

JOHANN SIMON MAYR
LE DUE DUCHESS

OPERA IN 2 ACTS

Schäfer · Herbert · Hasselhorn · Mattersberger · Mallmann
Ahn · Jo · Choi · Feith · Lindemann · Thum

Simon Mayr Chorus and Members of the Bavarian State Opera Chorus
Concerto de Bassus

Franz Hauk



WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING

Johann Simon
MAYR
(1763-1845)

Le due duchesse
ossia La caccia dei lupi

Opera semiseria in two acts (1814)
Libretto by Felice Romani (1788–1865)

Edgar..... Young-Jun Ahn, Tenor
Loredano Jaegyeong Jo, Bass
Malvina Eun-Hye Choi, Soprano
Enrico..... Markus Schäfer, Tenor
Artur Jörn Lindemann, Tenor
Ruggiero Harald Thum, Tenor
Laura Tina Marie Herbert, Soprano
Betzi Anna Feith, Soprano
Berto..... Samuel Hasselhorn, Baritone
Guglielmo Niklas Mallmann, Bass
Pietro..... Andreas Mattersberger, Bass

Coro di Donzelle, Coro di Villanelle e Villanelli, Coro di Cacciatori, Coro di Vassalli

Simon Mayr Chorus and Members of the Bavarian State Opera Chorus
Concerto de Bassus

Theona Gubba-Chkeidze, Concertmaster

Franz Hauk, Harpsichord and Conductor

1	Sinfonia	6:52	Act II		
	Act I		18	Aria e Coro La Duchessa è ascosa là... (Coro, Pietro)	2:23
2	Introduzione Ecco il castello castel vietato (Guglielmo, Loredano, Coro, Betzi, Berto)	17:27	19	Recitativo Com'han fatto a vederla? (Pietro, Loredano, Malvina)	2:34
3	Recitativo Parlare alla Duchessa? (Berto, Betzi, Laura)	1:12	20	Recitativo Che dici? (Loredano, Malvina)	0:48
4	Duetto Un marito cacciatore (Laura, Berto)	6:47	21	Duetto Morte!... (Malvina, Loredano)	8:08
5	Recitativo Oggi mio caro Berto (Laura, Berto)	1:50	22	Recitativo Maledetto quel lupo! (Berto, Pietro, Coro)	2:28
6	Sortita Giorni i momenti sono (Malvina)	6:25	23	Aria e Coro Ascoltate, o figlie oneste (Berto, Coro di Villanelle e Villanelli, Coro di Cacciatori)	5:01
7	Recitativo Quant dubbi e timori (Malvina, Betzi, Enrico)	2:07	24	Recitativo Amici, il bosco e il monte (Artur, Ruggiero, Pietro, Malvina, Laura)	2:14
8	Duetto Per voler del mio Signore (Enrico, Malvina)	9:35	25	Recitativo In quelle vesti!... (Malvina, Laura)	0:34
9	Recitativo Ahimè! Che brutto muso (Berto, Betzi)	1:24	26	Sestetto Deh! Prendetevi una volta (Laura, Malvina, Enrico, Berto, Edgar, Loredano)	13:47
10	Coro Presto i nastri (Coro di Donzelle)	1:11	27	Recitativo Come, diamine è andata la faccenda! (Berto, Pietro)	0:53
11	Recitativo Tant'è: non son contenta (Laura, Betzi, Enrico)	0:35	28	Coro Non più gioja (Coro di Vassalli)	1:44
12	Recitativo Comincio a poco a poco (Laura, Betzi, Berto, Enrico)	2:36	29	Recitativo Lasciami (Edgar, Ruggiero, Artur, Enrico, Malvina)	3:07
13	Aria Passò quel tempo (Laura, Enrico, Betzi, Berto, Coro)	7:02	30	Recitativo Vostra consorte! (Malvina, Edgar)	2:18
14	Recitativo Laura con sì belli abiti! (Berto)	0:32	31	Aria e Coro Deh! Per quel dolce oggetto (Malvina, Edgar, Coro)	4:50
15	Coro ed Aria Viva! Viva! Un dì festivo (Coro, Edgar, Enrico)	8:55	32	Recitativo Ah! Se a scoprir l'inganno ancor tardava (Edgar, Artur)	0:48
16	Recitativo Ma dov'è la Duchessa? (Edgar, Artur, Enrico, Ruggiero)	2:14	33	Finale II Della provincia intera (Coro, Berto, Laura, Edgar, Loredano, Ruggiero, Artur, Enrico, Malvina)	14:52
17	Finale I Perdonate (Edgar, Laura, Enrico, Ruggiero, Artur, Berto, Loredano, Coro)	18:56			

Johann Simon Mayr (1763–1845) Le due duchesse

Mayr's *Le due duchesse* – a magnificent opera in the Romantic style

In the 18th century, the English Pre-Romantic poet William Mason (1724–1797) reworked legends surrounding the 10th-century Anglo-Saxon king Edgar ‘the Peaceful’ (Latin: *Ēadgārus pacificus*) and the legend of Æthelwold and Ælfthryth, taking Greek tragedy as his model and publishing his work in 1752 as the dramatic poem *Elfrida*. Towards the end of the century, the poem found its way into Italian opera when Giovanni Paisiello set the chivalric material using a text prepared by Gluck's famous librettist Ranieri de' Calzabigi. Paisiello's *opera seria* *Elfrida* premiered on 4 November 1792 at the Teatro San Carlo in Naples sporting the then-obligatory *lieto fine* or happy ending. It was a huge success and enjoyed numerous revivals, including a modern production in Savona in 1990.

Johann Simon Mayr was also fascinated by medieval England, especially during his final creative phase. Shortly before composing *Le due duchesse*, he wrote an opera about the Wars of the Roses (*La rosa bianca e la rosa rossa*, Genoa, 21.8.1813), and one of his last operas was to be about King Alfred the Great (*Alfredo il grande*, Bergamo, 26.12.1819). For *La rosa bianca e la rosa rossa* he had already chosen a young writer who was familiar with the classical world of Metastasio on the one hand and more ‘exotic’ material on the other, and who had a particular talent for writing sonorous verse and taut drama. Mayr's classical masterpiece *Medea in Corinto* (Naples, 28.11.1813) had also been penned by Felice Romani, so he was a logical choice for the *dramma semiserio* *Le due duchesse*.

