

RITORNA VINCITOR!

VERONIKA DZHIOEVA SINGS FAVORITE ARIAS



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Constantine Orbelian, conductor
Kaunas City Symphony Orchestra



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VERONIKA DZHIOEVA SINGS FAVORITE ARIAS

"What a gorgeous voice — like a Rolls-Royce — she must sing in the best theaters in the world!" — Dmitri Hvorostovsky

VERDI: *Macbeth* — Nel dì della vittoria ... Vieni t'affretta • *Aida* — Ritorna vincitor!
• *Aida* — Qui Radamès verrà • *Il trovatore* — Tacea la notte placida • *La forza del destino* — Pace, pace mio Dio • Un ballo in maschera — Ecco l'orrido campo... Ma dall'arido stelo divulsa

PUCCINI: *Madama Butterfly* — Un bel di vedremo • *Suor Angelica* — Senza mamma • *Tosca* — Vissi d'arte

CILEA: *Adriana Lecouvreur* — Io son l'umile ancella

GIORDANO: *Andrea Chénier* — La mamma morta

Veronika Dzhioeva, soprano
Constantine Orbelian, conductor
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Total Playing Time: 59:32



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1. **GIUSEPPE VERDI:** *Macbeth*—Nel dì della vittoria ... Vieni t'affretta! (7:19)
2. **FRANCESCO CILEA:** *Adriana Lecouvreur*—Io son l'umile ancella (3:28)
3. **UMBERTO GIORDANO:** *Andrea Chénier*—La mamma morta (4:51)
4. **GIACOMO PUCCINI:** *Madama Butterfly*—Un bel dì vedremo. (4:21)
5. **PUCCINI:** *Suor Angelica*—Senza mamma (4:48)
6. **PUCCINI:** *Tosca*—Vissi d'arte (3:15)
7. **VERDI:** *Aida*—Ritorna vincitor! (6:42)
8. **VERDI:** *Aida*—Qui Radamès verrà. (6:12)
9. **VERDI:** *Il trovatore*—Tacea la notte placida (4:58)
10. **VERDI:** *La forza del destino*—Pace, pace mio Dio (5:14)
11. **VERDI:** *Un ballo in maschera*—Ecco l'orrido campo... Ma dall'arido stelo divulsa (8:19)

VERONIKA DZHIOEVA, soprano
CONSTANTINE ORBELIAN, conductor
KAUNAS CITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Total Playing Time: 59:32

**1. *Macbeth*: Nel dì della vittoria ...
Vieni t'affretta!**

Completed in 1847, *Macbeth* is the first of three operas based upon Shakespearean sources that Verdi completed; several others were considered, but never came to fruition. The version of the aria heard here—**Nel dì della vittoria ... Vieni t'affretta!**—is from the composer's 1865 revision of the opera. The aria comes late in Act 1, as Lady Macbeth—determined to see her husband enthroned as king—reads a letter from him revealing his encounter with witches who had (among other darker predictions) foretold that he would become king of Scotland. She then tells him not to hesitate, fanning the flame of his uncertain ambition by urging him to "Accept the gift, mount the throne and reign," no matter how much blood must be spilled in the process.

Nel dì della vittoria io le incontrai...
Stupito io n'era per le udite cose;
quando I nunzi del re mi salutarò
Sir di caudore, vaticinio uscito
dalle veggenti stesse.
Che predissero un serto al capo mio.
Racchiudi in cor questo segreto. Addio.

Ambizioso spirito.
Tu sei Macbetto... Alla grandezza aneli,
ma sarai tu malvagio?
Pien di misfatti è il calle

della potenza, e mal per lui che il piede
dubitoso vi pone, e retrocede!

Vieni t'affretta! Accendere
ti vo' quel freddo core!
L'audace impresa a compiere
io ti darò valore;
di scozia a te promettono
le profetesse il trono...
Che tardi? Accetta il dono,
ascendivi a regnar.

Duncano sarà qui?...qui? qui la notte?
Or tutti sorgete,—ministri infernali,
Che al sangue incorate,—spingete i mortali!
Tu, notte, ne avvolgi—di tenebre immota;
Qual petto percota—non vegga il pugnale!



I met them on the day of victory.
I was stunned at what I heard.
When the King's messengers hailed me
Thane of Cawdor, it fulfilled a prophecy
that those witches had made.
They also foresaw a crown upon my head.
Make this your heart's secret. Farewell.

Macbeth, you are an ambitious one.
You hunger for greatness,
but can you be evil enough?
The path to power
is littered with atrocities, and woe to him
who treads it hesitantly and retreats!

Come, make haste! I seek
to light a fire in your cold heart!
I shall give you the courage
to carry out this bold undertaking.
The prophetesses promise you
the throne of Scotland.
Why delay? Accept the gift,
mount the throne and reign.

Duncan will be here tonight? Here?
Now rise up, you fiendish ministers,
who stir the blood and spur
mortals onward!
O night, conceal it in foul darkness;
so that the stabbed breast won't see
the dagger!

