

Il viaggio a Reims

**Giordano • Pizzolato • Mchedlishvili • Marianelli • Mihai
Mironov • Palazzi • De Simone • Praticò • Myshketa
Camerata Bach Choir, Poznań • Virtuosi Brunensis
Antonino Fogliani**



Gioachino
ROSSINI
(1792-1868)

Il viaggio a Reims

ossia

L'albergo del Giglio d'Oro

(The Journey to Reims or The Inn of the Golden Fleur-de-lys)

Dramma giocoso in One Act

Libretto by Luigi Balochi, partly based on *Corinne, ou L'Italie* by Mme de Staël

Corinna Laura Giordano, Soprano
poetess, famous Roman improviser
Marchesa Melibea Marianna Pizzolato, Contralto
Polish widow of an Italian general, killed on the day of their marriage
La Contessa di Folleville Sofia Mchedlishvili, Soprano
a fashionable young widow
Madama Cortese Alessandra Marianelli, Soprano
Tyrolean hostess of the spa hotel, wife of a French businessman
Il Cavalier Belfiore Bogdan Mihai, Tenor
elegant French officer, amateur painter, ladies man, in pursuit of Contessa di Folleville
Il Conte di Libenskof Maxim Mironov, Tenor
Russian general, impetuous, extremely jealous by nature, in love with Marchesa Melibea
Lord Sidney Mirco Palazzi, Bass
English colonel, secretly in love with Corinna
Don Profondo Bruno De Simone, Bass
scholar, antiquarian, friend of Corinna
Il Barole di Trombonok Bruno Praticò, Bass
German major, music-lover
Don Alvaro Gezim Myshketa, Bass
Spanish admiral, in love with Marchesa Melibea

Don Prudenzio Baurzhan Anderzhanov, Bass
spa doctor
Don Luigino Carlos Cardoso, Tenor
cousin of Contessa di Folleville
Delia Guiomar Cantò, Soprano
Greek orphan, travelling with Corinna
Maddalena Olesya Berman Chuprinova, Mezzo-soprano
Spa housekeeper from Caux in Normandy
Modestina Annalisa D'Agosto, Mezzo-soprano
maid to Contessa di Folleville
Zefirino Artavazd Sargsyan, Tenor
messenger
Antonio Lucas Somoza Osterc, Bass
maitre d'hôtel
Gelsomino Yasushi Watanabe, Tenor
valet

Camerata Bach Choir, Poznań • Chorus-master: Ania Michalak
Virtuosi Brunensis (Karel Mitáš, Artistic Director)
Antonino Fogliani
Musical Assistant and Fortepiano: Michele D'Elia

Recorded live at the Königliches Kurtheater, Bad Wildbad, Germany, 8th, 10th and 12th July 2014
for the XXVI ROSSINI IN WILDBAD Festival (Artistic director: Jochen Schöneleber)
A Co-production with Südwestrundfunk

Critical edition by M. Elizabeth C. Bartlett, edited by Fondazione Rossini, Pesaro
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SWR ➡

ROSSINI
in WILDBAD

CD 1		54:51	5	Recitativo: Milord, una parola... (Profondo, Sidney, Corinna, Delia)	2:08	9	Polacca: Ai prodi guerrieri (Melibea, Tutti)	1:21	13	Canzone francese: Madre del nuovo Enrico (Folleville, Belfiore, Tutti)	1:34
1	No. 1 Introduzione: Presto, presto... su, coraggio! (Maddalena, Coro, Prudenzio, Antonio)	6:12	6	No. 5 Recitativo e Duetto: Sola ritrovo alfin la bella dea (Belfiore, Corinna)	2:58	10	Inno russo: Onore, gloria ed alto omaggio (Libenskof, Tutti)	1:33	14	Tirolese: Più vivace e più fecondo (Cortese, Profondo, Tutti)	4:29
2	Di vaghi raggi adorno (Cortese, tutti gli altri)	5:09	7	Nel suo divin sembiante (Belfiore, Corinna)	6:11	11	Canzone spagnola: Omaggio all'augusto duce (Alvaro, Tutti)	1:13	15	Strofe d'improvviso: All'ombra amena (Corinna)	10:50
3	Or state attenti (Cortese, tutti gli altri)	2:47	8	Dunque non v'è speranza? (Belfiore, Corinna)	4:16	12	Canzone inglese: Dell'aurea pianta (Sidney, Tutti)	2:11	16	Stretta: Viva il diletto augusto regnator (Tutti)	5:12
4	Recitativo: Partire io pur vorrei (Cortese, Folleville, Modestina, Luigino, Trombonok, Prudenzio)	2:37	9	Recitativo: Bravo il Signor Ganimede! (Profondo)	0:34						
			10	No. 6 Aria: Medaglie incomparabili (Profondo)	5:25						
5	Ahimè! Sta in gran pericolo... (Prudenzio, Trombonok, Luigino, Folleville)	2:07	11	Recitativo: Vedeste il Cavaliere? (Folleville, Profondo, Alvaro, Libenskof, Trombonok, Zefirino)	2:20						
6	Partir, oh ciel! desio (Folleville, tutti gli altri)	5:36	12	No. 7 Gran pezzo concertato a 14 voci: Ah! A tal colpo inaspettato (Folleville, Corinna, Melibea, Delia, Modestina, Libenskof, Belfiore, Zefirino, Trombonok, Alvaro, Sidney, Profondo, Prudenzio, Cortese)	4:56						
7	Che miro! ah! qual sorpresa! (Folleville, tutti gli altri)	6:01	13	Fra dolci e cari palpiti (Tutti)	4:02						
8	Recitativo: Eh! senti, mastro Antonio... (Trombonok, Antonio)	0:57	CD 3		53:51						
9	No. 3 Sestetto: Sì, di matti una gran gabbia (Trombonok, Profondo, Alvaro, Melibea, Libenskof, Cortese)	5:37	1	Recitativo: Savio della Contessa (Belfiore, Profondo, Trombonok, Folleville, Alvaro, Cortese, Antonio, Gelsomino)	2:49						
10	Non pavento alcun periglio... (Libenskof, Alvaro, Profondo, Trombonok, Cortese, Melibea)	5:52	2	No. 8 Scena e duetto: Di che son reo? (Libenskof, Melibea)	5:07						
11	Arpa gentil (Corinna, tutti)	8:04	3	Al barbaro rigore (Melibea, Libenskof)	5:17						
12	Simbol di pace e gloria (Tutti)	3:52	4	Recitativo: Tutto è all'ordin (Antonio, Gelsomino, Maddalena)	1:53						
CD 2		48:07	5	No. 9 Finale: Ballo: Allegretto – Marziale – Allegretto – Allegro – Vivace – Allegretto	4:08						
1	Recitativo: Zefirin non ritorna... (Cortese)	0:48	6	Coro: L'allegria è un sommo bene (Coro)	3:46						
2	No. 4 Scena ed Aria: Ah! perché la conobbi? (Sidney)	4:57	7	Recitativo: Ora secondo l'uso (Trombonok)	0:48						
3	Invan strappar dal core (Sidney, Coro)	6:13	8	Inno tedesco: Or che regna fra le genti (Trombonok, Tutti)	1:40						
4	Dell'alma diva (Sidney, Coro)	3:20									

Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868)

Il viaggio a Reims

Il viaggio a Reims: “This opera is a feast”

“Occasional works scarcely ever live on after the event for which they were written.” It was with this and similar sentences that critics in Paris regretted the rapid disappearance of *Il viaggio a Reims* following its première on 19 June 1825. Rossini himself did not believe that his “little occasional work” (“petite pièce de circonstance”) could have any chance of a future. The published libretto carried the description *Dramma giocoso*, which was translated literally as an *opéra-comique*, thus very much like a “comic opera”. From the beginning Rossini himself declared the piece to be a “cantata” and he used this term even in later years when he was authenticating its remaining autographed parts. For Rossini the term “cantata” was tantamount to being a work which was outside the main repertoire. Such commissioned cantatas were, for him, always works of a transitory nature, meaning that their music either originated from earlier works, or was later re-used, or even both. After only four performances Rossini withdrew *Il viaggio a Reims* from an enthusiastic public and three years later resurrected long stretches of it in *Le Comte Ory* – to even greater and much more enduring success. His strategy worked out well; the music fitted magnificently into the new stage-ready work.

It is no surprise that Rossini regarded the music in the guise of this cantata to be incapable of surviving. Its subject-matter was not even that of a general, detached allegory in a

tailored precisely to the occasion being celebrated. In *Il viaggio* numerous international guests have assembled in the real-life spa resort of Plombières in order to be taken on to Reims to attend the forthcoming coronation festivities for Charles X. But due to the lack of any transport facilities they present their own celebration in the hotel garden; each guest sings their own national anthem, with an appropriate text, as a message of greeting. It is logical to suppose that, as soon as the everyday politics of the new king took effect, such a work would no longer be of interest.

