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NAXOS



Ermanno WOLF-FERRARI  
**IL SEGRETO  
DI SUSANNA**

SERENADE FOR STRINGS

Judith Howarth  
Àngel Òdena

Oviedo Filarmonía  
**Friedrich Haider**

Ermanno  
**WOLF-FERRARI**  
(1876–1948)

## Il segreto di Susanna

Intermezzo in one act (1905–09)  
Libretto by Enrico Golisciani (1848–1918)

Susanna ..... Judith Howarth, Soprano  
Gil ..... Àngel Òdena, Baritone

Oviedo Filarmonía  
Friedrich Haider

|   |                                                                             |      |    |                                                               |      |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----|---------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 1 | Ouverture                                                                   | 2:46 | 10 | Arietta: Via, così non mi lasciate<br>( <i>Susanna, Gil</i> ) | 5:11 |
| 2 | Mantiglia grigia... cappellino rosa<br>( <i>Gil, Susanna</i> )              | 1:32 | 11 | Bravo Sante, chiudiam tutte le porte<br>( <i>Susanna</i> )    | 1:42 |
| 3 | Ben lo conosco l'odor molesto<br>( <i>Gil</i> )                             | 2:45 | 12 | Chi è là? – Son io Susanna<br>( <i>Susanna, Gil</i> )         | 4:35 |
| 4 | Evitiam che un domestico<br>( <i>Gil</i> )                                  | 1:12 | 13 | Aria: Oh gioia la nube leggera<br>( <i>Susanna</i> )          | 4:45 |
| 5 | Guardala! Con quell'aria ingenua e franca<br>( <i>Gil, Susanna</i> )        | 4:42 | 14 | Ti colgo questa volta!...                                     |      |
| 6 | Dal suo gesticolare – Duettino: Il dolce idillio<br>( <i>Susanna, Gil</i> ) | 3:36 |    | Tutto è fumo in questo mondo<br>( <i>Gil, Susanna</i> )       | 3:14 |
| 7 | Ah! l'odore fatal sin nella veste!<br>( <i>Gil, Susanna</i> )               | 1:32 |    |                                                               |      |
| 8 | Ah! Scellerata!<br>( <i>Gil, Susanna</i> )                                  | 2:57 |    |                                                               |      |
| 9 | Intermezzo – Cogliarla debbo...<br>( <i>Gil, Susanna</i> )                  | 3:31 |    |                                                               |      |

**Serenade for Strings in E flat major (1893)**

|    |                      |      |
|----|----------------------|------|
| 15 | I. Allegro           | 7:32 |
| 16 | II. Andante          | 6:49 |
| 17 | III. Scherzo: Presto | 2:31 |
| 18 | IV. Finale: Presto   | 5:16 |

**Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari (1876–1948)**

**Il segreto di Susanna (1905–09) · Serenade for Strings in E flat major (1893)**

In 1903, the Residenztheater in Munich staged a premiere that established the reputation of a young German-Italian composer, Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari (1876–1948). Although he was only 27 years old, Wolf-Ferrari's opera *Le donne curiose* succeeded not only in giving the comedies of the Venetian dramatist Carlo Goldoni (1707–1793) a new lease of artistic life, but also in launching a fundamental renewal of *opera buffa* offering a clear alternative to the dominance of Richard Wagner and Giacomo Puccini. The years that followed were perhaps Wolf-Ferrari's most productive period as a composer: *I quattro rusteghi*, *Il segreto di Susanna* and *I gioielli della Madonna* conquered the world's stages, and its foremost conductors – Arturo Toscanini, Arthur Nikisch, Felix Mottl, Gustav Mahler, Ernst von Schuch – performed his operas. Soon, however, the First World War plunged Wolf-Ferrari, who was a humanist, into depression and left him unable to work. As a citizen of two nations at war with each other, he felt he had lost his identity and become incapable of creating works of art. He spent five years living quietly in Switzerland. In the inter-war years he wrote two operas – *Sly* and *Il campiello* – while during the Second World War his creative abilities reached their final apogee in the composition of his *Violin Concerto, Op. 26*, a heartfelt gift to the young American violinist Guila Bustabo. Wolf-Ferrari died in 1948 in Venice, the city of his birth.

Throughout his life Wolf-Ferrari, the son of a German father and an Italian mother, would cling to the power of melody and tonality, and at a time when modernism was the order of the day, he was not afraid to write music that was songlike, lyrical and, in a word, melodious. This side of him was a natural result of his Venetian upbringing. At the same time, his work was built, formally speaking, on the foundations of an education in strict counterpoint – from 1892 onwards, he spent three years studying with the eminent Josef Rheinberger at the Akademie der Tonkunst in Munich.

