature plays, reimagined in a spirit of pure fun.

Four plays in particular are drawn on. As *You Like It* provided the basic situation: there the banished Duke Senior and his court live in the Forest of Arden, hunting deer for their subsistence (the food theme in *As You Like It* amusingly mutates

into the need for a supply of onions and carrots in *The Spectre Knight!*). *The Tempest* provided the more specific concept of a duke (Prospero) banished with his baby daughter (Miranda); the daughter then grows up without ever seeing a young man, and when she does see one, who happens to be a prince, she speedily falls in love. The friar plot comes from *Measure for Measure*, a play which had been notably revived in London in 1876: there Duke Vincentio disguises himself as a friar, meets and falls in love with Isabella, and finally — his disguise cast off — offers to marry her. And the most famous ‘spectre knight’ in all of British theatre was of course the ghost of old *Hamlet*, as *The Spectre Knight* implicitly recognises when the disguised Otho says: ‘I’m on visiting terms with Hamlet’s father’. Intriguingly, in an old theatre tradition first recorded by Nicholas Rowe (1674-1718), Shakespeare himself played the ghost in *Hamlet*. Thus, by fashioning an Elizabethan plot in which a man acts the part of a ghostly knight, Albery may be evoking not just Shakespeare’s imaginative world, but Shakespeare himself: in that case, Viola’s falling in love with her talented actor-suitor in 1594 emblematises the audience’s enduring love for the great actor-writer at the heart of the British theatre tradition. We can note, too, that Viola is the name of the heroine in *Twelfth Night*, another Shakespeare play involving a duke. (This is not an exhaustive list of Albery’s allusions to Shakespeare; I warmly encourage interested readers to look for more!)



Albery’s Shakespearean kaleidoscope is rendered in light, arch English, with just a few archaisms for flavour (‘Behoves us that we see she does not wed’), and it is easy to agree with the critic of the Pall Mall Gazette who declared, in 1878, that ‘Mr. Cellier owes more to Mr. Albery than composers usually do to their librettists’. In fact, in that long middle period of Cellier’s career, between the early promise of *The Sultan of Mocha* and the late triumph of *Dorothy, The Spectre Knight* was the only time he set a libretto that would stand comparison with those that Gilbert was contemporaneously writing for



MIKE LEIGH - *Topsy Turvy*

Allan Corduner as Arthur Sullivan in the biopic on Gilbert & Sullivan life, directed by Leigh in 1999. The movie was awarded 13 times, including two Academy Awards for Best Costume Design and Best Makeup.

Photo: ©Maximum Film / Alamy Stock Photo

Sullivan. The question then is: did Cellier take full advantage? The consensus of critics in 1878 was that he did; that the score was consistently excellent, well matched to the text, and worthy of (literally) standing beside Sullivan’s music. It was ‘music of remarkable merit’ judged the Era. This suggests that it was just the modest dimensions of *The Spectre Knight*, its categorization in the now obsolete ‘curtain-raiser’ genre, and the way this pressed Cellier into a subsidiary position as Sullivan’s ‘warm-up act’, that prevented it being taken more seriously

BEGGARSTAFF - *Hamlet*

Poster for W.S. Hardy Shakespeare Co., 1894.

THE STORY



A banished Duke, his daughter Viola, Lord Chamberlain and two ladies-in-waiting, live an eccentric existence in an enchanted glen. Unbeknownst to the glen's harebrained inhabitants, Viola's (distant) cousin Otho approaches, disguised as a friar and bent on courtship. Viola and Otho have a charged encounter: Viola tells Otho that their glen is haunted and he promises her that she will soon see a young knight. Evening falls but dinner is interrupted by Viola's excitement at this prospect. Everyone goes to bed except Viola, who lights her candles and waits. The Spectre Knight duly appears and wins everyone over; when he asks for Viola's hand in marriage, the Duke is delighted to accept. Only Viola knows that he is actually a real, live young man and her (distant) cousin Otho, comes to find her at last.

Di
DIRECTORS
NOTES

SINÉAD O'NEILL

Time, enchantment, coming of age — the themes of *The Spectre Knight* mirror my own journey to and from Wexford. Twenty years ago this year I came to the festival on an internship and inspiration struck. Call it love at first sight, call it forays in an enchanted glen, call it a haunting — that initial excitement at the magic of opera has never left me. Now this love affair has brought me back to Wexford — baby and husband in tow — to this charming, joyful, absurd opera.

There's no recording of *The Spectre Knight* and my tentative efforts on the piano offered only hints and echoes — so I called the Music Director, Gioele Mugliardo, and asked him to help. The WhatsApp recording of Gioele playing the overture that pinged into my phone a week later with the accompanying message (play at 1.5 x speed) answered all my questions. I laughed out loud! It wasn't Gilbert and Sullivan, even though Alfred Cellier, conductor for many of their operas, was obviously steeped in their music. Here was an assured compositional voice painting a delightful musical picture. Indeed, Cellier was so successful in his own time that his comic opera *Dorothy* was nineteenth-century London's longest-running piece of musical theatre. The now-all-but-forgotten James Albery was a successful dramatist

LISA KRUGEL - *The Spectre Knight*
Sketches for the Wexford production.

THE KNIGHT FANTASTIC

too, with many long-running plays on the London stage. I've taken the liberty of re-writing his dialogue only to keep it as lively and sharp as the original would have been for its first audiences. His text for the songs is largely untouched.

When Designer Lisa Krugel, Lighting Designer John Comiskey and I started sharing ideas for our production, we had a post-it on the wall with three words: bright, zany, madcap. Those guiding principles grew out of our enjoyment of the joie-de-vivre and tongue-in-cheek humour of *The Spectre Knight*. The photography of Richard Mosse, in which a filter turns greenery into shades of scarlet and pink, gave us the colour palette for our enchanted glen; a foil to the monochrome costumes. The furniture, like the characters themselves, has fallen out of time into a sort of wilderness in which old rules and habits are only half-remembered.

At time of writing, we are about to arrive in Wexford to embark on rehearsals. I'm sure that, like me, the cast and team are feeling both excited and nervous. We are at the foot of the mountain looking up, knowing that each step takes us closer to the summit and our meeting with you, our audience. I hope that our show delights, entralls and entertains you.



Wednesday 26 October | 8 pm
 Sunday 6 November | 11 am

JEROME HYNES THEATRE
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NEW COMMISSION OPERA



Exploring the bizarre world of 20th film pioneer Georges Méliès, this new chamber piece merges the birth of cinema with dream-play and fantasy.

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Music & Lyrics by
Conor Mitchell

A short opera
 for four characters

Emily Hogarty | A Student of Film

Ami Hewitt | An Actress

Richard Shaffrey | First Acrobat

Eoin Foran, William Kyle | Second Acrobat

Conor Mitchell | Music & Stage Director

Mairéad Hurley | Répétiteur

Massimo Carlotto | Costume Designer



THE STORY

A young research student is watching a film from the last century. She is joined by three characters, each lost in time.

A man and his friend - both acrobats from the Folies Bergère in Paris - are joined by a young actress with dreams of leaving France and going to New York. The characters inhabit the same space, though time is split between the present and 1902.

ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE 2022-2023

CONOR MITCHELL

A multi award-winning opera/music-theatre composer, librettist and stage director, Conor Mitchell is unique in his field, working towards a vision of total theatre through contemporary performance. A pupil of Blake and LeFanu, his music blends the worlds of stage design with contemporary visual arts and he finds new ways to engage his audience through socially relevant, politically charged subjects. A double *Ivor Novello* nominee and double *Fringe First* winner, he is the recipient of the *Arts Council Northern Ireland Major Individual Artist Award* - the highest honour bestowed by the agency. He is a life fellow of the Arts Foundation for composition and the only non-American to hold the title 'best score' at the New York Musical Theatre Festival. His pieces are regularly performed outside of Ireland. Recent work includes the National Theatre, Rome, Holland, Edinburgh, Aldeburgh, New York festivals as well as productions across Europe and the UK.

As founder and Artistic Director of The Belfast Ensemble, his most recent new chamber work *Lunaria* was performed at the Queen Elizabeth Hall as part of *PRSF's New Music Biennial* and broadcast on BBC Radio 3's *New Music Show*. His radical chamber opera *Abomination: a DUP Opera* was listed in the Top Ten Classical Works of 2019 alongside works from the Royal Opera House and others, and won 'Best Opera Production' at the 2020 *Irish Times Theatre Awards*.



CONOR MITCHELL

THE MOON DWELLERS



When I heard that this year's festival was circling the theme of 'magic', I instantly knew what I wanted to conjure: the origin of film. I remember being told once that the first movies were presented as illusions, tricks - created by magicians. This thought has never left me, and in a sense, for me, film is still a world of illusion. Here, I wanted to make a short work that centred around four characters - each concerned with Georges Méliès' 1902 film *A trip to the moon*. A French illusionist, this pioneer's work helped move film out of the circus and into the mainstream. But he also takes a theme (Jules Verne) that Offenbach had too, *Le Voyage dans la Lune*. Here we have a sense of voyage. Of entering a new world. And in this, I place my little characters; each going somewhere. New worlds. New loves.

Taking on this role as Artist-in-Residence means I can create work with the freedom to play; develop ideas at a grassroots level. I too then, am on a voyage with this work, and thank Wexford Festival Opera for being my spaceship!



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LIGHTS OUT

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HANNAH MCNIVEN

DIRECTED BY
BEN BARNES

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16 October - 26 November

Image: *Hole*, 2022, pen and Sharpie marker on
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Photo: ©2021 Roberto Recchia/WFO



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Ein Wintermärchen by Karl Goldmark

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CONCERTS & RECITALS



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Taking on dual homes this year, the concerts are held partly in the atmospheric surroundings of the O'Reilly Theatre, and will also return to the beautiful eighteenth-century St. Iberius Church.

The Lunchtime Recitals keep on providing an insight into the artistic personalities of some of the principal singers of the Festival. Thanks to the individual atmosphere and the crisp acoustic of both venues, audiences can appreciate the musical versatility of solo singers who perform a wide variety of music, including operatic arias, lieder, oratorio, concert and popular songs.

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As you enjoy one of our lunchtime recitals in either venue, why not continue that enjoyment with a delightful lunch at Clayton Whites Hotel, which is only a short stroll from The National Opera House or St Iberius Church.

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	STANISLAV KUFLYUK Carmen Santoro, <i>piano</i>	SAT 22	
	RORY DUNNE JADE PHOENIX Mairéad Hurley, <i>piano</i>	MON 24	
	GIULIO PELLIGRA Giorgio D'Alonzo, <i>piano</i>	TUE 25	
	HILA BAGGIO Carmen Santoro, <i>piano</i>	WED 26	
	GABRIELLE PHILIPONET Mairéad Hurley, <i>piano</i>	THU 27	
		FRI 28	NIAMH O'SULLIVAN Gary Beecher, <i>piano</i>
	PABLO BEMSCH Gioele Mugliardo, <i>piano</i>	SAT 29	
		SUN 30	GIORGI MANOSHVILI Giorgio D'Alonzo, <i>piano</i>
		MON 31	GERARD SCHNEIDER Carmen Santoro, <i>piano</i>
	AMI HEWITT Gioele Mugliardo, <i>piano</i>	TUE 1	
		WED 2	NIKOLAY ZEMLIANSKIKH Giorgio D'Alonzo, <i>piano</i>
		THU 3	JENNIFER DAVIS Vojtěch Červenka, <i>piano</i>
	JOZEF BENCI Vojtěch Červenka, <i>piano</i>	FRI 4	
	LIBUSE SANTORISOVA JOSEF MORAVEC Vojtěch Červenka, <i>piano</i>	SAT 5	

ALL THE RECITALS WILL START AT 1 pm

Wednesday 27 October | 8 pm

O'REILLY THEATRE
NATIONAL OPERA HOUSE



DANIELA BARCELLONA

ORCHESTRA GALA

WITH THE **WEXFORD FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA**
CONDUCTED BY **FRANCESCO CILLUFFO**

Born in Trieste, Daniela completed her musical studies under the guidance of Alessandro Vitiello. After winning numerous international competitions, she made her debut in the title role of *Tancredi* in Pesaro, establishing herself as a reference interpreter for *en travesti* roles, which have brought her to walk the most prestigious opera houses worldwide.

Prized with the Premio Abbiati and other major awards, she has worked with some of the greatest conductors and stage directors. Some of the awards include: Lucia Valentini-Terrani, the Aureliano Pertile, the International Opera Award, the CD Classica, the Rossini d'oro, the San Giusto d'Oro, the Sigillo trecentesco di Trieste, the Laurence Olivier Award, and the Pesaro Music Award.

Her several recordings include albums dedicated to Scarlatti and Pergolesi, works by Rossini, Mayr and Meyerbeer, as well as Verdi's *Requiem* and Berlioz's epic *Les Troyens*.

danielabarcellona.com

FRANCESCO CILLUFFO



Another very welcome return to the Wexford Festival Opera stage. The internationally renowned star, Daniela Barcellona, took her first steps right here in Wexford (*Parisina* in 1996 and *La fiamma* in 1997). It is a pleasure to welcome her to Wexford again.



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O'REILLY THEATRE
NATIONAL OPERA HOUSE



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MARTIN 'MARTY' WHELAN
& **ROSETTA CUCCHI**



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PROGRAMME**Grieg**, *Holberg Suite***Mozart**, *Piano Concerto n. 14 K 449***Kinsella**, *Nocturne for strings*

Barry Douglas has established a major international career since winning the Gold Medal at the 1986 Tchaikovsky International Piano Competition, Moscow. In January 2021 Barry was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire for services to music and community relations. He is Artistic Director of Camerata Ireland, the only all-Ireland orchestra, and of the Clondeboye Festival.

In addition to concerto appearances with the major orchestras around the world, Barry is a highly sought-after recitalist and chamber musician, performing in major venues throughout Europe, Asia and the Americas.

Barry is an exclusive Chandos recording artist. He recently completed a six-album recording of the full works for solo piano of Brahms. His current recording projects focus on the solo piano works of Schubert and Tchaikovsky solo piano music.

