

signum
CLASSICS

SILVIA TRO SANTAFÉ

Spanish Heroines

Orquesta Sinfónica de Navarra
Julian Reynolds



SPANISH HEROINES

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* Susanna Puig I Ferrés, soprano (Thibault)

SILVIA TRO SANTAFÉ MEZZO-SOPRANO
SUSANNA PUIG I FERRÉS SOPRANO
ORQUESTA SINFÓNICA DE NAVARRA
JULIAN REYNOLDS CONDUCTOR
ORFEÓN PAMPLONÉS
IGOR IJURRA DIRECTOR

IMAGES OF SPAIN

Spain has been a popular destination for opera tales for many years. This should not surprise; the image most of us have of the country is of a rugged, sun-blasted landscape with a scattering of highly emotional, hot-blooded inhabitants ready to whip out a dagger or gun to avenge an insult at the drop of a sombrero. Actually, that would probably do as a definition of operaland itself where passions naturally blaze with unnatural fervour. In a recent television programme about Spanish Art, the intensity of the Spanish soul was described as being as though the temperature had been turned up a few degrees.

Of course each generation chooses its own image of Spain to reflect its own ideals and interests. Whether it is the imagined chivalry and heroism of the so-called "reconquest" that forms the background to *Le Cid*; or the idealised image of the tolerance of a multi-cultural society under the Moors; or the image of an incredibly wealthy Empire stagnating in its own cruelty and stifling in the aridity of its court etiquette; or the image of a backwater which the Enlightenment passed by totally and failed to illumine or a country of volatile peasants, picturesque bandits and wild gypsies all living close to nature, Spain is all of

these things at once depending upon one's point of view. These images of Spain may be as far removed from actuality as the current image of sangria and chips is from the reality of one of the most progressive and quickly developing democracies in Europe.

Certainly, nobody can deny the extraordinary intensity of Spanish Art right across the scale. Spanish religious painting includes some of the most morbid representations in Western Art but also some of the most ecstatic; while modern art can embrace everything from the scream of La Guernica to the eroticism of Picasso and Dali.

This supports the opera world-view of Spain, a place slightly out of kilter, a country where emotions are so intense that what is actually happening may be slightly uncertain. Who can narrate clearly and lucidly the plot of *Il Trovatore* or *La forza del destino*? Does it matter? Just feel their pain as they throw their children on to the burning fire, oh, and sing about it. Operatic Spain is the place where the pain of love comes a distant second to the fury of revenge.

Naturally we ignore the corrective view of native operas. Few Spanish operas have made it to the general repertoire but two examples will suffice,

and both contradict the popular image totally. At the end of de Falla's *La vide breve* when Salud confronts her faithless betrayer, opera logic would dictate that as a Spanish heroine she should grab the nearest carving knife and initiate a bloodbath. Instead she limply and inexplicably expires. This ending has been criticised, but it is clearly what de Falla wanted. The image of Spanish woman he is portraying is not a Carmen, but a woman born to suffer passively. In fact this is not limited to women, in *Goyescas* by Granados, the hero sings a final love-duet knowing that he is going to be killed by Paquiro the toreador with whom he has to fight a duel.

Una voce poco fa

(*Il barbiere di Siviglia* - Gaetano Rossini)

A tourist slinking around modern Sevilla from one grateful piece of shade to the next may wonder why two of the three Mozart/da Ponte operas as well as Rossini's *Barber of Seville* are set in an area called "the frying-pan of Spain". As our tourist wonders how he is going to get as far as the cathedral in the burning heat, a new respect grows for a man who can make love in such a climate to 1003 Spanish women alone, far less the foreigners in Leporello's catalogue without the benefit of air-conditioning. Of course, the events

of *Don Giovanni* are mainly (and fittingly) nocturnal, and even while Almaviva's estate at a few hours ride away may be cooled by the "aguas frescas" the last act of *Le Nozze*, set after dark, is the one with the most action in it.

Only the farce of the Barber demands full-on action throughout the day, but it may explain the fact that the first act is supposed to start at about 6.00 in the morning. One of the most popular operas of all time, Rossini's *Barbiere* was famously an initial failure. This had nothing to do with the music, but at the premiere the audience were unnerved by the fact that the tenor - who accompanied himself in the aubade on the guitar - forgot to tune his instrument before venturing on to the stage. When a cat later wandered on to the scene, the audience gave up listening to the piece. In her opening aria, Rosina proclaims her confidence in her own abilities and her determination to win the suitor she wants, Almaviva whom she knows under the name of Lindoro.