Rossini had been aware of the transient nature of political proclamations from his early youth. His father professed himself to be a “true Republican”, wedded to the ideals of the French Revolution, but when troops loyal to the pope banished the French again, he ended up in prison. When in Bologna in 1815 Rossini himself must have experienced how he jeopardized his career, through his own anthem to an Italian centralized state as proclaimed by Murat; Murat was defeated by the Austrians at Tolentino and the Napoleonic age came to an abrupt end. In the period following the restoration Rossini regularly composed for the Bourbon court in Naples cantatas for birthdays, recoveries from illness and visits – all occasions which took place on one particular day, before normal business was resumed. In the case of the substantial cantata written for the marriage of Maria Carolina to the Duke of Berry (*Le nozze di Teti e di Peleo*, 1816) it must have come to his attention that the work

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tailored precisely to the occasion being celebrated. In *Il viaggio* numerous international guests have assembled in the real-life spa resort of Plombières in order to be taken on to Reims to attend the forthcoming coronation festivities for Charles X. But due to the lack of any transport facilities they present their own celebration in the hotel garden; each guest sings their own national anthem, with an appropriate text, as a message of greeting. It is logical to suppose that, as soon as the everyday politics of the new king took effect, such a work would no longer be of interest.

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was assassinated. Armed with this knowledge it was clear to Rossini that it would be no better for the coronation ceremony of Charles X, even if he expanded the work from a “small piece” into a full-length one-acter in three parts and even if the music came from the most famous composer of the age and represented his début work for Paris.

Only a few months later the grandiose hymns of praise to the new king would have provoked sarcasm and outrage. With his ultra-conservative politics, which sought to restore pre-revolutionary privileges to the upper classes and which re-introduced censorship with ordinances that overturned quasi-constitutional charters, Charles X snubbed the emerging liberal bourgeoisie. Even with expedient textual adjustments a revival of this coronation opera would have been unthinkable during the reign of the king, still less so after his downfall only five years later during the 18-year regency of the “citizen king” Louis-Philippe. Likewise the much-noticed subject of the Greek struggle for freedom which the poet Luigi Balochi had put into the libretto would, like all political subjects of the day, soon become obsolete and, at the most, would have only a historical dimension. In an opera celebrating the present day it would have had little meaning. Even if Rossini could not have foreseen these occurrences in detail, he still knew that his “cantata” would have been lost had he not preserved its music, at least in part, in his *Comte Ory*. One critic, Charles Maurice, who in other respects was not very Rossini-friendly, predicted however in the *Courrier français* of 20 June 1825 that: “It is possible that *Il viaggio* will outlive the occasion which gave rise to it.” Almost 160 years later he might be vindicated – likewise Stendhal, who spotted succinctly that: “This opera is a feast”.

In the Rossini renaissance of the last thirty years many cantatas have been unearthed and some of them have enjoyed a certain popularity in concert halls, thanks to their scintillating music and their generally mythological content, which today leaves us indifferent. When *Il viaggio a Reims* was resurrected in 1984 in Pesaro nobody really reckoned that it could become a staple of the repertoire, not necessarily on account of its subject-matter, which is so irrelevant and so far removed from us today, like the ancient tales of the gods, but for practical reasons: the roster of Rossinian star singers of the day, under Claudio Abbado, was unparalleled and could at most be repeated only on special occasions. Abbado conducted the opera, with small alterations to the line-up, in the production by Luca Ronconi, until 1992, in Milan, Vienna, Tokyo and Ferrara, and every time one thought: “That was it.” But in the interim several smaller theatres and even music conservatories

had taken up the challenge of presenting it and it became surprisingly apparent that such bold undertakings succeeded in every case, some even triumphantly. The myth that the opera was impossible to perform was effectively debunked even if it remained part of the academic and philosophical discussion surrounding the work; even today every theatre that takes on the work readily refers to its “unfeasibility”.

But how could it be that this opera, of all operas, has become such a cult in our times? As to the plot one doesn’t have to give a damn about it today; of what interest to us is Charles X and his time? Ronconi allowed him to appear with his royal household, but as a multi-media spectacle that immediately revealed it as “staged”. In the production which is given every year by the graduates of the Rossini Academy in Pesaro, Emilio Sagi presents Charles X as a boy king, with balloons. And in most productions the king himself does not actually appear; the members of the international company celebrate themselves. Only one director, the politically-sensitive Nobel prize-winner Dario Fo, in his 2003 Helsinki production, denounced the ultra-royalist king and his “unwholesome” association with the church. (In Fo’s production the king catches a chill because he has been anointed while lying half-naked before the archbishop on the cold floor of the church). Other productions will often make reference to the latest politics of the day (and it is perhaps the only Rossini opera that actually justifies that), for instance to the EU.

But the opera is a celebration of itself without any political agenda: its genre, its music, its singers, its composer. In 1992, the 200th anniversary of Rossini’s birth, there were even eight productions of *Il viaggio a Reims* and in 1998, to mark the tenth anniversary of ROSSINI IN WILDBAD, the work was performed for the first time in the spa town of Bad Wildbad, conducted by Alberto Zedda. It was perfectly obvious that this truly royal opera was the ideal choice to mark the re-dedication of Wildbad’s Royal Kurtheater in 2014. In the context of its successful collaboration with SWR and Naxos this presented the Festival with the opportunity of releasing the complete opera on CD for the first time and in accordance with the critical edition. Below are a number of variations from the established “performing tradition” and from the two “historical” recordings by Claudio Abbado:

– The musical quotations from Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven and Bach in the recitative before the Countess of Folleville’s aria were an inventive addition to the 1984 production but they did not come from Rossini.

– The eight verses in Corinna’s third stanza in the sextet

were often reduced to two.

– The chorus *L’allegria è un sommo bene* [CD 3 / 6] in the finale is missing in previous recordings because the music for it had not yet been discovered. Later Philip Gossett had identified a model for it in the girls’ chorus from *Maometto II* and for a while this number was performed as a women’s chorus. Now however it has been reconstructed for the critical edition as a mixed chorus.

– In Lord Sidney’s extended cadenza in the British national anthem Rossini put the words “basta, basta” (“enough, enough”) into the mouth of Baron Trombonok (this “gag” was not included by the librettist). In many performances these words are spoken by others or even by the conductor.

– In earlier recordings, during the French anthem, sung by Folleville and Belfiore, the trumpets blare out the Marseillaise from the orchestra pit after the Countess’s cadenza. This was

Synopsis

CD1

A room in The Inn of the Golden Fleur-de-lys, Plombières.

[1] Maddalena urges the staff to get on with their work, since the guests will leave today. Don Prudenzi, the hotel’s doctor, checks that breakfast is being prepared correctly. [2] The hotel’s proprietress Madame Cortese is delighted by the beautiful day and would also like to accompany her guests on their journey. [3] Mindful of the good reputation enjoyed by her establishment, she calls on the staff to be more than ever attentive to the idiosyncracies of each and every guest. [4] Madame Cortese is sorry that she won’t be able to see the new monarch. She hears the fashion-mad Countess of Folleville calling for her maid. The Countess is in a bad mood because she does not have with her the latest fashion items that she needs for the coronation. Her cousin Don Luigino appears and in a flutter reports that the coach carrying her clothes has met with an accident. The Countess falls into a faint. Cries for help are met by Maddalena, Antonio, Baron von Trombonok and Don Prudenzi, who rush in. [5] The doctor senses that the Countess is in great danger. But as he talks of the possibility of her even dying the Countess suddenly sits up. The men are unable to console her; only women can understand her distress at the absence of her fashionable outfits: [6] Honour and her fatherland forbid her from setting out in such circumstances. Modestina hurries in

certainly no impertinent gesture on Rossini’s part against the Bourbon king but a pure invention of the 1984 production; during the restoration of the monarchy the playing of the revolutionary hymn was a criminal offence.

– Rossini had earmarked five stanzas to be improvised by Corinna (in the melodic sequence ABAB’A”, which naturally required variations in their repetitions, for which we owe thanks here to Francis Benichou). Contrary to current practice the third and fourth stanzas are not cut in Wildbad.

– All the recitatives are recorded in their entirety.

– In Bad Wildbad the two short sections of ballet music which interrupt the final variations of the theme “Vive Henri IV” are not cut.