2. **Adriana Lecouvreur: Io son l'umile ancella**

When Francesco Cilea's successful *L'arlesiana* prompted the commissioning of another opera, the result was **Adriana Lecouvreur**: a story so popular for its comic/tragic mixture and moving (if far-fetched) final act that three other composers set the same story. Their efforts have long since been forgotten. Premiered in Milan in 1902, Cilea's opera begins with a classic play within a play, with actors and actresses whose own curtain is about to rise, and featuring the actress Adriana and her rival, Duclos. The Prince of Bouillon arrives to wish them luck,

to which the dedicated artist Adriana replies—in "**Io son l'umile ancella**"—that she is only a vessel for the creative spirit: "I'm the echo of human drama ... my name is Faithful." Despite the complex and confusing plot that follows – and the heroine's unlikely "death by poisoned violets" in the end – the opera has retained its foothold in the modern repertoire. The stunning appeal of this aria will only begin to tell you why.

Ecco: respiro appena.
Io son l'umile ancella del Genio creator
ei m'offre la favella, io la diffondo al cor.
Del verso io son l'accento,
l'eco del dramma uman,
il fragile strumento vassallo della man.
Mite gioconda, atroce, mi chiamo, Fedeltà.
Un soffio è la mia voce, che al novo d'immorrà.



See, I am scarcely breathing ...
I am the humble servant of the
creative genius
who gives me the words which
ignite the soul.
I am only the accent of his verse,
the echo of the human drama,
the fragile instrument on which he plays.
Tender, joyful, savage, my name is "Faithful."
My voice is a sigh which will die tomorrow.

3. *Andrea Chénier*: La mamma morta

Set in Paris before and during the chaos of the French revolution, Umberto Giordano's *Andrea Chénier* is a verismo opera in four acts; it was first performed at Milan's La Scala in 1896. Maddalena, the daughter of a countess, first meets the title character, a popular poet, at an aristocratic soirée. Five years later, at the height of the revolution's "reign of terror," they meet again and declare their love for each other. In Act 3, after Chénier has been imprisoned, Maddalena comes to plead for his life and sings "**La mamma morta**," describing how her mother, the Countess, died to save her as their house burned, casting her into poverty and despair until Chénier gave her new hope and encouragement. Despite his judge's promise to the contrary, Chénier is condemned to die. Maddalena comes to visit him, and bribes a guard to let her change places with a condemned noblewoman, enabling the lovers to face the guillotine together.

La mamma morta m'hanno
alla porta della stanza mia;
moriva e mi salvava!
poi a notte alta
io con Bersi errava,
quando ad un tratto
un livido bagliore guizza
e rischiara innanzi a' passi miei

la cupa via!
Guardo!
Bruciava il loco di mia culla!
Così fui sola!
E intorno il nulla!
Fame e miseria!
Il bisogno, il periglio!
Caddi malata,
e Bersi, buona e pura,
di sua bellezza ha fatto un mercato,
un contratto per me!
Porto sventura a chi bene mi vuole!
Fu in quel dolore
che a me venne l'amor!
Voce piena d'armonia e dice:
Vivi ancora! Io son la vita!
Ne' miei occhi e il tuo cielo!
Tu non sei sola!
Le lacrime tue io le raccolgo!
Io sto sul tuo cammino e ti sorreggo!
Sorridi e spera! Io son l'amore!
Tutto intorno e sangue e fango?
Io son divino! Io son l'oblio!
Io sono il dio che sovra il mondo
scendo da l'empireo, fa della terra
un ciel! Ah!
Io son l'amore, io son l'amor, l'amor'
E l'angelo si accosta, bacia,
e vi bacia la morte!
Corpo di moribonda e il corpo mio.
Prendilo dunque.
Io son già morta cosa!



They killed my mother
at my room's door;
she died saving me!
Later, in the depths of night,
Bersi and I were wandering ...
when suddenly,
I see a pale glow,
and it lightens the dark street
ahead of me. I look!
My home was on fire!
So I was alone!
And all around me, nothing!
Hunger ... despair!
Poverty ... danger!
I became ill,
and Bersi, pure and good-hearted,
marketed her beauty
for my sake.
I bring only misfortune to those
who love me!
It was in that deep sorrow
that love approached me!
A harmonious voice, saying:
You must live! I am life itself!
My eyes show your heaven;
you're not alone!
I'll gather up your tears!
I'll walk beside you and uphold you!
Smile and hope! I am love!
Are you mired in mud and blood?
I am divine oblivion!
I'm the God that descends to Earth
from the cosmos; I transform Earth
into heaven! Ah!

I'm love, I'm love, love—
and an angel draws nigh with a kiss
and it's death that's kissing you.
My body is dying.
So take it.
I've already died!