Contro un cor

The farce of Barber leads to a number of disguises in best *commedia dell'arte* tradition. Almaviva, already disguised as the student Lindoro, gains

admittance to Bartolo's house firstly disguised as a soldier, and later as a singing teacher. As he plots Rosina's escape with her, she sings an aria as part of the lesson. She tells her guardian that this is from the opera, *The Useless Precaution*. From quite early on, there was a tradition of substituting another aria - often with more fireworks - for Rossini's original, but nowadays we have returned to the aria Rossini wrote.

In quail eccessi, o Numi...Mi tradi

(*Don Giovanni* - Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart)

Da Ponte took a one-act opera and expanded it to two acts for Mozart, but he cut down the number of women in the opera from 4 to 3 - presumably because of the circumstances of the Prague Company for which it was written. Of the three, the character of Elvira is certainly the hardest to understand, and yet she is the most central. She recognises the hopelessness of her love for Giovanni and yet she dwells on it deliberately torturing herself. If de Falla is right in his portrayal of Spanish women with *Salud*, then Elvira is perhaps the most Spanish of the women in the opera. This aria forms part of the extension of the one-act form by da Ponte. It bridges the humiliation of the scene in which she discovers that Leporello has substituted for his master while

Giovanni attempts to seduce Elvira's maid with her genuinely heroic final attempt to save his soul. Its cyclic repetitions reinforce the image of her self-torture.

O mon Fernand

(*La favorite* - Gaetano Donizetti)

The action of this opera takes place in the Kingdom of Castille about 1340

Donizetti's *La favorite* written for Paris and first performed there in 1840 four years before *La Traviata* with which it shares the theme of a fallen woman in love. However, it also shows how opera can take an historical character - in this case Leonora de Guzman, the long-time mistress of Alfonso IX of Castille - and then cheerfully weave a web of operatic nonsense around her. This should not worry us, as the opera is musically one of Donizetti's best, a slow dramatic burn in which each act is better than the one that precedes it. Leonore is torn between her love for the young Fernand and her position as Royal Mistress. Fernand forces the issue by demanding her hand of the King after winning a battle. Unfortunately he does not know of her past, and when the grateful King grants his request, the young bridegroom is shocked when the court refuses to

speak to him. In a very dramatic scene, he hears the truth and rejects all the honours the King has awarded him, including Leonore, and in best operatic tradition storms off to a monastery. Of course she follows him disguised as a novice so that they can have a final splendid duet and she can expire in his arms. Long popular in the nineteenth century it is rarely revived now. One reason, apart from the libretto, may be the fact that Leonore is cast as a mezzo instead of the expected soprano, but the strength of the score can be judged by her wonderful aria in which she acknowledges her growing love for Fernand.

Chanson du Voile

(Don Carlo - Giuseppe Verdi)

Dona Ana Mendoza y de la Cerda, the original character upon whom Schiller loosely based his Princess of Eboli was an extremely forceful woman. She married young and soon became mother of a large family. When her husband died, she entered one of St Teresa of Avila's Carmelite convents. Within months she had caused such uproar that St. Teresa had to close the convent down and to smuggle all of the other terrified nuns out at midnight. She went back to the court and took up a remarkably unsuccessful life of intrigue. What she actually did is unclear, but it must have

been grave for her sentence was severe. King Philip ordered her to be locked in a single room of her own palace at Pastrana, forced to communicate through a grille. In her youth, she had been a Lady-in-waiting to the Elisabeth de Valois and this is the period covered by the opera. That she is one of the protagonists in the drama is often missed because when Verdi was forced to cut his mammoth French Grand Opera, Eboli was the chief victim of his scissors. Her role in some key scenes only becomes clear if one returns to the original.

She sings the Veil Song to divert the young Queen and her Ladies. Its "oriental" melismas hint at the lingering Moorish influence on Spanish music as well as pandering to the French taste for orientalism.

O don fatal

Later in the opera, she confesses to the Queen her part in an intrigue against her Mistress and that she has slept with the King. When the Queen banishes her from court, Eboli curses her fatal beauty in an aria whose music fits the French original far better than the later Italian version.

Habanera

(*Carmen* - Georges Bizet)

If *Carmen* is dated from the facts of Mérimée's novella then she met her end in the late 1820s, if it is dated from the time the opera was written we move that backward by roughly thirty years. Thus, and appropriately for this startlingly modern character, she is the youngest of our heroines. Bizet's librettists are more concerned with place than time. Outside the Cigarette Factory in Seville, a huge red-brick building that exists to this day and is now part of the University.

