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David Parry

TOSCA

PUCCINI
TOSCA

Puccini

PETER MOORES FOUNDATION



Giacomo Puccini, c. 1900

Giacomo Puccini (1858–1924)

Tosca

An opera in three acts

Libretto by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica after the play *La Tosca* by Victorien Sardou

English version by Edmund Tracey

Floria Tosca, celebrated opera singerJane Eaglen *soprano*
Mario Cavaradossi, painterDennis O’Neill *tenor*
Baron Scarpia, Chief of Police.....Gregory Yurisich *baritone*
Cesare Angelotti, resistance fighterPeter Rose *bass*
SacristanAndrew Shore *baritone*
Spoletta, police agentJohn Daszak *tenor*
Sciarrone, Baron Scarpia’s orderlyChristopher Booth-Jones *baritone*
JailorAshley Holland *baritone*
A Shepherd BoyCharbel Michael *alto*

Geoffrey Mitchell Choir
The Peter Kay Children’s Choir
Philharmonia Orchestra
Brad Cohen assistant conductor
David Parry

COMPACT DISC ONE

Act I

[1]	Opening – ‘Ah! Here in safety!’ <i>Angelotti</i>	2:08	68
[2]	‘I don’t believe it...’ <i>Sacristan, Cavaradossi</i>	3:31	68
[3]	‘Give me my palette!’ <i>Cavaradossi, Sacristan, Angelotti, Tosca</i>	5:45	69
[4]	‘Mario! Mario! Mario!’ <i>Tosca, Cavaradossi</i>	3:01	71
[5]	‘Our little house in the country’ <i>Tosca, Cavaradossi</i>	4:27	72
[6]	‘What eyes in all the wide world’ <i>Cavaradossi, Tosca, Angelotti, Sacristan</i>	9:34	74
[7]	‘All the choir in here at once!’ <i>Sacristan, Choir</i>	1:16	77
[8]	‘You make the church a fairground!’ <i>Scarpia, Sacristan, Spoletta</i>	1:28	78
[9]	‘Mario?! Mario?!’ <i>Tosca, Sacristan, Scarpia</i>	7:12	80
[10]	‘Three agents, go in a carriage...’ <i>Scarpia, Spoletta, Choir</i>	4:48	83

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COMPACT DISC TWO

Act II

[1]	‘Tosca, my falcon’ <i>Scarpia, Sciarrone</i>	3:27	84
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[2]	‘Richer far is the flavour’ <i>Scarpia, Sciarrone, Spoletta</i>	2:25	84
[3]	‘It seemed wise to arrest him...’ <i>Spoletta, Scarpia, Choir, Cavaradossi, Tosca</i>	4:22	85
[4]	‘Now you and I can talk’ <i>Scarpia, Tosca, Sciarrone, Cavaradossi</i>	5:15	88
[5]	‘Enough. Tosca, your answer’ <i>Scarpia, Tosca, Cavaradossi, Spoletta, Sciarrone</i>	3:49	90
[6]	‘Floria!’ <i>Cavaradossi, Tosca, Scarpia, Sciarrone</i>	4:28	93
[7]	‘How much?’ <i>Tosca, Scarpia</i>	4:41	95
[8]	‘Life has taught me singing and loving’ <i>Tosca, Scarpia, Spoletta</i>	7:15	97
[9]	‘Which route have you chosen?’ <i>Scarpia, Tosca</i>	6:55	99
Act III			
[10]	‘No words can cheer me’ <i>A Shepherd Boy, Jailor, Cavaradossi</i>	10:12	101
[11]	‘All the stars shone in heaven’ <i>Cavaradossi, Tosca</i>	5:58	101
[12]	‘Oh, hands of mercy’ <i>Cavaradossi, Tosca, Jailor</i>	8:35	103
[13]	‘What a time they are taking!’ <i>Tosca, Spoletta, Sciarrone, Soldiers</i>	4:04	105

TT 71:34

Giacomo Puccini: *Tosca*

It was in 1889 that the thirty-five-year-old Giacomo Puccini saw Sarah Bernhardt in Victorien Sardou's vintage 1887 melodrama, *La Tosca*, twice, and recognised it as a subject he much wanted to convert into an opera. The play, designed as a vehicle for Bernhardt, offered the actress ample opportunities for high-powered histrionics. With a pseudo-historical setting the plot allowed her to play the part of an opera singer: temperamental, jealous, amorous, imperilled, murderous, grief-stricken, and, in a final theatrical gesture, suicidal, as she leaps to her death from the ramparts of the Castel Sant'Angelo.

Seeing the drama acted in French, a language he scarcely knew, Puccini grasped *La Tosca's* potential as a subject well adapted to the lyric stage, as operas do not communicate by words alone. At this point Puccini had composed two operas, *Le Villi* and *Edgar*, neither of which had been unconditionally successful. Yet both had shown sufficient promise for the Milanese music publisher Giulio Ricordi to continue to pay Puccini a modest retainer in the hope that he would produce a genuine success, one that would earn

fat profits for Casa Ricordi and generous royalties for the composer. Fired with the conviction that Sardou's *La Tosca* was most promising material for an opera, in the autumn of 1890 Puccini persuaded Ricordi to discover from Sardou's agent in Paris on what terms Sardou would sell the rights for adapting his play as an opera. In January 1891, when an agreement about the rights seemed secure, Ricordi, at Puccini's suggestion, set the librettist Luigi Illica the task of converting Sardou's five-act melodrama into a three-act opera text. On 13 December 1891 an announcement that Puccini would compose *Tosca* appeared in Ricordi's house organ, the *Gazzetta Musicale*.

These prospects suddenly evaporated in December 1892 when Sardou, who had a thoroughly practical side to his nature, having heard some of Puccini's music, decided it was not as promising as Ricordi had tried to persuade him it was; but most likely, the playwright, who had demanded a share in the receipts of the operatic *Tosca*, was disappointed at the negligible earning power demonstrated by *Le Villi* and *Edgar*. Ricordi did not inform

Puccini of this development. In the meantime, Puccini had composed *Manon Lescaut* even though Massenet's popular setting of that subject was not a decade old. In his efforts to further Puccini's career, Giulio Ricordi even got possession of the Italian rights to Massenet's *Manon* with the intention of preventing its performance in Italy until Puccini's *Manon Lescaut* could establish itself in the repertoire. Brought out at Turin's Teatro Regio in February 1893, *Manon Lescaut* proved an inspiring success.

On 29 July 1893 Ricordi wrote to Sardou's agent that Puccini, still in the dark about Sardou's opinion, was offended by the long silence and had completely withdrawn from the project. But by October 1893, Sardou, who had obviously heard good reports about the launching of *Manon Lescaut*, informed Ricordi that, after all, Puccini should be the man to compose *Tosca*. Buoyed by the enthusiasm with which his *Manon Lescaut* had been received, Puccini interpreted Sardou's sudden shift of opinion as a crass gesture and a personal insult. Puccini's change of heart left Ricordi with Illica's libretto of *Tosca* on his hands. (By the way, the opera's title omits the play's definite article 'La'.) And now the canny publisher set about trying to interest another of his stable of

composers in the subject. It is only at this point that Alberto Franchetti (1860–1942) enters the picture.

A number of writers who have participated in the once-popular game of Puccini-bashing have maintained that Puccini's interest in the *Tosca* subject was aroused only when he heard Franchetti was working on it, and that Puccini and Ricordi deceived Franchetti about its suitability, thereby leaving the ground free for Puccini to use it. That this impression is false has been conclusively demonstrated by Deborah Burton, who has thoroughly researched the Ricordi archives for materials pertaining to the composition of *Tosca*. In July 1894 Illica's libretto was turned over to the wealthy Franchetti, who purchased the rights from Sardou for 25,000 lire.

Franchetti had made something of a splash in 1892, when on Verdi's recommendation he had won a commission from Genoa's Teatro Carlo Felice to write an opera about Columbus to celebrate the four-hundredth anniversary of that navigator's sailing the ocean blue and discovering what proved to be the Western hemisphere.

Franchetti's success with his *Cristoforo Colombo* demonstrated that his talents were more advantageously displayed in a pageant-

like spectacle than in the dramatic interaction of characters. It was Franchetti himself who decided that *Tosca* was not a subject suited to his particular abilities, and in March 1895 he was arguing with Illica about modifying the libretto. Two months later he had definitely relinquished the project because, as he later explained it, 'I did not feel the music in it'.

Meanwhile, Puccini was composing *La bohème* (Turin, 1896) to a libretto by Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa, a work which would prove even more successful than *Manon Lescaut*. By July 1895 Ricordi had set about persuading Puccini that Illica's libretto for *Tosca*, back on his hands now that Franchetti had definitely decided against setting it, was an ideal prospect for a successor to *Bohème*. Some time would pass before Puccini began to work on it.

One of Giulio Ricordi's most useful, and incidentally profitable, ideas was to send a composer to supervise the introduction of his works on their first productions in important theatres so that an authentic tradition might be established. And so during the next two years much of Puccini's time was spent supervising the launching of *La bohème* in various centres. In June 1898 he was in Paris at the time when *La bohème*, translated into French, received its local premiere at the Opéra-Comique. While he

and Ricordi were there, they paid a ceremonial visit to the sixty-seven-year-old Sardou, and it was on this occasion that Puccini's enthusiasm for *Tosca* was definitely rekindled. Illica, in conjunction with Giacosa, reworked the libretto to suit the composer's exigent sense of theatre. Puccini even contributed to the libretto himself, supplying the words for one of the most popular moments in the score, the tenor's Act III aria, 'All the stars shone in heaven' (E lucevan le stelle).

At its premiere, which took place at the Teatro Costanzi in Rome on 14 January 1900, *Tosca* proved a great success. Six months later it was introduced to London, and the following year to New York. Since then it has proved one of the hardest of Puccini's works, and every soprano with a flair for the dramatic is drawn to it like filings to a magnet.