**Serenade for Strings in E flat major**

Wolf-Ferrari's first attempts at composition culminated in the serendipitously inspired *Serenade for Strings in E flat major* for strings that he composed at the age of 17 – already the

work of a master-craftsman. It was given its first performance at the Munich Odeon on 7 July 1894 and was well-received, 'with much benevolent shaking of professorial heads', as Wolf-Ferrari later recalled. This *Serenade* is an early work, but everything that was to characterise the composer's art from then on is already there – the individual tone of voice that sits somewhere between carefree cheerfulness, bliss and bitter melancholy, the gift for writing inspired melodies (the *Andante*), and not least the ability to integrate polyphonic writing into the music almost playfully, but at the same time in a way that is full of expression (the *fugato* of the final *Presto*). A composer is born.

**Il segreto di Susanna: a new tone in musical comedy**

Composed from 1905 onwards and premiered in Munich under Felix Mottl, *Il segreto di Susanna*, an intermezzo in one act, quickly became a box office success, and it remains one of the composer's most frequently performed works to this day. The *Ouverture* sets off at a cracking pace right from the very first bars and may be considered one of the finest examples of Italian *buffa* vivacity. With its melodic felicity and Mediterranean urge for freedom, it is in love with life itself, bursting with inventiveness, capricious, exuberant and blissfully happy all at the same time. But it also humorously introduces Wolf-Ferrari the master of counterpoint when four themes (!) are introduced in under three minutes and at the end all four of them are played together without any discernible effort – a real masterstroke.

Later on, Wolf-Ferrari's art of characterisation unfolds for us an incredible wealth of moods and nuances. The music accompanying Count Gil's entrance (*'Mantiglia grigia... cappellino rosa'*) begins with the Neapolitan tarantella rhythm that crops up in many of the composer's works as a subliminal indication of his sanguine temperament. In a trice, the mood changes to a feather-light love duettino (*'Il dolce idillio'*) in which the two characters soar up to heights of pure bliss. The jealousy scene whistles and howls around us like a whirlwind – albeit one leavened with the requisite final touch of irony (*'Ah! Scellerata!'*). The final aria on the other hand, in which Susanna secretly smokes tobacco, draws us into a magical, almost impressionistic tone painting which, thanks to Wolf-Ferrari's exceptional intuition when it came to orchestration,

not only makes the smoke spreading through the room 'acoustically visible', but also gives a sense of how the nicotine now coursing through Susanna's veins intoxicates her senses ('*Oh gioia, la nube leggera*'). The subtle instrumentation with celesta, harp, three solo violins and muted strings envelop her in the very blue haze that set this magical little opera in motion.

### Synopsis

Count Gil is very much in love, but a man who is quick-tempered when jealous. He hurries into the drawing room of his apartment, perplexed because he thinks he has seen his wife Susanna in the street, despite him having forbidden her to go out alone ([2] '*Mantiglia grigia... cappellino rosa*'). When he goes to his room, Susanna enters, dressed to go out. She furtively passes the servant, Sante, a little package, which he quickly slips in his pocket.

Gil thinks he must have been mistaken in the street earlier, but the strong smell of tobacco in the room makes him suspicious ([3] '*Ben lo conosco l'odor molesto*'). Knowing that neither he himself nor his wife smokes, he takes Sante to task. Sante, however, pretends (gesticulating) that he knows nothing. Gil now suspects he has a rival in his house.

Susanna plays the piano, whilst in the other room, Gil thinks desperately. Could she really be deceiving him when they have only been married for a month? ([4] '*Evitiam che un domestico*'). Gil now starts accusing Sante of smoking in secret, then Susanna comes in ([5] '*Guardala! Con quell'aria ingenua e franca*'). The sight of her is enough to dispel his doubts, and he reaffirms his love for her. While they drink a cup of chocolate together, they recall how their love began ([6] '*Dal suo gesticolare – Duettino: Il dolce idillio*'). But just as they embrace, Gil notices that Susanna's clothes smell of tobacco and abruptly pushes her away ([7] '*Ah! l'odore fatal sin nella veste*'). Furiously, he calls her to account. Susanna hints that she really does have a guilty secret. At this, Gil loses his

composure completely and sets about destroying the furniture in a fit of rage ([8] '*Ah! Scellerata!*').