Writing in *A Stranger in Spain*, H.V. Morton noted that had the English connection with this corner of Spain not been so strong, our image of Spain would not be so strongly dominated by Andalusia. He blamed our nineteenth-century ancestors for creating the tourist image and wonders if we had continued to make the pilgrimage to Santiago whether the image would have been of Gallegos as the prototype for the nation instead of the Andalusian with his Cordoban hat, short jacket and tight trousers. He was right that the Andalusian is perhaps the least typical of all the Spaniards; but a travel poster for Spain is almost unthinkable without the flouncey dresses, castanets and upraised arms that have as little to do with the rest of Spain as the Highland Games

do with England. For this, literature and opera must share the blame. Washington Irving's *Tales of the Alhambra* may now seem humourless and patronising, but it made Andalusia fashionable. *Carmen*, the most popular of all operas, then stamped the image of flamenco skirts swished tempestuously firmly into our consciousness. The irony is that for Mérimée, the essence of *Carmen* is that she is an outsider, something strange, exotic and intangible. Don Jose by way of contrast comes from a good family though his uncontrollable temper has already got him in trouble in his native north of Spain.

Bizet supports this image of dancing, heel-clicking Spain; *Carmen's* arias are cast as Spanish dances, a Habanera and a Seguidilla. The first is her opening aria and it shows at once the subtlety of this extraordinary masterpiece. One of the most popular arias of all time, it does not reveal its secrets all at once. For example, to whom is she singing? The men in the chorus, or herself? She has just had a catfight with another cigarette girl. Is she singing it to restore her equilibrium or has this mercurial character already forgotten the disturbance?

Près des remparts de Séville [Séguedille]

(*Carmen* - Georges Bizet)

The image of this aria is an essential one for opera. Carmen has been tied up and is being guarded by Don Jose. She wants to escape and sees him as a means to an end. Unable to use her hands or feet because she is tied up, she uses her voice instead. Potently, this aria of seduction is in the form of a fast triple-time dance.

Pleurez, pleurez mes yeux

(*Le Cid* - Jules Massenet)

The earliest of our heroines, the action of *Le Cid* takes place principally around the city of Burgos in the eleventh century, however a certain amount of telescoping takes place. The King's enemy is called Boabdil (indeed the name of the last King of Granada) and the final act takes place after the conquest of Granada. So many legends have grown up around El Cid that it is often impossible to distinguish between fact and fiction; however we may be confident in ascribing this to fiction as it would make the characters all well over 400 years old. The libretto is also a time-traveller; partly based upon Corneille, it is an odd mix of seventeenth and nineteenth century French. Massenet wrote *Le Cid* for the Paris Opera and it is

a full-scale Grand Opera complete with ballet, Celestial Apparitions, very large cast and a large number of spectacular sets. As these militate against revivals it is hard to judge how it would work in the theatre, although it was initially one of the composer's most successful operas.

Chimene loves Rodrigue, but she swears revenge upon him because he killed her father. He is sent off to do battle against the Moors, rather with the idea that he should not return. Chimene in this aria weeps for her dead father and for the hopes she had of marrying Rodrigue.

As so often in French Opera, the part of the heroine lies in the mezzo-soprano range.

Alza! Alza!

(*Don Quichotte* - Jules Massenet)

As *Don Quichotte* is one of Massenet's most compelling operas its current neglect is curious. As well as offering a pair of gratefully written roles for the Don and Sancho Panza, it is - like all the best of Massenet's operas - a well-oiled and highly efficient piece of theatre machinery. By taking unconnected episodes from the novel, it was following a trend of the time in opera, which we can also see in *Manon* and *La Bohème*. Perhaps the

best part of the opera is the relationship between the Don and his servant Sancho Panza and perhaps the most conventional aspect of the piece is the treatment of Dulcinee who is sentimentalised in a very nineteenth century way. Perhaps that was inevitable only 30 years after the success of Carmen. She is given 4 vapid admirers to contrast with Quichotte and an aria in which she muses about needing more out of life - a way to let her react to Quichotte perhaps but far removed from the character conceived by Cervantes. Much of the humour of the novel lies in the discrepancy between the reality and the dream-world that Quichotte makes of it. He turns a simple country girl into an image of courtly love, but Dulcinee is frankly an incarnation of Bizet's charmer, beloved by everybody and bored with her own success.