Three arias, two for the tenor, and the soprano's Act II 'Life has taught me singing and loving' (Vissi d'arte, vissi d'amore), are the most familiar parts of the score. They are among the most frequently recorded pieces of operatic music in the world, and they are often encountered as popular encores on concert programmes. They share certain qualities: Puccini's lush lyricism and emotional expressiveness. Besides, they are relatively short,

none of them lasting more than about three minutes, as they are designed not to disrupt the momentum. Besides these solos, the soprano and the tenor participate in two effective love duets: one in the first act and the other in the last, shortly before the not-so-mock execution.

The character of the sadistic Baron Scarpia has his solo moments as well, but granting his evil nature the moments of this baritone's prominence are rarely encountered outside the context of performance in the opera. The first of these is the Te Deum at the conclusion to Act I, where, over a relentlessly repeated sequence in the bass, he describes his desire to possess Tosca, whilst the congregation assembles to participate in singing a victory hymn. In Act II, before Mario is brought in for interrogation, Scarpia tersely expounds his brutally hedonistic approach to life and its pleasures. And later on in the same act his reply to Tosca's question how much it would take to save Mario's life is a brief outpouring of his predatory instinct, set to a surging vocal line.

And speaking of Scarpia, the most prominent recurring theme of the score is associated with his character. This theme is the first music one hears, a loud succession of chords just before the curtain rises on Act I.

They recur in altered form when Tosca's lover, the painter Cavaradossi, tells the fugitive Angelotti where to hide from Scarpia. And later in Act I, when Scarpia himself enters the church having trailed Angelotti there, these ominous chords serve as his calling card. After he has exposed his hypocritical, lecherous nature during the Te Deum, the act ends with the 'Scarpia' chords blaring menacingly. At the end of Act II, when Tosca places the candles about Scarpia's corpse, the chords are heard again, now, however, reharmonised and played as 'softly as possible', according to the direction in the score.

Another theme that recurs with poignant effect is first heard in the E major section of the Act I love duet for Tosca and Mario Cavaradossi, beginning at the words 'Why so jealous?' (Mia gelosa!). According to a note in *Tosca's* autograph, substantiated by the fact that it is written on a separate fascicle of music paper, this rapturous melody apparently is the first music Puccini composed for the work. The melody returns, now imposingly developed, as an accompaniment to Tosca's second exit in Act I – after her upsetting colloquy with Scarpia. A hint of it is heard in the prelude to Act III, and a few minutes later, directly following 'All the stars shone in heaven', this theme serves as the

basis for the impetuous music accompanying Tosca's entrance.

Puccini also uses music for descriptive purposes. He does this most tellingly in the prelude to Act III. Not only do we hear an offstage shepherd boy singing a ditty in the local dialect, but we hear in various perspectives the ringing of church bells from near and far as the day dawns over the Castel Sant'Angelo. And in Act II Puccini supplies music, not only as the basis for operatic discourse and atmosphere, but also as sounds that characters on stage hear as music from offstage, as in the case of the shepherd's song. Near the beginning of Act II, a little orchestra in the wings is heard playing a gavotte. And not long thereafter, apparently from the Queen's apartments in the Palazzo Farnese, Tosca and a chorus are heard singing a cantata to celebrate a victory which, ironically enough, later turns out to have been a defeat of the royalist forces.

Other examples of atmospheric music occur in Act I, set in the Roman church of Sant'Andrea della Valle. Just before Mario's arrival, the Sacristan kneels and recites the Angelus, in a tempo marked *Andante religioso*. At the end of that act, as the church fills with worshippers, a Te Deum is sung, as bells are rung and a cannon booms in celebration.

In a plot so filled with intense and clearly motivated action, there is scant time for lyric expansiveness. One of Puccini's most treasurable gifts as an opera composer is his keen sense of the so-called 'theatrical clock'. He understood the optimum duration for every kind of episode. For instance, the suddenness with which we are pitchforked into the action at the beginning of Act I is in stark contrast to the leisurely bell-filled prelude to Act III, where this slowly-paced beginning creates suspense that will be resolved only by the sudden violence of the final few minutes.

Tosca is an opera that has had its share of detractors, people who are turned off by the melodrama of the plot. It is a mistake, however, to confuse the opera with its story. All operas are amalgams in which music and plot have become inseparably fused. Puccini's finely paced score converts Sardou's shoddy characters into memorably expressive ones, fully human in their strengths and weaknesses. One might not expect nowadays ever to encounter Sardou's *La Tosca* on the spoken stage, but Puccini's opera is a fixture in the active repertory and shows every sign of remaining one for a good while to come.

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Synopsis

Act I

Interior of the church of Sant'Andrea della Valle
Angelotti hurries into the church and slips into the private Chapel of the Attavanti family. His sister, who is married to the Marchese Attavanti, has hidden the Chapel key for him whilst visiting the church to pray. The Sacristan enters and washes some paintbrushes belonging to Cavaradossi who is finishing a painting of the Magdalene. The painter has blended the charms of his beloved Tosca with the beauty of an unknown woman he has seen at prayer in the church. When the Sacristan leaves, Angelotti emerges and is recognised by Cavaradossi who locks the church door. Angelotti explains that he has just escaped from the Castel Sant'Angelo, where he had been imprisoned on the orders of Scarpia.

They are interrupted by the sound of Tosca's voice outside the church and Angelotti returns to the Chapel. Cavaradossi lets Tosca in and she is disturbed by the fact that the painting of the Magdalene resembles the Marchesa Attavanti. Cavaradossi explains that he has seen her in the Chapel praying, but that he did not know who she was, and he and Tosca sing a love duet. When she has left, Cavaradossi and

Angelotti plan the latter's escape; when it becomes dark he must hurry to Cavaradossi's villa in disguise and hide in a well in the garden. A canon shot is heard from the castle signalling that Angelotti's escape has been discovered. At the same time the Sacristan enters with the (false) news of Napoleon's defeat at Marengo. The church fills with a joyous throng and Scarpia enters accompanied by Spoletta, commanding the Sacristan to prepare for a Te Deum in honour of the victory. He orders his men to look for clues as to Angelotti's whereabouts and these are duly found: a key, a basket empty of provisions which Cavaradossi had left and a fan belonging to Angelotti's sister, the Marchesa Attavanti. When Tosca returns Scarpia uses the fan to arouse her jealousy and she hurries to the villa hoping to surprise the guilty pair. Scarpia gives orders for her to be followed and he looks forward to catching the fugitive and enjoying Tosca's favours.

Act II

Scarpia's apartment in the Palazzo Farnese
Scarpia is dining alone whilst Queen Caroline entertains below. Spoletta enters with news that the search of Cavaradossi's villa proved fruitless, but that they have arrested him and brought

him to the palace. During Tosca's singing of a cantata in the Queen's honour, Scarpia interrogates Cavaradossi in the presence of the executioner and a judge. Cavaradossi denies all knowledge of Angelotti, and Scarpia gives orders for him to be tortured in an adjoining room. When questioned, Tosca also refuses to reveal Angelotti's whereabouts until, hearing her lover's groans, she mentions the well in the garden. The torture stops and Sciarrone enters with news that Napoleon has won the battle of Marengo.

Cavaradossi breaks out in a paean to liberty, for which Scarpia puts him under arrest again, and he is taken away to be shot at dawn. Scarpia then promises to have the painter set free on condition that Tosca gives in to his advances. Spoletta returns with news that Angelotti killed himself when they discovered him, and Tosca agrees to give herself to Scarpia. He tells Spoletta to set up a mock-execution 'as in the case of Palermi'. Tosca insists that he write a note guaranteeing a safe conduct for herself and Cavaradossi. While he is doing this she sees a knife and stabs him.

Act III

A platform in the Castel Sant'Angelo

A shepherd boy is heard singing as he drives his

flock. Cavaradossi asks for a pen and paper so that he can write a letter of farewell to Tosca. Spoletta appears with Tosca and then leaves. Tosca shows Cavaradossi the letter of safe-conduct and he is delighted and relieved. Tosca is anxious that her lover should play his part well when it comes to the execution. Indeed he does, for the rifles are loaded and he is killed. News of Scarpia's murder has broken and the agents are after Tosca. She climbs to the battlements and leaps to her death.

A Peter Moores scholar at the Royal Northern College of Music, **Jane Eaglen** has one of the most formidable reputations in the opera world today. Enjoying unique success in the contrasting roles of Norma (notably at Scottish Opera, Seattle Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Opéra national de Paris-Bastille and the Ravenna Festival) and Brünnhilde (Scottish Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Opera Pacific, Teatro alla Scala, Milan and in San Francisco and Vienna), hers is a dramatic soprano of outstanding achievement earning spectacular reviews world-wide. Other major roles performed are Isolde, La Gioconda, Donna Anna, Turandot, Amelia, Tosca and Ariadne, and her appearances at opera houses throughout Europe and North and South

America, including The Metropolitan Opera, New York, Vienna State Opera, Teatro Colon, Buenos Aires, English National Opera and opera houses in Munich, Bologna and Madrid, have won her great acclaim. Her activities on concert stages throughout the world have involved appearances with Sir Simon Rattle, Klaus Tennstedt, Bernard Haitink, Claudio Abbado, Zubin Mehta, Daniel Barenboim and James Conlon among many other distinguished musicians. She is an active recording artist whose performances include the title roles in Mayr's *Medea in Corinto* for Opera Rara and, for Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation, this *Tosca* which won a *Music Industries Association Award*.

Born in Wales of Irish and Welsh parents, **Dennis O'Neill** is one of the world's leading tenors and a specialist in the works of Verdi. He has enjoyed a long association with The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, where his recent roles have included Rodolfo (*La bohème*), the Duke (*Rigoletto*), Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*), Edgardo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Gustavo (*Un ballo in maschera*), Otello, Don Carlos and Radames (*Aida*).

North American engagements have included The Metropolitan Opera (*La traviata*, *Aida*, *La*

bohème, *Rigoletto*, *Cavalleria rusticana* and *Pagliacci*, the last two, unusually, performed in the same evening), Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Francisco Opera, San Diego Opera, Vancouver Opera and concerts with the Philadelphia, Cleveland, Montreal and Ottawa Symphony Orchestras and at the Cincinnati Festival. He is a frequent guest at the Bavarian State Opera, Munich where his performances have included *Il trovatore*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Tosca* and *Simon Boccanegra*. Elsewhere in Europe he has visited the opera houses of Vienna, Berlin, Bonn, Cologne, Hamburg, Nice, Zurich, Paris, Oslo, Brussels, Verona, Turin and Barcelona.