Sunday 6 November | 5 pm

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NATIONAL OPERA HOUSE

WEXFORD FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA

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CONDUCTOR & PIANIST



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Contact: John Barber - Mobile: 0873 403106 - Landline: +353 53 9201 924 / +44 7956 609777
email: ib@annefield.ie

Photo: ©2021 Clive Barda/ArenaPAL

WFO 2021

I Capuleti e i Montecchi by Vincenzo Bellini

TALKS



Thursday 27 October | 11 am

JEROME HYNES THEATRE
NATIONAL OPERA HOUSE



SHAKESPEARE'S ROUGH MAGIC

In his lecture, Patrick will explore how Shakespeare both mocked and championed the perceived roughness of the English tongue at a time when it had little currency beyond Dover.

He will suggest that while Shakespeare's rough magic aroused censure in France, it was the very roughness of his art that excited the imagination of many 18th and 19th century artists and composers, including Fromental Halévy.

We are grateful for the ongoing sponsorship of the Lecture by Victoria Walsh Hamer who is the daughter of the Festival's Founder, Dr Tom Walsh.

DR TOM WALSH LECTURE

Patrick joined Shakespeare's Globe in 1984. He founded Globe Education in 1989 which, pre-covid, worked with over 150,000 people a year of all ages and nationalities, from pre-school to postgraduate to pensioner.

As director, he curated a series of over 50 festivals including 'Shakespeare and Islam', 'Shakespeare and Shoes' and "Shakespeare IS German". He is a past-president of the Shakespeare Theatre Association, a Fellow of King's College (London) and the proud recipient of Honorary PhDs from the Universities of Sussex and Warwick.

He retired from Shakespeare's Globe in 2020, is a member of the Globe Council and a Trustee of the Rose Playhouse Trust.



PATRICK
SPOTTISWOODE

MICHAEL DERVAN

Friday 28 October | 11 am
Wednesday 2 November | 11 am

JEROME HYNES THEATRE
NATIONAL OPERA HOUSE



Michael Dervan | The Interviewer
Pete McCamley | Mr Harry Houdini

IMPOSSIBLE INTERVIEWS

Following last year's successful conversations with Mr Shakespeare and Mr Catalani, Michael Dervan chooses another great personality for this year's impossible interview.

This time, from his magical top hat, comes the greatest magician of all time: the escapologist and the most famous illusionist of his time: Mr Erik Weisz, better known as Harry Houdini!

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**NATIONAL
OPERA
HOUSE**



Photo: © 2021 Pádraig Grant

WFO 2021
A Pop-Up Event at Frank's.





Putting the environment in the spotlight

Making the right choices every day will maintain and improve quality of life in Ireland, without damaging the environment.



www.epa.ie

Friday 28 October

FESTIVAL GREEN NIGHT

Our audiences are known for their fashionable black-tie attire, so on Friday 28th October, in partnership with the EPA, we are encouraging all our audience to join us in making sustainable choices when choosing their evening outfits. Whether it's borrowing a bow-tie from a family member, shopping your wardrobe for that beautiful dress you wore many years ago, or finding the perfect pair of opera gloves in your local charity or vintage shop, collectively, every small change in the way we shop and live can make a big difference.



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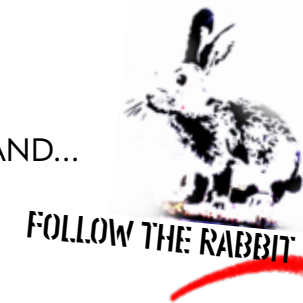
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Wexford Festival Opera

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Everyday

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Wexford Festival Opera will take to the streets of the town again this year with a series of daily Festival Pop-Up performance events: music, drama, singing and dance will be performed in various shops and businesses around Wexford town.

Performances will include artists from the Wexford Factory together with artists from the Festival's main stage programme. You never know who you might see singing from a window on

Main Street or performing in a Café when you pop in!

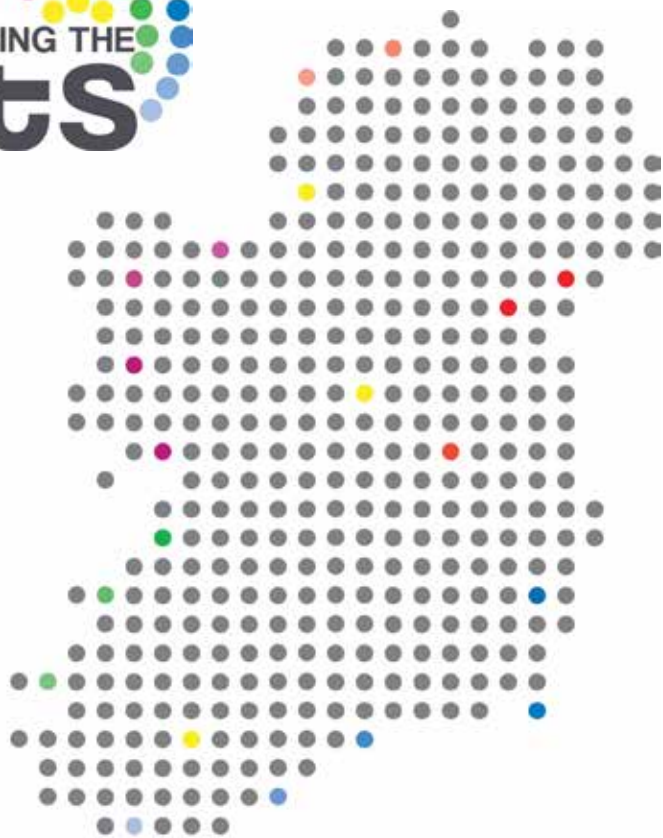
With over 20 Pop-Up performances planned throughout the Festival, there will be something for everyone.

So stay tuned and as you visit Wexford this year.



Photos: ©2021 Pádraig Grant





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*Together we
can make
a difference*





We're Wexford Born...and Bread



BORN

Established in 1860, Frank O'Connor's famous Main Street bakery in Wexford Town produced a wondrous array of oven-fresh breads each and every day, all destined to be eagerly snapped up by the local townsfolk.

Today, this proud family tradition continues at Frank's Place, where many modern favourites have been added, including baguettes, ciabatta, brioche, focaccia, and, the recently popularised sourdough.

And that's why we can say, without equivocation, that "We're Wexford born...and bread."



AND BREAD



Make It Yours

'Putting on the Ritz' by Mary O'Connor

franksp1ace1860.ie

MAKE OUR GARDEN GROW

A brand new cycle has started at the Wexford Factory. We are in the third year of our Academy, and continue to offer professional and financial support to young singers in the early stages of their career. Training started in early September when our artists were tutored by familiar names (Ernesto Palacio from Rossini Opera Festival, Ermonela Jaho and

Rosetta Cucchi) as well as international singers such as Desirée Rancatore and Antonino Siragusa. The opportunity allows them to jump into the professional world, through their involvement in the opera of the Festival. This year you will find them in the main stage opera, Pocket Opera and in our Pop-Up events.

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WEXFORD FACTORY





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Main Singing Tutor



Rosetta Cucchi
Singing & Acting



Ermonela Jaho
Singing Tutor



Desirée Rancatore
Singing Tutor



Antonio Siragusa
Singing Tutor



Sara Catellani
Body Awareness



Michael Dervan
Theatre Culture



Julia Lagahuzère
Opera For Peace



Roberto Recchia
Stage Craft

THE TUTORS

Photos: ©2022 Mark Steadman



From left: Nikolay Zemlianskikh, Sarah Luttrell, Deirdre Aratoon, Giorgi Manoshvili, Hannah O'Brien, Michael Bell, Emily Hogarty, Eoin Foran, Megan O'Neill, William Kyle, Ami Hewitt, Corina Ignat, Richard Shaffrey, Leah Redmond, Peter Lidbetter.

NEW REPETITEURS PROGRAMME

Pianists and repetiteurs are vital to any production, even if they remain invisible to most of the public.

In 2022, the Wexford Factory added an extra initiative to its programme: with international artists and professionals training young pianists/repetiteurs through intensive masterclasses.

The collaboration is with **RIAM** (Royal Irish Academy of Music) and **TUD** (Technological University Dublin).



Carmen Santoro
Main Repetiteur Tutor



Giorgio D'Alonzo
Repetiteur Tutor



Elèna Esposito
Alumna



Rebecca Warren
Alumna



Sunday 18 September | 7 pm

O' REILLY THEATRE
NATIONAL OPERA HOUSE

Another unforgettable night:
to close the Factory, our singers
presented a Final Concert.

THE FACTORY CONCERT

The Wexford Factory, sponsored
by PwC, reaffirms our support
for young artists, celebrating
excellence and recognising talent.

Learn more at pwc.ie



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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



The Wexford Factory is the core of our program to develop International relations with some of the most important educational organisations in the world.

The Wexford Factory is a collaboration with **Technological University, Dublin**; the **Royal Irish Academy of Music**; the **Accademia Rossiniana** in Pesaro and **Opera for Peace**.

It aims to train young singers through intensive masterclasses held by major international artists and opera professionals, further confirming Wexford Festival Opera as a centre of cultural and also educational importance in the opera world.



ACCADEMIA ROSSINIANA PESARO

A seminar dedicated to the interpretation in Rossini's works, directed by the Intendant of the ROF Ernesto Palacio.

The seminar, held every year in Pesaro during the Festival period, deals with the problems arising from modern interpretation of the vocal and dramatic requirements of the restoration of Rossini's operas to the repertoire; it is open to professional singers and researchers. The Accademia was also inaugurated with the idea of forming a more modern opera singer, disposed to give equal importance to the claims of singing, musicology and the visual aspects in an opera.

www.rossinioperafestival.it

OPERA FOR PEACE LEADING YOUNG VOICES OF THE WORLD

Opera for Peace is a new cultural movement for the lyric art form reflecting the reality of today's globalised and diverse world, building an inclusive and creative future together through passion, determination and collaboration. It's the largest worldwide organisation, working in six continents, serving as a reference for young singers: connecting, supporting, and promoting these outstanding artists through our network of Opera for Peace Partners, Advisors, Ambassadors, and Emerging Artists.

www.operaforpeace.org



WFO 2021

Le Songe d'une nuit d'été by Ambroise Thomas.



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WEXFORD FESTIVAL OPERA





CHORUS OF WEXFORD FESTIVAL O P E R A

SOPRANO

Isabel Araujo
Anna Gregg
Deirdre Higgins
Jennifer Lee
Zita Syme
Emma Walsh

MEZZO

Arlene Belli
Annabella-Vesela Ellis
Erin Fflur
Emma Jüngling
Grace Maria Wain
Dominica Williams

Nicole Bulavinets
Grace Doyle
Louise Duggan
Sadie Forde
Lauren Flynn
Lucy Harris-Kotras
Liadh Leonard
Este Lonergan
Lara McDermott
Halle Marglin

CHORUS MASTER
Andrew Synnott

CHORUS ADMINISTRATOR
Oskar McCarthy

CHILDREN CHORUS MASTER
Elizabeth Drwal

CHILDREN CHORUS



TENOR

Thomas Birch
Monwabisi Lindi
Chris Mosz
Gabriel Seawright
Richard Shaffrey
Stephen Walker

BASS

Thomas Bennett
Dan D'Souza
Lawrence Gillians
Andrii Kharlamov
Matthew Nuttall
James Wafer

Aisling O'Grady
Holly Quirke
Caoimhe Murphy
Adain Morrissey
Holly Kinsella
Jamie Cullen
Marcus Hussey
Lilly Lopez
Tara F Hegar

Photo: ©2022 Pádraig Grant

Orchestra of Wexford Festival Opera

1ST VIOLINS

Fionnuala Hunt,
Concertmaster
Lynda O'Connor,**
Guest Leader
Lara Rosemary Sullivan
Co-Principal

Brigid Leman,
Feilimídh Nunan
Emma Masterson
Katherine Sung
Jisun Min
Maria Ryan

2ND VIOLINS

Paul O'Hanlon, *Principal*
Aoife Dowdall, *Co-principal*
Justyna Dabek
Rachael Masterson
Robert Mahon
Lucia Mac Partlin

VIOLAS

Adele Johnson, *Principal*
Ruth Bebb, *Co-Principal*
Carla Vedres
Anthony Mulholland
Aoise O'Dwyer

* Armida

** Cinderella & Barcellona Gala

*** Flute & Piccolo

**** Oboe & Cor Anglais

***** Trumpet & Cornet

CELLOS

Adrian Mantu, *Principal*
Aoife Burke, *Co-Principal*
Alona Kliuchka
Sokol Koka

DOUBLE BASS

Dominic Duddley, *Principal*
Alex Felle, *Co-Principal*
William Hollands

FLUTES

Deirdra Brady, *Principal*
Kieran Moynihan*

OBOES

Nicola Hands, *Principal*
Ruth Berresford****
Rebecca Halliday*

CLARINETS

Jessie Grimes, *Principal*
Seamus Wylie

BASSOONS

Eanna Monaghan, *Principal*
James Fisher

HORNS

Joe Ryan, *Principal*
Peter Ryan
Dewi Jones
Helena Jacklin

TRUMPETS

William Palmer*****, *Principal*
Eoghan Cooke*****
Nathan McDonnell*

TROMBONES

Ross Lyness, *Principal**
Karl Ronan
Paul Frost

TUBA

Les Neush, *Principal*

TIMPANI

Noel Eccles, *Principal*

PERCUSSIONS

Patrick Nolan, *Principal*
Ronan McKee

HARP

Dianne Marshall, *Principal*

ORCHESTRA MANAGER

Noel Eccles

ORCHESTRAL ASSISTANT

Brian Smith

ORCHESTRAL LIBRARIAN

Sarah Burn

Photo: ©2022 Brownes Photography



THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING FRIENDS

Photo ©2021 Clive Barada/ArenaPAL

WFO 2021

Le Songe d'une nuit d'été by Ambroise Thomas.