Susanna withdraws to the adjoining room in tears, while Gil ruefully sinks into an armchair. During the ensuing orchestral *Intermezzo* ([9]), Sante restores order in the room. Susanna timidly returns, bringing her husband his gloves, hat and umbrella for when he goes out. Gil, who has planned to go to his club, inwardly resolves to return early so as to surprise his wife with her lover. Before he leaves, Susanna tries to mollify him with a little arietta ([10] '*Via, così non mi lasciate!*'). Disarmed in spite of himself, he kisses her goodbye on the forehead.

As a precaution, Sante the servant locks all the doors so that Susanna can indulge her '*vizietto profumato*' ('fragrant little vice') while he himself enjoys a little pinch of snuff beside her ([11] '*Bravo Sante, chiudiam tutte le porte*'). There is a knock at the door. It is an angry Gil, who proceeds to search for his rival ([12] '*Chi è là? – Son io, Susanna*'). He tells Susanna, who has just had time to hide her cigarette and asks why he is so het up, that he has forgotten his umbrella and is looking for it.

When Gil has left the apartment again, Susanna can finally enjoy her cigarette. While she sings an aria ecstatically hymning the joys of smoking, suspended between dream and reality she sees her beloved husband, enveloped in a haze of blue smoke ([13] '*O gioia, la nube leggera*'). This time, Gil slips into the house through the window to catch her *in flagrante* ([14] '*Ti colgo questa volta!*'). Susanna is only able to hide her cigarette behind her back. When Gil grabs her hand, he burns himself on the still lighted cigarette. The secret is out, and Susanna immediately asks his forgiveness. Gil, for his part, admits he has been jealous for no reason, and they decide that in future they will simply smoke together. The opera concludes with a little hymn-like song, '*Tutto è fumo in questo mondo*'.

**Friedrich Haider**

*Translation: Sue Baxter*



### Judith Howarth

Judith Howarth, one of the most sought-after sopranos in Europe, has consolidated a strong public following and critical appraisal for her work. She first came to public attention when she joined the Royal Opera House Covent Garden as a Principal. Subsequent engagements include performances in Cincinnati, Toulouse, Santiago de Chile, Oviedo, Santa Fe, Florida Grand Opera, Washington National Opera, Minnesota Opera, English National Opera, Glyndebourne, the Berlin Staatsoper and Netherlands Opera. On the concert platform Judith has toured with Plácido Domingo and appeared at festivals including Aix-en-Provence, the BBC Proms, Tanglewood, Edinburgh and Salzburg. She has worked with many distinguished conductors including Georges Prêtre, Bernard Haitink, Sir Colin Davis, Sir Georg Solti, Giuseppe Sinopoli, Claudio Abbado, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Daniel Barenboim, Sir Charles Mackerras and Seiji Ozawa. Howarth has appeared on television all over the world and has a discography of more than 30 recordings including *Troilus and Cressida*, conducted by Richard Hickox, which won a *Gramophone* Award.



### Àngel Òdena

Spanish baritone Àngel Òdena has performed in a wide range of musical styles, and sung in over 50 operas. He has performed in *Thaïs* at the Ópera de Oviedo and the Ópera Las Palmas, and *Carmen* in Jerez de la Frontera, Palermo, Toulouse, San Sebastian, the Arena di Verona, Málaga, the Cap Roig Festival and the Liceu Ópera Barcelona. He has also performed in venues such as the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam and at the Teatro Comunale di Bologna. Other operas include *Turandot*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Falstaff*, *La traviata*, *Il trovatore* and *La Bohème* among many others. He has appeared in *Pagliacci* at the Ópera Las Palmas, the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, and in a performance at the Teatro Real, Madrid which was subsequently released on DVD. Bel canto repertoire includes works by Rossini and Donizetti. Recent engagements include Sorozábal's *Katiuska* at the Teatro de la Zarzuela, Madrid, *Aida* and his debut in *Tosca* at the Ópera de Oviedo.



