



Richard STRAUSS

Ariadne auf Naxos

(Symphony-Suite, arr. D. Wilson Ochoa)

Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme – Suite

A photograph of a stone archway, likely part of an ancient Greek or Roman temple, set against a clear blue sky. The arch is made of large, weathered stone blocks. The text is centered within the opening of the arch.

Buffalo
Philharmonic
Orchestra
JoAnn Falletta

Richard STRAUSS (1864-1949)

Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme – Suite, Op. 60 (1912)	36:17	Ariadne auf Naxos – Symphony-Suite (arr. D. Wilson Ochoa for orchestra) (1912/2010)	39:17
1. Ouverture zum I. Aufzug (Overture to Act I) – Auftritt des Jourdain (Entrance of Jourdain)	4:08	10. 1. Prologue (Overture to the Prologue)	5:13
2. Menuett (Minuet)	1:43	11. 2. Duet: Ein Augenblick ist wenig, ein Blick is viel (A glance is greater than a moment)	3:54
3. Der Fechtmeister (The Fencing Master)	1:50	12. 3. Waltz: Eine Störrische zu trösten (Discard such worries)	6:11
4. Auftritt und Tanz der Schneider (Entrance and Dance of the Tailor)	5:22	13. 4. Overture: The Opera Overture – Ein Schönes War (There was such beauty)	4:47
5. Das Menuett des Lully (Minuet of Lully)	2:12	14. 5. Aria: Es gibt ein Reich (There is a realm)	6:21
6. Courante	2:49	15. 6. Interlude	4:21
7. Auftritt des Cléonte (Entrance of Cléonte (after Lully))	4:12	16. 7. Finale: Gibt es kein Hinüber? (Where is the passage?)	8:30
8. Prelude zum II. Aufzug (Prelude to Act II) (Intermezzo)	3:23		
9. Das Diner (Tafelmusik und Tanz des Küchenjungen) (The Dinner (Banquet music and Dance of the Chefs))	10:39		

Richard Strauss (1864-1949) Ariadne auf Naxos • Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme

In 1670, at the magnificent château known as Chambord, *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* (The Bourgeois Gentleman), was premièred for the Sun King, Louis XIV. The comedy-ballet was from the hand of the French satirist and playwright Jean-Baptiste Molière. As a co-conspirator, his compatriot Jean-Baptiste Lully got in the act by composing several ballet scenes for the event, and even performed one of the stage rôles. (As an aside, the famous story is true that Lully later succumbed to an infected wound in his foot – inflicted by his very own, floor-length conducting stick! Batons have been a lot shorter ever since. Molière, too, suffered an ironic demise, stricken while acting in his own satire titled *The Imaginary Invalid*.)

Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme is about the vanity of social climbing in the upper-middle class – the traditional Parisian bourgeoisie. The storyline in sum:

Monsieur Jourdain, a man of recent means, is determined to become a 'gentleman of quality' in high society. As the son of peasants he knows he must first refine his awkward manners, and begins to take lessons in the arts, philosophy and fencing. And of course, one cannot possibly be a 'gentleman of quality' without having a mistress, so he tries to woo the Marquise Dorimène, a widowed socialite who could add a certain chic to his reputation. All the while, his wife, Madame Jourdain, watches as he makes a bungling fool of himself at every turn. She finally saves the day by conspiring with their servants to teach Monsieur a much needed lesson.

One can imagine the opportunity here for unbridled comedy, especially from the pen of a piquant wit like Molière.

In 1912, exactly 242 years later after the Chambord première, Richard Strauss composed new incidental music for a revival of the play at the Stuttgart opera house in Germany. On this he was also encouraged by the Austrian poet Hugo von Hofmannsthal, who was Strauss' long-time collaborator and librettist. The latter also suggested that a reduced score for chamber orchestra would be ideal.

Everything went as planned except for a real-life comedy at the first performance, where stage actors, musicians, producer, conductor and theatre managers squabbled over trivial details in a farce of their own. As a consequence, the production was only modestly successful. The marvellous new music might have been forgotten were it not for Strauss himself who assembled the various musical episodes into the current suite, which was performed under his baton in Vienna on New Year's Day of 1920. The composer remained especially fond of the score, and even selected it for a ceremony given in honour of his 84th birthday in Munich in 1948.