It is not absolutely certain whether Romani knew Calzabigi's libretto. According to his preface to the first edition of the libretto (Milan 1814), he drew on a melodrama entitled *Edgar, ou La Chasse aux loups* by Louis-Charles Caigniez, dubbed the ‘Racine of the boulevards’. Adrien Quaisain (1766–1828) had written the music for this melodrama in three acts in 1811, and it had premiered at the Théâtre de l'Ambigu-Comique in Paris on 17 December that year. In his article on Romani's libretti for Mayr, Edilio Frassoni, meanwhile, raises the justified suspicion that Calzabigi's text must have served as an additional source because of the verbal parallels. In any event, a tragedy is turned into an *opera semiseria* enriched with

buffa elements; the heroine's name is changed to Malvina, one that often crops up elsewhere; she loses her aura of nobility and charges a double, her simple-minded chambermaid Laura, to deceive the hunting-mad king. Laura, who merely spouts quotations and proverbs and who is actually engaged to Enrico di Athelwold's chatelain and chief huntsman Berto, is made palatable to Edgar as a consort befitting his social rank (hence the title ‘The Two Duchesses’ and the subtitle ‘The Wolf Hunt’).

On 7 November 1814 the *dramma semiserio per musica in due atti* *Le due duchesse ossia La caccia dei lupi* was given its first performance at La Scala in Milan. There was only one revival, in 1819 at the Teatro San Carlo in Naples. As was usual in such cases, the *buffo* role of Berto was rewritten in Neapolitan dialect for the production. Romani was to recycle his libretto for the composer Filippo Celli (1782–1856), so that the opera was given again, with a few textual changes and fresh music, in Florence on 8 September 1824.

Romani's libretto can justifiably be described as early Romantic; this mindset was first able to develop freely in the *genere semiserio*, where there was no need to observe the conventions of *opera seria*. *Opera semiseria* is responsible for some things seeming overdrawn, illogical and positively grotesque; the opera's claim to be a Romantic piece rests in large part on this characteristic. Typical of the genre are, on the one hand, the *buffo* roles (here Laura and Berto) and the disguise and deception motifs so beloved of *opera buffa*, plus the medieval, Anglo-Saxon local colour achieved by giving the chorus a prominent role, and especially by means of the huntsmen's and knights' choruses and troubadour-like songs. On the other hand, the way the action becomes more and more intense dramatically until the situation seems hopeless, and the sudden resolution through the forgiveness of the sovereign, who ultimately proves merciful and magnanimous, lead inexorably to the *lieto fine* with its praise of the ruler's clemency.

All in all, Romani, who was already highly skilled early on in his career, offered the composer a multifaceted, colourful and eventful scenario and a taut plotline full of suspense to drive the action forward. Added to this, the verse is extraordinarily professional and often takes flight to become sublime poetry, with a linguistic and metrical variety that makes Romani stand out like no other librettist of his era.

On the opening night there was generous applause both for the excellent cast – Giovanni David (Edgar, King of England; tenor), Filippo Galli (Loredano, Earl of Devonshire; bass), Francesca Maffei Festa (Malvina, soprano), Luigi Mari (Enrico, Duke of Athelwold; tenor), Lorenza Corrèa (Laura; soprano) and Andrea Verni (Berto, chief huntsman and chatelain; bass) – and, above all, for the composer. Mayr was repeatedly called out to take a bow. The critics were unanimous in highlighting the originality and effectiveness of the work. The duets in Act I (for Laura and Berto and for Malvina and Enrico) and Edgar's big *opera seria*-style aria were singled out for special praise. Mayr had allowed himself a musical joke at the end of this number, however, setting the lines ‘Amico, coraggio! Contento, allegria! E' lecito al saggio far qualche pazzia’ as a Ländler; a contemporary reviewer reports that this deliberate amalgamation of stylistic registers, which was not untypical of Mayr, was the only thing that had failed to make an impression and had never been applauded.

Around 1814 it was already impossible to avoid being influenced, consciously and unconsciously, by the young genius Rossini, who was steadily conquering Italian opera (in a positive way). We therefore find in Mayr's third and last creative period numerous Rossinisms, though always tempered by his own nobility and restraint. To put it simply, Mayr's individual style derives from the refined orchestral writing of Viennese Classicism combined with the melodic Italianità of the (later) Neapolitan composers. Rossini in turn further developed this style, which had become characteristic of the period around 1810, making it tauter and more dynamic, and enriching it with his own very individual interpretation of the tradition he had inherited to produce his own unmistakable idiom, which was then to become a hallmark of Italian opera. Around 1813, Rossini was the rising star, not yet surpassing Mayr but already almost his equal. A correspondent of the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* judged him ‘probably the best opera composer in Italy today after Sim. Mayr’.

Le due duchesse is in itself already a very ambitious opera on which Mayr lavished a lot of care – a fine present for his Milanese audience. It moreover embodies, both with regard to its material and its music, an approach that was to influence the *melodramma romantico* of the future. It was not for nothing that the late Mayr specialist John Allitt wrote in his Italian monograph of a superb opera that deserved to be revived. He was to be proved right.

Thomas Lindner
Translation: Sue Baxter

Ad fontes (Go to the sources): A note on the sources

This edition is based primarily on a copy of the full score held in the Biblioteca civica Angelo Mai in Bergamo (I-BGc Mayr 186, 187). The Sinfonia is lacking in this transcript; in the women's chorus ‘Presto i nastri’ [10] much of the text hasn't been written in; and harmonically abrupt transitions in the recitatives suggest that they have been cut. During a two-day visit to Milan, the Archivio storico Ricordi kindly allowed us to consult the autograph score (I-Mr Le due duchesse PART02690; formerly E.VI.3-4) for comparison. This score not only contains all the parts missing in Bergamo, it also shows a number of cuts and insertions in Mayr's hand, and possibly in other manuscripts. These affect in particular the entry of Malvina with harp solo: ‘Giorni i momenti’ [6], Recitative: ‘Quanti dubbi’ [7], Recitative: ‘Amici!’, with a cut from ‘la faccia veder da’ cacciatori’ to ‘ma lasciatemi andar’ [24], Malvina's aria: ‘Deh per quel dolce oggetto’ [31] and Finale II [33]. These later alterations are already incorporated in the libretto. This also includes an appendix suggesting a cut in Scenes 6–8 which Mayr adopted in his work. ‘Dopo il Duettino di Malvina ed Enrico’, the autograph score has a secco recitative: ‘Altezza’. Articulation marks are more carefully distinguished, even though telling a dot from a stroke is often problematical.