4. *Madama Butterfly*: Un bel dì vedremo

Puccini began working on *Madama Butterfly* immediately after seeing David Belasco's play by the same name in 1900, and the revised version that we know today was premiered in the spring of 1904. Perhaps the composer was attracted to Butterfly's unwavering and hopeful (yet ultimately tragic) love, as expressed in one of Puccini's most famous and moving arias, "**Un bel dì vedremo.**" She waits faithfully for Pinkerton, her American naval officer husband, three years after he married her then abandoned her in Japan. Butterfly (a.k.a. Cio-cio-san), who has borne his child, sings ecstatically of an imaginary future scene in which Pinkerton returns to her as he had promised. After looking to the ocean to see his ship arrive, she patiently waits for him to ascend the mountain to her dwelling, where he will call her "dear little wife, bouquet of verbena" like he did before. Note how the aria shifts between gentle reverie and staggering dramatic intensity. She later discovers Pinkerton has returned, but with his American wife—who

wishes to adopt Butterfly's child. Butterfly shuts herself away in her room and commits suicide with her father's dagger just as Pinkerton arrives, calling her name.

Un bel dì vedremo
levarsi un fil di fumo
sull'estremo confin del mare.
E poi la nave appare—
poi la nave bianca
entra nel porto, romba
il suo saluto. Vedi?
È venuto!
Io non gli scendo incontro.
Io no. Mi metto là
sul ciglio del colle e aspetto,
e aspetto gran tempo
e non mi pesa
la lunga attesa.
E ... uscito dalla folla cittadina
un uom, un picciol punto
s'avvia per la collina.
Chi sarà? Chi sarà?
E come sarà giunto—
Che dirà? che dirà?
Chiamerà "Butterfly!"
Dalla lontana.
Io senza dar risposta
me ne starò nascosta,
un po' per celia
e un po' per non morir
al primo incontro,
ed egli alquanto in pena
chiamerà, chiamerà:

"Piccina mogliettina,
Olezzo di verbenà!"
I nomi che mi dava
al suo venire.
Tutto questo avverrà,
te lo prometto.
Tienti la tua paura,
io con sicura fede l'aspetto.



One fine day we'll see
a curl of smoke arising
on the ocean's horizon,
and then the ship will appear.
Then the white ship
will sail into the harbor,
thundering a salute.
Do you see it? He has come!
I won't go down to meet him,
instead, I'll stand there
on the hill's crest and wait,
and wait for a long time,
and I won't find
the wait long.
And from within the crowd,
a man — a tiny figure —
will begin to climb the hill.
Who could it be?
And when he has arrived,
what will he say?
From the distance,
he will call, "Butterfly!"
I won't answer,
but will remain hidden,

in part to tease him,
and partly so I don't die
as we first meet.
A bit worried,
he'll call,
"Dear little wife,
bouquet of verbena,"
as he called me
when he was last here.
And, I promise you,
all this will happen.
Calm your fears;
I'll wait for him
with utter faith.

5. *Suor Angelica: Senza mamma*

Suor Angelica, an opera in one act, is the second of the three short operas that make up Puccini's operatic trilogy, ***Il Tritico***—the other two being *Il Tabarro* and *Gianni Schicchi*. the trilogy was first performed at New York's Metropolitan Opera in 1918. Sister Angelica's aristocratic Florentine family had committed her to a convent seven years previously, after she had given birth to a son out of wedlock, and she has not heard from them since. Unexpectedly, the Princess (her aunt), arrives to obtain her signature on a document renouncing her share of her family inheritance, since her younger sister is about to marry another nobleman. Cruelly, she then tells Angelica

that her illegitimate son had died two years earlier of fever, leading to her heartbroken aria, "**Senza mamma.**" Then, resolved to join her son in heaven, Angelica takes poison. Realizing too late that her suicide is a mortal sin, she prays to the Virgin Mary for forgiveness, and—as she dies—a vision of Mary appears, leading the boy to her as the chorus sings of her salvation.

Senza mamma, o bimbo,
tu sei morto!
Le tue labbra, senza i baci miei,
scoloriron fredde!
E chiudesti, o bimbo,
gli occhi belli!
Non potendo carezzarmi,
le manine componesti in croce!
E tu sei morto
senza sapere quanto t'amava
questa tua mamma!
Ora che sei un angelo del cielo,
ora tu puoi vederla la tua mamma,
tu puoi scendere giù pel firmamento
ed aleggiare intorno a me ti sento.
Sei qui, mi baci e m'accarezzi.
Ah! Dimmi, quando in ciel potrò vederti?
Quando potrò baciarti?
Oh! Dolce fine d'ogni mio dolore,
quando in ciel potrò salire?
Quando potrò morire?
Dillo alla mamma, creatura bella,
con un leggero scintillar di stella.
Parlami, amore!



Without your mother, o my baby,
you have died!
Your lips, without my kisses,
grow pale and cold!
And close, o baby,
your pretty eyes.
I cannot caress you,
your little hands composed in a cross!
And you are dead
without knowing how loved you were
by your mother!
Now you are an angel in heaven,
now you can see your mother,
you can descend from heaven
and let your essence linger around me,
feeling my kisses and caresses.
Ah! Tell me, when will I see you in heaven?
When will I be able to kiss you?
Oh! Sweet end to all my sorrows,
when I greet you in heaven.
When will I greet death?
Tell your mother, beautiful creature,
with a sparkle of the stars.
Speak to me, my beloved!