Strauss borrowed liberally from Lully, and based three of the movements directly on samples from the French master, with fragments from other composers, including himself. Colourful and translucent throughout, the neo-classic sound of this opus is unexpectedly lean for Strauss, especially when considered against the macro-decibels of his more familiar work.

For reference, the *Overture* is subtitled *Jourdain the Bourgeois*; the *Minuet* is a parody of the blundering dancing lesson; *The Fencing Master* reveals that Monsieur can barely keep from wounding himself; the *Entrance and Dance of the Tailors* finds Jourdain outfitted in extravagant pomp; the *Minuet* is a graceful moment for real dancers; the courtly *Courante* conjures blithe moments from the ball scene; *Entrance of Cléonte* represents Jourdain's future son-in-law, who will help resolve the dilemma; *Intermezzo* serves to open the curtain on Act II; *The Dinner* offers different musical flavours for each dish: e.g. Rhine salmon with a snippet from *Das Rheingold*, a plate of mutton recalls the 'bleating sheep' from Strauss' own *Don Quixote*, etc. – a smorgasbord of borrowed whimsy. Delightful.

Completed in 1911, Strauss' luxuriant *Der Rosenkavalier* became the spiritual muse for *Ariadne auf Naxos*, which followed just a year later. For each opera, Strauss collaborated with his librettist Hugo Von Hofmannsthal. Although based on Greco-Roman mythology, *Ariadne* emerged with the lyrical levity of the worldly *Rosenkavalier*, and included a droll ballet intended as a prologue in the Italianate manner of the *commedia dell'arte*. Moreover, the double motif is framed in part as a take-off on Molière's delightful theatre farce, *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* of 1670.

Strauss and Hofmannsthal ultimately came up with a second version of *Ariadne* in 1916, and source music from both versions are represented in the current *Symphony-Suite*. The storyline calls for an 'opera-within-opera', written by a character known as The Composer – a male rôle sung by a *travesti mezzo-soprano* (in trousers), just as Strauss had employed for Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier*.

The libretto in brief: at the extravagant mansion of a Viennese dilettante, it is decided that – to save time – both the *commedia* ballet and the serious opera would be performed simultaneously. The Composer is distraught, but calmed by the flirtatious servant, Zerbinetta. For her part, Ariadne is already weeping for lost love, waiting for death. Zerbinetta segues from the *commedia* to advise her that the only antidote is another lover. Voilà: just in time – the worldly Bacchus arrives on the scene. After exchanging arias, he and Ariadne walk joyfully into the ever-after sunrise.

We should note: Mozart also used a *travesti* soprano for the role of Cherubino in *The Marriage of Figaro*; and, in *Ariadne*, Zerbinetta is a replica of the savvy maid, Despina, in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, whose principal aria presages the harmonies of Strauss, who knew well how to borrow.

The current setting by D. Wilson Ochoa was scored in 2010 for Giancarlo Guerrero and the Nashville Symphony. Except for the *Interlude* from Version 1, the movements are all derived from Version 2. About the work, Ochoa notes:

"My aim in extracting and arranging music from *Ariadne* was to create an orchestral suite that could act as a kind of symphony in the presentation and development of the main themes from the opera. I maintained Strauss' original instrumentation throughout, with the exception of having the second oboe double on English horn, an ideal instrument for some of the vocal quotes. The original keys remain, with added orchestration of lines originally cast for voice. Following Strauss' original setting, I attempted to create seamless, logical transitions between the excerpts.

"The *Symphony-Suite* is divided into seven continuous sections: the *Prologue* introduces us to the major musical themes from the opera, developed one at a time in the subsequent parts. The tender and lyrical *Duet* is between the characters of Zerbinetta and The Composer (*Ein Augenblick ist wenig ein Blick ist viel* – A glance is greater than a moment) as she flirts with him for her own designs.

"The *Waltz (Eine Störrische zu trösten* – Discard such worries), originally a virtuoso *coloratura* aria, is sung by Zerbinetta and three of her male admirers. The *Overture* is the slow, beautiful music that introduces the 'opera-within-opera' and eventually forms Ariadne's aria (*Ein Schönes war* – There was such beauty). Serving as the slow middle movement in the suite, it begins as a string sextet before expanding into the full chamber orchestra.