His many recordings include solo albums, Verdi's Requiem with Sir Colin Davis, *La fanciulla del West* with Leonard Slatkin, videos of *Der Rosenkavalier* with Sir George Solti, *Die Fledermaus* with Kiri Te Kanawa conducted by Plácido Domingo, *Macbeth* with Giuseppe Sinopoli and *Mefistofele* with San Francisco Opera. For Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation he has recorded *La bohème*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci* and a solo disc of operatic arias.

Gregory Yurisich is one of the world's leading baritones whose repertoire includes the title roles in *Nabucco*, *Rigoletto*, *Simon Boccanegra*,

Falstaff and *Guillaume Tell* as well as Giorgio Germont, Iago, Stankar (*Stiffelio*), Amonasro, Barak (*Die Frau ohne Schatten*), Escamillo, Telramund (*Lohengrin*), Balstrode (*Peter Grimes*), Sharpless, the four villains in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Alfio (*Cavalleria rusticana*) and Tonio (*Pagliacci*). His career has taken him to opera houses and festivals the world over, including The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, English National Opera, San Francisco Opera, Opera Australia, Los Angeles Opera, Victoria State Opera, Opéra de Lyon, Châtelet théâtre musical, Paris, Opéra national de Paris-Bastille, Théâtre royal de la Monnaie, Brussels, Washington Opera and State Opera Unter den Linden, Berlin, the Bregenz Festival, Melbourne International Festival, Edinburgh International Festival and Hong Kong Arts Festival, as well as to concert and opera stages in Belfast, Geneva, Munich, Athens, Tel Aviv and Brisbane. He has worked with such artists as Dame Joan Sutherland, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Plácido Domingo, José Carreras, Dennis O'Neill, Zubin Mehta, Sir Charles Mackerras and Sir Roger Norrington and has made several video and sound recordings, including this *Music Industries Association* Award-winning *Tosca* for Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation.

Born in Canterbury, **Peter Rose** read music at the University of East Anglia and studied with Ellis Keeler at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He made his operatic debut as the Commendatore with Glyndebourne Festival Opera in Hong Kong in 1986 and was principal bass with Welsh National Opera until 1989. He has performed under the world's foremost conductors and appeared with all the major British opera companies, including The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, English National Opera and Scottish Opera. Abroad he has sung at The Metropolitan Opera, New York, the Opéra-Comique, Paris, German State Opera, Berlin, Hamburg State Opera, Vienna State Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago and New Israeli Opera, Tel Aviv, as well as in San Francisco, Amsterdam, Cologne, Rome and Seattle. He has also appeared at major festivals throughout the world, such as those in Orange, Aix-en-Provence, Istanbul, Bregenz and the Maggio musicale in Florence. Among his many roles are Ramfis, Fasolt, Hunding, Pimen, Osmin, King Marke, Baron Ochs, Rocco, Bottom (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Banquo (*Macbeth*), Cadmus/Somnus (*Semele*), Gessler (*Guillaume Tell*), Mustafa (*L'italiana in Algeri*) and Walter (*Luisa Miller*). His many recordings include, for Chandos/Peter Moores

Foundation, this award-winning *Tosca* and *The Barber of Seville*.

Andrew Shore is acknowledged as Britain's premier *buffo* baritone and an outstanding singer/actor. He has worked for all the major British companies, including English National Opera, The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, Opera North, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Scottish Opera and Welsh National Opera, as well as having appeared abroad with San Diego Opera, New Israeli Opera, Opéra national de Paris-Bastille, Opéra-Comique, Gran teatre del Liceu in Barcelona, as well as in Lyon, Nantes, Montpellier, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Vancouver and Ottawa. His many engagements have included the title roles of *Wozzeck*, *Falstaff*, *King Priam*, *Gianni Schicchi* and *Don Pasquale*, as well as Dulcamara (*The Elixir of Love*), Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*), Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Papageno, King Dodon (*Le Coq d'or*), Leandro (*The Love for Three Oranges*), Dikoy (*Kat'a Kabanová*), Dr Kolenaty (*The Makropulos Affair*), Shishkov (*From the House of the Dead*), Frank (*Die Fledermaus*), Baron (*La Vie parisienne*), Baron Trombonok (*Il viaggio a Reims*), Varlaam (*Boris Godunov*) and Faninal (*Der Rosenkavalier*). His recordings for Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation

comprise *The Elixir of Love*, *Don Pasquale*, *La bohème* and highlights from *Der Rosenkavalier* in addition to *The Barber of Seville* and this award-winning *Tosca*.

The tenor **John Daszak** studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, the Royal Northern College of Music under Robert Alderson, where he was a Peter Moores scholar, and at the Accademia d'Arte Lirica, Italy. He is currently studying with David Pollard. Operatic roles have included Don José (*Carmen*), Steva (*Jenůfa*) and the title role in Peter Stein's production of *Peter Grimes* at Welsh National Opera, and Steva, Achilles (*King Priam*), Dimitri (Francesca Zambello's production of *Boris Godunov*), Skuratov (*From the House of the Dead*), Jack (*Mahagonny*), Pang (*Turandot*) and Max (David Pountney's production of *Der Freischütz*) at English National Opera. Abroad he has appeared at The Netherlands Opera and L'Opéra de Nice (The Big Convict in *From the House of the Dead*), Opera Zuid (Michel in Martinů's *Julietta*), in Lausanne (Jack) and at the Bregenz Festival (Yannakos in Martinů's *The Greek Passion*). As part of an active concert schedule he has participated in concert performances of Verdi's *Alzira* (Royal Opera House, Covent

Garden), *Oberon* (under Richard Hickox), Stravinsky's *Renard* (Birmingham Royal Ballet), *Otello* (under Sir Colin Davis) and *Candide* (under Kent Nagano). Recordings include this award-winning *Tosca* for Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation.

Christopher Booth-Jones, baritone, started his operatic career touring with Welsh National Opera for All and went on to perform with Welsh National Opera, Glyndebourne Festival and Touring Operas, Kent Opera and the English Music Theatre. Roles at English National Opera have included Papageno, Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*), Dr Falke, Schaunard, Denisov (*War and Peace*), Silvio, Pantaloon (*The Love for Three Oranges*), Elviro (*Xerxes*), Count Almaviva (*The Marriage of Figaro*), Music Master (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Faninal (*Der Rosenkavalier*), and Giorgio Germont. He has also appeared with The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, and with Opera North where roles have included Count Danilo (*The Merry Widow*), Ottokar (*Der Freischütz*), Father (*Hansel and Gretel*), Demetrius (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) and Claudio (*Béatrice and Bénédict*). Recordings include *Carmen*, *Billy Budd*, *Xerxes*, Sondheim's *Pacific Overtures* and, for

Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation, *Julius Caesar*.

Ashley Holland studied at Warwick University and the Royal Northern College of Music, where he won the Webster Booth/Esso Competition and the Curtis Gold Medal and was a Peter Moores scholar. Recently he also won the prestigious RANIERI I cestelli opera competition at the Hamburg State Opera. He is currently a principal baritone at English National Opera where his roles have included Belcore (*The Elixir of Love*), Lescaut (*Manon*), Zurga (*The Pearl Fishers*), Sharpless (*Madam Butterfly*), Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) and Cecil (*Mary Stuart*). Other appearances include Don Giovanni for Calgary Opera, Bosun (*Billy Budd*) for Opéra national de Paris-Bastille and roles in concert performances of *Linda di Chamounix* and *Candide*. Most recent and future appearances include Ford (*Falstaff*) at the Semper Opera, Dresden, Masetto at The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, Enrico (*Lucia di Lammermoor*) at Lyric Opera of Chicago and Ottokar (*Der Freischütz*) and Marcello (*La bohème*) at English National Opera. For Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation he has recorded *The Elixir of Love* in addition to this award-winning *Tosca*.

Geoffrey Mitchell's singing career has encompassed a remarkably wide repertoire from early to contemporary music and has taken him to Scandinavia, Germany, the former Czechoslovakia, Canada and Australasia. Early conducting experience with the BBC led to a wider involvement with his own singers and in turn to the establishment of the **Geoffrey Mitchell Choir**. Early recordings resulted in the Choir's long-term involvement with Opera Rara for which it has made over thirty recordings. The Choir is enjoying a growing reputation with further work from the BBC and international recording companies. For Chandos the Geoffrey Mitchell Choir has participated in numerous recordings in the acclaimed Opera in English series sponsored by the Peter Moores Foundation.

The Peter Kay Children's Choir provides young singers with opportunities in opera, concerts, commercials (TV and Radio), charity events, Glyndebourne Festival Opera and theatre productions in the UK, France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Italy, Spain and the USA. Its membership is by invitation and audition, drawing participants from those already experienced in singing performance at English National Opera where Peter Kay is

Children's Adviser, the Finchley Children's Music Group, New London Children's Choir, the Centre for Young Musicians, The Jennifer Lillegstone Singers, schools and other choirs all over London and the south of England. For the Millennium Concert at The Dome the Choir provided soloists for *A New Beginning* by John Tavener. In 2000 plans include singing many roles for English and Welsh National Operas.

From auspicious beginnings in 1945, when it was established by Walter Legge primarily as a recording orchestra, the **Philharmonia Orchestra** went on to attract some of the twentieth century's greatest conductors. Associated most closely with the Orchestra have been Otto Klemperer (first Principal Conductor), Lorin Maazel, Riccardo Muti, Giuseppe Sinopoli, Carlo Maria Giulini, Sir Andrew Davis, Vladimir Ashkenazy and Esa-Pekka Salonen. Under current Principal Conductor Christoph von Dohnanyi and with Leonard Slatkin as Principal Guest Conductor the Orchestra has consolidated its central position in British musical life, not only in London where it is Resident Orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall, but also in the wider community through regional residencies.