Giving forms the basis of what makes the Wexford Festival Opera unique. Our donors, Friends and partners are the heart of our organization without whom we would not exist. Founded in 1951, and managed for many years, by a group of individuals who gave freely of their time, talents, and what limited funds they had, the Festival has evolved to be a leader in national and international opera; praised worldwide by audiences and critics alike

Your invaluable support for Wexford Festival Opera enables us to:

- **Bring forgotten gems of the operatic world back to the stage;**
- **Discover and promote emerging national and international artistic talent;**
- **Pursue our mission to support and promote artists and to invest in their future careers.**

BECOME A FRIEND TODAY!

As a Friend, your contribution directly funds vital elements of each Festival, including the Chorus, Young Artist Bursary, and mainstage opera performances. As part of the Wexford family, we want you to experience the magical ambience that Wexford Festival Opera has to offer.

To enhance your time at WFO, we have created a range of exclusive benefits to ensure you have a memorable festival: Priority booking for the best seats; Exclusive Friends events; Friends Parties; Exclusive access to The Friends Lounge; Welcome Receptions held during the Festival; a complimentary copy of Programme Book and more benefits.

We would be delighted if you would consider joining our loyal supporters who enable the production of world-class opera in Wexford. Friends' memberships start at €80 with various different levels, to enable you to support us at a level that suits you. Membership allows you to be part of the Wexford family of friends and gain an insider's perspective of about the festival.

Gifts can be made in a tax-advantageous way through our Irish, UK, and US Charitable Trusts.

MAKE YOUR FRIENDS SUPPORT GO EVEN FURTHER

TAX RELIEF (IRELAND) & GIFT AID (UK)

Support at all levels is greatly appreciated and vital to sustaining the work of the Festival. By increasing your Friends level to Ensemble+ or above for the coming season, you will be providing the Festival with much needed additional funds. At these levels, contributions from Friends based in Ireland attract added value of up to 45% at no additional cost to themselves.

Friends in the UK can increase the value of their gift by 25% when they renew through the Wexford Festival UK Trust, with mutual benefits available to higher rate taxpayers.

ENDOW A SEAT

Endowing a seat in your name, your family's name or that of a loved one or friend is a wonderful way to support the Festival while being part of Ireland's National Opera House, the home of Wexford Festival Opera.

For further information, please email nuala@wexfordopera.com

BECOME AN ARTISTIC BENEFACTOR

The Artistic Benefactors programme enables Wexford Festival Opera to attract some of the opera world's most exciting singers, directors, and conductors. Artistic Benefactors receive recognition in the Festival Programme as well as complimentary mainstage Festival tickets to see the artist or creative team member they are sponsoring. Artistic Benefactors receive a special opportunity to engage with the artists while gaining insight into the world of opera from the artist's perspective.

MAESTRO LEVEL BENEFACTORS (€10,000)

The Maestro Level provides support for Wexford Festival Opera's engagement of top-level directors, conductors, and producers for the mainstage operas.

PRINCIPALE LEVEL BENEFACTORS (€5,000)

The Principale Level supports either a young/emerging artist or a well-established singer of their choice. At all stages, opera is a vocation that demands intense personal investment, and it is encouraging for performers to know that someone in the audience is behind them in this most practical way. Lasting friendships have blossomed between artists and benefactors since the beginning of this initiative, and we would be delighted to supply more information about this unique sponsorship opportunity. See contact details for more information.

PRODUCTION CONSORTIUM

Joining a Production Consortium is a unique and rewarding way of supporting Wexford's large-scale productions. As a member of a Production Consortium, you will join with other like-minded patrons to become part of the journey from score to stage. This group is involved throughout the creative process, gaining in-depth insights as they watch the artistic team bring the production to life.

PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE

Make a major impact by becoming a member of the President's Circle. Help to bring extraordinary opera productions to life in a direct and meaningful way. Support at this level gives the artistic team scope to attract exciting and innovative artists and co-productions – thereby raising the bar to new heights. Gifts may be directed towards specific performances and activities including:

- Mainstage Opera Productions
- Wexford Factory
- Festival Concerts
- The Wexford Festival Orchestra
- The Wexford Festival Chorus
- Festival Education Community Access Projects
- Any other donor-advised performance, project or activity

For further information on The President's Circle please contact Ann Marie Dalton phone: +353 87 9012 925 email: adalton@wexfordopera.com.

PLANNED GIVING

YOUR PASSION,
YOUR LEGACY

SECURING THE FUTURE WITH THE 1951 ENDOWMENT FUND

Wexford Festival Opera remains committed to the founding vision and legacy of Dr Tom Walsh to ensure the forgotten gems of the operatic repertoire are given a chance to glitter and shine once more.

By planning a legacy gift to the 1951 Endowment Fund, your thoughtfulness and generosity will help sustain the Wexford Festival and its dedication to rare opera into the future.

To learn how to help build the 1951 Endowment Fund, contact Ann Marie Dalton who will be happy to discuss the matter with you on a confidential basis. Your bequest can be directed to help a project of your choice and will be recognised in a manner that suits your wishes.

phone: +353 87 9012 925
email: adalton@wexfordopera.com



Photo: ©2021 Clive Barda/ArenaPAL

SUPPORTING WFO

DEVELOPMENT
CONTACT
INFORMATION

To become a Friend or to support Wexford Festival Opera through any of the options mentioned in these pages, or to learn more, please contact a member of the development team:

Friends Membership

Louise Carley
Friends Relationship Executive
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louise@wexfordopera.com
wexfordopera.com/friends

Artistic Benefactors, Wexford Factory and Seat Endowments

Nuala Sheedy
Donor Development Manager
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wexfordopera.com/support

Corporate Partnership and Corporate Hospitality

Adeline Minchin
Sponsorship Manager
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adeline@wexfordopera.com
wexfordopera.com/support/corporate

Major Gifts, Production Consortium, and Legacy Giving

Ann Marie Dalton
Head of Development
+353 87 901 2925
adalton@wexfordopera.com
wexfordopera.com/support

ARTISTIC BENEFACTORS

Thanks to the support of our Artistic Benefactors, Wexford Festival Opera is able to attract some of the world's most innovative and exciting singers, directors, and conductors for its unique opera productions. Our Artistic Benefactors receive recognition in the Festival Programme, complimentary Festival tickets of their choice, and the opportunity to meet in person with the artist or creative team member they are supporting in the course of the Festival. Each support level provides opera lovers with the chance not only to support, but to meaningfully engage with artists, as well as to gain insight and appreciation for the world of opera from an artist's perspective.

At **Maestro level** (€10,000), you will be providing significant support to Wexford Festival Opera in its goal to attract some of the most talented directors, conductors, and producers for our mainstage operas, as well as providing meaningful involvement in the artistic process. At the Maestro level level, you can also support a complete choral, orchestral or or one of our many vocal recitals during the Festival, offering a fully immersive festival experience.

At **Principale level** (€5,000), you will be providing direct support to the artists who are starring in the main stage opera productions. Opera is a vocation that demands intense personal investment, and it is very encouraging for a performer to know that someone in the audience is behind them in this most practical way. We have been delighted to see lasting friendships blossom between artists and benefactors since the beginning of this wonderful initiative.

Nuala Sheedy would be delighted to answer your questions and provide information on this unique sponsorship opportunity. Contact her via email at nuala@wexfordopera.com to arrange a call.

MAESTRO

FRANK AND URSULA KEANE

SUPPORTING JENNIFER DAVIS AND HILA BAGGIO

Irish soprano **Jennifer Davis** will take the title role of Armida by Dvořák, and has performed at the Festival on a number of occasions, notably in 2014 as Agata in Cagnoni's *Don Bucefalo*.

Hila Baggio will play Miranda, one of the central roles in *La tempesta* by Fromental Halévy. Her extensive career has gained her many prizes including Israeli Minister of Culture Award, Rosenblum Prize for the performing arts, Silverman Prize, Grabov Award, Basser Award.

Frank and Ursula have attended the Festival almost every year since 1972, supporting the Festival and Foundation, and are regular participants in the Artistic Benefactor programme. This year they are supporting two of the leading sopranos in 2022 Festival.

DR JAMES GLAZIER

SUPPORTING CONOR MITCHELL

Conor Mitchell, the 2022 WFO Artist-in-Residence. Conor is unique in his field, working towards a vision of total theatre through contemporary performance. At this year's festival Conor will present the newly commissioned work, *Les Selenites*, exploring the bizarre world of 20th century film pioneer Georges Méliès.

Dr **James Glazier** is a long time Bravura friend of the festival and supporter and travels annually to Wexford Festival Opera.

JUDITH LAWLESS AND KEVIN EGAN

SUPPORTING STEVEN WHITE

Steven White is conducting the main stage production *Lalla-Roukh*. Steven is one of North America's premiere operatic and symphonic conductors. He made his acclaimed Metropolitan Opera debut in 2010, conducting *La traviata* starring Angela Gheorghiu.

Judith and Kevin have been loyal supporters of Wexford Festival Opera as Bravura Friend's and by choosing to support our artist's each year.

MARK VILLAMAR AND ESTHER MILSTED

SUPPORTING GABRIELLE PHILIPONET

Gabrielle Philiponet will perform the title role in *Lalla-Roukh*, David's *opéra-comique*.

Gabrielle is a renowned French lyric soprano, noted for her wide-ranging repertoire. She has recently, performed as Lilia in another David's title, *Herculanum* with the Hungarian National Philharmonic Orchestra in Budapest.

Mark and Esther – who travel from the United States each year to attend the Festival – this year have generously chosen to support the acclaimed French soprano.



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Relax & unwind at Simon Lambert & Sons gastropub in the heart of Wexford town. The buildings rich history dates to the 1800's. Boasting much of the original exterior architecture, the building has been in the Lambert family since 1965. As the birthplace of YellowBelly Beer, the bar has a wide selection of craft beers, wines & spirits. You will find an extensive food menu served daily.

WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ALL AGAIN!

PRINCIPALE

ANONYMOUS

SUPPORTING ANDRII KHARLAMOV

Andrii Kharlamov is a 33-year-old Ukrainian bass baritone, who takes the role of Gernand in this year's production of *Armida*. Andrii secured first prize in the Song category in Antonín Dvořák International Singing Competition 2019, while in the previous edition of the same competition, he received third place in the category Opera Men.

ANONYMOUS

SUPPORTING NIAMH O'SULLIVAN

Irish mezzo soprano, **Niamh O'Sullivan** performs the role of Mirza in *Lalla-Roukh* by Félicien David. Niamh studied at the Royal Irish Academy of Music in Dublin under Veronica Dunne. In 2021 Wexford Festival Opera, Niamh performed the role of Paulina in Goldmark's *Ein Wintermärchen*.

NOREEN DOYLE

SUPPORTING STANISLAV KUFLYUK

Born in Ukraine, baritone **Stanislav Kuflyuk** is Ismen in *Armida* by Dvořák. Stanislav graduated with honors from the vocal department of the Art Institute in Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine. He made his operatic debut at the age of 24 in Alexandrov's production of *Boris Godunov* at the Wrocław Opera, and has performed at the stages of Polish National Opera, Grand Theatre Poznań, Silesian Opera & Kraków Opera to name but a few.

Noreen Doyle has been a constant supporter of our artists for many years in Wexford Festival Opera and is a regular attendee of the festival.

ANTHONY D KERMAN & JOANNA KANSKA

SUPPORTING JADE PHOENIX

Jade Phoenix is an Irish soprano & Wexford Factory alumna. In 2021 she won the Veronica Dunne International Singing Competition and the Danone Ireland Young Outstanding Female Artist Award from Wexford Festival Opera.

Anthony D Kerman and **Joanna Kanska** are long standing Bravura friends and supporters of Wexford Festival Opera, travelling from England each year to attend the festival.

DAME FIONA WOOLF & WILLIAM R GRIFFITH

SUPPORTING GERARD SCHNEIDER

Austrian-Australian tenor **Gerard Schneider** (Rinald in this year's *Armida*) has appeared throughout the world, including the Sydney Opera House, Carnegie Hall, Teatro Real, and the Salzburger Festspiele. In 2017 Wexford Festival Opera, he performed as Prince Dimitri in the critically acclaimed Alfano's *Rissurrezione*.

Dame Fiona Woolf is Chair of Wexford Festival Opera UK Foundation and a friend of the festival **William R Griffith** is a supporter of the arts who will travel from the USA this year to WFO.

WEXFORD COMES ALIVE AT FESTIVAL TIME



& CLAYTON WHITES HOTEL IS IN THE HEART OF IT ALL

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- Art & craft exhibition from 24th - 31st October 2022
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Last year Wexford Festival Opera announced a new bursary with our longstanding Production Sponsor, Danone. The inaugural Danone Young Outstanding Female Artist Award went to Jade Phoenix who was a member of our 21/22 Wexford Factory Academy, and this year is performing in one of the Festival's main stage productions, *La tempesta*.

The Award is focused on celebrating and supporting female leaders in all industries. It will be rewarded each year to a young female artist performing in the Festival programme to support their career endeavours.

Through their partnership with the Festival, Danone is also supporting the production of *Lalla-Roukh* in this year's programme.



THE DANONE IRELAND

YOUNG OUTSTANDING FEMALE ARTIST AWARD



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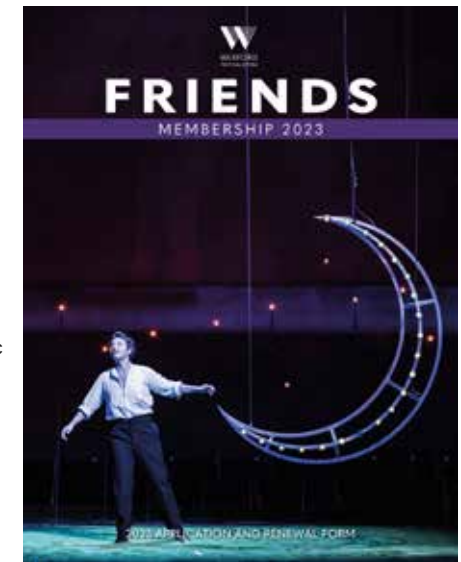
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Photo: © VisitWexfordz

WEXFORD FESTIVAL HISTORICAL TOURS

Wexford Festival Tours in association with Wexford Festival Opera and the National Opera House are organised by Bernard Browne on behalf of Wexford Historical Society. The Festival Tours, which have been running since 1951, are led by expert guides who take you to interesting and intriguing places throughout Wexford town and county, some known, some lesser-known. The tours leave the Talbot Hotel car park, unless otherwise stated*, at 10:30 am sharp and are scheduled to return to Wexford at 1:00pm, in time to enjoy the afternoon Festival events. If you don't have a car, don't worry. People with cars make room for those without; an opportunity to explore Co. Wexford's 'Hidden Gems' and make new friends.