6. *Tosca*: Vissi d'arte

Many consider Puccini's *Tosca* to be the most intensely melodramatic of his great masterpieces; it was first performed in Rome in 1900. Set in Rome at the time of Napoleon's threatened invasion of Italy in

1800, it contains graphic scenes depicting murder, torture and suicide at a time of unchecked police brutality. In Act 2, the news comes that Napoleon has won an important battle: a defeat for Baron Scarpia, the villainous secret police chief who supports a rival faction. Opposition sympathizer Cavaradossi, voicing his defiance of tyranny, is arrested and taken away to be executed just as Floria Tosca, his beautiful dark-haired lover, appears. Scarpia tells her that he would let Cavaradossi go free if she'd give herself to him. Fighting off his advances, she calls on God in her aria, "**Vissi d'arte**," declaring that she has dedicated her life only to art, charity and love. But Scarpia insists, and Tosca—now forced to give in or lose her lover—agrees to Scarpia's proposition ... but after he has written a false pardon for the lovers, she kills him with a knife she has found. Later, after learning that Cavaradossi has been executed anyway, she—in one of opera's most spectacular suicides—flings herself off the parapet of Castel Sant'Angelo to her death.

Vissi d'arte, vissi d'amore,
non feci mai male ad anima viva!
Con man furtiva quante miserie conobbi,
aiutai.
Sempre con fe' sincera la mia preghiera
ai santi tabernacoli salì. Sempre con fe'
sincera diedi fiori agli altar.
Nell'ora del dolore perchè, perchè, Signore,

perchè me ne rimunerì così?
Diedi gioielli della Madonna al manto,
e diedi il canto agli astri al ciel,
Che ne ridean più belli.
Nell'ora del dolore perchè, perchè, Signor, ah,
perchè me ne rimunerì così?



I have lived for art, I have lived for love;
never have I harmed a living creature!
Countless times have I given secret aid
to the unfortunate.
Always with true faith were my prayers
offered
to the holy shrines; always with true faith
have I laid flowers on the altar.
In this, my hour of grievous trouble,
why, oh Lord, do You reward me thus? I have
given jewels to grace the mantle of Our Lady;
I have sung for the stars and for the heavens,
that they might smile more kindly.
In this hour of grievous trouble,
why, O Lord, have You rewarded me thus?

7. *Aida*: Ritorna vincitor!

Aida was originally commissioned to serve as the gala opener for Egypt's new opera house in Cairo, where it was premiered in 1871. It's Verdi's grandiose tale of triumphal military conquest and jealousy-fueled tragedy set in the ancient Egypt of the Pharaohs. Radamès, the dashing young Cap-

tain of the Royal Guard, yearns to lead his nation's forces to victory against the invading Ethiopians, so that he can free his secret heartthrob, the Ethiopian slave girl Aida. Unknown to her Egyptian captors, Aida is actually the daughter of Amonasro, the Ethiopian King, who is now leading his forces towards Thebes to rescue her. At the end of the opera's opening scene, Aida—alone in the king's hall—gives voice to her anguished inner conflict, torn as she is between her passionate love for Radamès and loyalty to her nation and her father. In the aria "**Ritorna vincitor!**," hardly have the words "return a conqueror" passed her lips when she is wracked by her heart's truest desire, traitorous though it may be.

Ritorna vincitor!
E dal mio labbro uscì l'empia parola!
Vincitor del padre mio, di lui che
impugna l'armi
per me, per ridonarmi una patria, una reggia,
e il nome illustre che qui celar m'è forza!
Vincitor de' miei fratelli ... ond'io
lo vegga, tinto
del sangue amato, trionfar nel plauso
dell'Egizie coorti!
E dietro il carro, un Re, mio padre,
di catene avvinto!
L'insana parola, O Numi, sperdete!
Al seno d'un padre la figlia rendete;
struggete le squadre dei nostri oppressor!
Ah! Sventurata! che dissi? E l'amor mio?

Dunque accordar poss'io questo
fervido amore
che, oppressa e schiava,
come raggio di sol qui mi beava?
Imprecherò la morte a Radamès,
a lui ch'amo pur tanto!
Ah! non fu in terra mai, da più
crudeli angosce
un core affranto!
I sacri nomi di padre, d'amante
nè profferir poss'io, nè ricordar;
per l'un, per l'altro confusa tremante
io piangere vorrei, vorrei pregar.
Ma la mia prece in bestemmia si muta ...
Delitto è il pianto a me, colpa il sospir ...
In notte cupa la mente è perduta,
e nell'ansia crudel vorrei morir.
Numi, pietà del mio soffrir!
Speme non v'ha pel mio dolor.
Amor fatal, tremendo amor,
spezzami il cor,
fammi morir!
Numi pietà del mio soffrir!