The Orchestra has received several major awards and won critical acclaim for its vitality and unique warmth of sound. It has been praised as well for its innovative programming, at the heart of which is a commitment to performing and commissioning new music by the world's leading living composers, among them its current Visiting Composer James MacMillan.

The Orchestra tours frequently abroad and is the world's most recorded symphony orchestra with well over 1000 releases to its credit. Among these are, for Opera Rara, several discs of operatic arias as well as eleven complete operas (Donizetti's *Ugo, conte di Parigi*, *Ne m'oubliez pas*, *Emilia di Liverpool*, *L'assedio di Calais*, *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* and *Maria de Rudenz*, Meyerbeer's *Dinorah*, Mayr's *Medea in Corinto*, Mercadante's *Orazi e Curiazi*, Pacini's *Maria, regina d'Inghilterra* and Rossini's *Otello*). The Orchestra has recorded numerous discs for Chandos including, in the Opera in English series sponsored by the Peter Moores Foundation, *The Elixir of Love*, *Faust*, *La bohème*, this award-winning *Tosca* and six solo recital albums of operatic arias (with Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny and John Tomlinson, the last three to be released during 2000).

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David Parry studied with Sergiu Celibidache and began his career as Sir John Pritchard's assistant. He made his debut with English Music Theatre, then became a staff conductor at Städtische Bühnen Dortmund and at Opera North. He was Music Director of Opera 80 from 1983 to 1987 and since 1992 has been the founding Music Director of Almeida Opera.

He works extensively in both opera and concert, nationally and internationally. He has conducted several productions at English National Opera and appears regularly with the Philharmonia Orchestra. In 1996 he made his debut at the Glyndebourne Festival with *Così fan tutte*, where last year he conducted the world premiere of Jonathan Dove's *Flight*.

He is a frequent visitor to Spain where he has given concerts with most of the major Spanish orchestras. He conducted the Spanish premiere of *Peter Grimes* in Madrid and in 1996 the first Spanish production of *The Rake's Progress*. He has appeared in Germany, Sweden, The Netherlands, at the Pesaro Festival in Italy, the Hong Kong International Festival, in Japan with a tour of *Carmen* and in Mexico with the UNAM Symphony Orchestra. Recent new productions he has conducted include *Fidelio* at the New Zealand Festival, *Maria Stuarda* at

Theater Basel and *Lucia di Lammermoor* at New Israeli Opera.

His work in the recording studio includes the BBC Television production of Marschner's *Der Vampyr* and twenty-one complete opera recordings under the sponsorship of the Peter Moores Foundation. Among these are numerous discs for the Opera Rara label which have won several awards, including the Belgian Prix Cecilia for Donizetti's *Rosmonda*



Jane
Eaglen

d'Inghilterra. For Chandos he has conducted six recordings of operatic arias (with Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny and John Tomlinson, the last three to be issued during 2000), as well as *Faust*, *Don Pasquale*, *The Elixir of Love*, *La bohème*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci* and highlights from *Der Rosenkavalier* in addition to this award-winning recording of *Tosca*, all in association with the Peter Moores Foundation.



Dennis
O'Neill

Clive Barba

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PETER MOORES, CBE, DL

Peter Moores was born in Lancashire, the son of Sir John Moores, founder of the giant Littlewoods mail order, chain store and football pools group. He was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford, where he read modern languages – he was already fluent in German and Italian. It was opera, however, which was his great love. He had worked at Glyndebourne Festival Opera before going up to university, and after Oxford he became a production student at the Vienna State Opera, combining this with a three-year course at the Vienna Academy of Music and Dramatic Art.

By the end of his third year at the Academy Moores had produced the Vienna premiere of Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia*, had worked as Assistant Producer at the San Carlo Opera House, Naples, the Geneva Festival and Rome Opera, and seemed set for a successful operatic career. At this point he received a letter from his father asking him to come home as he was needed in the firm. Family loyalty being paramount, he returned to Liverpool.

By 1977, he was Chairman of Littlewoods. Three years later he stepped down from the post, although still remaining on the Board. He was a director of a merchant bank from 1978 to 1992. From 1981 to 1983 he was a Governor of the BBC, and a Trustee of the Tate Gallery from 1978 until 1985; from 1988 to 1992 he was a director of Scottish Opera. He received the Gold Medal of the Italian Republic in 1974, an Honorary MA from Christ Church, Oxford, in 1975, and was made an Honorary Member of the Royal Northern College of Music in 1985. In May 1992 he became Deputy Lieutenant of Lancashire, and in the New Year's Honours List for 1991, he was made a CBE for his charitable services to the Arts.



Peter Moores, CBE, DL

Christina Burton/PMF

Whilst still in his early twenties, Peter Moores had started giving financial support to various young artists, several of whom – Joan Sutherland, Colin Davis and the late Geraint Evans amongst them – were to become world-famous. In 1964 he set aside a substantial part of his inheritance to establish the Peter Moores Foundation, a charity designed to support those causes dear to his heart: to make music and the arts more accessible to more people; to give encouragement to the young and to improve race relations.

PETER MOORES FOUNDATION

In the field of music, the main areas supported by the Peter Moores Foundation are:

- the recording of operas from the core repertory sung in English translation; the recording or staging of rare Italian opera from the *bel canto* era of the early nineteenth century (repertoire which would otherwise only be accessible to scholars); the nurturing of promising young opera singers; new operatic work.

The Foundation awards scholarships annually to students and post-graduates for furthering their vocal studies at the Royal Northern College of Music. In addition, project awards may be given to facilitate language tuition in the appropriate country, attendance at masterclasses or summer courses, specialised repertoire study with an acknowledged expert in the field, or post-graduate performance training.

The Foundation encourages new operatic work by contributing to recordings, the publication of scores and stage productions.

Since 1964 the Foundation has supported the recording of more than forty operas, many of these sung in English, in translation. It has always been Peter Moores's belief that to enjoy opera to the full, there must be no language barrier, particularly for newcomers and particularly in the popular repertoire – hence the *Opera in English* series launched with Chandos in 1995. This includes many of the English language recordings funded by the Foundation in the 1970s and 1980s and is now the largest recorded collection of operas sung in English.

Giacomo Puccini: *Tosca*

Man schrieb das Jahr 1889, als der fünfunddreißigjährige Giacomo Puccini sich Sarah Bernhards wegen zweimal das 1887 von Victorien Sardou verfaßte köstliche Melodram *La Tosca* ansah und es als Stoff erkannte, den er gern zur Oper verarbeiten wollte. Das ganz auf Sarah Bernhardt abgestimmte Stück bot der Schauspielerin reichlich Gelegenheit für hohe Dramatik. Die pseudohistorische Handlung ermöglichte es ihr, eine Opernsängerin zu spielen: launisch, eifersüchtig, liebebedürftig, gefährdet, mordlustig, tief betrübt und als abschließende theatralische Geste selbstmörderisch – da springt sie nämlich von der Brustwehr der Engelsburg in den Tod.

Puccini hatte das Schauspiel auf Französisch gesehen, also in einer Sprache, die er kaum kannte; er hatte das Potential von *La Tosca* als für die Opernbühne geeignetes Thema erfaßt, da sich Opern nicht allein über das gesprochene Wort vermitteln. Bis dahin hatte Puccini zwei Opern komponiert, *Le Villi* und *Edgar*, von denen keine uneingeschränkt erfolgreich gewesen war. Immerhin aber waren beide so vielversprechend, daß der Mailänder Musikverleger Giulio Ricordi Puccini

weiterhin eine bescheidene regelmäßige Zuwendung zahlte; er hoffte, daß Puccini einen echten Erfolg verbuchen würde, der dem Hause Ricordi dicke Gewinne und dem Komponisten großzügige Tantiemen einbringen würde. Von der Überzeugung getrieben, daß Sardous *La Tosca* aussichtsreiches Material für eine Oper bot, überredete Puccini Ricordi im Herbst 1890, bei Sardous Agentur in Paris nach den Bedingungen zu fragen, unter denen Sardou die Rechte auf eine Opernbearbeitung seines Stücks abgeben würde. Im Januar 1891, als eine Vereinbarung bezüglich der Rechte gesichert erschien, stellte Ricordi auf Puccinis Anregung dem Librettisten Luigi Illica die Aufgabe, Sardous fünftaktiges Melodrama in einen drei Akte langen Operntext umzuwandeln. Am 13. Dezember 1891 verkündete Ricordis Hauszeitung, die *Gazzetta Musicale*, daß Puccini *Tosca* komponieren werde.

Die günstigen Aussichten zerschlugen sich im Dezember 1892; Sardou, der äußerst praktisch dachte, hatte eine Kostprobe von Puccinis Musik gehört und urplötzlich

entschieden, daß sie so vielversprechend nicht war, wie Ricordi ihm weiszumachen versucht hatte. Tatsächlich war der Dramatiker, der eine Beteiligung an den Einnahmen aus der Opernfassung von *Tosca* verlangt hatte, wohl enttäuscht über die geringe finanzielle Ausbeute von *Le Villi* und *Edgar*. Ricordi informierte Puccini nicht über diese Entwicklung. Inzwischen hatte Puccini *Manon Lescaut* komponiert, obwohl Massenets populäre Vertonung derselben Vorlage nicht einmal zehn Jahre alt war. In seinem Bemühen, Puccinis Karriere zu fördern, ging Giulio Ricordi soweit, sich die italienischen Rechte an Massenets *Manon* zu sichern, so daß er deren Aufführung in Italien verhindern konnte, bis sich Puccinis *Manon Lescaut* im Repertoire etabliert hatte. *Manon Lescaut*, uraufgeführt im Februar 1893 im Teatro Regio in Turin, erwies sich als ermutigender Erfolg.