Saturday 22 October

18TH CENTURY WEXFORD TOWN
with Ray Corish
(Author & Historian)

Tuesday 25 October

NEMESTOWN SHORE
with Jim Hurley (Naturalist)

Wednesday 26 October

THE NORTH END
with Monica Crofton
* Note this tour starts from
Trimmers Lane

Friday 28 October

WEXFORD TOWN
AND ITS LITERARY ASSOCIATIONS
with Bernard Browne
(Author & Historian)

Saturday 29 October

TOMHAGGARD VILLAGE
PART OF THE NORMAN WAY
with Brian Matthews

Monday 31 October

PIERCESTOWN TAGOAT
AND OUR LADY'S ISLAND
with Jarlath Glynn (Historian)

Tuesday 1 November

TAGHMON VILLAGE
with Greg Walsh
(Author & Historian)

Wednesday 2 November

BRIDE STREET GOTHIC
REVIVAL CHURCH
with Eithne Scallan

Thursday 3 November

RATHMACKNEE CASTLE
with John Mc Cormack
(History Teacher)

Saturday 5 November

BALLOUGHTON CHURCH OF IRELAND
ON ITS 200TH ANNIVERSARY
with Peter Miller



The tours are open to everyone and are free of charge.
More information on our site www.wexfordopera.com



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They are a little army ready to welcome, drive, usher, and relentlessly work backstage... You may have met a lot of our Volunteers over the years. The Festival wouldn't be the Festival without our enthusiastic group of Volunteers. Thank you from all at Wexford Festival Opera.

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Left to right: John Devitt (Head of Business Development at Ecclesiastical), Eleanor White, David Maguire, David Lane (Managing Director at Ecclesiastical), Randal Shannon (Executive Director at WFO). Long-time volunteer, David Maguire was named as Wexford Festival Opera's 2021 Volunteer of the Year' in partnership with Ecclesiastical. A great supporter and familiar face to many who walk through the doors of The National Opera House, David began his volunteer journey with the Festival in 1977 and has since worn many different hats. He sat on the Board of Directors for a time and manages a very busy Front of House each Festival.

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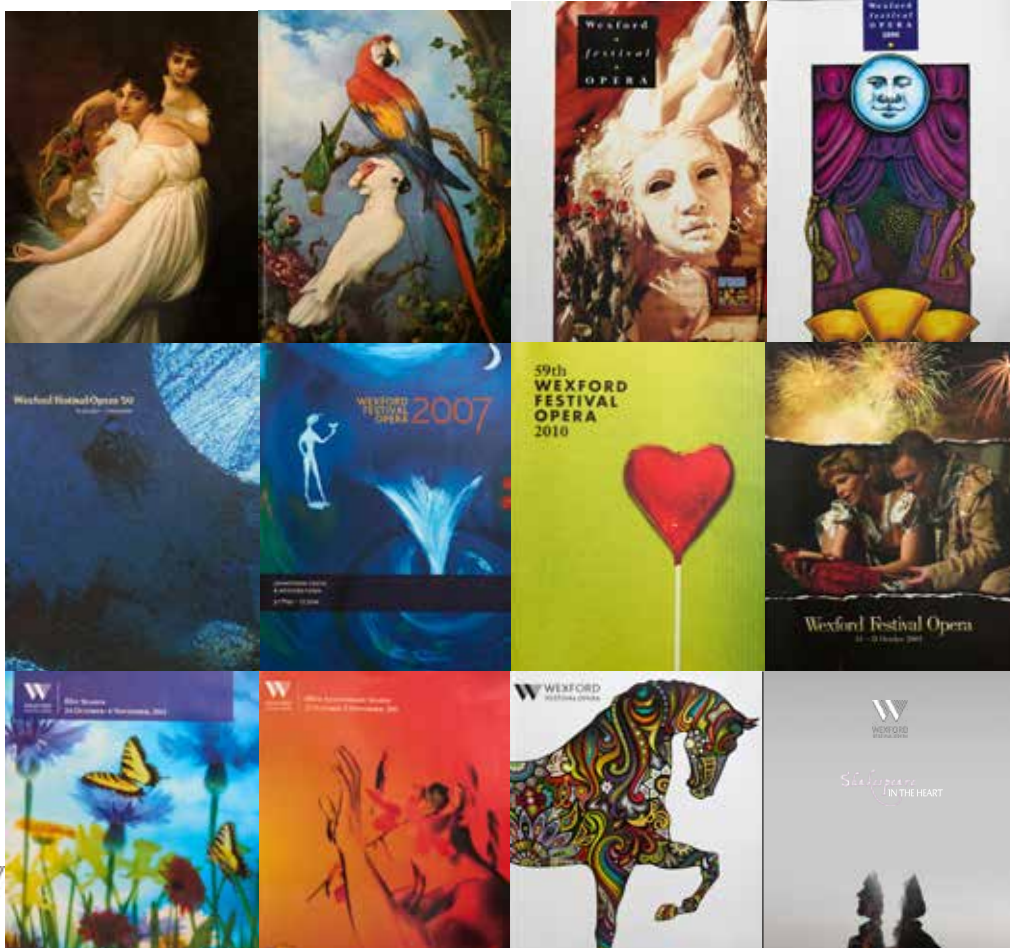
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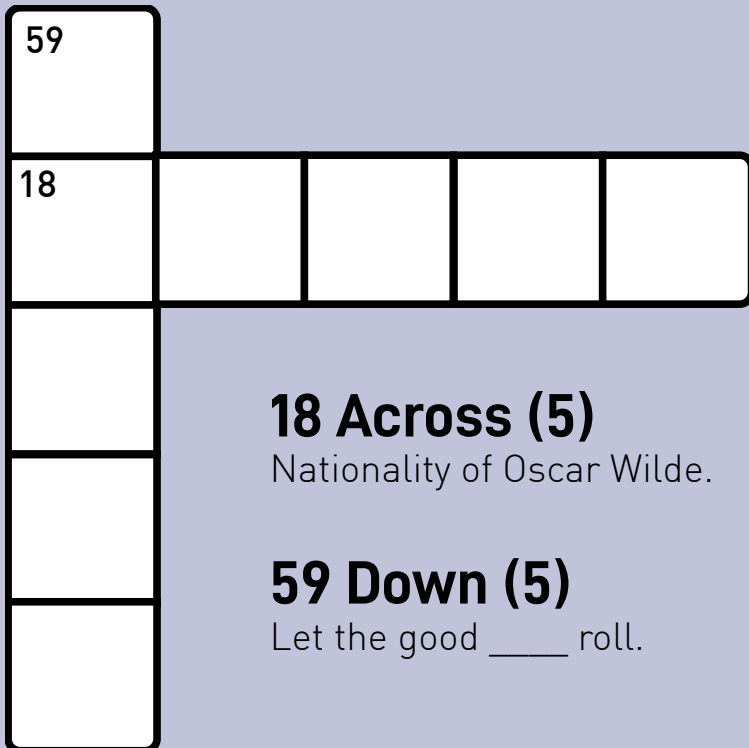
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WFO 1951 | 2022 REPERTOIRE BY YEAR

**1951***The Rose of Castile* | Balfe**1952***L'elisir d'amore* | Donizetti**1953***Don Pasquale* | Donizetti**1954***La sonnambula* | Bellini**1955***Der Wildschütz* | Lortzing*Manon Lescaut* | Puccini**1956***La Cenerentola* | Rossini*Martha* | Flotow**1957***La figlia del reggimento* | Donizetti*L'italiana in Algeri* | Rossini**1958***Anna Bolena* | Donizetti*I due Foscari* | Verdi**1959***La gazza ladra* | Rossini*Aroldo* | Verdi**1960***Theatre closed for reconstruction***1961***Ernani* | Verdi*Mireille* | Gounod**1962***L'amico Fritz* | Mascagni*I puritani* | Bellini**1963***Don Pasquale* | Donizetti*La Gioconda* | Ponchielli*The Siege of Rochelle* | Balfe**1964***Lucia di Lammermoor* | Donizetti*Il Conte Ory* | Rossini*Much Ado About Nothing* | Stanford**1965***Don Quichotte* | Massenet*La traviata* | Verdi*La finta giardiniera* | Mozart**1966***Fra Diavolo* | Auber*Lucrezia Borgia* | Donizetti**1967***Otello* | Rossini*Roméo et Juliette* | Gounod**1968***La clemenza di Tito* | Mozart*La Jolie Fille de Perth* | Bizet*L'équivoco stravagante* | Rossini**1969***L'infedeltà delusa* | Haydn*Luisa Miller* | Verdi**1970***Albert Herring* | Britten*Lakmé* | Delibes*L'inganno felice* | Rossini*Il giovedì grasso* | Donizetti**1971***Les Pêcheurs de perles* | Bizet*La rondine* | Puccini*Il re pastore* | Mozart



18 Across (5)

Nationality of Oscar Wilde.

59 Down (5)

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CROSSWORDS & PUZZLES

THE IRISH TIMES

1972

Oberon | Weber
Il pirata | Bellini
Kát'a Kabanová | Janáček

1973

Ivan Susanin | Glinka
The Gambler | Prokofiev
Lájo nell'imbarazzo | Donizetti

1974

Medea in Corinto | Mayr
Thaïs | Massenet
Der Barbier von Bagdad | Cornelius

1975

Eritrea | Cavalli
Le Roi d'Ys | Lalo
La pietra del paragone | Rossini

1976

Giovanna d'Arco | Verdi
The Merry Wives of Windsor
| Nicolai
The Turn of the Screw | Britten

1977

Hérodiade | Massenet
Orfeo ed Euridice | Gluck
Triple Bill:
Il maestro di cappella
| Cimarosa
La serva e l'ussero | Ricci
La serva padrona | Pergolesi

1978

Tiefland | d'Albert
Il mondo della luna | Haydn
The Two Widows | Smetana

1979

L'amore dei tre re | Montemezzi
La vestale | Spontini
Crispino e la comare | Ricci

1980

Edgar | Puccini
Orlando | Handel
Of Mice and Men | Floyd

1981

I gioielli della Madonna | Wolf-Ferrari
Zaide | Mozart
Un giorno di regno | Verdi

1982

Sakùntala | Alfano
L'isola disabitata | Haydn
Grisélidis | Massenet

1983

Hans Heiling | Marschner
La vedova scaltra | Wolf-Ferrari
Linda di Chamounix | Donizetti

1984

Le Jongleur de Notre-Dame
| Massenet
Le astuzie femminili | Cimarosa
The Kiss | Smetana

1985

La Wally | Catalani
Ariodante | Handel
The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny | Weill

1986

Königskinder | Humperdinck
Tancredi | Rossini
Mignon | Thomas

La straniera | Bellini
La cena delle beffe | Giordano
Cendrillon | Massenet

1988
The Devil and Kate | Dvořák
Elisa e Claudio | Mercadante
Double Bill:
Don Giovanni Tenorio
 | Gazzaniga
Turandot | Busoni

1989
Der Templer und die Jüdin
 | Marschner
Mitridate, re di Ponto | Mozart
The Duenna | Prokofiev

1990
Zazà | Leoncavallo
The Rising of the Moon | Maw
La Dame blanche | Boieldieu

1991
L'assedio di Calais | Donizetti
La Rencontre imprévue | Gluck
Der Widerspenstigen Zähmung
 | Goetz

1992
Il piccolo Marat | Mascagni
Gli equivoci | Storace
Der Vampyr | Marschner

1993
Cherevichki | Tchaikovsky
Il barbiere di Siviglia | Paisiello
Zampa | Hérold

1994
The Demon | Rubinstein
La bohème | Leoncavallo
Das Liebesverbot | Wagner

1995
Saffo | Pacini
Mayskaya noch' | Rimsky-Korsakov
Iris | Mascagni

1996
Parisina | Donizetti
L'Étoile du nord | Meyerbeer
Šárka | Fibich

1997
Elena da Feltre | Mercadante
Rusalka | Dargomizhsky
La fiamma | Respighi

1998
Fosca | Gomes
Šarlatán | Haas
I cavalieri di Ekebù | Zandonai

1999
Die Königin von Saba | Goldmark
Straszny dwór | Moniuszko
Siberia | Giordano

2000
Orleanskaya deva | Tchaikovsky
Si j'étais roi | Adam
Conchita | Zandonai

2001
Alessandro Stradella | Flotow
Jakobín | Dvořák
Sapho | Massenet

2002
Il giuramento | Mercadante
Mirandolina | Martinů
Manon Lescaut | Auber

2003
Die Drei Pintos | Weber/Mahler
María del Carmen | Granados
Švanda dudák | Weinberger

2004
La vestale | Mercadante
Eva | Foerster
Prinzessin Brambilla | Braunfels

2005
Maria di Rohan | Donizetti
Pénélope | Fauré
Susannah | Floyd

2006
Don Gregorio | Donizetti
Transformations | Susa

2007
Der Silbersee | Weill
Double Bill:
Pulcinella | Stravinsky
Arlecchino | Busoni
Rusalka | Dvořák

2008
Snegurochka | Rimsky-Korsakov
The Mines of Sulphur | Bennett
Tutti in maschera | Pedrotti

2009
The Ghosts of Versailles | Corigliano
Double Bill:
Une Éducation manquée
 | Chabrier
La cambiale di matrimonio
 | Rossini
Maria Padilla | Donizetti