Franz Hauk
Translation: Sue Baxter

Synopsis

Act I

[2] Loredano is looking for his daughter Malvina, who has gone missing. He and his servant Guglielmo enter the mysterious Castle Athelwold at dawn, dressed as troubadours. The strains of lively music can be heard. The two men have stumbled on a wedding party. Loredano is invited to sing a song. He sings about his beloved, Nisa, who is imprisoned in a tower.

The chief huntsman, Berto, returns from hunting. He is in love and wants to marry Laura, the Duchess's maid. When Berto sees the two strangers, who wish to speak to the Duchess, he sends them packing. [3] Betzi, a maidservant, criticises Berto's conduct. [4] Berto, for his part, bills and coos around his fiancée Laura. She likes to pepper her conversation with proverbs. [5] Naturally, there is an obstacle to their planned marriage: Enrico, the Duke, is demanding that Berto pay a

tax of 101 dead wolves. He still needs to kill one more wolf. Berto is despondent, because there are hardly any wolves left in the country.

[6] Malvina appears. She is melancholy and pining for her husband-to-be, Enrico. [7] Betzi announces that Enrico has arrived. The lovers are overjoyed to be together again.

Ruggiero, a courtier, arrives and tells Enrico that King Edgar is coming to hunt wolves. Enrico is dismayed. [8] Enrico confesses his secret to Malvina. He has married her despite her being promised to Edgar. Edgar had never seen her, and Enrico claimed that she wasn't worthy of the King's hand. Malvina suggests that Berto's fiancée, Laura, take her place, while she hides in Pietro's house. [9] Betzi bewilders Berto with strange insinuations. Berto is puzzled and becomes suspicious.

[10–11] Laura is practising for her new role. [12] She wants to impress everyone and make Berto jealous. [13] Berto does not know what has hit him. Laura spurns him, saying: 'Passò quel tempo o Berto, altro per me ci vuole...' ('That time's over, Berto; I need something else now...'). The King approaches and all hurry off to greet him. [14] Berto resolves not to let anyone take Laura from him. [15] The court welcomes the King with rejoicing. He notices that Enrico seems pensive. [16] Things come to a head: King Edgar wishes to see the Duchess. Edgar looks for excuses. Artur, a courtier, schemes, dropping hints to Edgar that he is being deceived.

[17] Laura joins the gathering of nobles, taking refuge in proverbs. Enrico and Ruggiero are embarrassed; Edgar and Artur find conversing with Laura amusing. Berto invites everyone to the hunt that has been arranged. Laura hesitates and seems uncertain of herself. Berto realises that the point of the exercise is not to bag animals but to forcibly conquer the fair sex: 'Quegli sì che sono lupi che mi danno da pensar' ('These are definitely wolves that worry me'). Loredano forces his way in. Berto, Enrico and Laura defend their roles and the confusion increases. Loredano is in despair: 'La figlia mia non è' ('This isn't my daughter'). Edgar becomes suspicious: 'Chi m'inganna fra poco saprò' ('I'll soon find out who is deceiving me'). Artur echoes his words: 'La menzogna scoprire saprò' ('I'll find out who is lying'). All then hurry off to join the chase.

Act II

[18] Everyone already knows that the real Duchess is hiding in Pietro's house. [19] Loredano and Ruggiero turn up there as well. At first, Pietro refuses to let them in. Then Malvina comes out, having recognised her father's voice. Loredano demands an explanation. [20] Malvina explains the situation, asking for pity. Loredano is beside himself and swears revenge. [21] Malvina and Loredano wrestle with their feelings in a duet. Both are heavy-hearted. A horn call is heard – the hunting party is getting closer. Loredano takes his leave. He will keep his counsel.

[22] Berto complains to Pietro about Laura's moods. She has vanished without trace. He seeks comfort in a glass of wine and sings the Song of the Wolf. [23] The song is about wily wolves in sheep's clothing. They don't attack flocks; they abduct daughters. Everyone joins in: 'Dagli al lupo, il lupo è qua' ('Give the wolf what for, the wolf is here'). Suddenly, the huntsmen can be heard shouting. They have found the wolf. Berto wants to catch it. [24] Artur has had the area around Pietro's house surrounded. Loredano is in his power. Malvina is also taken captive. [25] Malvina meets Laura, who has also been seized. Laura tells her story. [26] Sextet. Malvina and Laura are desperate. Enrico and Berto join them and advise them to flee – too late. Edgar arrives with Loredano, intending to put an end to the charade. Eventually, Enrico admits: 'Son io l'ingannator' ('I'm the cheat'). Edgar threatens to have Enrico executed. [27] Pietro explains the situation to Berto. Berto is worried his wedding might not now take place.

[28] It is night in the castle. The chorus sings about the night of sorrow. [29] Ruggiero and Malvina plead with Edgar to have mercy on Enrico. Edgar refuses: 'O sciogli l'empio nodo, oppur morire.' ('I'll dissolve the impious union or die'). Edgar and Artur join them. Edgar offers to banish Enrico from his kingdom if he will renounce Malvina. Enrico refuses – he'd rather die. But Edgar remains intransigent: 'Ho deciso: Malvina è mia consorte' ('My mind is made up. Malvina will be my wife'). [30] Malvina argues with the King. He can't make her love him. [31] Malvina sings of her torment. She resolves to die with Enrico. Edgar is secretly dismayed. [32] Left alone with Edgar, Artur pretends to be a schemer bent on revenge. But he hints that the King is bound by a promise he gave to the Countess of Cumberland.

[33] Finale. All the Duke's subjects, including Laura and Berto, sue for mercy for Enrico. So does Loredano. In a sudden dénouement, a messenger arrives from court in London. The King has already pledged to marry a Contessa, and she is demanding that they marry immediately. Edgar realises he is himself in danger of suddenly being unmasked as a

cheat. Everyone now hopes that there will be a happy ending – except Artur. Edgar hesitantly extricates himself from the affair, which has become troublesome, by preferring mercy to justice: 'Tutto perdono, e obbligo...' ('I'll forgive and forget everything...'). Everyone fêtes the benevolent ruler, and Berto rejoices that his 101st wolf is dead.