Am 29. Juli 1893 schrieb Ricordi an Sardous Agenten, daß Puccini, der über Sardous Ansichten immer noch nicht Bescheid wußte, über das lange Schweigen empört sei und sich völlig aus dem Projekt zurückgezogen habe. Dessen ungeachtet teilte Sardou, der offensichtlich Gutes über die ersten Aufführungen von *Manon Lescaut* gehört hatte, Ricordi im Oktober 1893 mit, daß er in

Puccini nun doch den Mann sehe, der *Tosca* komponieren solle. Ermutigt durch die Begeisterung, mit der seine *Manon Lescaut* aufgenommen worden war, deutete Puccini Sardous jähen Meinungsumschwung als Grobheit und persönliche Beleidigung. Er setzte sich nun tatsächlich von dem Projekt ab, und Ricordi blieb auf Illicas *Tosca*-Libretto sitzen. (Nebenbei sei erwähnt, daß der Titel der Oper auf den bestimmten Artikel "La" des Schauspiels verzichtet.) Der schlaue Verleger unternahm daraufhin den Versuch, einen anderen Komponisten aus seinem Stall für den Stoff zu interessieren. Erst in dieser Phase erschien Alberto Franchetti (1860–1942) auf der Bildfläche.

Eine Anzahl Autoren, die an dem früher so beliebten Spiel der Herabwürdigung Puccinis beteiligt waren, haben behauptet, daß Puccinis Interesse am Thema *Tosca* überhaupt erst geweckt worden sei, als er hörte, daß Franchetti daran arbeite. Puccini und Ricordi hätten Franchetti bezüglich der Eignung des Stoffs getäuscht, so daß Puccini freie Bahn bekommen habe, ihn selbst zu bearbeiten. Daß diese Auffassung falsch ist, wurde schlüssig bewiesen von Deborah Burton, die die Ricordi-Archive gründlich nach Material abgesucht hat, das sich auf die Komposition

von *Tosca* bezieht. Tatsächlich wurde Illicas Libretto im Juli 1894 an den wohlhabenden Franchetti übergeben, der für 25 000 Lire bei Sardou die Rechte erworben hatte.

Franchetti hatte 1892 für Aufsehen gesorgt, als er auf Verdis Empfehlung vom Teatro Carlo Felice in Genua beauftragt wurde, eine Oper über Columbus zu schreiben, die zur Vierhundertjahrfeier von dessen Seefahrt und der Entdeckung der Neuen Welt aufgeführt werden sollte.

Franchettis Erfolg mit *Cristoforo Colombo* zeigte, daß seine Talente in einem historischen Schauspiel mit Gepränge besser zur Geltung kamen als bei der dramatischen Interaktion mehrerer Figuren. Es war Franchetti selbst, der entschied, daß *Tosca* kein Stoff war, der seinen besonderen Fähigkeiten entsprach. Im März 1895 tritt er sich zunächst mit Illica über Änderungen am Libretto. Zwei Monate später hatte er das Projekt endgültig aufgegeben, da er, wie er später erklärte, "die Musik darin nicht spürte".

Mittlerweile komponierte Puccini *La bohème* (Turin, 1896) nach einem Libretto von Illica und Giuseppe Giacosa, ein Werk, das sich als noch erfolgreicher erweisen sollte als *Manon Lescaut*. Ricordi hatte Illicas Libretto für *Tosca* wieder in Händen, nachdem sich

Franchetti endgültig dagegen entschieden hatte, es zu vertonen, und war im Juli 1895 schon eifrig dabei, Puccini zu überreden, daß es ideale Bedingungen für ein Nachfolgestück zu *Bohème* biete. Doch es sollte noch einige Zeit vergehen, bis Puccini anfang, daran zu arbeiten.

Eine der nützlichsten und übrigens auch profitabelsten Ideen Giulio Ricordis bestand darin, daß er Komponisten aussandte, um aufzupassen, daß ihre Werke schon bei der ersten Inszenierung an bedeutenden Bühnen richtig eingeführt wurden und eine Tradition der Authentizität geschaffen wurde. Darum verwandte Puccini in den nächsten zwei Jahren viel Zeit darauf, den Start von *La bohème* in verschiedenen Städten zu beaufsichtigen. Im Juni 1898 hielt er sich in Paris auf, als *La bohème*, ins Französische übersetzt, dort an der Opéra-Comique Premiere hatte. Während er und Ricordi dort waren, machten sie dem siebenundsechzigjährigen Sardou ihre Aufwartung, und bei dieser Gelegenheit wurde Puccinis Begeisterung für *Tosca* eindeutig neu entfacht. Illica überarbeitete zusammen mit Giacosa das Libretto, um dem ausgeprägten dramatischen Gespür des Komponisten zu genügen. Puccini trug sogar selbst zum Libretto bei, indem er den Text für einen der

Glanzpunkte des Werks lieferte, die Tenorarie "Und es blitzten die Sterne" (E lucevan le stelle/All the stars shone in heaven) aus dem III. Akt.

Gleich bei der Uraufführung, die am 14. Januar 1900 am Teatro Costanzi in Rom stattfand, war *Tosca* ein großer Erfolg; sechs Monate später kam die Oper in London heraus und im folgenden Jahr in New York. Seither hat sie sich als eines der robustesten Werke Puccinis bewährt, und jede Sopranistin mit einem Hang zur Dramatik fühlt sich davon angezogen wie Eisenspäne von einem Magneten.

Drei Arien, zwei für den Tenor und die Sopranarie "Nur der Schönheit weiht' ich mein Leben" (Vissi d'arte, vissi d'amore/Life has taught me singing and loving) aus dem zweiten Akt, sind die bekanntesten Teile des Werks. Sie zählen zu den am häufigsten aufgezeichneten Opernarien der Welt, und man begegnet ihnen häufig als beliebte Zugabe in Konzertprogrammen. Allen dreien gemein sind bestimmte Vorzüge: Puccinis üppig lyrischer Stil und emotionale Ausdruckskraft. Darüber hinaus sind sie relativ kurz; keine dauert länger als rund drei Minuten, da sie so gestaltet sind, daß sie den Erzählfluß nicht stören. Von diesen Soli

abgesehen sind Sopran und Tenor an zwei wirkungsvollen Liebesduetten beteiligt: eines im ersten Akt, das andere im letzten, kurz vor der alles andere als vorgetäuschten Hinrichtung.

Die Figur des sadistischen Baron Scarpia hat ebenfalls ihre solistischen Momente, doch sind wegen seines bösen Charakters die Augenblicke, in denen sein Bariton in den Vordergrund tritt, selten vom Kontext der Opernhandlung abgehoben. Der erste ist das Te Deum am Schluß des I. Akts; begleitet von einer unablässig wiederholten Tonfolge im Baß, beschreibt Scarpia dort sein Verlangen, Tosca zu besitzen, während sich zugleich das Volk versammelt, um gemeinsam eine Siegeshymne zu singen. Im II. Akt, ehe Mario Cavaradossi zum Verhör vorgeführt wird, erläutert Scarpia seine brutal hedonistische Einstellung zum Leben und dessen Freuden. Und später im II. Akt verrät sich auf Toscas Frage, was nötig sei, um Marios Leben zu retten, in seiner aufbrausend vertonten Antwort kurz sein Raubtierinstinkt.

Da gerade von Scarpia die Rede ist: Das auffälligste der in der Partitur immer wiederkehrenden Motive ist mit seiner Figur verbunden. Dieses Motiv ist das erste, was man zu hören bekommt – eine laute

Akkordfolge, kurz bevor der Vorhang zum ersten Akt aufgeht. Sie erklingt erneut, wenn Toscas Geliebter, der Maler Cavaradossi, dem flüchtigen Angelotti sagt, wo er sich vor Scarpia verbergen soll. Und später im I. Akt, wo Scarpia auf Angelottis Spur selbst die Kirche betritt, fungieren die unheilvollen Akkorde als seine Visitenkarte. Nachdem er während des Te Deums seine Lüsterheit offenbart hat, klingt der Akt mit den bedrohlich plärrenden "Scarpia-Akkorden" aus. Am Ende des II. Akts dagegen sind die Akkorde, an der Stelle wo Tosca um Scarpias Leichnam herum die Kerzen aufstellt, noch einmal zu hören, nun jedoch anders harmonisiert und laut Partituranweisung "so leise wie möglich" gespielt.

Ein weiteres Thema, das mit ergreifender Wirkung immer wiederkehrt, ist zum ersten Mal im E-Dur-Teil des Liebesduetts von Tosca und Mario Cavaradossi im I. Akt zu hören, angefangen mit den Worten "Warum so eifersüchtig?" (Mia gelosa!/Why so jealous?). Aus einer Anmerkung in der Urschrift von *Tosca* geht hervor, daß diese entzückende Melodie offenbar das erste ist, was Puccini für das Werk komponierte; dies wird erhärtet durch die Tatsache, daß sie auf einem eigenen Faszikel niedergeschrieben ist. Die Melodie

taucht, nun eindrucksvoll durchgeführt, als Begleitung von Toscas zweitem Abgang im I. Akt wieder auf – im Anschluß an ihre bestürzende Unterredung mit Scarpia. Anklänge daran sind im Vorspiel zum III. Akt zu hören, und einige Minuten später, direkt nach "Und es blitzten die Sterne", dient das Thema als Grundlage für die ungestüme Musik, die Toscas Auftritt begleitet.

Puccini setzt Musik auch für deskriptive Zwecke ein. Er tut dies am wirkungsvollsten im Vorspiel zum III. Akt. Nicht nur hören wir hinter der Bühne einen Hirtenjungen im örtlichen Dialekt ein Liedchen singen, sondern auch aus verschiedener Perspektive das Läuten naher und ferner Kirchenglocken, während über der Engelsburg der Tag hereinbricht. Im II. Akt liefert Puccini nicht nur die musikalische Grundlage für Text und Stimmung der Oper, sondern auch wie im Fall des Hirtenjungen Musik, die die Figuren auf der Bühne als Musik von hinter der Bühne wahrnehmen. Gegen Anfang des II. Akts hört man ein kleines Orchester in den Kulissen eine Gavotte spielen. Und nicht lange danach sind Tosca und der Chor zu hören, offenbar aus den Gemächern der Königin im Palazzo Farnese; sie singen eine Kantate, um einen Sieg zu feiern, der, wie sich später herausstellt,

eine Niederlage der königstreuen Kräfte war.