2010
Virginia | Mercadante
The Golden Ticket | Ash & Sturrock
Hubička | Smetana

2017
Medea | Cherubini
Margherita | Foroni
Risurrezione | Alfano

2018
Double Bill:
L'oracolo | Leoni
Mala vita | Giordano
Dinner at Eight | Bolcom
Il bravo | Mercadante

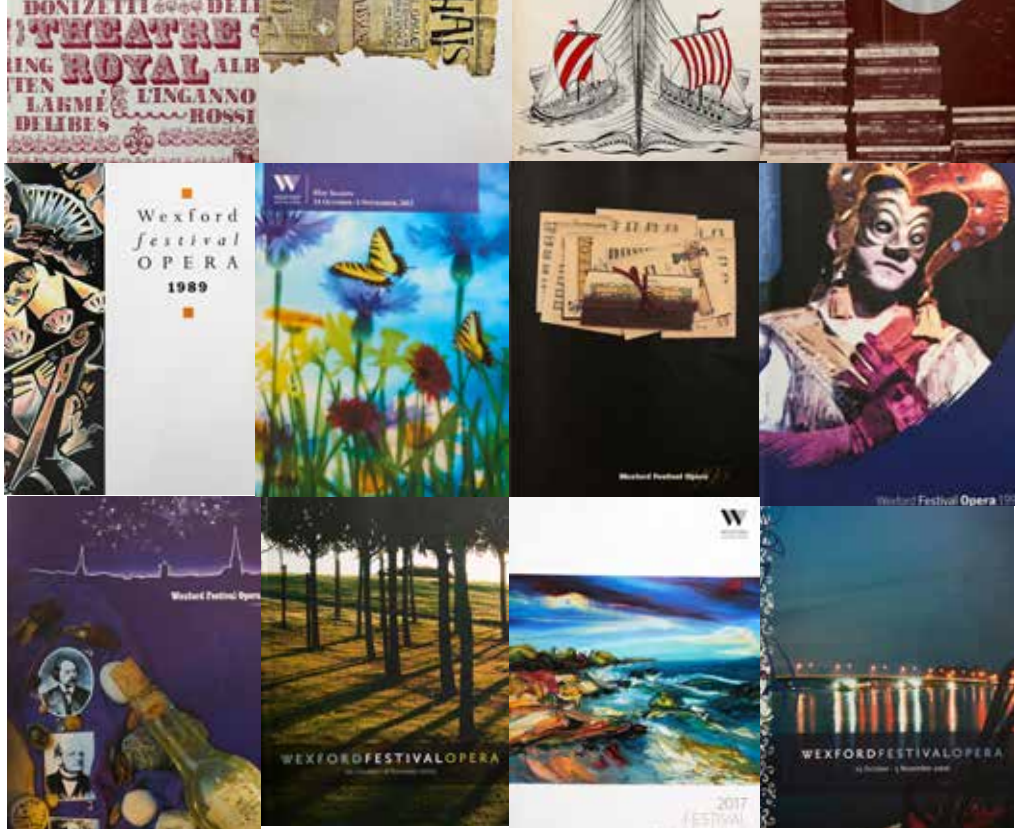
2019
Don Quichotte | Massenet
Dorilla in Tempe | Vivaldi
Double Bill:
La cucina | Synnott
Adina | Rossini

2020
Falstaff Chronicles | Verdi
What Happened to Lucrece?
 | Synnott

2021
Edmea | Catalani
Le Songe s'une Nuit d'Été
 | Thomas
Ein Wintermärchen | Goldmark

2022
La tempesta | Halévy
Lalla-Roukh | David
Armida | Dvořák





WFO 1951 | 2022 REPERTOIRE BY COMPOSER



ADAM
Si j'étais roi | 2000

D'ALBERT
Tiefland | 1978

ALFANO
Sakuntala | 1982
Risurrezione | 2017

ASH & STURROCK
The Golden Ticket | 2010

AUBER
Fra Diavolo | 1966
Manon Lescaut | 2002

BALFE
The Rose of Castile | 1951
The Siege of Rochelle | 1963

BARBER
Vanessa | 2016

BELLINI
La sonnambula | 1954
I puritani | 1962
Il pirata | 1972
La straniera | 1987

BENNETT
The Mines of Sulphur
| 2008

BIZET
La Jolie Fille de Perth | 1968
Les Pêcheurs de perles
| 1971

BOIELDIEU
La Dame blanche | 1990

BOLCOM
Dinner at Eight | 2018

BRAUNFELS
Prinzessin Brambilla | 2004

BRITTEN
Albert Herring | 1970
The Turn of the Screw
| 1976

BUSONI
Turandot | 1988
Arlecchino | 2007

CAGNONI
Don Bucefalo | 2014

CATALANI
La Wally | 1985
Edmea | 2021

CAVALLI
Eritrea | 1975

CHERUBINI
Medea | 2017

CHABRIER
Une Éducation manquée
| 2009
Le Roi malgré lui | 2012

CILEA
L'Arlesiana | 2012

CIMAROSA
Il maestro di cappella
| 1977
Le astuzie femminili | 1984

CORIGLIANO
The Ghosts of Versailles
| 2009

CORNELIUS
Der Barbier von Bagdad
| 1974

DARGOMĪZHSKY
Rusalka | 1997

DAVID
Herculanum | 2016
Lalla-Roukh | 2022

DELIBES
Lakmé | 1970

DELIUS
A Village Romeo and Juliet
| 2012
Koanga | 2015

DONIZETTI
L'elisir d'amore | 1952
Don Pasquale | 1953 & 1963

La figlia del reggimento
| 1957
Anna Bolena | 1958
Lucia di Lammermoor | 1964
Lucrezia Borgia | 1966
Il giovedì grasso | 1970
L'ajo nell'imbarazzo | 1973
Linda di Chamounix | 1983
L'assedio di Calais | 1991
Parisina | 1996
Maria di Rohan | 2005
Don Gregorio | 2006
Maria Padilla | 2009
Gianni di Parigi | 2011
Maria de Rudenz | 2016

DVOŘÁK
The Devil and Kate | 1988
Jakobín | 2001
Rusalka | 2007
Armida | 2022

FAURÉ
Pénélope | 2005

FIBICH
Šárka | 1996

FLOTOW
Martha | 1956
Alessandro Stradella | 2001

FLOYD
Of Mice and Men | 1980
Susannah | 2005

FOERSTER
Eva | 2004

FORONI
Cristina, regina di Svezia
| 2013
Margherita | 2017

GAZZANIGA
Don Giovanni Tenorio
| 1988

GIORDANO
La cena delle beffe | 1987
Siberia | 1999
Mala vita | 2018

GLINKA*Ivan Susanin* | 1973**GLUCK***Orfeo ed Euridice* | 1977
La Rencontre imprévue | 1991**GOETZ***Der Widerspenstigen
Zähmung* | 1991**GOLDMARK***Die Königin von Saba* | 1999
Ein Wintermärchen | 2021**GOMES***Fosca* | 1998**GOUNOD***Mireille* | 1961
Roméo et Juliette | 1967**GRANADOS***María del Carmen* | 2003**HAAS***Šarlatán* | 1998**HALÉVY***La tempesta* | 2022**HANDEL***Orlando* | 1980
Ariodante | 1985**HAYDN***L'infedeltà delusa* | 1969
Il mondo della luna | 1978*L'isola disabitata* | 1982**HÉROLD***Zampa* | 1993
Le Pré aux clercs | 2015**HUMPERDINCK***Königskinder* | 1986**JANÁČEK***Kát'a Kabanová* | 1972**LALO***Le Roi d'Ys* | 1975**LEONCAVALLO***Zazà* | 1990
La bohème | 1994**LEONI***L'oracolo* | 2018**LORTZING***Der Wildschütz* | 1955**MARIOTTE***Salomé* | 2014**MARSCHNER***Hans Heiling* | 1983
Der Templer und die Jüdin
| 1989*Der Vampyr* | 1992**MARTINÙ***Mirandolina* | 2002**MASCAGNI***L'amico Fritz* | 1962
Il piccolo Marat | 1992
Iris | 1995
Guglielmo Ratcliff | 2015**MASSENET***Don Quichotte*
| 1965 & 2019
Thaïs | 1974
Hérodiade | 1977
Grisélidis | 1982
Le Jongleur de Notre-Dame
| 1984
Cendrillon | 1987
Sapho | 2001
Thérèse | 2013
La Navarraise | 2013**MAW***The Rising of the Moon*
| 1990**MAYR***Medea in Corinto* | 1974**MERCADANTE***Elisa e Claudio* | 1988
Elena da Feltre | 1997
Il giuramento | 2002
La vestale | 2004
Virginia | 2010
Il bravo | 2018**MEYERBEER***L'Étoile du Nord* | 1996**MONIUSZKO***Straszny dwór* | 1999**MONTEMEZZI***L'amore dei tre re* | 1979**MOZART***La finta giardiniera* | 1965
La clemenza di Tito | 1968
Il re pastore | 1971
Zaide | 1981
Mitridate, re di Ponto | 1989**NICOLAI***The Merry Wives of Windsor*
| 1976**PACINI***Saffo* | 1995**PAISIELLO***Il barbiere di Siviglia* | 1993**PERGOLES***La serva padrona* | 1977**PONCHIELLI***La Gioconda* | 1963**PROKOFIEV***The Gambler* | 1973
The Duenna | 1989**PUCCHINI***Manon Lescaut* | 1955
La rondine | 1971
Edgar | 1980**PUTS***Silent Night* | 2014**RESPIGHI***La fiamma* | 1997**RICCI***La serva e l'ussero* | 1977**RICCI BROTHERS***Crispino e la comare* | 1979**RIMSKY-KORSAKOV***Mayskaya noch'* | 1995
Snegurochka | 2008**ROSSINI***La Cenerentola* | 1956
L'italiana in Algeri | 1957
La gazza ladra | 1959
Il Conte Ory | 1964
Otello | 1967
L'equivoco stravagante
| 1968
L'inganno felice | 1970
La pietra del paragone
| 1975
Tancredi | 1986
*La cambiale di
matrimonio* | 2009
Adina | 2019**ROTA***Il Cappello di paglia di
Firenze* | 2013**RUBINSTEIN***The Demon* | 1994**SMETANA***The Two Widows* | 1978
The Kiss | 1984
Hubička | 2010**SPONTINI***La vestale* | 1979**STANFORD***Much Ado About Nothing*
| 1964**STATKOWSKI***Maria* | 2011**STORACE***Gli equivoci* | 1992**STRAVINSKY***Pulcinella* | 2007**SUSA***Transformations* | 2006**SYNNOTT***La cucina* | 2019
What happened to Lucrece
| 2020**TCHAIKOVSKY***Cherevichki* | 1993
Orleanskaya deva | 2000
THOMAS
Mignon | 1986
La Cour de Célimène | 2011
Le Songe d'une nuit d'été
| 2021**VERDI***I due Foscari* | 1958
Aroldo | 1959
Ernani | 1961
Falstaff | 2020
La traviata | 1965
Luisa Miller | 1969
Giovanna d'Arco | 1976
Un giorno di regno | 1981**VIVALDI***Dorilla in Tempe* | 2019**WAGNER***Das Liebesverbot* | 1994**WEBER***Oberon* | 1972**WEBER/MAHLER***Die Drei Pintos* | 2003**WEILL***The Rise and Fall of the City of
Mahagonny* | 1985
Der Silbersee | 2007**WEINBERGER***Švanda dudák* | 2003**WOLF-FERRARI***I gioielli della Madonna*
| 1981
La vedova scaltra | 1983**ZANDONAI***I cavalieri di Ekebù* | 1998
Conchita | 2000

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THE CAST





ILARIA ARIEMME

Born in Turin, Italy, Ilaria studied for a degree in Scenography and Costume Design for stage productions from Brera Academy of Fine Arts near Milan. In recent years she has collaborated on several opera projects with director Roberto Catalano and designer Emanuele Sinisi.

DESIGNER, ITALY

COSTUME DESIGNER



ISABEL ARAUJO

In 2020, Isabel finished her masters degree in Performance - Vocal Studies at Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. In 2022 she won The Grange Festival Prize. Operatic roles include: *Fiordiligi/Così fan tutte*; *Belinda/Dido and Aeneas*; *Obedientia/Ordo Virtutum*. Isabel is supported by the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland Trust and the GDA Foundation (Portugal).

SOPRANO, PORTUGAL

ALICE JAMES



DEIRDRE ARRATOON

Deirdre started singing as guest soloist with choral societies and orchestras including The Garda Band, Eroica Camerata and Arun Sinfonia. She is the 2021 winner of the Dame Felicity Lott recital award and has recently sung *Dorabella/Così fan tutte* in Vienna with the Wiener Festspiele Orchestra. She is a member of the 2022 Wexford Factory.

MEZZO, IRELAND

FAIRY



HILA BAGGIO

Hila was a member of The Israeli Opera Studio. Recent and future contracts until 2022/23 include *Susanna/Le nozze di Figaro*, *Musetta/La Bohème* and *Gepopo/Venus/Le Grand Macabre* in a new production at the Semperoper Dresden conducted by Omer Meir Wellber and directed by Calixto Bieito. She will also debut as *Violetta/La traviata* in Tel Aviv.

SOPRANO, ISRAEL

MIRANDA



LUISA BALDINETTI

Luisa is a choreographer, director and author working in the field of dance and theatre. She has worked at Teatro alla Scala in Milano, La Fenice in Venezia, Carlo Felice in Genova, Regio in Turin, Rossini Opera Festival. In recent years she has collaborated with WFO on mainstage operas and Pop-up events.

DANCER, ITALY

CHOREOGRAPHER

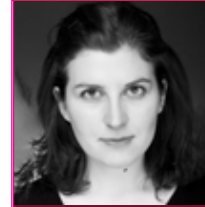


NORBERT BAXA

Norbert is currently Chief-Conductor with Theatre J. K. Tyl in Pilsen in the Czech Republic. He studied at the Bratislava Conservatorium and at the Music Academy of the Performing Arts in Prague. He began his career in 1998 when he became conductor of the North Bohemian Opera and Ballet in Ústí nad Labem and was promoted to Head of Opera for the 1999 season at the age of just 24.