Return in victory!
From my lips have come traitorous words!
Victory over my father, who leads the army
to regain for me a country, a kingdom,
and a great name which I must conceal
for the present
victory over my brothers ... with whose
beloved blood
he may be stained

when he is welcomed in triumph by Egypt.
And behind his chariot, a king, my father,
a captive in chains.
O gods, undo my insane words!
Return this daughter to her father's heart;
destroy the forces of our oppressor!
Ah, wretched me! What have I said?
And my love?
Can I then forget this burning passion
which as an oppressed slave I welcomed
like a warming ray of sunshine?
Shall I invoke death upon Radamès,
the one whom I love so much?
Oh, never on this earth has a heart known
more cruel torment!
The sacred words "father" and "lover" —
I can
no longer speak nor remember them;
in my fear and confusion I long to weep,
to pray for each.
But my prayers become blasphemies ...
My tears and sighs become sins ...
My mind is lost in darkest night,
and in such cruel anguish I wish only to die.
O gods, have pity on my suffering!
There is no hope for such sorrow as mine.
Fatal love, overwhelming love,
break my heart! Let me die!
O gods, have pity on my suffering!

8. *Aida*: Qui Radamès verrà

As Act 3 begins, Aida—outside of the temple of Isis—awaits her planned meeting with her beloved Radamès, who is soon to be married to Amneris, the daughter of the king. As she waits, she sings "**Qui Radamès verrà**," expressing her fear that he will give her his final farewell, driving her to suicide and final peace in the waters of the Nile. But he arrives, declaring his love and intention to marry her after escaping with her to the desert. But they are overheard, and Radamès is arrested as a traitor, leading ultimately to their death together, sealed in a locked vault beneath the temple.

Qui Radamès verrà!
Che vorrà dirmi? Io tremo!
Ah! se tu vieni a recarmi, o crudel,
l'ultimo addio,
del Nilo i cupi vortici
mi daran tomba e pace forse,
e pace forse e oblio.

O patria mia, mai più ti rivedrò!
Mai più! mai più ti rivedrò!
O cieli azzurri o dolci aure native
dove sereno il mio mattin brillò
O verdi colli o profumate rive
O patria mia, mai più ti rivedrò!
Mai più! no, no, mai più, mai più!
O fresche valli, o queto asil beato
che un dì promesso dall'amor mi fu

or che d'amore il sogno è dileguato.
O patria mia, non ti vedrò mai più.
Oh patria mia, mai più ti rivedrò!



Radames will come here to me!
What does he want to tell me? I tremble!
Ah! cruel one, if you bring me
your last farewell,
the Nile's dark whirlpools
will give me a tomb, and maybe peace ...
Yes, perhaps even peace and oblivion.

O my country, never more will I see you!
Never more, never more will I see you!
O blue skies, O sweet native breezes,
where shone peacefully the morning of
my life;
O green hills, O perfumed riverbanks,
O my country, I will see you never more!
Never more! No, no, never more!
O cool valleys, o calm refuge,
which love one day promised me.
Now that the dream of love is gone,
O my country, I'll never see you again.
O my country, never more will I see you!

9. *Il Trovatore*: Tacea la notte placida

Begun as a sequel to *Rigoletto*, ***Il Trovatore*** turned out to be one of Verdi's most exotic (and complex) operatic stories – also one of his all-time smash hits. Premiered in Rome

in 1853, it begins outside Spain's royal palace gates with a group of soldiers keeping watch for Count di Luna's foe: a mysterious knight-troubadour who is leading a rebellion against him. The captain of the guard tells a story about a gypsy woman who had allegedly burned the Count's infant brother to death in retribution for her own mother's execution. Within the gates, Leonora—Lady-in-waiting to the Princess—awaits the return of Manrico, the troubadour, with whom she has fallen in love. In **"Tacea la notte placida,"** she sings ecstatically about the first time she heard him sing what she thought was a prayer, before realizing that the song was in praise of her rather than of God. When Manrico appears, the Count—who also loves Leonora—confronts him and challenges him to a duel. In the end (three acts later), Leonora chooses death by poison rather than marry di Luna, shortly before di Luna learns to his horror that his just-executed enemy Manrico was in fact his long-lost brother.

Tacea la notte placida
e bella in ciel sereno,
la luna il viso argenteo
mostrava lieto e pieno...
Quando suonar per l' aere,
infino allor sì muto,
dolci s' udiro e flebili
gli accordi di un liuto,
e versi melanconici
un Trovator cantò.

Versi di prece ed umile
qual d'uom che prega Iddio
in quella ripeteasi
un nome...il nome mio!
Corsi al veron sollecita...
Egli era! egli era desso!...
Gioia provai che agli angeli
solo è provar concesso!...
Al core, al guardo estatico,
la terra un ciel sembrò.