Her opening aria is also reminiscent of Carmen's first appearance. The town is celebrating a fiesta. She enters on a balcony and sings of her effect on all men. Massenet adds Moorish herbs to his dish with the opening melismas on the word "Alza" which recall both Carmen and Eboli.

TEXTS

1. Una voce poco fa

Una voce poco fa
qui nel cor mi risuonò;
il mio cor ferito è già,
e Lindor fu che il piagò.
Sì, Lindoro mio sarà;
lo giurai, la vincerò.

Il tutor ricuserà,
io l'ingegno aguzzerò.
Alla fin s'accheterà
e contenta io resterò.
Sì, Lindoro mio sarà;
lo giurai, la vincerò.

Io sono docile, son rispettosa,
sono obbediente, dolce, amorosa;
mi lascio reggere, mi fo guidar.
Ma se mi toccano dov'è il mio debole
sarò una vipera sarò, e cento trappole
prima di cedere farò giocar.

2. Contro un cor

Contro un cor
che accende amore
di verace, invito ardore,
s'arma invan poter tiranno
di rigor, di crudelta'.

D'ogni assalto vincitore
sempre amor trionfera'.

Cara immagine ridente,
dolce idea d'un lieto amore,
tu m'accendi in petto il core,
tu mi porti a delirar.

Caro, a te mi raccomando,
tu mi salva, per pietà',
tu mi porti a delirar.

3. In quai eccessi, o Numi...Mi tradi

In quali eccessi, o Numi,
in quai misfatti orribili, tremendi
è avvolto il sciagurato!
Ah no! non potete tardar l'ira del cielo,
la giustizia tardar!
Sentir già parmi la fatale saetta,
che gli piomba sul capo!
Aperto veggio il baratro mortal!
Misera Elvira, che contrasto d'affetti
in sen ti nasce!...
Perchè questi sospiri,
e queste'ambascie?

Mi tradì quell'alma ingrata,
Infelice, oddio!, mi fa.
Ma tradita e abbandonata,
Provo ancor per lui pietà.

Quando sento il mio tormento,
Di vendetta il cor favella:
Ma, se guardo il suo cimento,
Palpitando il cor mi va.

4. O mon Fernand

L'ai-je bien entendu? Qui... lui... Fernand,
l'époux de Léonore!
Lui... Tout me l'atteste et mon coeur doute encore
de ce bonheur inattendu. Moi, l'époser!
ah! ce serait infâme!
Moi, lui porter en dot mon déshonneur!
Non, non; dût-il me fuir avec horreur,
il connaîtra la malheureuse femme
qu'il croit digne de son coeur.

O mon Fernand! tous les biens de la terre,
pour être à toi mon coeur eût tout donné;
mais mon amour, plus pur que la prière,
au désespoir, hélas! hélas! est condamné.
Tu suras tout, et par toi méprisée,
j'aurai souffert tout,
tout ce qu'on peut souffrir. Ah!
Si ta justice est alors apaisée, mon Dieu!
fais-moi mourir, mon Dieu! mon Dieu!
fais-moi, fais-moi mourir.

Venez, cruels! qui vous arrête?
venez, cruels, venez!

Mon arrêt descend du ciel.
Venez tous, c'est une fête!
de bouquets parez l'autel.
Qu'une tombe aussi s'apprête!
Et jetez un voile noir
sur la triste fiancée qui, maudite et repoussée,
sera morte avant ce soir.

Pour bandeau de fiancée,
qu'on me jette un voile noir.
Venez, venez cruels!
Mon arrêt descend du ciel.
Venez tous, c'est une fête!
de bouquets parez l'autel.
Qu'une tombe aussi s'apprête!
Et jetez un voile noir
sur la triste fiancée qui, maudite et repoussée,
sera morte avant ce soir.

5. Chanson du Voile

[Princess Eboli]
Puisque dans ce couvent la Reine des Espagnes
Peut seule entrer; voulez-vous, mes compagnes,
Chercher en attendant que le ciel ait pâli,
Quelque jeu qui nous divertisse?

[Thibault, Les Dames]
Nous suivront tous votre caprice,
Charmante Princesse Eboli!

[Princess Eboli]
Apportez une mandoline,
Et chantons tour à tour,
Chantons la chanson Sarrasine,
Celle du voile indulgent à l'amour!
Chantons!

[Thibault and Les Dames]
Chantons!

[Princess Eboli]
Au palais des fées, des rois Grenadins,
Devant les nymphées, de ces beaux jardins,
Couverte d'un voile une femme, un soir,
À la belle étoile seule vint s'asseoir.
Achmet le roi maure, en passant la vit,
Et voilée encore elle le ravit.
"Viens, ma souveraine, régner à ma cour,
Lui dit-il: la reine n'a plus mon amour."
Ah!