Reto Müller

English translations by David Stevens

carrying a box containing a little hat which has been salvaged undamaged from the coach. [7] Effusively the Countess gives thanks to the gods for this happy act of providence. Those present can barely suppress a smile. [8] Trombonok, who has been appointed by the travelling party as their treasurer, issues orders to Antonio to get everything ready for the departure for Reims. Referring to the Countess’s fainting-fit, Trombonok reckons that everyone in the world is mad in their own way. [9] He compares the world with a great fool’s cage. The Italian Don Profondo is late because he has been looking at a rare antique. The Spaniard Don Alvaro comes in with the Polish Marquess Melibea, who is looking forward to being on the journey in the company of such distinguished people. Madame Cortese is perturbed by the non-appearance of the courier. Libenskof, a Russian Count, is jealous because Don Alvaro is courting his beloved Melibea. [10] Despite attempts at reconciliation they are both at loggerheads. Don Profondo and Trombonok make the philosophical point that love makes grown men childish. [11] Suddenly the sound of harps rings out in the background and they hear the Roman poetess Corinna expressing her thanks for a golden age of brotherly love. [12] They all appear spellbound and forget about their quarrels.

CD 2

[1] Madame Cortese is still waiting for Zefirino. She sees Lord Sidney arrive; he is secretly in love with Corinna and Madame Cortese is of the opinion that the feeling is mutual.

[2] The Englishman is suffering from the pain brought about by his love for Corinna. [3] He tries in vain to tear Cupid's arrow from his heart. Peasant girls enter carrying flowers, the messengers of his love for her. [4] While the chorus sings in praise of the beloved's grace and modesty, Lord Sidney dwells on thoughts of his yearning passion. [5] Don Profondo, who is asking Lord Sidney about English antiquities, is told abruptly to go to the museums. He has a letter from Rome for Corinna; it contains good news about the future of Greece, which fills Delia, a Greek orphan in Corinna's custody, with hope. Left alone, Corinna, deeply moved, contemplates the daily gift of flowers from her admirer. [6] Belfiore has decided to win over the beautiful Corinna. [7] To the astonishment of the poetess he confesses that he has fallen madly in love with a great beauty. Finally he throws himself at her feet and admits that it is she whom he worships. [8] Corinna is not impressed by the philanderer and threatens to call people in. But Belfiore is convinced that Corinna, like all women, is only pretending for the sake of protocol and that she will weaken sooner or later. [9] Don Profondo has witnessed the scene and laughs at the beau, knowing full well that the Countess of Folleville will punish her lover when she finds out about it. But now he must draw up an inventory of the goods and chattels that his fellow travellers will take with them on the journey. [10] He himself will take with him priceless medals, precious antiquities, his academic distinctions and an unpublished treatise. For the Spaniard he makes a note of genealogical tables with explanatory commentaries, diplomas and decorations as well as Peruvian pearls. The Polish lady owns the most exquisite works of literature as well as pictures based on them. The French lady has her finest jewellery with her, as well as a box intended for the latest hat. For the German Don Profondo makes a note of dissertations on harmony, first-rate works by German composers and obscure types of wind instruments. In his luggage the Englishman has treatises on navigation, Chinese tea, opium and airguns, as well as English parliamentary bills. The Frenchman carries lithographs by Horace Vernet and painting equipment, not to mention souvenirs of past love affairs. The Russian owns descriptions of Siberia and Turkey, stuffed animals and feather head-dresses. Having finalised the list Don Profondo jumps for joy at the prospect of the forthcoming departure; he fancies that he can hear the stamping of the horses and exults in the great moment. [11] The Countess of Folleville is looking for the Chevalier Belfiore. As a scholar Don Profondo doesn't want to lie to her, so he tells her that the Chevalier has been having a poetry lesson. The Countess vows inwardly to have her

revenge. Don Alvaro and Count Libenskof ask impatiently about the reason for the delay. At that moment Trombonok comes in and announces terrible news which the courier, who has just arrived, will tell them himself. After all the others have been called in Zefirino explains that the proposed journey will have to be cancelled. No horses are to be had anywhere, either for hire or sale, because they have all long since been reserved for the journey to Reims. [12] All thirteen of the guests react with dismay to this unexpected blow. Then Madame Cortese hurries in with a comforting letter which she has just received from her husband in Paris. By popular request Don Profondo reads out the letter in a loud voice. Within the next few days the king is expected back in Paris where a great celebration is being prepared; all those who were unable to make it to Reims for the coronation will be able to take solace from the celebrations in Paris. The Countess of Folleville impulsively offers the entire group accommodation in her Paris house. [13] They all take up this idea with great enthusiasm, delighted at being able to outwit fate.

CD 3

[1] The stage-coach scheduled to leave for Paris the next morning seems to be the natural conveyance. With the money that they have already collected they will be able to put on a public celebration that very evening. As a friend of harmony, Trombonok would like Melibea and Libenskof to be reconciled. [2] Libenskof defends himself that he is guilty only of an excess of love and that he would like Melibea's heart back. She reproaches him for thinking that she could be unfaithful and doesn't believe in his repentance. [3] But she feels her sternness wane, while Libenskof's hopes rise. Finally she relents and, full of the happiness of love, they fall into each other's arms.

A lit garden with tables ready laid. [4] Antonio instructs Gelsomino to call the guests to the tables. Maddalena announces a travelling company of singers and dancers whom the Baron has invited on impulse. [5] While the guests are being seated the dancers present a mythological allegory. [6] The four singers from the travelling players, with the attendants as the chorus, celebrate cheerfulness as being the greatest good. [7] After this divertissement Trombonok announces the order of the toasts. [8] He opens proceedings by drinking to harmony among the European peoples. They all join in with the refrain; then it is Melibea's turn. [9] To the rhythm of a rousing polonaise she toasts the brave soldiers; the chorus reiterates the watchwords

of fatherland, throne, fidelity and honour. [10] In a song of the tsars Libenskof toasts the heiress apparent to the French throne for her courage and for her future reign. Trombonok hands on the toast from the north to the south. [11] The Spaniard Don Alvaro sings an anthem to the Duke of Angoulême, who liberated his country from civil war. The Englishman claims to be unmusical. [12] But of course he knows the English national anthem with which he toasts the next Bourbon generation, the Duke of Bordeaux and the French people. The two French guests, Folleville and Belfiore, are to choose a song in C major. [13] They sing the praises of the mother of the aforementioned and the chorus wishes for her the benevolence of heaven. Finally Trombonok asks Madame Cortese and Don Profondo to round things off in E flat major. [14] The native Tyrolean lady and the Italian strike up a Tyrolean round dance comprising

an echo yodel. It refers to the golden lily, the emblem of the ruling Bourbon branch which, in a refrain, the choir extols as the continuous hope of the French people. Finally it falls to Corinna to contribute her improvisations. Everyone writes down on slips of paper key words, which are then put into a tombola drum; by happy chance Melibea pulls out the one on the subject of "Charles X, King of France". [15] Corinna dedicates an improvisation of five stanzas to him. [16] After this hymn of praise likenesses of the royal family and of the most famous French kings appear on banners. After some short dances Belfiore, followed by all the others, toasts the king. The festivities conclude with a *vivat* to France and her valiant ruler.

Reto Müller

English translations by David Stevens



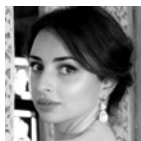
Laura Giordano

Laura Giordano was born in Palermo and made her operatic début at a very young age in the title rôles of the operas *I pazzi per progetto* by Donizetti and *Adina* by Rossini at the Teatro Massimo in Palermo. Her career has since taken her to leading opera houses throughout Europe and the Americas, collaborating with the most distinguished conductors, including Riccardo Muti, Riccardo Chailly, Valery Gergiev, Daniel Harding, Gianandrea Noseda, Jesús López Cobos, Rinaldo Alessandrini, Yuri Bashmet, Christophe Rousset, Jean-Christophe Spinosi, Alberto Zedda, Michel Plasson, Zubin Metha, Antonio Pappano and Myung Chung. Laura Giordano has recorded Vivaldi's *L'Olimpiade* with Rinaldo Alessandrini and a previously unpublished duet by Rossini with Riccardo Chailly. She sings Musetta in *La bohème* on the DVD recording of the performance at Teatro Real de Madrid, Norina in *Don Pasquale* conducted by Riccardo Muti, and Fulvia in *La pietra del paragone* conducted by Jean-Christophe Spinosi.