### Friedrich Haider

Friedrich Haider, an Austrian conductor with Italian ancestry, was trained at the Vienna Music Academy. At the age of 29 he was appointed music director of the Strasbourg Opéra National du Rhin. With a repertoire of some 60 operas he has appeared at leading European opera houses in Vienna, Munich, Berlin, Dresden, Barcelona, Amsterdam and Venice. In 2006 he made his debut at the Metropolitan Opera in New York with *Rigoletto*. He has conducted the Czech Philharmonic, the London Symphony Orchestra and the Camerata Salzburg, among others. From 2004 to 2010 he was principal conductor of the Oviedo Filarmonía and in 2017, was appointed chief conductor of the Musicae Antiquae Collegium Varsoviense, Poland's most renowned period instruments orchestra. Haider is an ardent champion of the music of Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari. He has made the world premiere recording of the composer's complete orchestral works as well as the complete a cappella choral works and *Talitha Kumi!* [www.friedrichhaider.com](http://www.friedrichhaider.com)



### Oviedo Filarmonía

The Oviedo Filarmonía was created by the Oviedo City Council in 1999. It is the resident orchestra at the Spanish Lyric Theatre Festival, the Auditorium Concert Cycle and the Luis G. Iberní Piano Season organised by Oviedo City Council, accompanying internationally acclaimed soloists. It performs each year during the Oviedo opera season. From 2004 to 2011 its chief conductor was Friedrich Haider, who put the Oviedo Filarmonía both on the national and international map. Together they have recorded Verdi's *Otello* for Naxos, as well as a series of works by the Italian-German composer Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari, including the complete orchestral works. Lucas Macías has been chief conductor since January 2019, with Ivan López-Reynoso as the main guest conductor. The Oviedo Filarmonía has been a member of the Spanish Association of Symphony Orchestras (Asociación Española de Orquestas Sinfónicas) since 2003. For more information: [www.oviedofilarmonia.es](http://www.oviedofilarmonia.es)

## Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari (1876–1948)

### Il segreto di Susanna (1905–09) · Serenade für Streichorchester in Es-Dur (1893)

Im Jahre 1903 geht im Münchner Residenztheater eine Uraufführung über die Bühne, die den Weltruhm eines erst 27 Jahre jungen, deutsch-italienischen Komponisten begründet. Mit der Oper *Le donne curiose* gelingt Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari (1876–1948) nicht nur eine künstlerische Wiederbelebung der Werke des venezianischen Lustspielautors Carlo Goldoni (1707–1793), sondern er leitet mit ihr auch eine grundlegende Erneuerung der opera buffa ein, die einen klaren Gegenentwurf zur Dominanz von Richard Wagner und Giacomo Puccini darstellt. Die folgenden Jahre werden zur vielleicht produktivsten Schaffensperiode des Komponisten: *I quattro rusteghi*, *Il segreto di Susanna*, sowie *I gioielli della Madonna* erobern die Welt-Bühnen. Die bedeutendsten Dirigenten widmen sich Wolf-Ferraris Opern: Arturo Toscanini, Arthur Nikisch, Felix Mottl, Gustav Mahler, Ernst von Schuch. Bald aber schon stürzt der 1. Weltkrieg den Humanisten Wolf-Ferrari in Depression und Arbeitsunfähigkeit. Als Staatsbürger zweier sich bekriegender Nationen fühlt er sich identitätslos und künstlerischen Schaffens unfähig. Fünf Jahre lang lebt er zurückgezogen in der Schweiz. In den Zwischenkriegsjahren entstehen nur noch zwei Opern – *Sly* und *Il Campiello*, während des 2. Weltkrieges erlebt seine Schaffenskraft mit der Komposition des Violinkonzerts op.26 einen letzten Höhepunkt – ein Herzengeschenk an die junge amerikanische Geigerin Guila Bustabo. 1948 stirbt Wolf-Ferrari in seiner Geburtsstadt Venedig.

Zeit seines Lebens sollte der Sohn eines deutschen Vaters und einer italienischen Mutter an der Kraft von Melos und Tonalität festhalten und sich in einer Zeit des Modernismus nicht scheuen, Liedhaftes und Arioses, kurz: Gesangliches zu schreiben. Das muss als Teil seines Selbstverständnisses gesehen werden, das sich in jener Stadt herangebildet hat, in der er aufgewachsen ist: Venedig. Gleichzeitig steht sein Werk aber auf dem formalen Fundament einer strengen Kontrapunkt-Schule: bei dem berühmten Josef Rheinberger absolviert der Komponist ab 1892 an der „Königlichen Akademie der Tonkunst“ in München ein dreijähriges Kompositions-Studium.