"Ariadne's lovely aria (*Es gibt ein Reich* – There is a realm) is her belief that death would bring liberation from her sorrows. The *Interlude* is an absolutely charming episode which leads to the sumptuous *Finale*, where the same theme is elongated to become *Gibt es kein Hinüber?* (Where is the passage?), revealing Ariadne's transformation by a new love. As a fitting close, the *Finale* smartly recalls several themes from earlier in the opera."

Edward Yadzinski

D. Wilson Ochoa



San Diego, California, native D. Wilson Ochoa came to the Boston Symphony Orchestra as Principal Librarian in 2014. He holds degrees in music from San Diego State University and the University of Memphis. Previously, Ochoa played French horn professionally for 13 years. In his spare time, he prepares orchestral and chamber arrangements and transcriptions. These include Aaron Copland's *Emblems*, and additional works by Chance, Jenkins and Prokofiev, as well as the opening *Promenade* from Leonard Slatkin's compilation of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* (Naxos 8.570716). Ochoa has also been a producer on four albums by the Nashville Symphony and the Alias Chamber Ensemble on the Naxos label.

Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra



Founded in 1935, the GRAMMY® Award-winning Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, under the direction of Music Director JoAnn Falletta, is Buffalo's leading cultural ambassador and presents more than 120 Classics, Pops and Youth Concerts each year. Since 1940, the orchestra's permanent home has been Kleinhans Music Hall, a National Historic Landmark, designed by Eliel and Eero Saarinen, one of the finest concert halls in the United States. The BPO has toured widely across the United States and Canada including the Florida Friends Tour with JoAnn Falletta in March 2010. The BPO performed at Carnegie Hall as a participant in the *Spring For Music* festival in 2013, as one of five orchestras selected from a national field. This was the orchestra's 24th appearance at Carnegie Hall and its first since its performance there under JoAnn Falletta in June 2004. Over the decades, the BPO has matured in stature under leading conductors, including William Steinberg, Josef Krips, Lukas Foss, Michael Tilson Thomas, Maximiano Valdés, Semyon Bychkov and Julius Rudel. During the tenure of JoAnn Falletta the BPO has rekindled its distinguished history of radio broadcasts and recordings, including the release of 24 new albums of a highly diverse repertoire on the Naxos and Beau Fleuve labels. The Philharmonic's Naxos recording of composer John Corigliano's *Mr. Tambourine Man: Seven Poems of Bob Dylan* (8.559331), featuring soprano Hila Plitmann, won GRAMMYs® in two categories of the three for which it was nominated: Classical Vocal Performance and Classical Contemporary Composition.

JoAnn Falletta

Photo: Guerin Blask



JoAnn Falletta serves as Music Director of the Buffalo Philharmonic and Virginia Symphony in the United States and Principal Conductor of the Ulster Orchestra in Northern Ireland. She has guest conducted over a hundred orchestras in North America, and many of the most prominent orchestras in Europe, Asia, South America and Africa and is the Principal Guest Conductor of the Phoenix Symphony and Brevard Music Center of North Carolina. Recipient of the Seaver/National Endowment for the Arts Conductors Award, winner of the Stokowski Competition, and the Toscanini, Ditson and Bruno Walter conducting awards, Falletta has also received eleven ASCAP awards and serves on the U.S. National Council on the Arts. A champion of American music, she has presented over five hundred works by American composers including 110 world premières. Her Naxos recordings include the double GRAMMY® Award-winning disc of works by John Corigliano and GRAMMY® nominated discs of works by Tyberg, Dohnányi, Fuchs, Schubert, Respighi, Gershwin, Hailstork and Holst.

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Richard Strauss' *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* suite was one of his own favourite scores, an absolute jewel of incidental music that combines the composer's romanticism with his love of the Baroque music of Jean-Baptiste Lully. D. Wilson Ochoa has created a new symphonic orchestral suite from Strauss' opulent *Ariadne auf Naxos*, enabling the orchestra to revel in music of extreme beauty and sensuous luxury, studded with gorgeous instrumental solos and the composer's incomparable blend of poignancy, humour and melodic richness.

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1-9 Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme
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10-16 Ariadne auf Naxos – Symphony-Suite
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*** WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDING**

Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra
Concertmasters: William Preucil 1-9, Dennis Kim 10-16
JoAnn Falletta

A detailed track list can be found on page 2 of the booklet.

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