Marianna Pizzolato

Marianna Pizzolato graduated with honours at the Bellini Conservatory in Palermo and attended *Lieder* classes in Nuremberg with Rosemarie Cabaud and Werner Dormann. Throughout her career she has collaborated with Raúl Giménez, with whom she undertook an in-depth study of her major Rossini rôles. She is currently studying with Claudia Carbi. She made her operatic début in 2002 singing the title rôle in Rossini's *Tancredi* under the baton of Marco Zambelli, followed by Dorina in Cimarosa's *Il marito disperato* in Caserta, conducted by Antonio Fogliani. She regularly performs Baroque and eighteenth-century repertoire. After her stage début in *Il viaggio a Reims* in 2003 at the Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro, she became a favourite returning guest to the Festival, singing *Tancredi* (title rôle) in 2004, *L'italiana in Algeri* in 2006, *Andromaca (Ermione)* in 2008, *Emma (Zelmira)* in 2009 and *La Cenerentola* (title rôle) in 2010. She has a number of recordings to her credit and continues to appear in major opera houses in Italy and elsewhere.



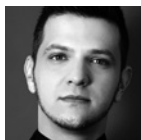
Sofia Mchedlishvili

The Georgian soprano Sofia Mchedlishvili was born in Tbilisi, where she graduated at the Conservatory. In 2015 she graduated from the Academy of La Scala Theatre with great success. She made her Italian début in 2012 at Jesi in the title rôle of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, continuing her career in rôles that have ranged from Amenaïde (*Tancredi*) and Gilda (*Rigoletto*) to the Queen of the Night (*Die Zauberflöte*). In 2013 she won the 64th As.Li.Co Competition for Young Opera Singers of Europe held at the Teatro Sociale, Como, for the rôle of Amenaïde (*Tancredi*).



Alessandra Marianelli

The soprano Alessandra Marianelli has sung leading rôles in operas by Mozart, Donizetti and Rossini in some of the world's major theatres, including the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Teatro Comunale, Bologna, Teatro dell'Opera, Rome, Teatro Regio, Turin, the Rossini Opera Festival, Pesaro, the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Rome, Teatro Real, Madrid, Opéra de Montecarlo, Opera de Bilbao and the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, Brussels. Recent engagements include *Il campiello* in Trieste, *Orfeo ed Euridice* in Naples, *La sonnambula* (Lisa) in Montecarlo and Bari, *Il mondo della luna* (Flaminia) in Montecarlo, *Ricciardo e Zoraïde* (Zoraïde) and *Così fan tutte* (Despina) in Cagliari, *La bohème* (Musetta) in Genoa and *Il campiello* in Florence.



Bogdan Mihai

The Romanian tenor Bogdan Mihai trained in Italy under the guidance of Mirella Freni who awarded him the Nicolai Ghiuurov scholarship. He also obtained his Masters Diploma in Belcanto at the Transylvania University in Brasov, Romania. In 2008 he appeared at Bucharest National Opera as Count Almaviva (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Don Ramiro (*La Cenerentola*), Ugo (*Parisina d'Este*), Tamas (*Gemma di Vergy*), and Ernesto (*Don Pasquale*). An international career quickly followed. In 2009 he made his début with Staatsoper Stuttgart as Almaviva (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) and then as the Italian Singer (*Der Rosenkavalier*). He made his English début in Rossini's *Armida* at Garsington Opera. He has appeared as Count Almaviva at the Semperoper Dresden, Deutsche Oper Berlin and Théâtre du Châtelet, Paris, as Adelberto (*Adelaide di Borgogna*) in Pesaro, and in the title rôle in Rossini's *Aureliano in Palmira* at the Martina Franca Festival.



Maxim Mironov

The Russian tenor Maxim Mironov started his career by winning the international competition Neue Stimmen in Germany. Born in Tula and a graduate of the Gnessin State Musical College, Moscow, he joined the Helikon Opera Theatre of Moscow, making his début in Grétry's *Pierre Le Grand* in 2002. Since then he has performed on many prestigious stages across the world, including the Teatro Real, Madrid, the Festival of Aix-en-Provence, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées and Opéra Garnier, Paris, the Glyndebourne Festival, Théâtre de la Monnaie, Brussels, the Japan Opera Foundation, Tokyo, Las Palmas Opera, Vlaamse Opera, Antwerp, Vienna Staatsoper, Theater An der Wien, Los Angeles Opera and Washington National Opera. He has collaborated with leading conductors, and has made several recordings for major labels.



Mirco Palazzi

The bass-baritone Mirco Palazzi was born in Rimini and studied at the Rossini Conservatory in Pesaro. While still a student he took second prize at the Ferruccio Tagliavini Competition, first prize at the Riccardo Zandonai Competition and first prize at the Reggio Emilia Gianfranco Masini Competition. He made his début in the title rôle of *Don Giovanni* at Riva del Garda, followed by engagements that have taken him to Wexford, Mexico, Japan, Liverpool, Moscow, and opera houses and concert halls throughout Europe. He has sung *Don Giovanni* at La Scala, Milan, and in Dallas. At Rossini in Wildbad he sang in the Rossini-Tadolini version of the *Stabat mater*.



Bruno De Simone

The baritone Bruno De Simone was born in Naples and studied classics at the University, while developing his musical gifts, soon winning a reputation in eighteenth-century *dramma giocoso* and *opera buffa*, with rôles in works by Pergolesi, Cimarosa, Tritto, Paisiello and others. He has appeared in major theatres, including La Scala, Milan, the Paris Opéra, and the Vienna State Opera, as well as houses as far afield as San Francisco and Tokyo, in collaboration with conductors of the highest distinction. In 2007 he was awarded the Rossini d'Oro for his performances as Don Bartolo, Don Magnifico, Isidoro, and Taddeo. Other prizes include the Musa Euterpe awarded in 2013 by the Florentine Accademia internazionale "Le Muse". His

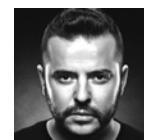
repertoire includes leading Mozart, Donizetti and Verdi rôles.



Bruno Praticò

Born in Aosta, Bruno Praticò studied singing with Giuseppe Valdenigo and attended special courses at La Scala Milan under Rodolfo Celletti. He went on to specialise in *basso buffo* rôles with appearances at La Scala, the Teatro La Fenice in Venice, the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, the Vienna and Bavarian State Operas, the Opéra National in Paris and the Teatro San Carlo in Naples. Engagements have also taken him to Bologna, Florence, Rome, Lausanne, Stockholm, New York, San Francisco and Tokyo. He has worked with distinguished conductors, including Claudio Abbado, Riccardo Chailly, Alberto Zedda and Carlo Rizzi. His repertoire includes Rossini rôles such as Bartolo in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Mustafà and Taddeo in *L'italiana in Algeri*, as well as

comic rôles in *Il viaggio a Reims*, *La cambiale di matrimonio* and *Le Comte Ory*. He has appeared regularly at the Pesaro Rossini Festival since 1993, with a Rossini d'Oro award for his portrayal of Don Magnifico in *La Cenerentola* in 1998. His various rôles for Rossini in Wildbad include those of Don Geronio in *Il Turco in Italia* (2003), Bruschino père in *Il signor Bruschino* (2009), Don Magnifico in *La Cenerentola* (2010) and the count in the modern première of Mercadante's *I briganti* (2012). He has also established a highly successful career as a singing teacher.



Gezim Myshketa

The bass Gezim Myshketa studied at the Arrigo Boito Conservatory in Parma and made his début as Figaro in *Le nozze di Figaro*. In 2006 he won the As.Li.Co competition and sang Leporello (*Don Giovanni*) in a tour of Italy and at the Opéra de Massy. He was awarded first prize at the Ortona Francesco Paolo Tosti Competition. He has appeared in theatres in Italy, France, Slovakia, Austria and Germany, performing with leading conductors.



Baurzhan Anderzhanov

The bass-baritone Baurzhan Anderzhanov was born in Aksu, Kazakhstan in 1985 and studied there at the Astana Academy of Music. From 2005 he was a soloist with the Stana National Opera Theatre and from 2009 to 2013 studied at the Osimo Accademia d'Arte Lirica in Italy, collaborating in various productions and singing Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*) at the Teatro La Nuova Fenice, Osimo. In 2012 he took first prize in the Concorso Anita Cerquetti and the Teatro Spoleto Special Prize. He sang in Shostakovich's *The Nose* at the Teatro dell'Opera, Rome under the director Peter Stein and conductor Slesio Perez. He is a soloist of the Astana Opera in Kazakhstan and at the Aalto Theater in Essen.



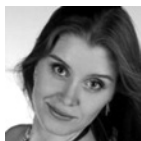
Carlos Cardoso

Born in Tarouquela, the Portuguese tenor Carlos Cardoso won first prize in 2011 in the Setúbal Luisa Todí National Singing Competition, Setúbal, joining the Teatro Nacional de São Carlos Opera Studio. A scholarship took him to the La Scala Accademia di Perfezionamento per Cantanti Lirici in Milan. He made his La Scala debut as Dorvil (*La scala di seta*), followed by the Conte di Lerma (*Don Carlos*). In 2013 he sang Delmonte (*Un giorno di regno*) in Verona and in 2014 made his debut in Amsterdam with the Netherlands Opera as Edgardo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*).