The quiet night was calm
and beautiful in the peaceful sky,
the moon's silvery face
showed glad and full...
When, resounding in the air
that had been so quiet
a soft and sweet sound –
the harmony of a lute –
and a troubadour sang
a melancholy song.
Those humble verses
were like a man praying to God.
But in them was repeated
a name... mine!...
So I ran to the balcony...
There he was! It was he!...
I felt a joy that only angels
are allowed to feel!...
To my heart, to my ecstatic eyes,
the earth seemed like heaven.

10. *La forza del Destino:*
Pace, pace mio Dio

Yet another Leonora comes to the fore in ***La Forza del Destino***: a somewhat odd conglomeration of ideas uncommon to Verdi's stage works, making it something of an operatic mosaic. It was first performed in St. Petersburg, Russia, in 1862. The episodic plot encompasses wide geographical- and time-spans, and the musical traditions in the opera itself derive from a diverse pool of stylistic and structural conventions. Caught up in a love-hate triangle involving her brother and her lover, Leonora appears in the final act after years of living in a cave as a hermit ever since she had been separated from her family and lover. In "**Pace, pace mio Dio,**" she pleads for the peace that has eluded her all these years, praying fervently for death. Abruptly introduced by the orchestra's "fate" theme, the exquisite melodic flow unfolds over a bed of harp tones, before rising in desperate supplication to its spine-tingling climax. God is then quick to grant her wish as she dies violently by her mortally wounded brother's hand.

Pace, pace, mio Dio!
Cruda sventura m'astringe, ahimè a languir;
come il dì primo da tant'anni dura
profondo il mio soffrir.
L'amai, gli è ver! Ma di beltà e valore
cotanto Iddio l'ornò, che l'amo ancor,
nè togliermi dal core l'immagin sua saprò.

Fatalità! Fatalità! Fatalità!
Un delitto disgiunti n'ha quaggiù!
Alvaro, io t'amo, e su nel cielo è scritto:
Non ti vedrò mai più!
Oh Dio, Dio, fa ch'io muoia;
che la calma può darmi morte sol.
Invan la pace qui spero quest'alma
in preda a tanto duol, in mezzo a tanto duol.
Misero pane, a prolungarmi vieni
la sconsolata vita ... Ma chi giunge?
Chi profanare ardisce il sacro loco?
Maledizione! Maledizione! Maledizione!



Peace, peace, o God!
Cruel misfortune has driven me to misery.
From the beginning of these hard years
I have suffered bitterly.
Truly, I loved him! But God bestowed on him
such grace and virtue that I love him still, and
cannot keep him from my thoughts.
Oh fate! Oh cruel fate!
The sins of the past have separated us!
Alvaro, I love you, but in heaven it is written
that we shall never meet again!
Oh God, God, let me die;
for only then can I know peace.
In vain does my soul seek peace
in the midst of such anguish.
Oh cursed bread, which prolongs
this miserable
existence.... But who comes now?
Who dares profane this sacred place?
A curse upon him!

11. *Un ballo in maschera*: Ecco l'orrido campo... Ma dall'arido stelo divulsa

This scene and aria open Act 2 of ***Un ballo in maschera***, Verdi's politically controversial operatic tale of regicide that got its premiere (in modified form) at Rome's Teatro Apollo in 1859. Amelia—the wife of Count Anckarström, King Gustavo's secretary—is in love with the king, but is torn between him and her marriage vows. Amelia, as midnight approaches, finds herself at a desolate field to meet the sorceress Ulrica, from whom she seeks to obtain a potion to dispel her potentially adulterous, but as yet innocent love for Gustavo. The grim locale is evoked in an extended prelude, its turbulence carrying over into the opening lines of the aria, **“Ecco l'orrido campo... Ma dall'arido stelo divulsa.”** From there, the aria temporarily slows down, losing some of its fearful agitation, with its melody shared between Amelia's voice and a solo English horn as she sings in fragmentary utterances that reflect her growing anxiety. The tempo and dramatic tension pick up as Amelia experiences a frightening vision of death, before finally simmering down into an impassioned prayer.

Ecco l'orrido campo ove s'accoppia
al delitto la morte!
Ecco là le colonne...
la pianta è là verdeggia al piè.

S'innoltri. Ah, mi si agghela il core!
Sino il rumor de' passi miei, qui tutto
m'empie di raccapriccio e di terrore!
E se perir dovessi?
Perire! Ebben!... quando la sorte mia,
il mio dover tal è... s'adempia, e sia!
Ma dall'arido stelo divulsa
come avrò di mia mano quell'erba,
e che dentro la mente convulsa
quell' eterea sembianza morrà:
Che ti resta, perduto l'amor...
che ti resta, mio povero cor!
Oh! chi piange, qual forza m'arretra?
M'attraversa la squallida via?
Su, corraggio... e tu fatti di pietra,
non tradirmi, dal pianto rista:
O finisci di battere e muor,
t'annienta, mio povero cor!
Mezzanotte! Ah, che veggio?
Una testa di sotterra si leva... e sospira!
Ha negli occhi il baleno dell'ira
e m'affisa e terribile sta! ah!
Deh! mi reggi, m'aita, o Signor...
Miserere d'un povero cor...