[Princess Eboli and Thibault]
Ah! O jeunes filles, tissez des voiles!
Quand le ciel brille des feux du jour,
Aux lueurs des étoiles,
Les voiles sont chers à l'amour!

[Les Dames]
Ah! O jeunes filles, tissez des voiles!
Quand le ciel brille des feux du jour,

[with Princell Eboli and Thibault]
Aux lueurs des étoiles,
Les voiles sont chers à l'amour!

[Princess Eboli]
J'entrevois à peine dans l'obscur jardin,
Tes cheveux d'ébène, ton pied enfantin.
O fille charmante un roi t'aimera:
Sois la fleur vivante de mon Alhambra.
Mais quitte ce voile, bel astre charmant,
Fais comme l'étoile du bleu firmament!
J'obéis sans peine: tiens, regarde-moi!
Allah! C'est la Reine!" s'écria le roi!
Ah!

[Princess Eboli and Thibault]
Ah! O jeunes filles, tissez des voiles! etc.

[Les Dames]
O jeunes filles, tissez des voiles! etc.

6. Don Fatal

Ah! Je ne verrai plus la Reine!

O don fatal et détesté,
Présent du ciel en sacolère!
O toi qui rends la femme si fière!
Je te maudis, ô ma beauté!
Tombez, tombez, larmes amères!
Mes trahisons et mes forfaits,

Mes souillures et mes misères,
Vous ne les laverez jamais!
Je te maudis, ô ma beauté!

Adieu, Reine, victime pure
De mes déloyales et folles amours!
Dans un couvent et sous la bure,
le m'ensevelis pour toujours!

Et Carlos?... Oui! demain, peut-être,
Il tombera sous le fer sacré!
Ah! Un jour me reste! Ah! le me sens renaitre!
Béni ce jour, je le sauverai!

7. Habanera

[Chorus]

La voila! Voila la Carmencita!
Carmen! sur tes pas nous nous pres sons tous!
Carmen! sois gentile, au moins réponds-nous?
Et dis-nous quel jour tu nous aimeras!
Carmen, dis-nous quell jour tu nous aimeras!

[Carmen]

Quand je vous aimerai?
Ma foi, je ne sais pas...
Peut-être jamais! peut-être demain!...
Mais pas aujourd'hui... c'est certain.

L'amour est un oiseau rebelle
Que nul ne peut apprivoiser,
et c'est bien en vain qu'on l'appelle,
s'il lui convient de refuser.
Rien n'y fait, menace ou prière,
L'un parle bien, l'autre se tait:
Et c'est l'autre que je préfère,
Il n'a rien dit mais il me plaît.

L'amour! L'amour! L'amour! L'amour!

L'amour est enfant de Bohème,
Il n'a jamais, jamais connu de loi,
Si tu ne m'aimes pas, je t'aime:
Si je t'aime, prends garde à toi!
Si tu ne m'aime pas,
Si tu ne m'aime pas, je t'aime!
Mais si je t'aime,
si je t'aime, prend garde à toi!
Si tu ne m'aime pas,
Si tu ne m'aime pas, je t'aime!
Mais, si je t'aime,
Si je t'aime, Prends garde à toi!

L'oiseau que tu croyais surprendre
Battit de l'aile et s'envola;
L'amour est loin, tu peux l'attendre;
Tu ne l'attends plus, il est là!
Tout autour de toi, vite, vite,

Il vient, s'en va, puis il revient;
Tu crois le tenir, il t'évite;
Tu crois l'éviter, il te tient!

L'amour! L'amour! L'amour! L'amour!

L'amour est enfant de Bohème,
il n'a jamais, jamais connu de loi;
Si tu ne m'aimes pas, je t'aime:
si je t'aime, prends garde à toi!

8. Près des remparts de Séville [Séguedille]

Près des remparts de Séville,
Chez mon ami, Lillas Pastia
J'irai danser la Séguedille
Et boire du Manzanilla.
J'irai chez mon ami Lillas Pastia.
Oui, mais toute seule on s'ennuie,
Et les vrais plaisirs sont à deux;
Donc, pour me tenir compagnie,
J'emmènerai mon amoureux!
Mon amoureux, il est au diable...
Je l'ai mis à la porte hier!
Mon pauvre coeur très consolable,
Mon coeur est libre comme l'air!
J'ai les galants à la douzaine,
Mais ils ne sont pas à mon gré.
Voici la fin de la semaine:
Qui veut m'aimer? Je l'aimerai!