Guiomar Cantó

Guiomar Cantó was born in Madrid in 1985. She started her singing studies with the répétiteur Aída Monasterio and in 2013 graduated in singing at the Escuela Superior de Canto de Madrid, specializing in opera and *zarzuela*. Besides her singing studies, she also graduated in Law and Economics at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid. Her operatic rôles include Adina, Gretel, and Nanetta in different theatres throughout Spain, the Teatro Campos Eliseos of Bilbao and the Teatro Bellas Artes of Madrid, among others. She has also sung *zarzuela* rôles. In 2015 she made her debut as the Queen of the Night (*Die Zauberflöte*).



Olesya Berman Chuprinova

The Russian mezzo-soprano Olesya Berman Chuprinova studied first at Ekaterinburg and then Moscow, where she made her debut as Marchesa Melibea (*Il viaggio a Reims*) in 2008, a year in which she won first prize at the Polish Rûbezah! International Singing Competition. In 2011 she moved to Italy, making her debut in Palermo as Zita (*Gianni Schicchi*). A prize-winner in a number of competitions, she has continued with a career that has brought particular success in rôles including Rosina (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Mary (*Der fliegende Holländer*), Enrico (*Elisabetta, regina d'Inghilterra*), Maddalena (*Rigoletto*) and Angelina (*La Cenerentola*).



Annalisa D'Agosto

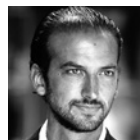
The soprano Annalisa D'Agosto graduated in 2010 at the Giuseppe Martucci Conservatoire, Salerno, having studied at the Haydn Conservatory in Eisenstadt from January to July 2008. In 2009 she made her debut as Musetta at the Teatro delle Arti and Augusteo Theatre in Salerno. Other engagements have included leading rôles in Giusto Pappacena's *La notte di Tiberio* and Francesco Libetta's *800. L'assedio di Otranto*. In 2012 she won the Young Salerno Talent Prize from the Lions Club. She studies with the soprano Amelia Felle.



Photo: Mareike Goldschmidt

Artavazd Sargsyan

Artavazd Sargsyan studied singing at the Ecole Normale de Musique in Paris with Daniel Ottevaere. His stage rôles have included Gerald (*Lakmé*), Nadir (*Les Pêcheurs de perles*), Ouf in Chabrier's *L'Etoile*, Vincent in Gounod's *Mireille*, Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*), Nemorino (*L'elisir d'amore*) at the Belle-Ile-en-Mer Opera Festival in Brittany and Arturo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*) at the Morlaix Festival. He took the title-rôle in Gluck's *L'Ivrogne corrigé* with the La Peniche Opera Ensemble in Paris and Amsterdam. Other rôles have included the Witch (*Hänsel und Gretel*) in Paris and Fontainebleau, Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*) and with the European Philharmonic Orchestra in Paris, and Henry in Richard Strauss's *Die schweigsame Frau*. He is a member of the Opera Studio of Opéra Bastille in Paris and appears as a soloist in oratorio.



Lucas Somoza Osterc

Born in Buenos Aires in 1984, the baritone Lucas Somoza Osterc spent his formative years studying with Victor Srugo, graduating from the Instituto Superior de Arte del Teatro Colón in 2010. With a scholarship from the Fundación Música de Cámara, he studied with Guillermo Opitz from 2007 to 2010, making his debut with Juventus Lyrica at the Teatro Avenida in Buenos Aires in 2008. He worked for a number of years with this company and with Buenos Aires Lirica, singing such prominent rôles as Zurga (*Les Pêcheurs de perles*) and participating in productions of *Fidelio*, *Madama Butterfly*, *The Fairy Queen*, and *Belisario*, among others. At Teresa Berganza's master-class in Bougival, France, he sang Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) before performing the rôle at the sixty-fourth Dubrovnik Summer Festival. He has sung Morales (*Carmen*) with the SNG Opera, Ljubljana and the baritone solo in Fauré's *Requiem* at the Philharmonic Hall, Ljubljana with the Slovenian Radio and Television Symphony Orchestra. He has recorded the baritone solo in Alberto Ginastera's *Estancia* with the BBC Philharmonic for Chandos Records.



Yasushi Watanabe

The Japanese tenor Yasushi Watanabe was born in 1984 in Niigata and studied at the Kunitachi Music University and in 2014 at the Parma Arrigo Boito Conservatory. He has sung Clistene (Mysliveček's *L'Olimpiade*) in Bologna, Paolino (*Il matrimonio segreto*) in Mantua and Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*) in Tenerife, as well as rôles in Parma, Wildbad and Montepulciano, and is a member of the LTL Opera Studio, Teatro del Giglio, Lucca, Italy.



Photo: Roxana Vlad

Michele D'Elia

As a child Michele D'Elia studied the cello and piano, followed by studies at the Teatro Lirico Sperimentale di Spoleto and at the Accademia delle Arti of the Teatro alla Scala in Milan. He has taken part in numerous performances in festivals and theatres at home and abroad. As an accompanist and répétiteur he has collaborated with Mirella Freni, Renato Bruson, Luciana Serra, Katia Ricciarelli, Juan Diego Flórez, Luciana D'Intino, Raina Kabaivanska, as well as with younger artists, including Jessica Pratt, Maria Agresta, Veronica Simeoni and Pretty Yende. He is a senior teacher at the Accademia del Teatro alla Scala di Milano, a free-lance pianist and a guest of important international musical and operatic events.



Antonino Fogliani

Antonino Fogliani graduated as a pianist before studying conducting with Vittorio Parisi at the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory in Milan. He specialised in Siena at the Accademia Chigiana with Franco Donatoni and Ennio Morricone, and served as assistant to the conductor Gianluigi Gelmetti. He made his début at the Pesaro Rossini Opera Festival of 2001 with Rossini's *Il viaggio a Reims*, followed by further engagements in Pesaro and in other well known opera houses, including the Teatro La Fenice, Venice, the Teatro dell'Opera, Rome, the Teatro San Carlo, Naples and the Paris Opéra Comique, as well as at the Bergamo Donizetti Festival. At La Scala, Milan, he has conducted, among other works, Donizetti's *Ugo conte di Parigi* and a new production of Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda*. In the 2011/12 season he conducted *Aida* at Houston Grand Opera and the Teatro Regio, Parma, *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the Nationale Reisopera, Enschede and the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, *L'amico Fritz* at the Tchaikovsky Concert Hall in Moscow, and *La traviata* at the Opéra de Montréal. In 2004 he made his début at Rossini in Wildbad, where his recordings for Naxos include Rossini's *Ciro in Babilonia*, *Mosè in Egitto*, *Otello*, *L'occasione fa il ladro*, Vacca's *La sposa di Messina* and Mercadante's *I briganti*. In 2011 he was named Musical Director of the Festival.



Camerata Bach Choir, Poznań

The Camerata Bach Choir was founded in 2003 by Tomasz Potkowski in Poznań. The members are for the most part soloists from the Poznań Opera chorus and the Kraków Philharmonic. The choir collaborates closely with the Wrocław Philharmonic. Its repertoire includes works by Johann Sebastian Bach, Georg Friedrich Händel and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Since 2010 the choir has served as ensemble in residence for the Rossini in Wildbad Festival.



Virtuosi Brunensis

The Virtuosi Brunensis chamber orchestra was established in 2007 from two of the best known Czech orchestras, the Brno Janáček Theatre Orchestra and the Brno Philharmonic. Under its artistic director Karel Mitáš the orchestra has appeared, among other engagements, at the Bad Hersfeld Opera Festival and at the Rossini in Wildbad Festival, where it has recorded operas including Rossini's *Otello*, *L'italiana in Algeri*, *Semiramide* and *Guillaume Tell*, Vacca's *La sposa di Messina* and Mercadante's *I briganti* for Naxos. Under the name Musica Figuralis the ensemble also gives Bach concerts on historical instruments conducted by Siegfried Heinrich.

Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868)

Il viaggio a Reims

Il viaggio a Reims: „Diese Oper ist ein Fest“

„Gelegenheitswerke überleben kaum einmal das Ereignis, das sie entstehen ließ“ – mit diesem und ähnlichen Sätzen bedauerten die Rezensenten in Paris das rasche Verschwinden von *Il viaggio a Reims* nach der Uraufführung vom 19. Juni 1825. Rossini selbst glaubte nicht daran, dass sein „kleines Gelegenheitswerk“ („petite pièce de circonstance“) Zukunftschancen haben könnte. Das gedruckte Libretto trug die Bezeichnung „Dramma giocoso“, was wörtlich mit „Opéra-comique“ übersetzt wurde, also sehr treffend als eine „komische Oper“. Rossini selbst bezeichnete das Stück von Anfang an als „Cantata“, und diesen Begriff verwendete er auch noch in späteren Jahren, als er die ihm verbliebenen autografen Stücke authentifizierte. Für Rossini bedeutete „Kantate“ so viel wie ein nicht repertoirefähiges Werk. Solche Auftragskantaten waren für ihn immer von transitorischem Charakter, d.h. deren Musik stammte aus früheren Werken, oder sie wurde später wiederverwendet, oder auch beides. Nach nur vier Aufführungen entzog Rossini *Il viaggio a Reims* dem begeisterten Publikum und ließ weite Teile daraus drei Jahre später in *Le Comte Ory* wieder aufleben – mit noch größerem und sehr dauerhaftem Erfolg. Sein Kalkül war aufgegangen, die Musik passte sich dem neuen, bühnngerechten Werk in hervorragender Weise an.

Es verwundert nicht, dass Rossini die Musik im Gewand dieser Kantate nicht für überlebensfähig hielt. Es handelt sich dabei nicht einmal um eine allgemeine, unverbindliche Allegorie im mythologischen oder arkadischen Stil, sondern um einen zeitgenössischen Schwank, der ganz direkt auf das zu feiernde Ereignis zugeschnitten ist. Da treffen sich in dem real existierenden Badeort Plombières zahlreiche internationale Gäste, die sich nach Reims zu den real stattfindenden Krönungsfeierlichkeiten für Karl X. begeben wollen; doch in Ermangelung von Transportmöglichkeiten halten sie ihr Fest gleich im Garten ihres Hotels ab, und jeder singt als Grußbotschaft seine Nationalhymne mit einem passenden Text. Logisch, dass ein solches Werk, wenn einmal die Alltagspolitik des neuen Königs zu greifen begann, keinen Menschen mehr interessieren würde.

Die Vergänglichkeit politischer Proklamationen wurde

Rossini schon in frühester Jugend bewusst. Sein Vater bekannte sich als „echter Republikaner“ zu den Idealen der französischen Revolution, doch als die papsttreuen Truppen die Franzosen wieder vertrieben, kam er ins Gefängnis. Rossini selbst musste 1815 in Bologna erfahren, wie er durch seine Hymne auf einen von Murat proklamierten italienischen Einheitsstaat seine Karriere aufs Spiel setzte: Murat wurde in Tolentino von den Österreichern geschlagen und die napoleonische Ära fand ein jähes Ende. In der anschließenden Restaurationszeit komponierte Rossini für den Hof der Bourbonen in Neapel regelmäßig Kantaten zu Geburtstagen, Genesungen, Besuchen – alles Anlässe, die nur einen Tag Bestand hatten, bevor zur Tagesordnung übergegangen wurde. Bei der großen Kantate zur Hochzeit von Maria Carolina mit dem Herzog von Berry (*Le nozze di Teti e di Peleo*, 1816) musste er sogar erfahren, dass sie dem königlichen Paar kein Glück brachte: Vier Jahre später fiel der Herzog einem Attentat zum Opfer. Mit diesem Erfahrungsschatz war es für Rossini klar, dass es dem Festakt zur Krönung Karls X. nicht besser ergehen würde, auch wenn er das Stück von einer „petite pièce“ zu einem abendfüllenden Einakter in drei Teilen erweiterte und auch wenn die Musik von dem berühmtesten Komponisten seiner Zeit stammte und sein Einstandswerk für Paris darstellte. Nur wenige Monate später hätten die vollmundigen Lobeshymnen auf den neuen König Sarkasmus und Entrüstung hervorgerufen. Mit seiner ultrakonservativen Politik, die die vorrevolutionären Privilegien der Oberschicht wiederherstellen wollte, die Zensur wieder einführte und mit Ordonnanzen die verfassungsähnliche Charte aushebelte, brüskierte Karl X. das aufstrebende liberale Bürgertum. An eine Wiederaufnahme dieser Krönungsoper wäre auch mit opportunen Textanpassungen in der Regierungszeit des Gekrönten nicht mehr zu denken gewesen, und noch weniger nach dessen Sturz nur fünf Jahre später während der 18-jährigen Regentschaft des „Bürgerkönigs“ Louis-Philippe. Auch das vielbeachtete Thema des griechischen Freiheitskampfes, das der Dichter Luigi Balocchi im Libretto untergebracht hat, sollte wie alle politischen Tagesthemen bald obsolet werden und bestenfalls noch eine geschichtliche Dimension haben, die aber in einer Oper, die das Jetzt feiert, wenig Sinn gehabt hätte. Auch wenn Rossini diese

Ereignisse im Detail nicht voraussehen konnte, so wusste er doch, dass seine „Kantate“ verloren gewesen wäre, hätte er deren Musik nicht zumindest teilweise in seinen *Comte Ory* hinübergerettet.

Ein Kritiker, der ansonsten nicht sehr rossinifreundliche Charles Maurice, orakelte allerdings im „*Courrier français*“ vom 20. Juni 1825: „Es ist möglich, dass *Il viaggio* die Gelegenheit, die sie entstehen ließ, überleben wird“. Fast 160 Jahre später sollte er recht bekommen – ebenso wie Stendhal, der lapidar erkannte: „Diese Oper ist ein Fest“.

In der Rossini-Renaissance der letzten dreißig Jahre wurden viele Kantaten ausgegraben, und einige davon erfreuen sich in den Konzertsälen einer gewissen Beliebtheit, dank ihrer brillanten Musik und ihrer uns heute gleichgültig lassenden, meist mythologischen Stoffe. Bei der Ausgrabung von *Il viaggio a Reims* 1984 in Pesaro rechnete freilich niemand mit einer Repertoirefähigkeit. Nicht wegen des Stoffes, der uns heute fast so fern und so egal ist wie die antiken Fabeln des Olympos, sondern aus praktischen Gründen: Das Aufgebot der damaligen Starsänger des Rossinigesangs unter der Leitung von Claudio Abbado war einmalig und konnte höchstens zu ganz besonderen Anlässen wiederholt werden. Abbado gastierte mit der Inszenierung von Luca Ronconi und kleinen Varianten in der Besetzung bis 1992 noch in Mailand, Wien, Tokio und Ferrara, und jedes Mal dachte man: „Das war's“. Doch in der Zwischenzeit hatten sich einige kleinere Theater und sogar Musikhochschulen an das Stück gewagt, und es stellte sich überraschenderweise heraus, dass das verwegene Unterfangen jeweils gelang und stets von Erfolg gekrönt war. Der Mythos der Unaufführbarkeit der Oper war faktisch widerlegt, auch wenn er in der Dialektik stehen blieb: Auch heute noch verweist jedes Theater, das sich des Stückes annimmt, gerne auf seine „Unaufführbarkeit“. Die Oper wurde in den ersten 30 Jahren ihrer fulminanten Reise rund um die Welt in gut 150 Produktionen und mit weit über 600 Aufführungen gegeben.

Wieso aber konnte ausgerechnet ein solches Werk in unserer Zeit zu einer richtigen Kultoper werden? Auf den Inhalt kann man heute getrost pfeifen: Was interessieren uns noch Karl X. und seine Zeit? Ronconi ließ ihn zwar mit seinem Hofstaat auftreten, aber als multimediales Spektakel, das ihn sogleich als „inszeniert“ entlarvte. Emilio Sagi machte bei der Produktion, die alljährlich von den Absolventen der Accademia Rossiniana in Pesaro gegeben wird, einen Kinderkönig mit Luftballons daraus. Und in den

meisten Inszenierungen kommt der König gar nicht vor, die internationale Gesellschaft feiert sich selbst. Nur einer, der politisch sensible Literaturnobelpreisträger Dario Fo, denunzierte in seiner Inszenierung von 2003 in Helsinki den Ultraroyalisten und seine „ungesunde“ Verbindung mit der Kirche (der König erkältet sich, weil er bei der Salbung halbnackt auf dem kalten Kirchenboden vor dem Erzbischof liegt). Ansonsten wird oft auf aktuelle Tagespolitik Bezug genommen (und es ist vielleicht die einzige Rossini-Oper, die das wirklich rechtfertigt), etwa auf die EU.