Andere Beispiele für Stimmungsmusik kommen im I. Akt vor, der in der römischen Kirche Sant'Andrea della Valle spielt. Kurz vor Marios Ankunft kniet der Mesner nieder und rezitiert in *Andante religioso* bezeichnetem Tempo das Angelusgebet. Am Ende des Akts wird, während sich die Kirche mit Gläubigen füllt, ein Te Deum gesungen, werden Glocken geläutet, erklingt festlicher Kanonendonner.

In einem Text, der so erfüllt ist von eindrucksvollem, klar motiviertem Handeln, bleibt kaum Platz für lyrische Weitschweifigkeit. Eine von Puccinis schätzenswertesten Eigenschaften als Opernkomponist ist sein feines Gespür für Zeiteinteilung auf der Bühne. Er erkannte die optimale Dauer für jede nur mögliche Episode. So steht beispielsweise die Plötzlichkeit, mit der wir im I. Akt in das Geschehen hineinversetzt werden, in krassem Gegensatz zum bedächtigen, von Glockengeläut erfüllten Vorspiel zum III. Akt; dort erzeugt der langsam voranschreitende Anfang Spannung, die erst durch die unvermittelte Gewalttätigkeit der letzten paar Minuten aufgelöst wird.

Tosca ist eine Oper, die von vielen verunglimpft wurde, von Leuten, die sich

durch die Melodramatik der Handlung abgestoßen fühlten. Es ist jedoch ein Fehler, die Oper insgesamt mit ihrer Fabel zu verwechseln. Alle Opern sind ein Gemisch, in dem sich Musik und Handlung untrennbar verbunden haben. Puccinis wunderbar ausgeklügelte Partitur verwandelt Sardous schäbige Figuren in einprägsam expressive, die in ihren Stärken und Schwächen echte Menschen sind. Man kann heutzutage nicht damit rechnen, Sardous *La Tosca* je im Sprechtheater zu begegnen; dagegen ist Puccinis Oper ein fester Bestandteil des gängigen Repertoires und wird es allen Anzeichen nach noch eine ganze Weile bleiben.

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Inhaltsangabe

I. Akt

Im Innern der Kirche Sant'Andrea della Valle
Angelotti kommt in die Kirche geeilt und schlüpft in die private Kapelle der Familie Attavanti. Seine Schwester, die mit dem Marchese Attavanti verheiratet ist, hat den Schlüssel zur Kapelle für ihn hinterlegt, als sie zum Beten in der Kirche war. Der Mesner erscheint und reinigt einige Pinsel aus dem

Besitz Cavaradossis, der dabei ist, ein Gemälde der Maria Magdalena zu vollenden. Der Maler hat die Reize seiner geliebten Tosca mit der Schönheit einer unbekannten Frau verbunden, die er beim Gebet in der Kirche beobachtet hat. Nachdem der Mesner gegangen ist, kommt Angelotti hervor und wird von Cavaradossi erkannt, der daraufhin das Kirchenportal verriegelt. Angelotti berichtet, daß er aus der Engelsburg geflohen ist, wo er auf Scarpias Befehl eingekerkert war.

Sie werden unterbrochen, als draußen vor der Kirche Toscas Stimme erklingt. Angelotti zieht sich erneut in die Kapelle zurück. Cavaradossi läßt Tosca ein, und sie stellt mit Bestürzung fest, daß das Bild Maria Magdalenas der Marchesa Attavanti ähnlich sieht. Cavaradossi erklärt, daß er sie beim Beten in der Kapelle gesehen und nicht gewußt habe, wer sie war. Er und Tosca singen ein Liebesduett. Nachdem sie fort ist, planen Cavaradossi und Angelotti dessen Flucht: Er soll im Schutz der Dunkelheit verkleidet zu Cavaradossis Villa eilen und sich im Garten in einem Brunnen verstecken. Ein Kanonenschuß von der Burg verkündet, daß Angelottis Flucht entdeckt worden ist. Gleichzeitig überbringt der Mesner die

(unwahre) Nachricht von Napoleons Niederlage bei Marengo. Die Kirche füllt sich mit einer jubelnden Menge, und Scarpia erscheint in Begleitung Spolettas, um dem Mesner zu befehlen, er solle zur Feier des Sieges ein Te Deum ansetzen. Seine Männer weist er an, nach Anhaltspunkten für Angelottis Verbleib zu suchen, und diese werden alsbald gefunden: ein Schlüssel, ein geleerter Proviantkorb, den Cavaradossi dagelassen hat, und ein Fächer von Angelottis Schwester, der Marchesa Attavanti. Als Tosca zurückkehrt, entfacht Scarpia mit Hilfe des Fächers ihre Eifersucht, und sie macht sich eilig auf zur Villa, um das schuldige Paar zu ertappen. Scarpia erteilt Befehl, ihr zu folgen, und freut sich, zugleich den Flüchtling einfangen und Toscas Gunst genießen zu können.

II. Akt

In Scarpias Gemächern im Palazzo Farnese
Scarpia speist allein, während die Königin Maria Carolina im Erdgeschoß Gäste bewirtet. Spoletta kommt und meldet, daß sich die Durchsuchung von Cavaradossis Villa als fruchtlos erwiesen hat, daß man jedoch ihn selbst festgenommen und in den Palast gebracht hat. Während Tosca zu Ehren der

Königin eine Kantate singt, verhört Scarpia Cavaradossi in Gegenwart des Henkers und eines Richters. Cavaradossi leugnet, Angelotti zu kennen, und Scarpia befiehlt, ihn in einer angrenzenden Kammer der Folter zu unterziehen. Auch Tosca weigert sich, als sie befragt wird, Angelottis Aufenthaltsort zu verraten, bis sie das Wehklagen ihres Geliebten hört und den Brunnen im Garten erwähnt. Die Folter wird abgebrochen, und Sciarrone erscheint mit der Nachricht, daß Napoleon in der Schlacht von Marengo gesiegt hat.

Cavaradossi stimmt ein Loblied auf die Freiheit an, wofür Scarpia ihn erneut festnehmen läßt. Er wird abgeführt und soll bei Morgengrauen hingerichtet werden. Allerdings sagt Scarpia zu, den Maler unter der Bedingung freizulassen, daß Tosca seine Avancen über sich ergehen läßt. Spoletta kehrt mit der Neuigkeit zurück, daß sich Angelotti bei seiner Entdeckung selbst entleibt habe, und Tosca erklärt ihre Bereitschaft, sich Scarpia hinzugeben. Er weist Spoletta an, eine Scheinhinrichtung "wie im Falle Palermi" vorzubereiten. Tosca besteht darauf, daß er einen Schutzbrief ausstellt, der ihr und Cavaradossi freies Geleit garantiert. Während er noch dabei ist, erblickt sie ein Messer und ersticht ihn damit.

III. Akt

Eine Plattform auf der Engelsburg

Man hört einen Hirtenjungen, der singend seine Herde zusammenreibt. Cavaradossi bittet um eine Feder und Papier, damit er Tosca einen Abschiedsbrief schreiben kann. Spoletta kommt mit Tosca und geht wieder. Tosca zeigt Cavaradossi den Schutzbrief, und er ist erfreut und erleichtert. Tosca ermahnt den Geliebten, seine Rolle überzeugend zu spielen, wenn es zur Hinrichtung kommt. Und er tut wie geheißen, denn die Gewehre sind geladen, und er stirbt tatsächlich. Es hat sich herumgesprochen, daß Scarpia ermordet wurde, und die Schergen sind hinter Tosca her. Sie erklimmt die Brüstung und springt in den Tod.

Übersetzung: Anne Steeb/Bernd Müller

Jane Eaglen, ehemals Peter-Moores-Stipendiatin am Royal Northern College of Music, hat in der Welt der Oper heute ein außerordentlich hohes Renommee. Sie hat in so unterschiedlichen Rollen wie Norma (insbesondere an der Scottish Opera, Seattle Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Opéra national de Paris-Bastille und bei den Festspielen von Ravenna) und Brünnhilde (Scottish Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Opera Pacific, Teatro

alla Scala, Mailand, sowie in San Francisco und Wien) einzigartige Erfolge gefeiert und besitzt eine außerordentlich leistungsfähige dramatische Sopranstimme, die ihr auf der ganzen Welt sensationell gute Kritiken einbringt. Andere große Partien, die sie gesungen hat, sind Isolde, La Gioconda, Donna Anna, Turandot, Amelia, Tosca und Ariadne, und ihre Auftritte an Opernhäusern in Europa, Nord- und Südamerika, zum Beispiel an der Metropolitan Opera, New York, der Wiener Staatsoper, dem Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires, der English National Opera und Opernhäusern in München, Bologna und Madrid wurden mit viel Beifall bedacht. Ihre weltweite Tätigkeit auf dem Konzertpodium umfaßt Auftritte mit Sir Simon Rattle, Klaus Tennstedt, Bernard Haitink, Claudio Abbado, Zubin Mehta, Daniel Barenboim, James Conlon und vielen anderen herausragenden Musikern. Sie ist als Schallplattenkünstlerin aktiv und hat unter anderem die Titelrolle in Mayrs *Medea in Corinto* für Opera Rara aufgezeichnet sowie für Chandos und die Peter Moores Foundation die vorliegende *Tosca*, die mit dem Preis der Music Industries Association ausgezeichnet wurde.

Dennis O'Neill, geboren in Wales als Sohn irischer und walisischer Eltern, ist einer der führenden Tenöre der Welt und Verdi-Spezialist. Er arbeitet seit langem mit der Royal Opera, Covent Garden zusammen und ist dort zuletzt als Rodolfo (*La bohème*), Herzog (*Rigoletto*), Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*), Edgardo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Gustavo (*Un ballo in maschera*), Otello, Don Carlos und Radames (*Aida*) aufgetreten.