CONDUCTOR, CZECH REP.

CONDUCTOR



SARAH BAXTER

A member of Irish National Opera's ABL Aviation Opera Studio from 2018 to 2020, in 2020 Sarah directed Hannah Peel's *Close* as part of INO's much-praised *20 Shots of Opera* project. Her work has toured throughout Ireland, the UK and internationally. Sarah was the recipient of Druid Theatre's Marie Mullen Bursary 2020–2021 and she is an Associate Artist with Once Off Productions.

DIRECTOR, IRELAND

ASSISTANT STAGE DIRECTOR



MICHAEL BELL

Michael currently studies at the Royal College of Music having previously held a choral scholarship at St. John's College, Cambridge. He has a wide concert repertoire and has evangelised Bach's *St. John Passion* and *Christmas Oratorio*. His upcoming engagements include Bach, the *Witch/Hänsel und Gretel* (Royal College of Music). He is a member of the 2022 Wexford Factory.

TENOR, N. IRELAND

PRINCE



ARLENE BELLI

Arlene is a graduate of the Conservatorio S. Cecilia in Rome and winner of the first prize at the Simone Alaimo Competition. Future engagements include her debut with Wexford Festival Opera, as well as the female *Pope/The Burning Question* by Edward Lambert, *Teresa/La sonnambula* and *Rosina/Il barbiere di Siviglia*.

MEZZO, ITALY

LADY LOUISA WOLSELEY



PABLO BENSCH

Pablo is a former member of the International Opera Studio at Opernhaus Zürich and of the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme at the Royal Opera House. In 2023 he will be the tenor soloist for a recording of Handel's *Messiah* with the L'Orchestre de l'Opéra Royal - Versailles.

TENOR, ARGENTINA

NOURREDIN

**JOZEF BENCI**

Jozef has been a member of the ensemble of the Slovak National Theater in Bratislava since 2004. His recent performances include three concerts featuring Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass* with the Orchestra of the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia Rome under Jakub Hruša. He sang in Halévy's *La Juive* in a production by Peter Konwitschny.

BASS, SLOVAKIA

KING HYDRAOT

**THOMAS BENNETT**

Thomas studied at the Royal Academy of Music and as part of Royal Academy Opera. He has sung as Die Cappadozier/*Salome* (Salzburger Festspiele); Bull Wild Thing/*Where The Wild Things Are* (Shadwell Opera); King René/*Iolanta*, Il Commendatore/*Don Giovanni*, Cadmus and Somnus/*Semele* (Royal Academy Opera); Sarastro/*Die Zauberflöte* (Cavatina Opera).

BASS, UK

THE GRAND DUKE

**THOMAS BIRCH**

A member of the WFO Chorus, in 2021 Thomas made his Wexford debut in *Ein Wintermärchen*. His recent debuts include *Pinkerton/Madama Butterfly* and *Macduff/Macbeth*, as well as numerous concert performances throughout Europe. He will debut the role of Canio/*Pagliacci* in Graz.

TENOR, UK

ROGER HENRY JAMES

**MADELEINE BOYD**

Madeleine studied Theatre Design at Central Saint Martin's College of Art and Design, she was awarded the 2008 Design Fellowship from Independent Opera. Her designs include: *A Little Night Music* (Leeds Playhouse & Opera North); *La traviata* (Komische Oper, Berlin); *Carmen* (Nikai Opera, Tokyo); *A Quiet Place* (Opera Zuid, Maastricht) which won the Place de L'Opera Award for Best Opera 2018.

DESIGNER, UK

SET & COSTUME DESIGNER

**MASSIMO CARLOTTO**

After earning a specialist degree at the IUAV Venice, Massimo graduated as a costume designer from the Scuola dell'Opera Italiana in Bologna. He worked with Vera Marzot, and later he was assistant to Claudia Pernigotti. His recent designs include *Madama Butterfly*, *Giovanna D'Arco*, *Falstaff*, *Nabucco*, *Don Pasquale*, *La Cenerentola*. He became Head of Wardrobe at WFO in 2021.

DESIGNER, ITALY

COSTUME DESIGNER

**ALBERTO CARUSO**

Alberto is a composer, pianist and conductor. He was Assistant Composer for three years at Hans Zimmer studios L.A. He wrote scores for *Madhouse*, *Sunday Lunch*, *Without Writers*. His first opera, *The Little Prince*, was commissioned by The Tokyo Chamber Orchestra and he conducted the premiers in Tokyo and Turin. His compositions have been performed all over the world.

COMPOSER, ITALY

COMPOSER/CONDUCTOR

**ROBERTO CATALANO**

Roberto has a degree in Philosophy and Ethics. His debut as stage director was in 2017 at the Festival Monteverdi of Cremona with the diptych *Il ballo delle ingrate* and *Il combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda*. Forthcoming events include *Il matrimonio segreto* at the Teatro Massimo, Palermo and at the Teatro Regio, Parma.

DIRECTOR, ITALY

STAGE DIRECTOR

**VOJTĚCH ČERVENKA**

Repetiteur Vojtěch began playing piano at the age of six. He graduated from the conservatory and currently studies conducting at the Ježek Conservatory in Prague. He awarded a special prize for accompaniment from the Kroměříž Academy of Music under the direction of Zdeněk Klouda.

PIANIST, CZECH REP.

REPETITEUR

**FRANCESCO CILLUFFO**

Now in his second year as Principal Guest Conductor at WFO, Francesco is the conductor of *La tempesta*. He has also conducted several other operas for Wexford including *Edmea* (2021), the double bill *L'oracolo/Mala vita* (2018), *Risurrezione* (2017). Recent engagements include *Manon Lescaut*, *Macbeth*, *Falstaff* and Verdi's *Requiem*.

CONDUCTOR, ITALY

CONDUCTOR

**JOHN COMISKEY**

John has worked extensively in theatre, music, film and television. He won Best Design at the Irish Theatre Awards and has been Nominated multiple times for Best Lighting Design. He designed the first Irish participation at the Prague Quadrennial exhibition of world theatre design. He directed the award-winning film *Hit and Run*. He is currently completing the opera film *DreamCatcher*.

DESIGNER, IRELAND

LIGHTING DESIGNER



LORCAN CRANITCH

Dublin born, Lorcan is an Irish actor, he became involved in drama as a student and in 1980 he moved to London where he trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. His first major role on British television was as Tim Healy in *Parnell* and *the Englishwoman*. He then combined TV with stage work at The Royal National Theatre, The Royal Shakespeare Company, The Abbey and The Gate Theatre.

ACTOR, IRELAND

NARRATOR



GIORGIO D'ALONZO

Giorgio studied at the Conservatory of Bologna graduating in piano and vocal coaching both *cum laude*. He works for opera companies including Teatro Comunale (Bologna); Festival Verdi, (Parma); Festival della Valle d'Itria and Auditorio de Tenerife. He carried out further study of vocal repertoire with R. Barker, V. Scalera, C. Santoro, G. Zappa. He is a tutor for the Wexford Factory.

PIANIST, ITALY

REPETITEUR



JENNIFER DAVIS

Jennifer is an alumna of the Jette Parker Young Artist Programme, and has sung *Elsa/Lohengrin*; *Gretel/Hänsel und Gretel*; *Adina/L'elisir d'amore*; and *Erste Dame/Die Zauberflöte* (Covent Garden). She previously appeared in 2014 at WFO as *Agata/Don Bucefalo* by Antonio Cagnoni.

SOPRANO, IRELAND

ARMIDA

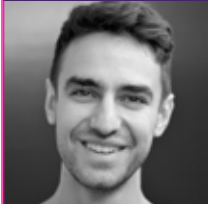


ELIZABETH DRWAL

Elizabeth is an experienced vocal animateur with a portfolio of work built up over the last 30 years. Her creative projects encompass many genres of the arts including opera, dance and film. She is presently collaborating with composer Andrew Synott and local students to develop a Youth Opera for 2022. She is Chorus director for the WFO Children's Opera Chorus 2022.

VOCAL SPECIALIST, IRELAND

CHILDREN CHORUS MASTER



DAN D'SOUZA

Dan studied at the Royal Academy Opera and the Royal College of Music. Last season he covered *Boatswain/HMS Pinafore* (English National Opera) and sang *Silvio/Pagliacci* (Iford Arts Next Generation Program); and *Schaunard/La bohème* (Mid Wales Opera). This season he plays *Flemish Deputy/Don Carlo* (Royal Opera House).

BARITONE, UK

TRINCULO | H. C. ANDERSEN



RORY DUNNE

A graduate of TU Dublin Conservatoire, Rory is also an alumni of Wexford Factory 2020/2021 and The Irish National Opera ABL Aviation Opera Studio. He is a current Company Artist for Northern Ireland Opera. He also studied as an actor. He was *Falstaff/Falstaff Chronicles* and *Jeremy/Le Songe d'un nuit d'ete* in the last two Seasons of WFO.

BARITONE, IRELAND

BOHUMIR, MUEZIN



ANNABELLA-VESELA ELLIS

British born Bulgarian-Turkish mezzo-soprano Annabella Vesela-Ellis is a 2021/23 season Fellow with English National Opera Chorus and made her debut as *New Ofglen/The Handmaid's Tale*. This year she made her Finnish debut with Savonlinna Opera Festival. She has performed with Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Longborough Festival Opera, British Youth Opera, Dorset Opera, Devon Opera.

MEZZO, UK

CONSTANCE F. WOOLSON



ERIN FFLUR

Erin graduated from the Royal Northern College of Music in 2020, With a first-class honours degree Music in Vocal Studies and Opera and a Distinction in a Masters in Music (Performance). Her roles include *Catrin/Wild Cat* (Welsh National Opera); *Ruth/The Pirates of Penzance* (Forebear); and *Cousin Hebe/H.M.S. Pinafore* (The National Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Company).

MEZZO, UK

SECOND LADY



EOIN FORAN

Eoin is in his final year of study at the Royal Conservatoire Scotland of a Masters degree in Performance. To date, he has been a soloist on both the operatic and concert platform. He sang Giuseppe Palmieri/*The Gondoliers*. Recent competition highlights include winner of the 2020 TU Dublin Gold Medal Recital Award. He is a member of the 2022 Wexford Factory.

BARITONE, IRELAND

SECOND ACROBAT



DAVIDE GASPARRO

Actor and director, Davide graduated in Theatre History and from Piccolo Teatro of Milan school under the guidance of Luca Ronconi. Since then, he has collaborated with the Piccolo Teatro of Milan as an actor, assistant director and director working with Luca Ronconi, Damiano Michieletto, Rosetta Cucchi, Carmelo Rifici, Francesco Aliverta amongst others.

DIRECTOR, ITALY

STAGE DIRECTOR



LAWRENCE GILLIANS

Lawrence studied at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance. Operatic engagements include *Stárek/Jenůfa* (Aylesbury Opera); *Norberg/La Nonne Sanglante* (Gothic Opera); *Speaker, Second Armed Man/Die Zauberflöte* (Hurn Court Opera); *Zalzal/L'étoile* (New Sussex Opera); *Bartolo/Le nozze di Figaro* (Puzzlepiece Opera), multiple roles in Cavalli's *L'Egisto* (Hampstead Opera).

B. BARITONE, UK

WILLIAM JAMES, EDMUND GOSSE



ANNA GREGG

Recently graduated from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Anna studied both under Sarah Pring. She has been an 'Associate Artist' with NI Opera this year, and 'Musician in Residence' at Holy Trinity Church, Dartford. Recent productions include: *Semele* (OCI), *Der Freischütz* and *L'Elisir d'amore* (Random Opera).

SOPRANO, UK

ALICE GIBBENS JAMES



CONOR HANRATTY

Conor trained at UCLA, the National Theatre and Rough Magic's SEEDS. He directed *Flatpack* and *HARP | A River Cantata* (Dublin Fringe Festival); and the trilogy *Front of House, Backstage and The Stalls* (Cork Opera House), nominated for Best Opera Production at the Irish Times Theatre Awards. In 2021 he directed *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* by Vincenzo Bellini for WFO.

DIRECTOR, IRELAND

STAGE DIRECTOR



DEIRDRE HIGGINS

Deirdre completed a BA in Voice and Dance (University of Limerick) and is currently undertaking a Master of Music Performance in the TU Dublin Conservatoire under the tutelage of Mairéad Buicke and Mairéad Hurley. She made her opera chorus debut in 2022 in the Irish National Opera's production of *Maria Stuarda*. She regularly performs and tours with acclaimed Irish vocal group Anúna.

SOPRANO, IRELAND

ENSEMBLE



AMI HEWITT

Ami is from Dublin. She is a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin and TU Dublin Conservatoire, where she attained her BmusEd degree majoring in vocal performance. She graduated with distinction from a masters degree in Voice and Opera at Conservatorium Maastricht. She is a current member of The Wexford Factory.

SOPRANO, IRELAND

STEPMOTHER AN ACTRESS



MONIKA HLINĚNSKÁ

Monika studied international relations in Pilsen and studied art and theatre at the University of Salford. She was accepted to the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague to study directing and dramaturgy of drama theatre. Her own dramatization of Stefan Zweig's novel *Beware of Pity* won third place in the Evald Schorm Prize for 2020.

DIRECTOR, CZECH REP.

ASSISTANT STAGE DIRECTOR



EMILY HOGARTY

Based in Dublin, she graduated from the TU Dublin Conservatoire in conjunction with Trinity College Dublin with a first-class honours degree in Music Education (BMusEd). Emily has been a soloist with Trinity Orchestra since 2017 and she will be performing Gershwin's *My Man's Gone Now* and Mozart's *Smanie Im placabili* in the Spring concert. She is a current member of The Wexford Factory.

MEZZO, IRELAND

ZIBALDONA

A STUDENT OF FILM



THOMAS D HOPKINSON

Thomas is an Associate Young Artist at the National Opera Studio and is a Sybil Tutton award winner supported by Help Musicians. He has performed several times at WFO, including *The Caliph/The Veiled Prophet*, *Batone/L'inganno felice* and *Monterone/Rigoletto*. He will be making his debut as *Sciarrone/Tosca* at the Royal Opera House later this year.