Franz Hauk

Translation: Sue Baxter



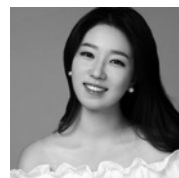
Young-Jun Ahn

A native of South Korea, Young-Jun Ahn studied singing at the universities of Kosen and Sejong. In 2011–12 he was awarded Third Prize at the Osaka International Music Competition. From 2007 to 2011 he was a member of the professional state chorus in Namyangju. In 2015 he embarked on postgraduate studies in singing at the Hochschule für Musik, Theater und Medien Hannover under Markus Schäfer, and in 2016 won both the Sparda-Bank Audience Prize and Third Prize at the Klassik in der Altstadt Hannover. He is a member of the chorus of the Staatsoper Hamburg.



Jaegyeong Jo

Jaegyeong Jo studied at the Honam Theological University and Seminary in South Korea and the Hochschule für Musik, Theater und Medien Hannover. During 2014–15 he was a member of the Thuringian Opera Studio in Weimar. He has won prizes in various competitions such as the Competizione dell'Opera, Linz (2015), the Francesco Vinàs International Competition, Barcelona (2017) and the International Singing Competition 'Feruccio Tagliavini', Deutschlandsberg (2017). His repertoire ranges from Figaro in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* to Monterone in Verdi's *Rigoletto*, and Harlequin in Richard Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos*.



Eun-Hye Choi

Born in South Korea, soprano Eun-Hye Choi studied at the Ewha Womans University, Seoul and the Hochschule für Musik, Theater und Medien Hannover. She made her debuts in *Le nozze di Figaro* at the Korean National Opera and Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel* at Ewha University. In the 2013–14 season she sang the title role in *The Princess and the Pea* at Osnabrück, and in 2014–15 appeared in *Le nozze di Figaro* at Hanover State Opera, where she is a company member of the Youth Opera. She has appeared as Mimì in *La Bohème* at the Gwang-ju Opera, and has won awards at a number of competitions.



Photo: Werner Kmentitsch

Markus Schäfer

The tenor Markus Schäfer studied singing and church music in Karlsruhe and Düsseldorf with Armand McLane. He was a prize-winner in Berlin and Milan and made his debut at the Zurich Opera Studio, followed by engagements at the Hamburg State Opera and the Düsseldorf Oper am Rhein. His subsequent career has brought appearances in major theatres and concert halls in Europe and America, collaborating with distinguished conductors and a number of award-winning recordings. He teaches singing at the Hanover Music and Theatre Hochschule. www.tenor-markus-schaefer.de



Photo: Jaegyeong Jo

Jörn Lindemann

Born in Celle, Germany, Jörn Lindemann trained as a piano maker before studying opera at the Hochschule für Musik, Theater und Medien Hannover. He has appeared as a soloist at the Göttingen International Handel and Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festivals among others, and has performed with numerous ensembles such as the Balthasar Neumann Choir. He has served as a member of the Oldenburgisches Staatstheater and made guest appearances at the Komische Oper Berlin and Theater Dortmund among others. Lindemann also trains the Lower Saxony Youth Choir and teaches at the Brunswick Cathedral Choir School. www.joern-lindemann.de



Harald Thum

Born and raised in Ingolstadt, Germany, Harald Thum studied singing at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater München under Hanno Blaschke. Since 1990 he has been a chorus member of the Bayerische Staatsoper, regularly taking solo roles and appearing under conductors including Wolfgang Sawallisch, Zubin Mehta, Kent Nagano and Kirill Petrenko. As a soloist he has sung standard concert repertoire, such as Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*, Handel's *Messiah*, Haydn's *The Creation* and Mozart's *Requiem*. He has also appeared on recordings and broadcasts.



Photo: Studioline Photography Flensburg

Tina Marie Herbert

American soprano Tina Marie Herbert appeared at the Schleswig-Holstein Theatre in roles including Adele (*Die Fledermaus*) and Despina (*Così fan tutte*) from 2014 to 2016. During the 2016–17 season she appeared in *Carmen*, *West Side Story* and *The Merry Widow* in Flensburg. During the 2012–13 and 2013–14 seasons she appeared at Theater Osnabrück in *L'elisir d'amore* and a staging of Telemann's dramatic oratorio *Daniel in the Lion's Den*. Herbert studied at Ball State University in Indiana, USA, subsequently participating in the Santa Cecilia Opera Studio, Rome under the direction of Renata Scotto, and pursuing postgraduate studies at the Hochschule für Musik, Theater und Medien Hannover.



Photo: Monika Kanvilius-Feith

Anna Feith

Anna Feith completed her studies at the Würzburg Musikhochschule under Monika Bürgener. During the course of her training she devoted herself particularly to Early Music, participating in the Tage der Alten Musik and a performance of Monteverdi's *Vespers*. She is a member of the vocal ensemble of the Bavarian Baroque Orchestral Academy, where she develops her knowledge of early Baroque performance practice and singing. She has appeared with Le Ninfe di Meno ensemble and in the Early Music in Schleissheim Castle series. She also enjoys a busy concert schedule. www.annafeith.de



Samuel Hasselhorn

German baritone Samuel Hasselhorn has won numerous prestigious competitions and awards, including the 2018 Queen Elisabeth Competition and the Emmerich Smola 'SWR Young Opera Star' prize. During the 2018–19 season he was a member of the Vienna State Opera. Lieder recitals and concert appearances have taken him across Europe, to venues such as the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels and the Barbican Centre in London. In the 2017–18 season he made his concert and recital debuts at the Munich Philharmonie, Wigmore Hall and the Zurich Tonhalle among others, and in 2017 toured North America. www.samuelhasselhorn.com



Photo: Lars John

Niklas Mallmann

Niklas Mallmann performed as a soloist with the Tolz Boys' Choir, later touring worldwide with the men's choir. After completing qualifications as an engineer at the Technical University of Munich, he studied singing in the same city. He has appeared with the Staatstheater am Gärtnerplatz and the Bayerische Staatsoper, and at the Isny-Oper Festival, Rota Das Artes Festival in Lisbon, HIDALGO Lieder Festival, Munich, and performed the title role of Telemann's *Pimpinone* with génération baroque in Strasbourg. He has made various recordings for Naxos, and has collaborated with Concerto de Bassus and the Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra.