Here is the horrid field
where death and crime unite.
The columns are here...
with the plant growing green at their feet.
Let me approach... Ah, my heart freezes!
Even the sound of my own
footsteps completely
fills me with horror and terror!

And if I must perish?
 Perish! Well then, if it is my fate, my duty...
 Let it be done, and so be it!
 But when I have uprooted the dry stem
 of that herb with my hand,
 and inside my troubled mind,
 the heavenly image dies.
 What will remain for you, lost love...
 What will remain for you, my poor heart!
 Oh, why do I weep? What is holding
 me back?
 What blocks the wretched path I must take?
 Come, courage... and you, poor heart,
 turn to stone,
 Do not betray me; do not weep;
 or stop beating and die;
 be extinguished, my poor heart!
 Midnight! Ah, what do I see?
 A head rises from the ground... and sighs!
 It has in its eyes the flash of anger
 and it stares at me, and terrible it is!
 Ah! support me, help me, oh Lord,
 have pity on a poor heart...

—Notes by Lindsay Koob

“What a gorgeous voice—like a Rolls-Royce—she must sing in the best theaters in the world!” wrote Dmitri Hvorostovsky about soprano Veronika Dzhioeva, whose first Delos recording offers intensely personal performances of well-loved Italian arias.

A native of South Ossetia, **Veronika Dzhioeva** trained at North Ossetia’s Vladikavkaz College before graduating from the St. Petersburg Conservatory in 2005. Since then, she has become one of Russia’s leading singers, being a leading soloist of the Novosibirsk Opera and Ballet Theater and a frequent guest soloist at the Bolshoi and Mariinsky Theaters. She remains in considerable demand throughout Europe, Scandinavia and the Baltic nations; she has also appeared to great acclaim in the USA as well as in China, Japan and Korea.

Her major roles include the Countess (*The Marriage of Figaro*), Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*), Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*), Gorislava (*Ruslan and Lyudmila*), Yaroslava (*Prince Igor*), Marfa (*The Tsar’s Bride*), Tatiana (*Eugene Onegin*), Micaela (*Carmen*), Violetta (*La Traviata*), Elizabeth (*Don Carlo*), Lady Macbeth (*Macbeth*), Thaïs (*Thaïs*), Musetta (*La bohème*), Amelia (*Un ballo in maschera*), Zemfira (*Aleko*) and Liù (*Turandot*).

She has graced the stages of major opera houses worldwide, including the Teatro Co-



munale di Bologna, Teatro Real (Madrid), the Hamburg Opera, the Houston Opera, Palermo's Teatro Massimo, the Geneva Opera House, and Moscow's Novaya Opera Theater. Top conductors she has worked with include Mariss Janssons, Vladimir Fedoseyev, Valery Gergiev, Mikhail Pletnev, Vladimir Spivakov and Yuri Bashmet. She has also made several notable television appearances in Russia.

Ms. Dzhioeva's concert repertoire features the requiem masses by Verdi and Mozart, Mahler's *Symphony No. 2*, Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*, Mozart's *Great Mass in C Minor*, Richard Strauss's *Four Last Songs*, Saint-Saëns's *Requiem*, and Bruckner's *Te Deum*, as well as notable works by contemporary composers. She has collaborated with major orchestras such as the Royal Concertgebouw, the Bavarian Radio Symphony, The Czech Philharmonic orchestra of Prague, and has toured with the London Symphony Orchestra.

Dzhioeva's many awards include the Maria Callas Grand Prix, St. Petersburg's All-Russia Competition of Opera Singers, the International Glinka Competition and the Czech National Pragensis Prize, to name just a few. She has served as a jury member for numerous national and international contests, alongside many other distinguished singers such as Elena

Obraztsova. As of this recording's release, Viktoria is rehearsing the roles of Aida, Elizabeth in *Tannhäuser* and Marguerite in *Faust* at Russian and European theaters.

Grammy-nominated conductor **Constantine Orbelian** "stands astride two great societies, and finds and promotes synergistic harmony from the best of each." (*Fanfare*)

For over 25 years the brilliant American pianist/conductor has been a central figure in Russia's and Eastern Europe's musical life — first as Music Director of the Moscow Chamber Orchestra and the Philharmonia of Russia, and more recently as Chief Conductor of the Kaunas City Symphony Orchestra in Lithuania. In 2016 he also became Artistic Director of the State Academic Opera and Ballet Theater in Yerevan, Armenia. In all of these centers, Orbelian leads concerts and recordings with some of the world's greatest singers.

Opera News calls Constantine Orbelian "the singer's dream collaborator," and commented that he conducts vocal repertoire "with the sensitivity of a lieder pianist." The California-based conductor tours and records with American stars such as Sondra Radvanovsky and Lawrence Brownlee, and made numerous celebrated recordings with Dmitri Hvorostovsky before the leg-



endary singer's untimely death. Orbelian is the founder of the annual Palaces of St. Petersburg International Music Festival.