Die Oper feiert aber auch ganz unpolitisch sich selbst: ihre Gattung, ihre Musik, ihre Sänger, ihren Komponisten. 1992 gab es zum 200. Geburtstag Rossinis gleich acht Produktionen von *Il viaggio a Reims*, und 1998, zum zehnjährigen Jubiläum von ROSSINI IN WILDBAD, wurde das Werk unter der Leitung von Alberto Zedda erstmals in der Thermalstadt Bad Wildbad aufgeführt. Es liegt auf der Hand, dass diese wahrhaft königliche Oper 2014 die ideale Wahl für die Wiedereinweihung des Königlichen Kurtheaters Wildbad darstellte. Das bot dem Festival die Gelegenheit, im Rahmen seiner erfolgreichen Zusammenarbeit mit SWR und Naxos die Oper erstmals vollständig und getreu der Kritischen Edition auf CD herauszugeben. Hier einige Unterschiede zur gängigen „Aufführungstradition“ und zu den beiden „historischen“ Aufnahmen unter Claudio Abbado:

- Die musikalischen Zitate von Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven und Bach im Rezitativ vor der Arie der Contessa di Folleville waren eine originelle Hinzufügung der Produktion von 1984, stammen aber nicht von Rossini.

- Die acht Verse in der dritten Strophe Corinnas innerhalb des Sextetts wurden oft auf zwei reduziert.

- In den früheren Aufnahmen fehlt im Finale der Chor „L'allegria è un sommo bene“, weil die Musik dazu noch nicht entdeckt war. Später hat Philip Gossett als Vorlage dazu den Mädchenchor aus *Maometto II* identifiziert, und das Stück wurde zeitweise als Frauenchor aufgeführt. Erst mit der definitiven Kritischen Edition wurde es als gemischter Chor rekonstruiert.

- In der englischen Hymne hat Rossini bei der verlängerten Kadenz von Lord Sidney die Worte „basta basta“ dem Baron Trombonok in den Mund gelegt (der Librettist sah diesen „Gag“ nicht vor); in manchen Aufführungen wird das von anderen Personen oder vom Dirigenten übernommen.

- In dem von Folleville und Belfiore gesungenen französischen Lied schmettern nach der Kadenz der Gräfin in den bekannten Aufnahmen die Trompeten die Marseillaise

aus dem Orchestergraben. Das war freilich keine impertinente Geste Rossinis gegenüber dem Bourbonenkönig, sondern eine reine Erfindung der Produktion von 1984; in der Restauration war das Anstimmen der Revolutionshymne ein Straftatbestand.

- Rossini hat für Corinna fünf Improvisationsstrophen vorgesehen (in der melodischen Abfolge ABA'B'A“, was natürlich bei den Wiederholungen Variationen erfordert, die

Die Handlung

CD 1

Saal im Hotel „Zur Goldenen Lilie“ in Plombières.

[1] Maddalena hält die Bediensteten zur Arbeit an, da die Gäste an diesem Tag abreisen. Don Prudenzo, der Arzt des Hotels, kontrolliert, ob das Frühstück richtig zubereitet wurde. [2] Die Hotelbesitzerin Madame Cortese freut sich über den schönen Tag und würde auch gerne mit auf die Reise gehen. [3] Dem guten Ruf ihres Hauses entsprechend, fordert sie die Belegschaft auf, mehr denn je auf die Eigenart der einzelnen Gäste zu achten. [4] Madame Cortese bedauert, dass sie den neuen Herrscher nicht sehen kann. Sie hört, wie die modenärssische Gräfin von Folleville nach ihrer Zofe ruft. Die Gräfin ist missmutig, weil sie nicht die neuesten Modeartikel bei sich hat, die sie für das Fest benötigt. Ihr Cousin Don Luigino erscheint und berichtet aufgeregt, dass die Kutsche mit den Modeartikeln verunglückt ist. Die Gräfin fällt in Ohnmacht. Auf die Hilferufe hin eilen Maddalena, Antonio, Baron von Trombonok sowie Don Prudenzo herbei. [5] Der Arzt konstatiert große Gefahr für die Gräfin. Als er gar von ihrem möglichen Tod spricht, richtet sich die Gräfin unvermittelt auf. Die Herren können sie nicht trösten; nur Frauen können ihr Leid wegen der fehlenden Modeausstattung verstehen: [6] Ehre und Vaterland verbieten ihr, unter diesen Umständen aufzubrechen. Da eilt Modestina herbei und bringt ein Hütchen in einer Schachtel, die unversehrt geborgen werden konnte. [7] Überschwänglich dankt die Gräfin den Göttern für diese glückliche Fügung. Die Anwesenden können sich das Lachen kaum verkneifen. [8] Trombonok, der von der Reisegesellschaft als Kassenwart bestimmt wurde, erteilt Antonio den Auftrag, alles für die Abreise nach Reims zu richten. Auf die Ohnmacht anspielend, meint Trombonok, dass jeder auf der Welt seine eigene Verrücktheit habe. [9] Er vergleicht die Welt mit einem großen Narrenkäfig. Der Italiener Don Profondo ist verspätet,

wir hier Francis Benichou verdanken). Im Gegensatz zur gängigen Praxis wurden in Wildbad die Strophen 3 und 4 nicht gestrichen.

- Alle Rezitative sind vollständig eingespielt.
- In Bad Wildbad wurden auch die beiden kurzen Ballettmusiken nicht gestrichen, die die Schlussvariationen über das Thema „Vive Henri IV“ unterbrechen.

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weil er sich eine seltene Antiquität angeschaut hat. Der Spanier Don Alvaro erscheint mit der polnischen Marchesa Melibea, die sich auf die Reise mit so distinguierten Leuten freut. Madame Cortese ist über das Ausbleiben des Dienstboten beunruhigt. Libenskot, ein russischer Graf, ist eifersüchtig, weil seine Geliebte Melibea von Don Alvaro hofiert wird. [10] Die beiden geraten sich trotz Beschwichtigungsversuchen in die Haare. Don Profondo und Trombonok konstatieren philosophisch, dass die Liebe erwachsene Männer kindisch werden lässt. [11] Unvermittelt erklingen im Hintergrund Harfenklänge, und man hört, wie die römische Improvisatorin Corinna ihren Gedanken von einem goldenen Zeitalter brüderlicher Liebe Ausdruck verleiht. [12] Alle Anwesenden sind wie verzaubert und vergessen ihre Auseinandersetzung.

CD 2

[1] Madame Cortese wartet immer noch auf Zefirino. Sie sieht Lord Sidney kommen, der heimlich in Corinna verliebt ist, was ihrer Meinung nach auf Gegenseitigkeit beruhe. [2] Der Engländer leidet unter den Schmerzen, die ihm seine Liebe zu Corinna verursacht. [3] Vergebens versucht er, den Pfeil Amors aus seinem Herzen zu reißen. Bauernmädchen bringen die Blumen, die er als Botinnen seiner Liebe bestellt hat. [4] Während der Chor die Grazie und Bescheidenheit der Angeboteten lobt, hängt der Lord den Gedanken an seine schmachende Leidenschaft nach. [5] Don Profondo, der den Lord nach englischen Antiquitäten fragt, wird schroff an die Museen verwiesen. Für Corinna hat er einen Brief aus Rom, mit guten Nachrichten über die Zukunft Griechenlands, was Delia, eine griechische Waise unter der Obhut Corinnas, mit Hoffnung erfüllt. Allein geblieben, betrachtet Corinna gerührt die tägliche Blumengabe ihres Verehrers. [6] Belfiore hat sich vorgenommen, die schöne Corinna zu erobern. [7] Er gesteht der verwunderten Dichterin, dass eine große Schönheit seine