In Nordamerika war er an der Metropolitan Opera engagiert (für *La traviata*, *Aida*, *La bohème*, *Rigoletto*, *Cavalleria rusticana* und *Pagliacci* – die letzten zwei wurden ausnahmsweise am selben Abend aufgeführt), an der Lyric Opera of Chicago, an den Opernhäusern von San Francisco, San Diego und Vancouver sowie für Konzerte mit den Sinfonieorchestern von Philadelphia, Cleveland, Montreal und Ottawa und beim Cincinnati Festival. Er ist häufig an der Bayerischen Staatsoper in München zu Gast, zum Beispiel in *Il trovatore*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Tosca* und *Simon Boccanegra*. Anderswo in Europa hat er an den Opernhäusern von Wien, Berlin, Bonn, Köln, Hamburg, Nizza, Zürich, Paris, Oslo, Brüssel, Verona, Turin und Barcelona gastiert.

Zu seinen zahlreichen Aufnahmen auf

Tonträger zählen außer Soloalben Verdis Requiem mit Sir Colin Davis, *La fanciulla del West* mit Leonard Slatkin, auf Video *Der Rosenkavalier* mit Sir Georg Solti, *Die Fledermaus* mit Kiri Te Kanawa unter der Leitung von Plácido Domingo, *Macbeth* mit Giuseppe Sinopoli und *Mefistofele*, eine Produktion der San Francisco Opera. Für Chandos und die Peter Moores Foundation hat er *La bohème*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci* und ein Soloprogramm mit Opernarien aufgenommen.

Gregory Yurisich ist einer der führenden Baritone der Welt, dessen Repertoire die Titelrollen von *Nabucco*, *Rigoletto*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Falstaff* und *Guillaume Tell* umfaßt, außerdem Giorgio Germont, Iago, Stankar (*Stiffelio*), Amonasro, Barak (*Die Frau ohne Schatten*), Escamillo, Telramund (*Lohengrin*), Balstrode (*Peter Grimes*), Sharpless, alle vier Bösewichte in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Alfio (*Cavalleria rusticana*) und Tonio (*Pagliacci*). Seine Karriere hat ihn an Opernhäuser und zu Festspielen rund um die Welt geführt, zum Beispiel an die Royal Opera, Covent Garden, die English National Opera, die San Francisco Opera, die Opera Australia, die Los Angeles Opera, die Victoria

State Opera, die Opéra de Lyon, das Châtelet théâtre musical in Paris, die Opéra national de Paris-Bastille, das Théâtre royal de la Monnaie in Brüssel, die Washington Opera, die Staatsoper Unter den Linden in Berlin, die Bregenzer Festspiele, Melbourne International Festival, Edinburgh International Festival und Hong Kong Arts Festival sowie auf Konzertpodien und Opernbühnen in Belfast, Genf, München, Athen, Tel Aviv und Brisbane. Er hat mit Künstlern wie Dame Joan Sutherland, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Plácido Domingo, José Carreras, Dennis O'Neill, Zubin Mehta, Sir Charles Mackerras und Sir Roger Norrington zusammengearbeitet und eine Reihe von Videos und Tonträgern aufgenommen, darunter auch die vorliegende, mit dem Preis der Music Industries Association ausgezeichnete *Tosca*-Aufnahme für Chandos und die Peter Moores Foundation.

Peter Rose wurde in Canterbury geboren, hat an der University of East Anglia Musik studiert und wurde von Ellis Keeler an der Guildhall School of Music and Drama ausgebildet. Sein Operndebüt gab er als Komtur beim Gastspiel der Glyndebourne Festival Opera 1986 in Hongkong und war

dann bis 1989 Baßsolist an der Welsh National Opera. Er ist unter der Leitung der führenden Dirigenten der Welt und mit allen bedeutenden britischen Operntruppen aufgetreten, darunter die Royal Opera, Covent Garden, die English National Opera und Scottish Opera. Außerhalb Großbritanniens hat er an der Metropolitan Opera in New York gesungen, an der Opéra-Comique in Paris, der Deutschen Staatsoper Berlin, der Hamburgischen Staatsoper, der Wiener Staatsoper, der Lyric Opera of Chicago und der New Israeli Opera in Tel Aviv, in San Francisco, Amsterdam, Köln, Rom und Seattle. Er war bei bedeutenden Festspielen auf der ganzen Welt wie jenen in Orange, Aix-en-Provence, Istanbul und Bregenz zu Gast, sowie beim Maggio musicale in Florenz. Zu seinen zahlreichen Partien gehören Ramfis, Fasolt, Hunding, Pimen, Osmin, König Marke, Baron Ochs, Rocco, Bottom (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Banquo (*Macbeth*), Cadmus/Somnus (*Semele*), Geßler (*Guillaume Tell*), Mustafa (*L'italiana in Algeri*) und Walter (*Luisa Miller*). Auf Tonträger hat er unter anderem für Chandos und die Peter Moores Foundation die vorliegende preisgekrönte *Tosca* und *Il barbiere di Siviglia* aufgenommen.

Andrew Shore gilt als der herausragende Buffo-Bariton Großbritanniens und ist ein ausgezeichnete Sänger und Schauspieler. Er hat für alle großen britischen Opernensembles gearbeitet, so auch für die English National Opera, die Royal Opera, Covent Garden, Opera North, die Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Scottish Opera und Welsh National Opera, und ist im Ausland an der San Diego Opera, der New Israeli Opera, der Opéra national de Paris-Bastille, der Opéra-Comique, dem Gran teatro del Liceu in Barcelona, in Lyon, Nantes, Montpellier, Kopenhagen, Amsterdam, Vancouver und Ottawa aufgetreten. Seine zahlreichen Verpflichtungen haben die Titelrollen von *Wozzeck*, *Falstaff*, *King Priam*, *Gianni Schicchi* und *Don Pasquale* eingeschlossen. Darüber hinaus hat er Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*) gesungen, Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*), Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Papageno, den Zaren Dodon (*Le Coq d'or*), Leandro (*Die Liebe zu den drei Orangen*), Dikoj (*Katja Kabanowa*), Dr. Kolenatý (*Die Sache Makropulos*), Šiškov (*Aus einem Totenhaus*), Frank (*Die Fledermaus*), den Baron (*La Vie parisienne*), Baron Trombonok (*Il viaggio a Reims*), Warlaam (*Boris Godunow*) und Faninal (*Der Rosenkavalier*). Für Chandos und die Peter Moores Foundation hat er an

folgenden Aufnahmen mitgewirkt: *L'elisir d'amore*, *Don Pasquale*, *La bohème* und Highlights aus dem *Rosenkavalier* sowie *Il barbiere di Siviglia* und die vorliegende preisgekrönte *Tosca*.

Der Tenor **John Daszak** hat an der Guildhall School of Music and Drama, als Peter-Moores-Stipendiat unter Robert Alderson am Royal Northern College of Music und an der Accademia d'Arte Lirica in Italien studiert und nimmt derzeit Unterricht bei David Pollard. Zu seinen Opernpartien gehören Don José (*Carmen*), Steva (*Jenifà*) und die Titelrolle in Peter Steins Inszenierung von *Peter Grimes* an der Welsh National Opera, und er war als Steva, Achilles (*King Priam*), Dimitri (in Francesca Zambellos *Boris-Godunow*-Produktion), Skuratov (*Aus einem Totenhaus*), Jack (*Mahagonny*), Pang (*Turandot*) und Max (in David Pountneys *Freischütz*-Inszenierung) an der English National Opera zu sehen. Im Ausland ist er an der Nederlandse Opera und der Opéra de Nice aufgetreten (als der große Sträfling in *Aus einem Totenhaus*), an der Opera Zuid (als Michel in Martinůs *Julietta*), in Lausanne (als Jack) und bei den Bregenzer Festspielen (als Yannakos in Martinůs *Griechischer Passion*). Im Rahmen

seiner regen Konzerttätigkeit hat er an konzertanten Aufführungen von Verdi *Alzira* (am Royal Opera House, Covent Garden), *Oberon* (unter Richard Hickox), Strawinskis *Renard* (Birmingham Royal Ballet), *Otello* (unter Sir Colin Davis) und *Candide* (unter Kent Nagano) teilgenommen. Auf Tonträger hat er unter anderem die vorliegende preisgekrönte *Tosca* für Chandos und die Peter Moores Foundation aufgenommen.

Der Bariton **Christopher Booth-Jones** begann seine Opernkarriere auf Tournee mit der Welsh National Opera for All und ist seither an der Welsh National Opera, beim Glyndebourne Festival und mit der Glyndebourne Touring Opera, der Kent Opera und dem English Music Theatre aufgetreten. An der English National Opera hat er unter anderem den Papageno gegeben, außerdem Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*), Dr. Falke, Schaunard, Denissov (*Krieg und Frieden*), Silvio, Pantalon (*Die Liebe zu den drei Orangen*), Elviro (*Serse*), Graf Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*), den Musiklehrer (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Faninal (*Der Rosenkavalier*) und Giorgio Germont. Außerdem hat er an der Royal Opera, Covent Garden und an der

Opera North unter anderem Graf Danilo (*Die lustige Witwe*), Ottokar (*Der Freischütz*), den Vater (*Hänsel und Gretel*), Demetrius (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) und Claudio (*Béatrice et Bénédicte*) gesungen. Zu seinen Aufnahmen auf Tonträger gehören *Carmen*, *Billy Budd*, *Serse*, Sondheims *Pacific Overtures* sowie für Chandos und die Peter Moores Foundation *Giulio Cesare*.

Ashley Holland hat an der Universität von Warwick und am Royal Northern College of Music studiert, wo er den Webster Booth/Esso-Wettbewerb und die Curtis-Goldmedaille gewann und Peter Moores-Stipendiat war. Vor kurzem hat er außerdem den angesehenen Opernwettbewerb RANIERI I cestelli an der Hamburgischen Staatsoper gewonnen. Zur Zeit ist er als Baritonssolist an der English National Opera engagiert und hat dort unter anderem Belcore (*L'elisir d'amore*), Lescaut (*Manon*), Zurga (*Les Pêcheurs de perles*), Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*), Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) und Cecil (*Maria Stuarda*) gegeben. Er ist als Don Giovanni an der Calgary Opera aufgetreten, als Bosun (*Billy Budd*) an der Opéra national de Paris-Bastille und hat an Konzertaufführungen von *Linda di Chamounix* und *Candide* mitgewirkt.