Qui veut mon âme? Elle est à prendre!
Vous arrivez au bon moment!
Je n'ai guère le temps d'attendre,
Car avec mon nouvel amant,
Près des remparts de Séville,
Chez mon ami, Lillas Pastia!
J'irai danser la Séguedille
Et boire du Manzanilla.
J'irai chez mon ami Lillas Pastia.

9. Pleurez, pleurez mes yeux

De cet affreux combat je sors l'âme brisée!
Mais enfin je suis libre et je pourrai du moins
Soupirer sans contrainte et souffrir sans témoins.

Pleurez! pleurez mes yeux! tombez triste rosée
Qu'un rayon de soleil ne doit jamais tarir!
S'il me reste un espoir, c'est de bientôt mourir!
Pleurez mes yeux, pleurez toutes vos larmes!
Pleurez mes yeux!

Mais qui donc a voulu l'éternité des pleurs?
Ô chers ensevelis, trouvez-vous tant de charmes à
léguer aux vivants d'implacables douleurs?
Hélas! je me souviens, il me disait:
Avec ton doux sourire,
Tu ne saurais jamais conduire
Qu'aux chemins glorieux ou qu'aux sentiers bénis!

Ah! mon père! Hélas!
Pleurez! pleurez mes yeux!
Tombez triste rosée
Qu'un rayon de soleil ne doit jamais tarir!
Pleurez mes yeux!
Ah! pleurez toutes vos larmes! pleurez mes yeux!

10. Alza! Alza!

[Chorus]

Anda! Alza! Anda! Dulcinée

[Dulcinée]

Alza! Alza!

Quand la femme a vingt ans, la majesté surpême

Ne doit pas avoir grands attraits!

L'on possède un beau diadème,

Mais après, mes amis, après? Après?

On vit dans une apothéose,

Vos jours, sont de gloire entourés,

Mais il doit manquer quelque chose...

ou quelqu'un...

Ah! Comme vous voudrez.

[Chorus]

Belle dont le charme est l'empire;

Dulcinée! Reine!

Sois notre Reine!

[Dulcinée]

Alza!

Quand la femme a vingt ans,

D'hommages l'on vous environne

Durant le jour; oui, mais la nuit...

Parce qu'on porte une couronne...

Le temps d'amour s'enfuit.

Hélas! Hélas!

Et pour calmer le coeur morose

Et les ennuis exaspérés,

Il doit bien manquer quelque chose...

ou quelqu'un...

Ah!

Comme vous voudrez.

[Chorus]

Dulcinée! Reine!

Sois notre Reine!

Alza!

[Dulcinée]

Alza! Alza!

Amis, à tous, ici,

Merci! amis, merci, merci!

BIOGRAPHIES

SILVIA TRO SANTAFÉ

Silvia Tro Santafé was born in Valencia and studied at the Conservatorio “Joaquin Rodrigo” with Ana Luisa Chova, later studying with Carlo Bergonzi, Walter Berry, Gerard Souzay, Félix Lavilla, Magda Olivero, Monserrat Caballé and Renata Scottò. After her professional debut in La Scala di Seta at the Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro in 1992 she won a place at the Julliard School in New York and was awarded first prize in the Opera Index Competition. Shortly afterwards she made her American debut singing Cherubino in Santa Fe.

Since then she has become one of the most sought after coloratura mezzos of her generation. As a great Handelian, she has sung Medoro (*Orlando*) in Valencia; Tolomeo (*Giulio Cesare*) with the Netherlands Opera and in Bologna; Polinesso (*Ariodante*) in Paris (Palais Garnier), Dresden and at the Salzburg Festival; the title role in *Rinaldo* at the Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin; Amastre in *Xerxes* in Paris (Théâtre des Champs Elysées); Ruggiero



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(*Alcina*) in Paris (Châtelet) Amsterdam and Oviedo; and the title role in '*Ariodante*' at the Liceu, Barcelona. Among many other Baroque roles she has sung the title role in *Eliogabalo* in Brussels (La Monnaie).

Above all, she has established an international reputation as a great Rossini singer: her Rosina has been heard in Bologna, Toulouse, Amsterdam, Berlin, Hamburg, Zurich, Luxembourg and at the Vienna State Opera; she has sung Isabella (*L'Italiana in Algeri*) in Berlin, Zurich, Dresden and Vienna; and her Angelina in *La Cenerentola* has been acclaimed in, Barcelona, Zurich, Brussels, Dresden and Munich. Other Rossini roles include Ernestina (*L'equivoco stravagante*) at the Rossini Opera Festival, Malcom (*La Donna del Lago*) at the San Carlos in Lisbon and Marchesa Melibea (*Il viaggio a Reims*) in Frankfurt Opera.