lebhafteste Leidenschaft entzündet habe. Schließlich wirft er sich ihr zu Füßen und bekennt, dass sie sein Idol sei. ^[8] Corinna lässt sich von dem Schwerenöter nicht beeindrucken und droht, Leute herbeizurufen. Belfiore ist allerdings überzeugt, dass Corinna wie alle Frauen nur der Form halber Strenge vorgebe und früher oder später schwach werde. ^[9] Don Profondo hat die Szene beobachtet und lacht über den Beau, wohl wissend, dass die Gräfin von Folleville ihren Geliebten bestrafen wird, wenn sie davon erfährt. Nun muss er aber ein Inventar über die Gegenstände erstellen, die die Reiseteilnehmer mitführen. ^[10] Er selbst führt unvergleichliche Medaillen, wertvolle Antiquitäten, seine akademischen Auszeichnungen und ein unveröffentlichtes Traktat mit sich. Von dem Spanier verzeichnet er Ahnentafeln mit historischen Erläuterungen, Diplome und Orden sowie peruanische Perlen. Die Polin besitzt die vorzüglichsten Werke der Literatur sowie darauf basierende Bilder. Die Französin hat ihren feinsten Schmuck dabei sowie eine Schachtel, die das neueste Hutmodell enthalten dürfte. Für den Deutschen notiert Don Profondo Dissertationen über Harmonie, erstrangige Werke deutscher Komponisten und unbekannte Modelle von Blasinstrumenten. Der Engländer hat Seefahrertraktate, chinesischen Tee, Opium und Luftdruckpistolen sowie die „Bills“ des englischen Parlaments im Gepäck. Der Franzose führt Lithographien von Horace Vernet und Malutensilien mit sich, ganz abgesehen von Souvenirs vergangener Liebesaffären. Der Russe verfügt über Beschreibungen von Sibirien und der Türkei, ausgestopfte Tiere und Federschmuck. Nach Fertigstellung der Liste freut sich Don Profondo unbändig auf die bevorstehende Abreise: Er glaubt schon das Stampfen der Pferde zu vernehmen und jubelt innerlich über den großen Moment. ^[11] Die Gräfin von Folleville sucht nach dem Chevalier Belfiore. Da der Gelehrte Don Profondo nicht lügen will, antwortet er ihr, dass dieser eine Lektion in Poesie genommen habe. Die Gräfin schwört innerlich Rache. Don Alvaro und Graf von Libenskofer fragen ungeduldig nach dem Grund der Verzögerung. In dem Moment kommt Trombonok und kündigt eine schreckliche Nachricht an, die der eben eingetroffene Bote selbst mitteilen wird. Nachdem alle anderen herbeigerufen wurden, erklärt Zefirino, dass die geplante Reise abgesagt werden muss: Es gibt weit und breit keine Pferde zu mieten oder zu kaufen, da alle seit langem für die Reise nach Reims reserviert sind. ^[12] Alle dreizehn Anwesenden reagieren mit Entsetzen auf diesen unerwarteten Schlag. Da eilt Madame Cortese mit einem tröstlichen Brief herbei, den sie soeben von ihrem Mann aus Paris erhalten hat. Don Profondo liest ihn auf allgemeinen Wunsch laut vor: Der König wird in den nächsten Tagen in Paris zurück erwartet, wo man große Feste vorbereitet;

alle, die nicht zur Krönung nach Reims fahren konnten, werden sich mit den Festlichkeiten in Paris trösten können. Die Gräfin von Folleville bietet der ganzen Gruppe spontan ihr Haus in Paris als Unterkunft an. ^[13] Begeistert nehmen alle diese Idee auf, glücklich, dem Schicksal ein Schnippchen schlagen zu können.

CD 3

^[1] Für die Reise nach Paris bietet sich die planmäßige Postkutsche am nächsten Morgen an. Mit dem bereits gesammelten Geld wird man noch an diesem Abend ein öffentliches Fest veranstalten. Trombonok wünscht als Freund der Harmonie, dass sich Melibea und Libenskofer versöhnen. ^[2] Libenskofer verteidigt sich damit, dass ein Übermaß an Liebe ihn schuldig werden ließ, und möchte Melibeas Herz zurück. Diese tadelt ihn dafür, dass er sie für untreu halten konnte, und will nicht an seine Reue glauben. ^[3] Sie fühlt aber, wie ihre Strenge schwindet, während in Libenskofer Hoffnung aufkeimt. Schließlich gibt sie nach und beide fallen sich voll Liebesglück in die Arme.

Beleuchteter Garten mit gedeckter Tafel.

^[4] Antonio beauftragt Gelsomino, die Gäste zu Tisch zu bitten. Maddalena kündigt eine Truppe fahrender Gesangs- und Tanzkünstlern an, die der Baron spontan eingeladen hat. ^[5] Während sich die Gäste an die Tafel setzen, geben die Tänzer eine mythologische Allegorie zum Besten. ^[6] Die vier Sänger der fahrenden Truppe lassen mit den Bediensteten als Chor die Fröhlichkeit als höchstes Gut hochleben. ^[7] Nach diesem Divertissement kündigt Trombonok die Trinksprüche an, deren Abfolge er vorgibt. ^[8] Er eröffnet die Runde, indem er auf die Harmonie unter den europäischen Völkern anstößt. Alle Anwesenden stimmen in den Refrain ein. Darauf ist Melibea an der Reihe. ^[9] Im Rhythmus einer schneidigen Polonaise lässt sie die heldenhaften Krieger hochleben; der Chor wiederholt die Losungen Vaterland, Thron, Treue und Ehre. ^[10] Libenskofer lässt mit einem Zarenlied die Thronfolgerin Frankreichs für ihren Mut und ihre künftige Regentschaft hochleben. Vom Norden gibt Trombonok an den Süden weiter: ^[11] Der Spanier Don Alvaro singt eine Hymne auf den Herzog von Angoulême, der sein Land vom Bürgerkrieg befreit hat. Der Engländer hält sich für unmusikalisch. ^[12] Aber er kennt natürlich die englische Königshymne, mit der er auf eine weitere Bourbonen-Generation, den Herzog von Bordeaux, und das französische Volk anstößt. Die beiden Franzosen, Folleville und Belfiore, sollen ein Lied in C-Dur wählen. ^[13] Sie besingen die Mutter des Vorgenannten, und der Chor wünscht ihr die Gunst des Himmels. Schließlich

bittet Trombonok Madame Cortese und Don Profondo, den Abschluss in Es-Dur zu machen. ^[14] Die gebürtige Tirolerin und der Italiener stimmen eine Tirolienne in Form eines Echojodels an. Sie gilt der goldenen Lilie, dem Symbol des herrschenden Bourbonenzweiges, den der Chor im Refrain als stete Hoffnung der Franzosen besingt. Zuletzt liegt es an Corinna, ihre Improvisationen beizusteuern. Aus den Stichworten, die alle auf einen Zettel schreiben und in eine Urne legen, zieht

Melibea per Zufall das Thema „Karl X., König von Frankreich“. ^[15] Corinna widmet ihm ex tempore fünf Strophen. ^[16] Nach dieser Lobeshymne erscheinen in Transparentbildern die Konterteils der königlichen Familie und der berühmtesten französischen Könige. Nach kurzen Tänzen lässt Belfiore, gefolgt von allen anderen, den König hochleben. Das Fest schließt mit einem Vivat auf Frankreich und seinen tapferen Herrscher.

Reto Müller

Also available



8.660363-66



8.660369-71

The great writer Stendhal wrote of *Il viaggio a Reims* that “this opera is a feast”. The plot is a contemporary farce tailor-made for a particular occasion – the coronation festivities of Charles X – though Rossini valued the music so highly that he reused at great part of the score three years later in the opera *Le Comte Ory*. With a cast of ten principal and eight smaller rôles, this sparkling work is heard complete for the first time and in accordance with the critical edition prepared by the Fondazione Rossini and Casa Ricordi.



**Gioachino
ROSSINI**

(1792-1868)



**Playing Time
2:36:49**

Il viaggio a Reims **ossia L'albergo del Giglio d'Oro**

Dramma giocoso in One Act • Libretto by Luigi Balochi, partly based on *Corinne, ou L'Italie* by Madame de Staël

Corinna **Laura Giordano, Soprano**
Marchesa Melibea **Marianna Pizzolato, Contralto**
La Contessa di Folleville **Sofia Mchedlishvili, Soprano**
Madama Cortese **Alessandra Marianelli, Soprano**
Il Cavalier Belfiore **Bogdan Mihai, Tenor**
Il Conte di Libenskof **Maxim Mironov, Tenor**
Lord Sidney **Mirco Palazzi, Bass**
Don Profondo **Bruno De Simone, Bass**
Il Barone di Trombonok **Bruno Praticò, Bass**
Don Alvaro **Gezim Myshketa, Bass**

Camerata Bach Choir, Poznań • Chorus-master: Ania Michalak
Virtuosi Brunensis (Karel Mitáš, Artistic Director)

Antonino Fogliani

Musical Assistant and Fortepiano: Michele D'Elia

CD 1 [1]-[12] Part I 54:51 CD 2 [1]-[13] Part II 48:07 CD 3 [1]-[16] Part III 53:51

Recorded in concert at the Königliches Kurtheater, Bad Wildbad, Germany, 8th, 10th and 12th July 2014
for the XXVI ROSSINI IN WILDBAD Festival (Artistic director: Jochen Schönleber)

A Co-production with Südwestrundfunk • Producer: Siegbert Ernst • Engineers: Norbert Vossen and Siggie Mehne
Editor: Dr. Anette Sidhu-Ingenhoff • Booklet notes and Synopsis: Reto Müller • Cover Photo by Patrick Pfeiffer:
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