#### Serenade für Streichorchester in Es-Dur

Die ersten Kompositionsversuche gipfeln in der handwerklich bereits meisterlich gearbeiteten, äußerst glücklich inspirierten Streicher-Serenade des 17-jährigen. Am 7. Juli 1894 gelangt sie im Münchner „Odeon“ auch zur erfolgreichen Uraufführung – „*mit gefälligem Schütteln der Professorenköpfe*“, wie der Komponist sich später erinnern wird. Diese Serenade ist ein Frühwerk, in dem doch bereits alles „da“ ist was die meisterliche Kunst des Komponisten fortan kennzeichnen wird: jener individuelle Ton, der zwischen unbekümmertem Frohsinn, Seligkeit und herber Melancholie schwebt, die Anlage zu begnadeter melodischer Erfindung (der Andante-Satz), nicht zuletzt die handwerkliche Fähigkeit, polyphone Stimmführung beinahe spielerisch und gleichzeitig ausdrucksstark in der Musik aufgehen zu lassen (das Fugato des Presto-Finalsatzes). Ein Komponist ist geboren.

#### „Il segreto di Susanna“: ein neuer musikalischer Komödienton

Der ab 1905 komponierte, und 1909 in München unter Felix Mottl uraufgeführte Einakter *Il segreto di Susanna* wird rasch ein Kassenschlager und zählt bis heute zu den vielleicht meistaufgeführten Werken des Komponisten. Schon die ersten Takte der Ouvertüre vermögen uns mit ungeheurem Elan anzuspringen, und sie darf als eines der herrlichsten Beispiele italienischer Lustspiel-Vivacità angesehen werden. In ihrer euphorischen Melodik, ihrem mediterranen Freiheitsdrang ist sie verliebt in das Leben selbst, birst vor Erfindungskraft, ist launig, übermütig und selig zugleich. Mit Humor führt sie aber auch den Kontrapunktiker vor, wenn in nicht einmal drei Minuten vier(!) Themen eingeführt, und am Ende ohne hörbare Anstrengung gleichzeitig zum Erklingen gebracht werden. Ein Kabinettstück!

In weiterer Folge breitet die Charakterisierungskunst Wolf-Ferraris einen unbeschreiblichen Reichtum an Nuancen und Stimmungen vor uns aus. Mit dem neapolitanischen „Tarantella-Rhythmus“, der in vielen Werken des Komponisten auftaucht, hebt die Auftrittsmusik des Grafen Gil an - als unterschwellige Ankündigung seines sanguinischen Temperaments („*Mantiglia grigia ... cappellino rosa...*“) Im Nu schlägt die Stimmung in ein wolkenleichtes Liebes-

Duettino um, in dem die Protagonisten sich in wahrhaft paradiesische Gefühle aufschwingen – „*Il dolce idillio*“. Wie ein pfeifender Wirbelwind fegt die Eifersuchtsszene über uns hinweg – durchsetzt freilich, mit dem nötigen Schuß Ironie (*Ah! Scellerata*). Die Schluß-Arie wiederum, in der Susanna sich dem heimlichen Tabakgenuss hingibt, zieht uns in ein magisches, fast impressionistisches Klanggemälde, in dem mit herausragender Intuition für Orchestrierung nicht nur der sich im Raum ausbreitende Rauch „akustisch sichtbar“ gemacht, sondern auch das sinnbetörende Nikotin fühlbar wird, das jetzt durch Susannens Adern streicht – „*Oh gioia la nube leggera*“. Die raffinierte Instrumentation mit Celesta, Harfe, 3 Solo-Violen und gedämpften Streichern hüllen sie dabei in jenen blauen Dunst, der der Auslöser für diese zauberhafte kleine Oper gewesen ist.

#### Die Handlung

Der sehr verliebte, aber auch cholerisch eifersüchtige Graf Gil betritt hastig den Salon seiner Wohnung. Er ist verwirrt, da er seine Frau Susanna, trotz des ihr auferlegten Verbotes, alleine auszugehen, auf der Straße gesehen zu haben glaubt (② „*Mantiglia grigia... cappellino rosa*“). Als er in sein Zimmer geht, betritt Susanna in Straßentoilette den Raum. Heimlich reicht sie dem Diener Sante ein Päckchen, das dieser schnell in die Tasche steckt.

Gil meint, sich zuvor auf der Straße getäuscht zu haben, ist jedoch misstrauisch wegen des starken Tabakgeruches im Zimmer (③ „*Ben lo conosco l'odor molesto*“). Wissend, daß er selbst und auch seine Frau nicht rauchen, stellt er Sante zur Rede. Der aber gibt (pantomimisch) vor, von nichts zu wissen. Da vermutet Gil nun einen Nebenbuhler in seinem Hause.