Andreas Mattersberger

Originally from the Tirol, bass Andreas Mattersberger was a member of the Tirolean Regional Theatre from 2005 to 2012, receiving guidance from Brigitte Fassbaender. He has appeared as a soloist in many European countries, and has performed at the Staatstheater Braunschweig, Opera Halle and Saarländisches Staatstheater. In 2017 he made his widely acclaimed debut as Figaro in *Le nozze di Figaro* at the Regional Theatre in Innsbruck. His discography spans music from various periods, bearing witness to his versatility as an artist. www.andreamattersberger.com



Photo: Andy Frank

Theona Gubba-Chkhaidze

Theona Gubba-Chkhaidze was born into a family of artists in Tbilisi, Georgia. Her mother is a violinist and her father a well-known theatre director. She graduated from the University of Music and Performing Arts, Munich with the highest marks in violin studies. She is currently completing her Master's Degree in Historical Performance Practices (Baroque violin) under the guidance of Professor M. Utiger in Munich, Germany. She performs as a soloist and chamber musician on both modern and Baroque violins at international festivals and in important concert halls of France, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Portugal, Peru, Argentina and Chile. As Concertmaster of the Simon Mayr Ensemble and Concerto de Bassus, under the baton of Franz Hauk, she has made over 20 recordings for the Naxos label.



Photo: Anna Götz

Franz Hauk

Born in Neuburg an der Donau in 1955, Franz Hauk studied church and school music, with piano and organ, at the Munich Musikhochschule and in Salzburg. In 1988 he took his doctorate with a thesis on church music in Munich at the beginning of the 19th century. Since 1982 he has served as organist at Ingolstadt Minster, and since 1995 also as choirmaster. He has given concerts in Europe and the United States and made a number of recordings. Since October 2002 he has taught in the historical performance and church music department of the Hochschule für Musik und Theater, Munich. He founded the Simon Mayr Chorus in 2003.



Photo: Lorenz Ziegemeier

Simon Mayr Chorus and Members of the Bavarian State Opera Chorus

The Simon Mayr Chorus was founded by Franz Hauk in 2003, and is committed to delivering excellent performances of works ranging from the 16th to the 21st centuries. Its membership largely consists of vocal students from the Hochschule für Musik und Theater München, members of the choir of Munich's Bayerische Staatsoper, and trained singers from the Ingolstadt region. The ensemble's vast discography features works by Johann Simon Mayr, Gaetano Donizetti, Ferdinando Paër and Robert Maximilian Helmschrott, including world premiere recordings. Its albums have been released on Naxos.

The Chorus of the Bavarian State Opera has had a long and distinguished history, sharing with the Bavarian State Orchestra and Bavarian State Ballet a repertoire of some 350 opera and ballet performances annually at the National Theatre, the Prince Regent Theatre and the Cuvilliés Theatre, Munich. Since 2010 the chorusmaster has been Sören Eckhoff, with Stellario Fagone as deputy and Kamila Akhmedjanova as répétiteur.

Concerto de Bassus

Concerto de Bassus is an international ensemble engaging young musicians keen to play music from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries according to period performance practice in various orchestrations. The ensemble recruits both professors and outstanding graduates of the Hochschule für Musik und Theater München, and also realises large symphonic orchestrations. The group takes its name from the bass, the fundamental element of Baroque music.

Johann Simon Mayr (1763–1845)

Le due duchesse

Mayrs *Le due duchesse* – eine grandiose Oper im Stil der Romantik

Der sagenumwobene Stoff um den angelsächsischen König Edgar (den „Friedfertigen“, lat. Eadgārus *pacificus*, 10. Jahrhundert) und die Legende von Æpelwold und Ælfþryp wurde im 18. Jahrhundert vom englischen Präromantiker William Mason nach dem Modell der griechischen Tragödie bearbeitet und als dramatisches Gedicht *Elfrida* 1752 veröffentlicht. Gegen Ende des Settecento fand er Eingang in die italienische Oper. Giovanni Paisiello komponierte den chevaleresken Stoff auf ein Textbuch des bekannten Gluck-Librettisten Ranieri de' Calzabigi: Seine sehr erfolgreiche *Elfrida* erlebte am 4. November 1792 am Teatro San Carlo in Neapel als Opera seria mit einem zur damaligen Zeit obligaten Lieto fine ihre Uraufführung und in weiterer Folge zahlreiche Reprisen; in moderner Zeit wurde sie 1990 in Savona wiederentdeckt.

Auch Giovanni Simone Mayr war, insbesondere in seiner letzten Schaffensperiode, vom England des Mittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit fasziniert: Kurz vor *Le due duchesse* vertonte er den Stoff der Rosenkriege (*La rosa bianca e la rosa rossa*, Genua, 21.8.1813), eine seiner letzten Opern sollte *Alfredo il grande* werden und sich mit König Ælfred dem Großen auseinandersetzen (Bergamo, 26.12.1819). Bereits für *La rosa bianca e la rosa rossa* wählte er einen jungen Autor, der einerseits mit der antiken Welt Metastasio, andererseits aber ebenso mit „exotischeren“ Stoffen vertraut war und ein besonderes Talent für sprachlichen Wohlklang und dramaturgische Stringenz hatte. Mayrs klassizistisches

Hauptwerk *Medea in Corinto* (Neapel, 28.11.1813) stammte ebenfalls aus Felice Romanis Feder; so war es nur folgerichtig, dass auch beim *Dramma semiserio* *Le due duchesse* die Wahl auf ihn fiel.