BASS, UK

KABOUL



MAIRÉAD HURLEY

Mairéad Hurley studied piano at the Royal Irish College of Music and music at University College Dublin. Further studies include the repetiteur course at the London National Opera Studio and a MMus degree at TU Dublin Conservatoire. From 2010 to 2021, Mairéad was Head of Vocal, Opera and Drama studies at TU Dublin Conservatoire. She continues her work as repetiteur.

PIANIST, IRELAND

REPETITEUR



JAN HYNK

Jan studied at Prague Conservatory and is currently with Paolo de Napolì. He is a soloist in the Pilsen J. K. Tyl theatre and host soloist in Prague National Theatre, South-Bohemian Theatre in České Budějovice and Liberec F. X. Šalda theatre. He won the Singing A. Dvořák competition in Carlsbad, 2016 and the Mozart competition in Prague 2012.

BASS, CZECH REP.

PETR

**CORINA IGNAT**

Corina attended the Royal Irish Academy of Music in Dublin. Her studies continue through RIAM's Masters in Music Performance programme. She collaborates with Irish National Opera on a wide array of productions and is currently a member of The Wexford Factory.

SOPRANO, ROMANIA

STEPMOTHER

**EMYR WYN JONES**

Welsh bass-baritone Emyr Wyn trained at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama before furthering his training as a Young Artist at the National Opera Studio. His past engagements include Masetto/*Don Giovanni* (Scottish Opera); *Colline/La bohème* (Opera North); *Leporello/Don Giovanni* (Longborough Festival Opera).

BARITONE, UK

BAKBARA

**EMMA JÜNGLING**

Emma debut as soloist on the opera stage was *Tituba/The Crucible* by Robert Ward's (Berlin Opera Academy), thanks to the Lorna White Merit grant. She also covered the role of Cherubino/*Le nozze di Figaro*. Her future engagements will include *Venus/Orpheus in the Underworld* (CO2 Hall - Switzerland).

MEZZO, SWITZERLAND

SICORACE

**ANDRII KHARLAMOV**

Andrey has been an artist at the Odessa Opera House, Ukraine since 2014 and won first prize at the 2019 Antonín Dvořák International Competition in Karlovy Vary. He trained at the Odessa National Music Academy and has been a soloist with the Odessa Philharmonic Orchestra, the Vodyanoy Academic Theatre of Musical Comedy, the Teplice Philharmonic and Pilsen Opera House.

BARITONE, UKRAINE

GERNAND

**JOSEF KOVAČIČ**

Graduate of the Music Academy of Performing Arts in Prague and of the Prague Conservatory, he made his professional debut in 2015 as Hermann/*Les Contes d'Hoffmann* (Bregenz). In the same season he appeared as a guest artist on Czech opera stages. Since 2020, he is a permanent soloist of the opera of F. X. Šalda Theater in Liberec.

BASS, CZECH REP.

UBALD

**WILLIAM KYLE**

William made his debut with Outreach Opera, playing Benoît and Alcindoro/*La Bohème*. He is a Nevill Holt Opera Associate Artist and will perform as *Ufficiale/Il barbiere di Siviglia*. His will also sing *Conte/Le nozze di Figaro* and *Petrus/St John Passion*. He is currently a member of the 2022 Wexford Factory and was chosen by Maestro Palacio to join the Accademia Rossiniana in 2023.

BARITONE, IRELAND

SECOND ACROBAT

**LISA KRUGEL**

Lisa graduated from The Lir's MFA in Stage Design. Recent set and costume designs include: *In Our Veins* (Abbey Theatre/Bitter Like a Lemon); *Grimm Tales*, and *Baroque Opera Double Bill* (TU Dublin Conservatoire); *Dalliance, I Am a Camera, Damascus and The Ugly One* (The Lir). Lisa also works as a Stage Manager with Liz Roche Company and Irish National Opera.

DESIGNER, IRELAND

SET & COSTUME DESIGNER

**STANISLAV KUFLYUK**

Stanislav graduated with honours from the vocal department of the Art Institute in Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine and in Poznan Music Akademy. His future engagements include debuts with as *Metivier/War and Peace* (Bayerische Staatsoper); *Figaro/Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Opera Australia); *Miecznik/The Haunted Manor* (Teatr Wielki Warsaw).

BARITONE, UKRAINE

ISMEN

**JENNIFER LEE**

Jennifer recently completed her postgraduate studies at the Royal Academy of Music. Her operatic roles include: *Donna Anna/Don Giovanni*; *Mimi and Musetta/La bohème*; *Geraldine/A Hand of Bridge*; *Casilda/The Gondoliers*, *Yum Yum/The Mikado*. Jennifer also performs in concerts, recitals and oratorio in various venues across the UK.

SOPRANO, UK

LADY VIOLA

**PETER LIBBETTER**

Peter holds an MMus and PGdip in vocal performance from the Royal Northern College of Music (both with distinction), where he also won the Elizabeth Harwood Memorial Award and the Brigitte Fassbaender Award for Lieder. He was part of the WFO Chorus in 2021 and he is currently a member of The Wexford Factory.

BASS, IRELAND

KING

**MONWABISI LINDI**

Monwabisi studied at Tshwane University of Technology and is a graduate of the National Opera Studio, London. He recently performed in Bernstein's *Candide* for Scottish Opera (he also covered the title role). This season he will make his debut with English Touring Opera. He has also performed with Hampstead Garden Opera, Opera Africa and Cape Town Opera

TENOR, SOUTH AFRICA

LORD CHAMBERLAN

**DAISY LONG**

Daisy is a lighting designer for theatre, opera, concert and dance. Originally from Cambridge, Massachusetts, she now lives in New York City. Her credits include: The Shed, Keen Company, BAM, Atlantic, The Barrow Group Primary Stages, LaMaMa, NYU.

DESIGNER, USA

ASSOCIATE LIGHTING DESIGNER

**SARAH LUTTRELL**

Sarah is an honours graduate of the TU Dublin Conservatoire and is currently studying for her master of music degree at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland where she is the recipient of the RCS Trust Postgraduate Scholarship. Sarah has performed with Irish National Opera, Lyric Opera, Blackwater Valley Opera Festival and Northern Ireland Opera. She is currently a member of The Wexford Factory.

MEZZO, IRELAND

ZIBALDONA

**GIORGI MANOSHVILI**

Giorgi graduated from the Vano Sarajshvili State Conservatory in Tbilisi (Georgia). He made his debut at the Rossini Opera Festival, Pesaro in the role of Lord Sidney// *Il Viaggio a Reims* and performed in the 2022 *Tribute to Pier Luigi Pizzi* and Rossini's *Petite messe solennelle* conducted by Michele Mariotti.

BASS, GEORGIA

CALIBANO

**BEN McATEER**

Ben trained at the National Opera Studio, London and the Guildhall School of Music & Drama opera course. Before embarking on a musical career, he studied Chemistry at the University of St Andrews. Notable operatic roles include Falke/*Die Fledermaus*; Goryanchikov/*From the House of the Dead*, Marcello/*La bohème*, Count Almaviva/*Le nozze di Figaro*.

BARITONE, N. IRELAND

BASKIR

**PETER McCAMLEY**

Peter is a graduate of the Rose Bruford College of Speech and Drama in the UK and the American College, Dublin, where he holds the position of the Head of the Acting Department. He has worked for: The RSC, The Blueman Group, Channel 4, Channel 5, RTÉ and Birmingham Stage Company. He teaches the Guitar and Drums. He played William Shakespeare for WFO in the 2021 *Impossible Interviews*.

ACTOR, IRELAND

ROYAL MINISTER

**PATRICK McLAUGHLIN**

Patrick works as a freelance Lighting Designer and Production Manager throughout Ireland. Opera lighting designs include WFO Shortworks, Nevill Holt Opera, Castleward Opera and Cork Opera. Other design work for theatre companies include: Crash Ensemble, Island Theatre Company, DubbelJoint Theatre Company, Tinderbox Theatre Company and Druid Theatre Company.

DESIGNER, N. IRELAND

WEXFORD FACTORY

LIGHTING DESIGNER

**ANNA LAURA MISZERAK**

Anna Laura is an Italian assistant opera director, a professional dancer, and an art history graduate of the University of Bologna. With a passion for opera since childhood, and after her first opera performance, she completely fell in love with it, viewing it a complete form of art where music, dance and poetry converge perfectly to create an extraordinary outcome.

DIRECTOR, ITALY

ASSISTANT STAGE DIRECTOR

**JOSEF MORAVEC**

Josef Moravec graduated from the Prague Conservatory, then studied at the Academy of Music, Prague and the Sibelius Academy, Helsinki. Having completed a master class with the renowned tenor Gregory Kunde, he switched from baritone to tenor. His repertoire includes: *Don Ottavio/Don Giovanni*; *Alfredo/La traviata*; *Ismaele/Nabucco*; *Don José/Carmen*; *Rodolfo/La bohème*.

TENOR, CZECH REP.

SVEN

**GIANLUCA MORO**

Gianluca began his musical journey with pop and gospel music under the guidance of Afro-American tenor Timothy Martin at the American University. He graduated from the Conservatorio of Cagliari under the direction of Bernadette Manca Di Nissa and from Conservatorio of Bologna.

TENOR, ITALY

STEFANO

**CHRIS MOSZ**

Born in Oklahoma, Chris' father was born in Budapest and his mother was a soprano. While at Oklahoma City University, Chris' roles included George Gibbs/Our Town, Ferrando/Così fan tutte and Le petit vieillard/L'enfant et les sortilèges.

TENOR, USA

DUDO TITO

**GIOELE MUGLIARDO**

An eclectic and versatile musician, Gioele has mastered the styles of a wide and multifaceted repertoire from classical music to musicals, film scores as well as American music and jazz. Among the many orchestras, he has conducted Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte-Carlo, Münchner Symphoniker, Essener Philharmoniker and Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale RAI of Turin.

PIANIST, ITALY

MUSIC DIRECTOR

**RORY MUSGRAVE**

Rory recently made his UK Operatic debu singing the title role of *Eugene Onegin* for Opera Holland Park's young Artist Programme. Upcoming roles include Marcello/*La bohème* (Cork Opera House). Rory was also awarded the PWC Emerging Artist Bursary and the Arnholm Bursary by Wexford Festival Opera.

BARITONE, IRELAND

ALONSO

**MATTHEW NUTTALL**

Matthew is a graduate of the Royal Northern College of Music. His competition successes include The Joyce and Michael Kennedy Award for the singing of Strauss and The Frederic Cox Award. Matthew first joined The Glyndebourne Chorus in 2018 and most recently performed the role of the Notary/*Don Pasquale* and Customs Officer/*La bohème*.

BARITONE, UK

GHOST, OTHO

**HANNAH O'BRIEN**

Hannah is currently studying with Elizabeth Ritchie, having completed her Masters and BA in The Royal Irish Academy of Music. She performed the premier of Michael Holohan's song cycle *The Hills are crying* and she will be performing a leading role of Polly in a film adaptation of Kevin O'Connell's *Dreamcatcher*. She is currently a member of The Wexford Factory.

SOPRANO, IRELAND

GRISELDA

**MEGAN O'NEILL**

She is a soprano from Killarney, County Kerry. She obtained her master's in music performance degree at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, studying with Professor Mary Brennan and repetiteur Andrew Synnott. Megan graduated with a Bachelor of Music Degree from Maynooth University with First Class Honours. She is currently a member of The Wexford Factory

SOPRANO, IRELAND

CINDERELLA

**SINÉAD O'NEILL**

She wrote and directed *Precipice* for The Grange Festival. For Glyndebourne, Sinéad has directed *Il barbiere di Siviglia* in 2017 and the Glyndebourne Opera Cup in 2018. Recent independent work includes *La Calisto* (Project Arts Centre, Dublin), *On the Axis of this World*, *The Raven*, and *The Albatross* with composers Matt Rogers, Kim Ashton and Kate Whitley.

DIRECTOR, IRELAND

STAGE DIRECTOR

**NIAMH O'SULLIVAN**

Niamh studied at the Royal Irish Academy of Music in Dublin under Veronica Dunne. She followed her studies by joining the Opera Studio at the Bayerische Staatsoper, Munich from 2016-18. In 2021 she made her WFO debut as Paulina/*Ein Wintermärchen*, also appearing at the festival in a Lunchtime Recital and in the Gala Concert.

MEZZO, IRELAND

MIRZA

**GIULIO PELLIGRA**

Giulio made his stage debut at the Manoel Theatre in Malta, singing Count Almaviva/*Il barbiere di Siviglia*, when he was 20. He has sung with conductors such as Roberto Abbado, Yves Abel, Asher Fisch, Daniel Oren, Renato Palumbo, Donato Renzetti, Riccardo Frizza, Daniele Gatti, Paolo Arrivabeni, and has worked with stage directors including Graham Vick, Pier Luigi Pizzi and Damiano Michieletto.

TENOR, ITALY

FERNANDO

**ORPHA PHELAN**

Orpha has directed *La Cenerentola* at INO, *A Quiet Place* at Opera Zuid Netherlands, *Powder Her Face* and *Dead Man Walking* at Royal Danish Opera, *Billy Budd* and *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* at Opera North/Opera Australia, *Fidelio* at Longborough, *Jenůfa*, *Hoffmann*, *Fiddler on the Roof* and *La Bohème* at Malmö Opera, *Dialogues des Carmelites* at RNCM, and *Così Fan Tutte* at OTC.

DIRECTOR, IRELAND

STAGE DIRECTOR



GABRIELLE PHILIPONET

Born in Albi, France, she was a flutist and cellist before studying the voice with Daniel Ottevaere. As a member of the Chapelle Musicale Reine Elisabeth in Brussels, she was a prize winner at the prestigious Reine Elisabeth Competition. Often acclaimed as one of the finest French lyric sopranos of the moment, her wide-ranging repertoire spans from Mozart to contemporary music.