Other appearances include the title role in *L'enfant et les sortilèges*, Barcelona (Liceu); Nicklausse (*Les Contes d'Hoffman*) with the Rome Opera; Dorabella in Oviedo; and Charlotte ('*Werther*') in Como and Pisa. Her recent debut, singing Adalgisa to Edita Gruberova's *Norma* in Hamburg and Berlin, was a great public and critical success.

Silvia has an extensive concert and recital repertoire. Her recording for Globe of Spanish songs was given a top rating by Diapason Magazine. Other recordings include *La Verbena de la Paloma* with Placida Domingo, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* on Kikko Classics, *Xerxes* (Amastre) with William Christie for Virgin and Scarlatti's *Griselda* for Harmonia Mundi with René Jacobs.

Among other exciting future plans include a return to Vienna for *L'Italiana* and *Barbieri*, a new Massenet *Don Quichotte* in Brussels, singing Dulcinée, and *L'Italiana* at the Teatro Real Madrid.

She will return again to the States to open the Washington Opera Season in 2009 singing Rosina. Adalgisa in *Norma* at the Monnaie, *La Cenerentola* at the Dresden Semperoper, Nicklausse in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Pierotto in *Linda di Chamounix* and Cecilio in *Lucio Silla* at the Liceu Barcelona, Giovanna Seymour in *Anna Bolena* in Dortmund and Rosina at the Geneva Opera.

ORQUESTA SINFÓNICA DE NAVARRA (NAVARRA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA)

The Orquesta Sinfónica de Navarra is the oldest Spanish orchestra in existence: it was founded in 1879 by the noted Spanish composer and violinist, Pablo Sarasate who was born in Pamplona.

Since 1997, the Artistic Director and Chief Conductor has been Maestro Ernesto Martínez Izquierdo. The orchestra is now acclaimed as one of the finest in Spain, and noted for the breadth of its repertory and for the fact that it regularly collaborates with internationally known conductors and soloists. It has been heard on numerous important concert stages as well at international Festivals.

In 2007/8, the the Orchestra visited Bilbao, Warsaw, Dortmund, and Paris. The following year sees a return to Paris for performances that include a concert with Juan Diego Flórez and a production at the Théâtre du Châtelet of the rarely performed *Cyrano de Bergerac* by Alfano, the composer most widely known for his completion of Turandot. The production will feature Plácido Domingo in the title-role. As Cultural Ambassador

to the region of Navarre, the Orchestra is also undertaking a tour of China that will showcase works by the orchestra's founder, Sarasate.

It is the resident orchestra of the Gayarre singing competition and the Sarasate violin competition in Madrid and is regularly to be heard in the orchestra pit for opera and zarzuela performances in Pamplona, Spain and abroad.

The Orquesta Sinfónica de Navarra has also developed an important educational role. This not only includes concerts in schools but also series of popular concerts that include such events as providing live accompaniment to silent films as well as the collaborations with internationally known jazz artists.

Its most recent recordings include the first volumes of what its to be the complete works of Sarasate on the Naxos label.

The Orquesta Sinfónica de Navarra receives financial support from the Government of Navarra and the City of Pamplona. It is also receives generous assistance from private companies such as NH Hoteles, Diario de Navarra, Caja Navarra and Gas Natural Navarra.

ORFEÓN PAMPLONÉS THE ORFEÓN PAMPLONÉS

The Orfeón Pamplonés is one of the oldest choral ensembles in Spain, founded in 1865. It currently has 120 members, allowing performances of a wide variety of repertoire spanning all periods, from Classical through Romantic, to the 20th century. The group also performs regularly in opera and zarzuela, as well as in a *capella* music.

The Orfeón Pamplonés was the first vocal ensemble in Spain to allow the admission of women, with the creation of a female choir in 1903. Since then the chorus has been able to give the first performances in Spain of a large number of works, including Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* and Bach's *Mass in B minor*. In 1928, Maurice Ravel conducted the Orfeón Pamplonés in performing his *Trois Chansons*.