Ob Romani Calzabigis Libretto gekannt hat, lässt sich nicht mit letzter Sicherheit sagen. Er griff seinem Vorwort im Libretto-Erstdruck (Mailand 1814) zufolge auf ein Mélodrame *Edgar, ou la Chasse aux loups* von Louis-Charles Caigniez, der den „Ehrentitel“ *Racine des Boulevards* bekommen hatte, zurück; dieses dreiaktige Melodram war 1811 von Adrien Quaisain (1766–1828) komponiert und am 17. Dezember 1811 am Théâtre de l'Ambigu-Comique in Paris uraufgeführt worden. Indes vermutete Edilio Frassoni in seinem Beitrag zu Romanis Libretti für Mayr aufgrund von wörtlichen Parallelen zu Recht, dass Calzabigis Text als zusätzliche Vorlage gedient haben dürfte. In jedem Fall wird aus einer Tragödie eine mit Buffa-Elementen angereicherte Opera semiseria, aus dem ursprünglichen Namen der Protagonistin eine auch ansonsten recht häufig erscheinende Malvina, die ihren hehren Nimbus einbüßt und eine Doppelgängerin mit dem Betrug am jagdbegeisterten König beauftragt: Ihre recht einfach gestrickte und bloß mit Zitaten und Sprichwörtern auftrumpfende Kammerzofe Laura – die eigentlich mit Enrico di Athelwolds Kastellan und Chefjäger Berto verlobt ist – wird Edgar als standesgemäße Gemahlin schmackhaft gemacht (daher der Haupttitel 'Die beiden Herzoginnen' und der Sekundärtitel 'Die Wolfsjagd').

Am 7. November 1814 wurde das *Dramma semiserio* per musica in due atti *Le due duchesse ossia La caccia dei lupi* an der Mailänder Scala aus der Taufe gehoben. Es gab nur

eine Wiederaufnahme, und zwar 1819 am Teatro San Carlo in Neapel. Dabei wurde, wie in solchen Fällen üblich, die Buffo-Rolle des Berto in neapolitanischem Dialekt umgeschrieben. Romani sollte sein Libretto übrigens nochmals verwerten, und zwar für den Komponisten Filippo Celli (1782–1856), sodass die Oper mit etlichen Veränderungen im Wortlaut und neuer Musik am 8.9.1824 in Florenz abermals erklang.

Romanis Textbuch kann man mit gutem Recht als frühromantisch bezeichnen; diese Attitüde konnte sich zunächst im Genere semiserio ohne Rücksicht auf die Konventionen der „seriosen“ Oper frei entfalten. Die Semiseria zeichnet dafür verantwortlich, dass so manches überzeichnet, unlogisch und geradezu grotesk erscheinen mag; sie bezieht zu einem Gutteil daraus ihre romantische Anmutung. Gattungstypisch sind auf der einen Seite die Buffo-Rollen (hier Laura und Berto) und die in der Opera buffa beliebten Verkleidungs- und Täuschungsmotive sowie die durch starke Chorpräsenz, insbesondere durch die Jäger- und Ritterchöre, und troubadoureske Kanzenen evozierte Couleur locale des angelsächsischen Mittelalters. Auf der anderen Seite steuern die sich bis hin zur Ausweglosigkeit dramatisch zuspitzende Aktion und die plötzliche Lösung des Knotens durch die Vergebung des zu guter Letzt barmherzigen und generösen Souveräns zwangsläufig auf das Lieto fine mit der Huldigung der Herrschermitde zu.

In Summe bot der schon zu Beginn seiner Karriere höchst versierte Dichter dem Komponisten ein vielfältiges, buntes und abwechslungsreiches Szenario und eine straffe, die Aktion vorantreibende und Spannungsgeladene Dramaturgie. Hinzu kommt die ungemein professionelle, sich nicht selten zu sublimen Poesie aufschwingende Versifikation, deren sprachliche wie metrische Vielfalt Romani wie kaum einen anderen Librettisten seiner Zeit auszeichnet.

Am Uraufführungsabend gab es große Beifallsbekundungen, sowohl für das hochkarätige Sängerensemble – Giovanni David (Edgar, re d'Inghilterra; Tenor), Filippo Galli (Loredano, conte di Devonshire; Bass), Francesca Maffei Festa (Malvina, Sopran), Luigi Mari (Enrico, duca di Athelvold; Tenor), Lorenza Corréa (Laura; Sopran) und Andrea Verni (Berto, capocaccia e custode del castello; Bass) – als auch vor allem für den Komponisten; Mayr wurde mehrfach vor den Vorhang gerufen. Die Kritik hob einhellig hervor, dass es sich um ein originelles und wohlgeklungenes Werk handle. So wurden die Duette im ersten Akt (zwischen Laura und Berto sowie Malvina und Enrico) und Edgars große Arie in der Faktur der Opera

seria besonders gelobt. Mayr erlaubte sich aber am Ende dieser Nummer einen musikalischen Witz, indem er die Textzeilen «Amico, coraggio! Contento, allegria! E' lecito al saggio far qualche pazzia» als Ländler vertonte; einzig diese für Mayr nicht untypische, absichtliche Verquickung der stilistischen Ebenen hatte, wie ein zeitgenössischer Rezensent berichtete, wenig Wirkung gemacht und war nie beklatscht worden.

Es war um 1814 bereits unvermeidlich, den noch jungen, aber unaufhaltsam die italienische Oper – im positiven Sinn! – vereinnahmenden Genius Rossini bewusst wie unbewusst zu rezipieren. So finden wir in Mayrs letztem Schaffensdrittel zahlreiche Rossinismen, jedoch immer mit der ihm eigenen Vornehmheit und Zurückhaltung. Auf eine vereinfachte Formel gebracht, ergibt der verfeinerte Orchestersatz der Wiener Klassik, amalgamiert mit melodischer Italianità der (Spät-) Neapolitaner, Mayrs Personalstil. Rossini wiederum entwickelte den sich daraus konstituierenden Epochenstil um 1810 weiter, strafft und dynamisiert ihn, reichert ihn seinerseits mit einer sehr eigenständigen Interpretation des Althergebrachten an und leitet daraus wiederum sein unverkennbares Idiom ab, das der italienischen Oper maßgeblich seinen Stempel aufdrücken sollte. Um 1813 war Rossini der aufgehende Stern, zwar noch nicht über Mayr, aber doch beinahe schon auf gleicher Höhe; ein Korrespondent der *Allgemeinen Musikalischen Zeitung* urteilte: „Er ist, nach Sim. Mayr, wol heut zu Tage der beste Opern-Compositeur in Italien“.