SOPRANO, FRANCE

LALLA-ROUKH



JADE PHOENIX

Jade is a 24-year-old lyric soprano from Ireland and is currently a studio member with Northern Ireland Opera. Jade participated in Wexford Festival Opera's Academy programme in 2020 and 2021. Jade's recent events include the role of Iris/*Semele* with Opera collective Ireland. This is her professional debut.

SOPRANO, IRELAND

ARIELE



LEAH REDMOND

Kildare soprano Leah graduated with a first class honours degree from the Royal Irish Academy of Music in Dublin, and is now in the Masters programme at the Royal College of Music in London. A keen recital artist, in March 2020 she premiered the Evangelina Rigaki piece *If Words are Water* in a series of concerts in New York. She is currently a member of The Wexford Factory.

SOPRANO, IRELAND

GRISELDA



ELEONORA ROSSI

She graduated at Brera Arts Academy-Milan. After an internship at Teatro Real Opera House-Madrid, she gained a specialization degree in Set Decoration and Costume Design at Teatro alla Scala Opera House Academy where she later taught Costume Decoration Techniques. Her professional experience ranges from theatre to opera and ballet.

DESIGNER, ITALY

SET DESIGNER



LIBUSE SANTORISOVA

Libuse is guest soloist of Astana Opera House in Kazakhstan. She moved to Italy at very young age to study with Mirella Freni and then with Renata Scotto at Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Rome. During her career she has sung more than 40 different leading opera characters. Forthcoming engagements include Tatiana/*Eugene Onegin* and Cio Cio San/*Madama Butterfly*.

SOPRANO, CZECH REP.

SIREN, A NYMPH



CARMEN SANTORO

Carmen is Artistic Director of the Belcanto Opera Festival in Tokyo. Since 2012 she has been Musical Assistant to Fabio Luisi at the Zurich Opera House, at the Maggio Fiorentino in Florence and at the Valle d'Itria Festival in Martina Franca. She has been a constant presence at WFO since 2005, and she is the leader repetiteur at the Wexford Factory, with the new Repetiteurs Programme.

PIANIST, ITALY

REPETITEUR



GERARD SCHNEIDER

Austrian-Australian tenor Gerard Schneider is acknowledged as a preeminent singer of opera, operetta, and songs. He has developed a strong international presence and appeared around the world, having made major debuts at the Sydney Opera House, Carnegie Hall, Metropolitan Opera, Oper Frankfurt, and Salzburg Festival in repertoire spanning the bel canto, romantic, and verismo styles.

TENOR, AUSTRIA

RINALD



HARTMUT SCHÖRGHOFER

Active as both a director and designer, Hartmut is constantly fascinated by opera's manifold possibilities as a multi-faceted art form. Born in Salzburg, he studied interior design in Linz and stage design at the Mozarteum University in Salzburg. Austria, Germany and Switzerland have been central to his career, but his activities have also embraced France, Belgium, Russia, Sweden and Slovenia.

DESIGNER, AUSTRIA

DIRECTOR, SET & COSTUME DESIGNER



GABRIEL SEAWRIGHT

Gabriel graduated at the Royal Northern College of Music. His roles include: Henry Crawford/*Mansfield Park*; Schoolmaster/*The Cunning Little Vixen*; Tanzmeister/*Ariadne auf Naxos*; Basilio/*Le nozze di Figaro*; Premier Commissaire/*Dialogues des Carmélites*; Satirino/*La Calisto* and First Armed Man/*Die Zauberflöte* (Longborough Festival Opera); Giuseppe/*La traviata* for Northern Ireland Opera.

TENOR, N.IRELAND

MR WEBSTER



RICHARD SHAFFREY

Richard studied at The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland MMus Opera Course. He performed Ferrando/*Così fan tutte*; Lechmere/*Owen Wingrave*; Alfred/*Die Fledermaus*. He has featured at the WFO where he was a PWC Young Artist, performing in *La fanciulla del West*, in *Il Bravo* and in 2021 Festival, *Ein Wintermärchen*. He is currently a member of The Wexford Factory.

TENOR, IRELAND

ANTONIO

PRINCE

FIRST ACROBAT



AMY SHARE-KISSIOV

She trained at the Victorian College of the Arts and the Australian Ballet School. After 20 years as a soloist in various companies in Australia, Europe and North America, she began her second artistic life as a choreographer and director. She has worked with directors such as Yoshida Oida at Opera Lyon, Denis Krief at 73rd Opera Season at Ente Luglio Musicale in Italy.

DANCER, AUSTRALIA

CHOREOGRAPHER



EMANUELE SINISI

After graduating in Bari, Emanuele moved to Rome in order to continue his studies. He continues to pursue his artistic activities, especially painting. Since 2013 he designed sets for the directors Roberto Catalano, Rafael Villalobos, Italo Nunziata, Stefano Viziosi. He currently lives between Bologna and Venice where he teaches Scenic Design at the School of Fine Arts.

DESIGNER, ITALY

SET DESIGNER



ZITA SYME

Zita graduated from Royal Holloway University of London, and then studied in Florence and Berlin. Since 2020, she has been in the ensemble of Opéra Grand Avignon (*Mireille*, *Peter Grimes* and *Idomeneo*). She sung with Opera Holland Park, Opera Australia and the Buxton International Festival. Forthcoming engagements include *Antonia/Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and *Mimi/La bohème*.

SOPRANO, UK

MRS SAKER



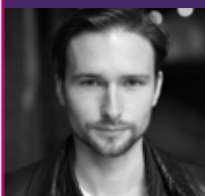
ANDREW SYNNOTT

Andrew was the Artist-in-Residence at WFO in 2020/21. In 2017, his opera *The Dubliners* was premiered at WFO and he was nominated for an Irish Times Theatre Award for the Best Opera. In 2019 his opera *La cucina* was performed before Rossini's *Adina*. WFO then commissioned his chamber opera *What Happened to Lucrece*. He is Chorus Master at WFO and the conductor of *Cinderella*.

COMPOSER, IRELAND

CHORUS MASTER

MUSIC DIRECTOR



JAMES WAFER

James was a chorister at Lincoln during the early 2000s and whilst there, he discovered his love for singing. He then attended the Royal College of Music and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, and has subsequently pursued a varied career in the UK and Europe as an opera singer, actor and recitalist. He studies with Julian Tovey and David Rendall.

BARITONE, UK

HAMMOND, OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES JR



GRACE MARIA WAIN

Grace graduated from The Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama with a BMus (Hons) and an MA in Opera Performance. Her roles include: *Dorabella/Così fan tutte*, *Prince Charmant/Cendrillon*, *Zweite Dame*, *Zweite Knabe/Die Zauberflöte* and *La Ciesca/Gianni Schicchi*. Her upcoming roles include: the world premiere of *Symphony for me Marras*, and *Sangs from Hyme* by Ben Lunn.

MEZZO, UK

FIRST LADY



STEPHEN WALKER

Stephen Walker is a tenor who recently graduated with first class honours from the TU Dublin Conservatoire under Dr. Robert Alderson. He has appeared in multiple productions and concerts in Ireland and the UK; including *Blackwater Valley Opera Festival*, *Ireland and Yorke Trust Opera* in the UK. He is also a multi-prize winner. Stephen intends to continue his studies in the UK.

TENOR, IRELAND

MR SMITH



EMMA WALSH

Emma has won numerous awards throughout her native Ireland, including RTE's All Ireland Talent Showcase. Her roles include: *Violetta/La traviata*, *Mabel/The Pirates of Penzance*, the *Princess/Princess Ida*, *Musetta/La bohème* and *Hanna Glavari/The Merry Widow*. Emma debuted the role of *Elvira/Il Letto* by Christopher Hogg at Grimeborn Music Festival, London.

SOPRANO, IRELAND

MAUDE HOWE ELLIOTT



FRANCES WHITE

Frances's first experience of theatre was as a volunteer at WFO straight from school. She went on to be trained at Wimbledon College of Art, studying costume. She worked in the London West End and The Royal Shakespeare Company at the Barbican. Most recently she has been working for the Blackwater Opera Festival in Lismore, Irish National Opera and Wexford Festival Opera.

DESIGNER, IRELAND

COSTUME DESIGNER



STEVEN WHITE

Steven is one of North America's premiere operatic and symphonic conductors. He made his acclaimed Metropolitan Opera debut in 2010, with *La traviata* starring Angela Gheorghiu. Since then, he has conducted a number of Metropolitan Opera performances of *La traviata*, with stars including Natalie Dessay, Hei-Kyung Hong, Plácido Domingo, Thomas Hampson, Dmitri Hvorostovsky

CONDUCTOR, USA

CONDUCTOR



DOMINICA WILLIAMS

She performed as Cherubino/*Le nozze di Figaro* (Sherman Theatre, Cardiff) and as Ino and Juno/*Semele*. Dominica won the Janet Price Opera Prize at The Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama in 2021; she also received the Irish Heritage Brackville Studies Bursary 2020/2021. She will cover the role of Octavian/*Der Rosenkavalier* with Irish National Opera next spring.

MEZZO, IRELAND

MISS LORING



D.M. WOOD

D.M. is a Canadian working internationally as a lighting designer for opera and theatre. She has been a Wexford regular in the past years and her acclaimed lighting designs include last year's Catalan's *Edmea* and Thomas' *Le Songe d'une nuit d'été*. Ms Wood received the UK's 2012 Knight of Illumination Opera Award for her design of *Suor Angelica* (Royal Opera House).

DESIGNER, CANADA

LIGHTING DESIGNER

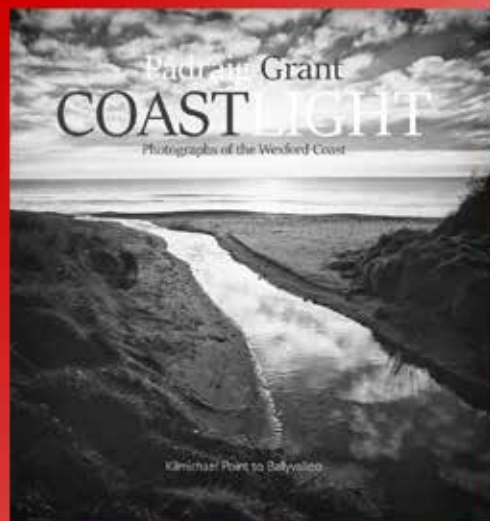


NIKOLAY ZEMLIANSKIKH

Nikolay joined the Young Artist Program of the Bolshoi Theater in 2019/20 season. He has been under guidance of the Artistic Director of the Program Dmitry Vdovin, Makvala Kasrashvili and Svetlana Nesterenko, as well as attending masterclasses with Neil Shicoff, Florence Daguere, John Fisher, Evamaria Wieser. He is currently a singer of the Wexford Factory artist.

BARITONE, RUSSIA

PROSPERO



COASTLIGHT - Photographs of the Wexford coast' is the latest book and accompanying exhibition by official Wexford Festival Opera photographer Pádraig Grant. It is part one of a three part series.

"The objective was to create a series of images that would elicit an emotional response; pictures that resonate with the viewer. To this end, I photographed only when I was in a receptive state of mind and the light was just right, because if I'm not in love with what I'm doing, then the images certainly won't communicate."

It is a limited edition hardback book featuring over 150 beautiful greyscale photographs. It is both rich in texture and tone.

Priced at just €39.95 it is available from **The Pádraig Grant Gallery** Rowe Street Lower, Wexford Y35 A277 or online at <https://www.padraiggrant.com>

CONTRIBUTORS



JOHN ALLISON, MORE OF THAT EMOTION - PAG. 104

Editor of Opera magazine. He writes widely on music, has served on the juries of many international competitions and co-founded the International Opera Awards.



DAVID CHANDLER, THE GHOST OF SHAKESPEARE - PAG. 112

Professor of English at Doshisha University, Kyoto. A specialist in English Romantic literature he also researches opera and is a founding director of the recording company *Retrospect Opera*.



MELISSA EDDY, IF THE MUSICAL SHOE FITS - PAG. 96

Correspondent based in Berlin covering German culture, politics and social issues for *The New York Times*.



RALPH P. LOCKE, A MASTER OF OPERA REDISCOVERED - PAG. 48

Professor Emeritus of Musicology at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY, specialising in musical exoticism and writing more widely as a music critic.



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Reader in Musicology and Composition at Queen's University in Belfast, where her research is focused on 18th and 19th century musical theatre in London and Ireland.



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Professor Emeritus at Queen's University, Belfast, and a widely published authority on Czech music.



CHRISTOPHER WEBBER, THE MAN WHO COULD DO ANYTHING - PAG. 72

Actor, playwright, director and music critic, who specialises in Hispanic music and is an authority on zarzuela.

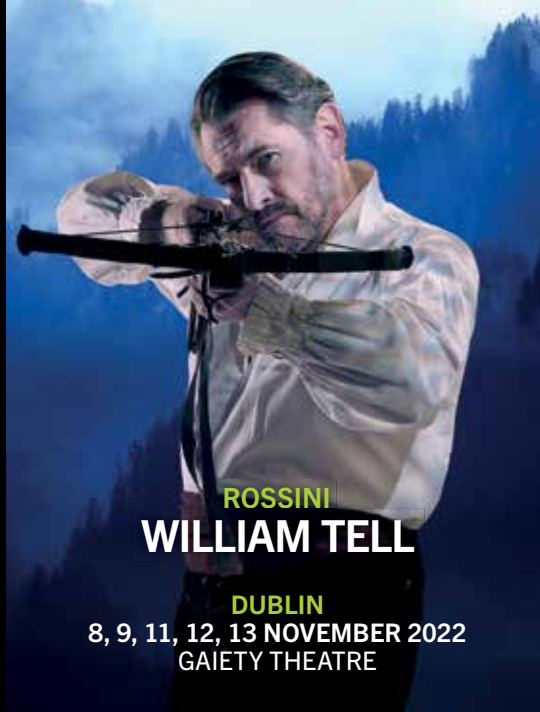


FLORA WILLSON, OVERSHADOWED BY HIS OWN PERFECTION - PAG. 24

Senior Lecturer in Music at King's College London, where her work has focused on the operatic culture of 19th century Paris, and a music critic on *The Guardian*.

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