Susanna spielt am Klavier, während Gil im anderen Zimmer verzweifelt sinniert: Sollte sie ihn nach nur einem Monat Ehe tatsächlich betrügen können? (④ „*Evitiam che un domestico*“). Gil beginnt nun Sante des heimlichen Rauchens zu bezichtigen. Da tritt Susanna ins Zimmer und ihr Anblick vermag seine Zweifel sogleich wieder zu zerstreuen. Er beteuert ihr seine Liebe (⑤ „*Guardala! Con quell'aria ingenua e franca*“. Bei einer gemeinsam eingenommenen Tasse Schokolade gehen ihre Gedanken nun zurück zu den Anfängen ihrer Liebe (⑥ „*Dal suo gesticolare – Duettino: Il dolce idillio*“). Im Moment der Umarmung aber stößt Gil Susanna brüsk zurück, da er Tabakgeruch nun auch an ihrer Kleidung bemerkt (⑦ „*Ah!*

*l'odore fatal sin nella veste!*“). Wütend stellt er sie zur Rede. Susanna gibt ihm zu verstehen, tatsächlich ein lasterhaftes Geheimnis zu hüten. Das bringt Gil vollends aus der Fassung und in einem Tobsuchtsanfall beginnt er das Mobiliar zu verwüsten (⑧ „*Ah! Scellerata*“).

Weinend zieht sich Susanna in das Nebenzimmer zurück, während Gil zerknirscht in einen Sessel sinkt. Während des folgenden Orchester-Zwischenspiels bringt Sante das Zimmer wieder in Ordnung (⑨). Bange kommt Susanna zurück, um ihrem Gemahl Handschuhe, Hut und Schirm für den Ausgang zu bringen. Gil, der geplant hat, in den Club zu gehen, beschließt für sich, vorzeitig zurückzukommen um seine Frau mit ihrem Liebhaber zu überraschen. Susanna versucht ihn vor seinem Ausgang noch mit einem kleinen Arioso zu besänftigen (⑩ „*Via, così non mi lasciate*“). Gegen seinen Willen „entwaffnet“, küsst er sie zum Abschied auf die Stirn.

Vorsorglich verschließt Diener Sante alle Türen, damit Susanna sich ihrem „*vizietto profumato*“, ihrem „duftenden kleinen Laster“ hingeben könne (⑪ „*Bravo Sante, chiudiam tutte le porte*“). Und er selbst genießt an ihrer Seite eine kleine Prise Schnupftabak. Da klopft es an der Tür. Es ist Gil, der nun wutentbrannt nach seinem Nebenbuhler sucht (⑫ „*Chi è là? – Son io, Susanna*“). Susanna, die ihre Zigarette gerade noch verstecken konnte und nach dem Grund seiner Erregtheit fragt, antwortet er, den Schirm zu suchen, den er vergessen habe.

Nachdem Gil die Wohnung wieder verlassen hat, kann Susanna sich endgültig dem Rauchen hingeben. In ihrer Arie besingt sie verückt die Wonnen des Tabakgenusses, und zwischen Wirklichkeit und Chimäre erscheint ihr, eingehüllt in blaue Rauchschwaden, der geliebte Gatte (⑬ „*O gioia la nube leggera*“). Der schlüpf diesmal aber heimlich durch das Fenster ins Haus, um sie in flagranti zu ertappen (⑭ „*Ti colgo questa volta!*“). Susanna kann ihre Zigarette nur noch hinter dem Rücken verstecken. Als Gil gewaltsam ihre Hand ergreift verbrennt er sich an der noch glühenden Zigarette. Nun ist das Geheimnis gelüftet, für das Susanna sogleich um Verzeihung bittet. Gil wiederum gesteht seine unberechtigte Eifersucht. So beschließen sie, in Zukunft einfach - gemeinsam zu rauchen. Ein kleiner, hymnenartiger Gesang – „*Tutto è fumo in questo mondo*“ – beschließt die Oper.

Friedrich Haider

Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari's prolific early career succeeded in launching a fundamental renewal of *opera buffa*, offering a clear alternative to the dominance of Wagner and Puccini, while his Venetian upbringing inspired a songlike and lyrical style. With its subtle orchestration and vivacious Mediterranean charm, *Il segreto di Susanna* ('Susanna's Secret') is a magical comic opera that became a box office success in its day and remains one of Wolf-Ferrari's most frequently performed works. The early *Serenade* reveals his innate gift for inspired melody, expressing both carefree bliss and bitter melancholy.

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**1–14 Il segreto di Susanna 43:51 15–18 Serenade for Strings in E flat major (1893) 22:18** **Playing Time 66:29**

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