The artistic achievements of the Orfeón Pamplonés have been repeatedly recognized with several awards. The repertoire of the Orfeón Pamplonés includes the most important symphonic and choral works, and the ensemble has collaborated with many leading Spanish and European orchestras, including the Orchestre du Capitole de Toulouse, Münchner Philharmoniker and the

Berliner Symphoniker. In the last few years, the Orfeón has appeared at some of the most prestigious festivals in Spain (Quincena Musical Donostiarra, Santander, Peralada, Granada), France (Avignon, Orange, Montpellier) and Germany (Ruhr), among others. In September 2007, the Orfeón Pamplonés undertook its first tour Mexican tour, singing Verdi's *Requiem*.

Igor Ijurra Fernández has been chief conductor since 2005.

JULIAN REYNOLDS

Conductor Julian Reynolds enjoys an international career in the operatic and concert repertoire. Most recent seasons' successes have included engagements at the Netherlands Opera for *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and *Norma*, which is available in DVD format on Opus Arte, in Sankt Gallen for *Tosca*, *Norma*, and *Hänsel und Gretel*, at the Grand Théâtre de la Ville in Luxembourg with *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, and acclaimed performances of Puccini's *Il trittico* in Modena, Ferrara, and Piacenza. He made his debut at Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Bruxelles with *Elisabetta*, *Regina d'Inghilterra*. This will be followed by *Lucia de Lammermoor* and *Ermione*. *Madama Butterfly* at the Puccini Festival Torre del Lago and *Don Giovanni* in Riga.

In 1986, Julian Reynolds was appointed Assistant Music Director at the Netherlands Opera in Amsterdam, conducting *Bluebeard's Castle*, *Mitridate*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, *L'italiana in Algeri*, *Luisa Miller*, and *L'elisir d'amore*, among others. During his tenure at the Netherlands Opera, he worked with other opera companies in the country, most notably in productions of *Madama Butterfly* and *The Cunning Little Vixen* for Opera Zuid.

Julian Reynolds made his German debut with *Otello* at the Staatstheater Stuttgart, followed by a new production of *Luisa Miller* with the Staatstheater Mainz. He has been a regular guest conductor with the Kirov Opera in the Maryinsky Theatre St. Petersburg, making his debut with the company conducting *La traviata*, and went on to lead a new production of Verdi's *Don Carlos*, followed by *Samson et Dalila*, and the Kirov's first ever production of *Le nozze di Figaro*.

He made his North American debut at the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto with *L'italiana in Algeri* in Toronto. In the same season, he made his Wexford Opera Festival debut with Weinberger's *Svanda dudák*, the recording of which is available on Naxos. He has led *Carmen* at both the Teatro Regio di Parma and at the Arena di Verona, and *Adelina* at the Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro, and made his debut on the Sankt Gallen podium with *La Cenerentola* followed quickly by *Otello*, and conducted *Lucrezia Borgia* at the Festival de Música de Castellón.

Enjoying an extensive symphonic repertoire, Maestro Reynolds has been a guest conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, The Australian Chamber



Orchestra, Auckland Philharmonia, Dutch Radio Philharmonic, Netherlands Philharmonic, Netherlands Chamber Orchestra, Melbourne International Festival, Teatro di San Carlo in Naples, and the orchestra of the Deutsche Oper am Rhein, where he led his own orchestration of Lieder by Alma Mahler, which he has recorded with soprano Charlotte Margiono on the Globe label.

An active recital accompanist, Maestro Reynolds has worked extensively with Dmitri Hvorostovsky, Susan Graham, and Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, both in recital and as conductor.

His recordings includes CDs of Rossini Overtures, Ravel's *Ma Mère l'Oye*, Saint-Saëns' *Le Carnaval des animaux* and several Rossini rarities, for Globe Records. As a pianist he has recorded the complete works for piano and violin of Beethoven, Schubert and Schumann with violinist Johannes Leertouwer.

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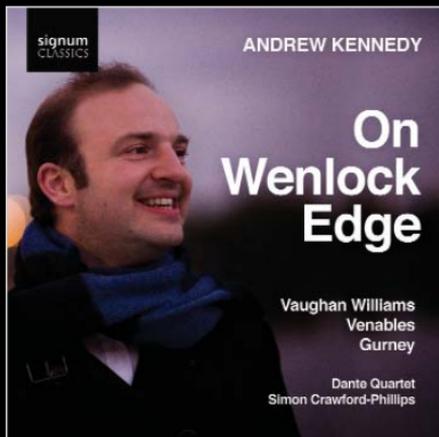
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SignumClassics, Signum Records Ltd., Suite 14, 21 Wadsworth Road, Perivale, Middx UB6 7JD, UK

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