"Orbelian has star quality, and his orchestra plays with passion and precision," *The Audio Critic* wrote of his acclaimed series of over 50 recordings on Delos. Among his concert and televised appearances are collaborations with stars Renée Fleming and Dmitri Hvorostovsky, and with Van Cliburn in Cliburn's sentimental return to Moscow, the great pianist's last performance. Orbelian's frequent collaborations with Hvorostovsky included repertoire from their Delos recordings of universal sentimental songs *Where Are You, My Brothers?* and *Moscow Nights*, as well as their 2015 recording in the same series, *Wait for Me*. Orbelian has conducted historic live telecasts from Moscow's Red Square, with such artists as Hvorostovsky and Anna Netrebko.

Born in San Francisco to Russian and Armenian emigré parents, Constantine Orbelian made his debut as a piano prodigy with the San Francisco Symphony at the age of 11. After graduating from Juilliard in New York, he embarked on a career as a piano virtuoso that included appearances with major symphony orchestras throughout the United States, United Kingdom, Europe, and Russia. His recording of the Khachaturian piano concerto with conductor Neeme Jär-

vi won the "Best Concerto Recording of the Year" award in the United Kingdom.

Orbelian's appointment in 1991 as Music Director of the Moscow Chamber Orchestra was a breakthrough event: he is the first American ever to become music director of an ensemble in Russia. A tireless champion of Russian-American cultural exchange and international ambassadorship through his worldwide tours, he was awarded the coveted title "Honored Artist of Russia" in 2004, a title never before bestowed on a non-Russian citizen. In May 2010, Orbelian led the opening Ceremonial Concert for the Cultural Olympics in Sochi — he first event setting the stage for Russia's hosting of the Olympic Games in 2014. In 2012 the Consulate in San Francisco awarded him the Russian Order of Friendship Medal, whose illustrious ranks include pianist Van Cliburn and conductor Riccardo Muti, and which singles out non-Russians whose work contributes to the betterment of international relations with the Russian Federation and its people.

From his 1995 performance at the 50th Anniversary Celebrations of the United Nations in San Francisco, to his 2004 performance at the U.S. State Department commemorating 70 years of diplomatic relations between Washington and Moscow, and a repeat State Department appearance

in 2007, all with the Moscow Chamber Orchestra, Orbelian continues to use his artistic eminence in the cause of international goodwill. He and his orchestras have also participated in cultural enrichment programs for young people, both in Russia and the United States. In 2001 Orbelian was awarded the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, an award given to immigrants, or children of immigrants, who have made outstanding contributions to the United States.

The **Kaunas City Symphony Orchestra** grew from the Kaunas Chamber Orchestra, which was founded in 1988 and since 2000 has been managed by Algimantas Treikaukas. Its previous principal conductors were Pavel Berman, Modestas Pitrenas, and Imants Resnis; the position now belongs to American maestro Constantine Orbelian.

The Kaunas City Symphony Orchestra gives concerts at home in Lithuania and



abroad—including Latvia, Estonia, Norway, Switzerland, Germany, Finland, and Italy. It appears regularly at various international festivals, presents special concert projects, and gives theme-oriented concerts. Many famous Lithuanian as well as foreign soloists and conductors have collaborated with the orchestra—which organizes and appears in about fifty concerts per year. A highly versatile ensemble, the orchestra specializes in various genres of classical and contemporary music, including crossover projects with such groups as The Scorpions, Smokie, and the Electric Light Orchestra, to name a few.

For two years, the orchestra also appeared on the opera contest show *Arc of Triumph* on Lithuanian National Television. Among the group's prominent highlights in the 2012-2013 season were its collaboration with legendary baritone Dmitri Hvorostovsky and Maestro Orbelian, as well as its appearance at the Murten Classics festival in Switzerland under the baton of Kaspar Zehnder. The orchestra's discography includes a number of recent CD projects recorded for Delos with several of today's most acclaimed singers, conducted by Maestro Orbelian. Among these are the complete opera *Simon Boccanegra*, with Dmitri Hvorostovsky in the title role (DE 3457), which was released by Delos in 2015; tenor Lawrence Brownlee's 2014 Delos release showcasing Rossini arias (DE 3455), which re-

ceived a Grammy nomination; and a second album featuring Brownlee, *Allegro io son* (DE 3515), which was released in 2016.



Special thanks:

Algimantas Treikauskas, General Director of the Kaunas City Symphony Orchestra.
John Fisher, whose guidance as Opera Consultant to the Kaunas City Symphony Orchestra was indispensable throughout the production of this recording.

Recorded at Kaunas Philharmonic, July 2018

Producer: Vilius Keras

Recording Engineers: Vilius Keras, Aleksandra Kerienė

Editing: Aleksandra Kerienė

Mastering: Vilius Keras

Photos of Veronika Dzhioeva: Aliona Bolkvadze

Booklet Editor: Lindsay Koob

Booklet design and layout: Lonnie Kunkel



Algimantas Treikauskas, Constantine Orbelian, Veronika Dzhioeva, and John Fisher

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