Le due duchesse ist für sich genommen bereits ein sehr anspruchsvolles und von Mayr sorgfältig ausgearbeitetes Werk, mit dem er das Mailänder Publikum reich beschenkte. Es verkörpert darüber hinaus stofflich wie musikalisch einen Ansatz, der das künftige Melodramma romantico prägen wird. Nicht umsonst sprach der verewigte Mayrspezialist John Allitt in seiner italienischen Monographie von einer superben Oper, die es wiederzuentdecken gilt. Er sollte damit recht behalten.

Thomas Lindner

Ad fontes – Zu den Quellen

Der Notenedition lag zunächst eine Partiturschrift des Werkes zugrunde, die in der Biblioteca civica Angelo Mai in Bergamo aufbewahrt wird (I-BGc Mayr 186, 187). Darin fehlt die Sinfonia, im Frauenchor „Presto i nastri“ (Nr. 9 eigene Zählung, [10] ist die Textierung nicht ausgeführt, harmonisch abrupte Übergänge in Rezitativen ließen Striche

vermuten. Bei einem zweitägigen Besuch in Mailand konnte freundlicherweise die autographe Partitur im Archivio storico Ricordi eingesehen und verglichen werden (I-Mr Le due duchesse PART02690; früher E.VI.3-4). In dieser Partitur sind nicht nur alle in Bergamo fehlenden Teile enthalten, sondern auch einige Kürzungen und Einfügungen von der Hand Mayrs, vielleicht auch von anderen Händen, dokumentiert. Dies betrifft besonders die Nummern 5 [6] (Sortita der Malvina mit Harfensolo: „Giorni i momenti“), 6 [7] (Recitativo: „Quanti dubbi“), 23 [24] (Recitativo „Amici“, Kürzung von „la faccia veder da' cacciatori“ bis „ma lasciatemi andar“), 30 [31] (Arie der Malvina: „Deh per quel dolce oggetto“) und 32 [33] (Finale II). Im Libretto sind die nachträglichen Eingriffe bereits übernommen, im Anhang desselben wird eine Kürzung der Szenen VI bis VIII vorgeschlagen, der Mayr in der Komposition folgt. „Dopo il Duettino di Malvina ed Enrico“ ist in der autographen Partitur ein Seccorezitativ erhalten: „Altezza“. Artikulationsangaben werden im Autograph sorgfältiger unterschieden, selbst wenn die Differenzierung zwischen Punkt und Strich immer wieder ein Problem darstellt.

Franz Hauk

Die Handlung

Akt I

[2] Loredano sucht seine verschwundene Tochter Malvina. Im Morgengrauen und als Troubadoure verkleidet dringt er zusammen mit seinem Diener Guglielmo ins geheimnisumwitterte Schloss Athelvold ein. Heitere Musik erklingt. Beide treffen auf eine Hochzeitsgesellschaft. Loredano wird gebeten, ein Lied vorzutragen. Er singt von Nisa, seiner Angebeteten, die im Turm gefangen ist.

Berto, der Oberjäger, kehrt von der Jagd heim. Er ist verliebt und will Laura, die Kammerzofe der Herzogin heiraten. Berto sieht die beiden Fremden, die mit der Herzogin sprechen wollen. Er weist sie barsch vom Hof. [3] Betzi, ein Dienstmädchen, tadelt Bertos Verhalten. [4] Berto wiederum turtelt mit seiner Braut Laura, die gerne Sprichwörter in ihre Unterhaltung einfließt. [5] Freilich gibt es noch ein Hindernis für die geplante Heirat: Enrico, der Herzog, fordert von Berto 101 erlegte Wölfe als Steuer, ein Wolf fehlt noch. Berto ist darüber verzagt, es gibt im Land kaum noch Wölfe.

[6] Malvina erscheint in melancholischer Stimmung, sie sehnt sich nach Enrico, den zukünftigen Gatten. [7] Da kündigt Betzi die Ankunft von Enrico an, beide sind überglücklich.

Ruggiero, ein Höfling, tritt auf und berichtet Enrico, König Edgar komme zur Wolfsjagd. Enrico ist bestürzt. [8] Enrico gesteht Malvina sein Geheimnis: Er habe sie geheiratet, obwohl sie – ungesehen – für Edgar bestimmt war, er habe vorgegeben, sie sei des Königs nicht würdig. Malvina schlägt vor, Laura, die Verlobte von Berto, solle an ihre Stelle treten. Malvina wolle sich dagegen im Haus von Pietro verstecken. [9] Betzi verwirrt Berto mit seltsamen Andeutungen. Berto stutzt, wird misstrauisch.

[10]–[11] Laura übt sich in der neuen Rolle. [12] Sie will alle beeindrucken und Berto eifersüchtig machen. [13] Berto weiß nicht, wie ihm geschieht. Laura weist ihn von sich: „Passò quel tempo o Berto, altro per me ci vuole...“ – „Die Zeit ist vorbei, o Berto, was andres brauch ich nun...“. Der König naht. Alle eilen, ihn zu begrüßen. [14] Berto will Laura keinem Anderen überlassen. [15] Der König wird freudig am Hof empfangen. Er bemerkt, dass Enrico nachdenklich wirkt. [16] Die Situation spitzt sich zu: König Edgar will die Herzogin sehen, Edgar sucht Ausflüchte. Artur, ein Höfling, intrigiert und deutet gegenüber Edgar den Schwindel an.

[17] Laura erscheint in der hohen Gesellschaft, flüchtet sich in Sprichwörter, Enrico und Ruggiero sind betreten. Edgar und Artur sehen in der Unterhaltung mit Laura ein Spiel. Berto lädt zur verabredeten Jagd ein. Laura zögert, wirkt unsicher. Berto erkennt, es geht nicht nur um das Erlegen von Tieren, es geht auch um die gewaltsame Eroberung des weiblichen Geschlechts: „Quegli sì che sono lupi che mi danno da pensar“ – „Diese, ja, sind Wölfe, die mir zu denken geben.“ Loredano dringt in die Gesellschaft ein. Berto, Enrico und Laura verteidigen ihre Rollen. Die Verwirrung nimmt zu, Loredano ist verzweifelt: „La figlia mia non è“ – „Dies ist nicht meine Tochter“. Edgar wird misstrauisch: „Chi m'inganna fra poco saprò“ – „Bald werd' ich wissen, wer mich hintergeht“. Und Artur sekundiert: „La menzogna scoprire saprò“ – „Ich werde die Lüge aufdecken können“. Dann eilen alle zur Jagd.

Akt II

[18] Alle wissen bereits, dass sich die wahre Herzogin im Haus von Pietro verborgen hält. [19] Auch Loredano und Ruggiero tauchen dort auf. Pietro verweigert zunächst den Zutritt. Da

tritt Malvina heraus. Sie erkennt die Stimme des Vaters. Loredano fordert Aufklärung. ²⁰ Malvina erklärt die Situation, bittet um Mitleid. Loredano ist außer sich, er will Rache. ²¹ Im Duett ringen Malvina und Loredano mit ihren Gefühlen. Beiden wird das Herz schwer. Ein Hornruf ertönt, die Jagdgesellschaft kommt näher. Da nimmt Loredano Abschied, er will schweigen.

²² Berto beklagt sich bei Pietro über Lauras Launen, sie sei spurlos verschwunden. Er sucht Trost bei einem Glas Wein und singt das Lied vom Wolf. ²³ Es geht um den listigen Wolf im Schafspelz. Er reißt nicht die Herde, er entführt die Tochter. Alle stimmen ein: „Dagli al lupo, il lupo è qua“ – „Fang den Wolf, der Wolf ist hier“. Plötzlich sind Schreie der Jäger zu hören, der Wolf sei entdeckt. Berto will den Wolf fangen. ²⁴ Artur hat die Gegend um Pietros Haus umzingeln lassen. Loredano ist in seiner Gewalt. Auch Malvina wird festgenommen. ²⁵ Malvina trifft Laura, die ebenfalls aufgegriffen wurde. Laura erzählt ihre Geschichte. ²⁶ Sextett: Malvina und Laura sind verzweifelt. Enrico und Berto kommen dazu, raten zur Flucht. Zu spät: Edgar erscheint mit Loredano, will das Spiel beenden. Schließlich gesteht Enrico: „Son io l'ingannator“ – „Der Betrüger bin ich“. Edgar droht Enrico mit dem Tod. ²⁷ Pietro schildert Berto die Lage, der bangt um seine Hochzeit.

²⁸ Es ist Nacht im Schloss. Der Chor singt von der Nacht des Kummers. ²⁹ Ruggiero und Malvina bitten Edgar um Gnade für Enrico. Edgar lehnt ab: „O sciogli l'empio nodo, oppure morire“ – „Gelöst werde die frevelhafte Verbindung oder er sterbe“. Edgar und Artur kommen dazu. Edgar bietet Enrico die Verbannung aus dem Königreich an, fordert aber den Verzicht auf Malvina. Enrico lehnt ab, er will eher den Tod. Doch Edgar bleibt hart: „Ho deciso: Malvina è mia consorte“ – „Malvina wird meine Gattin.“ ³⁰ Malvina hadert mit dem König. Ihr Herz könne er mit Gewalt nicht erobern. ³¹ Malvina besingt ihre Qualen. Sie will mit Enrico in den Tod gehen. Edgar ist innerlich bestürzt. ³² Edgar und Artur: Artur gibt den rachelustigen Intriganten, er deutet indes an, dass der König bei der Gräfin von Cumberland im Wort steht.

³³ Finale. Das gesamte Volk des Herzogs bittet um Gnade für den Herzog, darunter auch Laura und Berto, ebenso Loredano. Die plötzliche Wende: Ein Bote vom Hof in London erscheint, der König habe sich bereits einer Comtessa versprochen, diese fordere die unverzügliche Heirat. Edgar erkennt die Gefahr, plötzlich ebenfalls als Betrüger dazustehen. Alle hoffen nun auf einen glücklichen Ausgang, nur Artur nicht. Edgar zieht sich zögernd aus der mittlerweile lästigen Affäre, er lässt Gnade vor Recht walten. „Tutto perdono, e obbligo...“ – „Ich vergebe und vergesse alles...“ Alle feiern den gütigen Herrscher und Berto den 101ten erlegten Wolf.

Franz Hauk

Also available



8.660198-99



8.573236



8.660367-68



8.573065

As one of the leading operatic composers of his generation, Johann Simon Mayr nurtured a fascination with the chivalric stories of medieval England. *Le due duchesse*, an *opera semiseria* with *buffa* elements, is set during the reign of the 10th-century King Edgar. Huntsmen's and Knights' choruses and troubadour-like songs give great vivacity to a score that is both lyrical and dramatic. Mayr's compound of Viennese Classicism and Italianate melodic beauty, allied to his ambitious writing and a skilful libretto, produced an important and influential opera couched in his own unmistakable idiom.



Johann Simon
MAYR

(1763–1845)



simon-mayr-chor
ensemble e.V.



Gefördert von
Margarete Baronin
de Bassus.

Le due duchesse

ossia La caccia dei lupi

Opera semiseria in two acts (1814) • Libretto by Felice Romani (1788–1865)

Edgar Young-Jun Ahn, Tenor
Loredano Jaegyeong Jo, Bass
Malvina Eun-Hye Choi, Soprano
Enrico Markus Schäfer, Tenor
Artur Jörn Lindemann, Tenor
Ruggiero Harald Thum, Tenor
Laura Tina Marie Herbert, Soprano
Betzi Anna Feith, Soprano
Berto Samuel Hasselhorn, Baritone
Guglielmo Niklas Mallmann, Bass
Pietro Andreas Mattersberger, Bass

WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING

Simon Mayr Chorus and Members of the Bavarian State Opera Chorus

Concerto de Bassus

Franz Hauk, Harpsichord and Conductor

1	Sinfonia	6:51	18–33	Act II	66:30
2–17	Act I	88:48			Playing Time: 2:42:09

Recorded: 18–27 September 2017 at the Kongregationssaal, Neuburg an der Donau, Bavaria, Germany

Producers: Sebastian Riederer, Dina Pohl • Engineer and editor: Sebastian Riederer

Critical edition: Franz Hauk, Manfred Höbl and Diemut Hauk • Management: Michaela Mirlach-Geyer and Josef Geyer

Publisher: Simon Mayr Chorus • Booklet notes: Thomas Lindner and Franz Hauk • Cover: Paolo Zeccara, Italy

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet, and the Italian libretto, together with a German translation, may be accessed at www.naxos.com/libretti/660422.htm