Zu seinen jüngsten bzw. zukünftigen Rollen gehören Ford (*Falstaff*) an der Semper-Oper in Dresden, Masetto an der Royal Opera, Covent Garden, Enrico (*Lucia di Lammermoor*) an der Lyric Opera of Chicago sowie Ottokar (*Der Freischütz*) und Marcello (*La bohème*) an der English National Opera. Für Chandos und die Peter Moores Foundation hat er außer seiner preisgekrönten *Tosca*-Darbietung *L'elisir d'amore* aufgenommen.

Geoffrey Mitchells Gesangskarriere hat ihm ein bemerkenswert breitgefächertes Repertoire von der alten bis zur neuen Musik beschert und ihn nach Skandinavien, Deutschland, in die ehemalige Tschechoslowakei, nach Kanada und Australasien geführt. Nachdem er bei der BBC erste Dirigiererfahrungen gesammelt hatte, begann er mit eigenen Sängern zu arbeiten und gründete den **Geoffrey Mitchell Choir**. Aus ersten Aufnahmen entwickelte sich eine langfristige Zusammenarbeit des Chors mit Opera Rara, für die er über dreißig Tonträger aufgenommen hat. Der Chor genießt wachsendes Ansehen und ist bei der BBC und internationalen Plattenfirmen gefragt. Für Chandos hat der Geoffrey Mitchell Choir an zahlreichen Aufnahmen der

hervorragend kritisierten Reihe Opera in English unter der Schirmherrschaft der Peter Moores Foundation teilgenommen.

Der **Peter Kay Children's Choir** bietet jungen Sängern die Gelegenheit, an Opern und Konzerten, an Werbespots (TV und Radio), Wohltätigkeitsveranstaltungen und bei Opern- und Theaterproduktionen der Glyndebourne Festival Opera in Großbritannien, Frankreich, Belgien, den Niederlanden, Deutschland, Italien, Spanien und den USA teilzunehmen. Die Aufnahme in den Chor erfolgt auf Einladung und nach Vorsingen; seine Teilnehmer werden unter denen ausgewählt, die bereits Erfahrungen mit Gesangsdarbietungen haben, sei es an der English National Opera, wo Peter Kay als Berater für die Arbeit mit Kindern tätig ist, oder in der Finchley Children's Music Group, beim New London Children's Choir, am Centre for Young Musicians, bei den Jennifer Lilleystone Singers und in Schul- und anderen Chören in ganz London und Südengland. Beim Eröffnungskonzert des Londoner Millennium Dome am Silvesterabend 1999 hat der Chor Solisten für *A New Beginning* von John Tavener gestellt. Für das Jahr 2000 ist unter anderem vorgesehen, zahlreiche

Rollen an der English und Welsh National Opera zu singen.

Seit seinen vielversprechenden Anfängen 1945, als es von Walter Legge hauptsächlich für Schallplattenaufnahmen gegründet wurde, hat das **Philharmonia Orchestra** einige der bedeutendsten Dirigenten des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts für sich gewonnen. Besonders enge Beziehungen zu dem Orchester haben Otto Klemperer (der erste Chefdirigent), Lorin Maazel, Riccardo Muti, Giuseppe Sinopoli, Carlo Maria Giulini, Sir Andrew Davis, Vladimir Ashkenazy und Esa-Pekka Salonen unterhalten. Unter seinem derzeitigen Chefdirigenten Christoph von Dohnanyi und mit Leonard Slatkin als Erstem Gastdirigenten hat das Orchester seine zentrale Position im britischen Musikleben gefestigt, und zwar nicht nur in London, wo es als Hausorchester der Royal Festival Hall fungiert, sondern mit Hilfe regionaler Gastspiele auch für ein breiteres Publikum.

Das Orchester hat mehrere bedeutende Preise gewonnen und mit seiner Vitalität und seinem einzigartig warmen Klang den Beifall der Kritik gefunden. Außerdem wurde es für seine innovative Programmgestaltung gepriesen, in deren Kern die Zielsetzung steht,

neue Stücke der weltweit führenden lebenden Komponisten, zum Beispiel seines derzeitigen Gastkomponisten James MacMillan, zu spielen und in Auftrag zu geben.

Das Orchester unternimmt oft Auslandstourneen und kann als das am häufigsten aufgenommene Sinfonieorchester der Welt über tausend Einspielungen für sich verbuchen. Darunter befinden sich (für die Reihe Opera Rara) mehrere Aufnahmen mit Opernarien und elf vollständige Opernaufzeichnungen (Donizettis *Ugo, conte di Parigi*, *Ne m'oubliez pas*, *Emilia di Liverpool*, *L'assedio di Calais*, *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* und *Maria de Rudenz*, Meyerbeers *Dinorah*, Mayrs *Medea in Corinto*, Mercadantes *Orazi e Curiazi*, Pacinis *Maria, regina d'Inghilterra* und Rossinis *Otello*). Das Orchester hat für Chandos zahlreiche Aufnahmen auf Tonträger vorgenommen, beispielsweise für die Reihe Opera in English unter der Schirmherrschaft der Peter Moores Foundation *L'elisir d'amore*, *Faust*, *La bohème*, die vorliegende preisgekrönte *Tosca* und sechs Soloalben mit Opernarien (mit Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny und John Tomlinson – die drei letztgenannten werden im Jahr 2000 erscheinen).

David Parry hat bei Sergiu Celibidache studiert und seine berufliche Laufbahn als Assistent von Sir John Pritchard begonnen. Er hat am English Music Theatre debütiert und wurde dann Dirigent mit Festvertrag an den Städtischen Bühnen Dortmund und an der Opera North. Von 1983 bis 1987 war er Musikdirektor der Opera 80 und seit 1992 Gründungsmitglied und Direktor der Almeida Opera.

Er übt in Großbritannien und international eine weitgespannte Tätigkeit in den Bereichen Oper und Konzert aus, hat mehrere Produktionen der English National Opera dirigiert und tritt regelmäßig mit dem Philharmonia Orchestra auf. 1996 gab er sein Debüt beim Glyndebourne Festival mit *Così fan tutte* und hat dort im vergangenen Jahr die Uraufführung von Jonathan Doves *Flight* geleitet.

Er ist häufig in Spanien zu Gast und hat mit den meisten bedeutenden spanischen Orchestern Konzerte gegeben. In Madrid hat er die spanische Erstaufführung von *Peter Grimes* dirigiert, und 1996 die erste spanische Inszenierung von *The Rake's Progress*. Er ist in Deutschland, Schweden und den Niederlanden aufgetreten, bei den Festspielen in Pesaro, beim Hong Kong International Festival, in Japan

anlässlich einer *Carmen*-Tournée und in Mexiko mit dem UNAM Symphony Orchestra. Zu den Neuproduktionen, die er in letzter Zeit dirigiert hat, zählen *Fidelio* beim New Zealand Festival, *Maria Stuarda* am Stadttheater Basel und *Lucia di Lammermoor* an der New Israeli Opera.

Seine Tätigkeit im Aufnahmestudio umfaßt die Produktion von Marschners *Der Vampyr* fürs BBC-Fernsehen und einundzwanzig vollständige Opernaufzeichnungen unter der Schirmherrschaft der Peter Moores Foundation. Darunter befinden sich zahlreiche Aufnahmen der Reihe Opera Rara, die

mehrere Preise gewonnen haben, beispielsweise den belgischen Prix Cecilia für Donizettis *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra*. Für Chandos hat er die Aufzeichnung von sechs Programmen mit Opernarien geleitet (mit Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny und John Tomlinson – die drei letztgenannten kommen im Jahr 2000 heraus), außerdem *Faust*, *Don Pasquale*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *La bohème*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci* und Highlights aus dem *Rosenkavalier* sowie die vorliegende preisgekrönte *Tosca*-Aufnahme, jeweils in Zusammenarbeit mit der Peter Moores Foundation.

Giacomo Puccini: Tosca

C'est en 1889 que Giacomo Puccini, alors âgé de trente-cinq ans, vit à deux reprises Sarah Bernhardt dans le grand mélodrame de Victorien Sardou datant de 1887, *La Tosca*, et s'aperçut qu'il s'agissait-là d'un sujet qu'il désirait fortement transformer en opéra. La pièce, conçue spécialement pour Bernhardt, offrait à cette actrice la possibilité de déployer pleinement ses talents dramatiques. Dans un cadre pseudo-historique, l'intrigue lui permettait de jouer le rôle d'une cantatrice tour à tour capricieuse, jalouse, amoureuse, en danger, meurtrière, accablée de douleur et, pour finir dans un grand geste théâtral, suicidaire, alors qu'elle se jette du haut des remparts de Castel Sant'Angelo.

Ayant vu la pièce en français, langue que Puccini connaissait à peine, il réalisait parfaitement que le sujet de *La Tosca* s'adapterait très bien à la scène lyrique, puisque les opéras ne reposent pas seulement sur les paroles comme moyen de communication. À l'époque Puccini avait déjà composé deux opéras, *Le Villi* et *Edgar*, aucun des deux n'ayant remporté un succès absolu. Ils étaient cependant suffisamment prometteurs pour que

l'éditeur de musique milanais Giulio Ricordi continuât de payer une modeste provision à Puccini dans l'espoir qu'il composa un véritable succès, faisant ainsi faire de gros bénéfices à la Casa Ricordi et octroyant d'importants droits d'auteur au compositeur. Très excité et convaincu que *La Tosca* de Sardou constituait un sujet très prometteur pour un opéra, Puccini persuada Ricordi dans le courant de l'automne 1890 de négocier avec l'agent de Sardou à Paris afin de voir si celui-ci accepterait de vendre ses droits d'adaptation de la pièce en opéra, et dans quelles conditions. Au mois de janvier 1891, alors que l'accord au sujet des droits semblait définitif, Ricordi, à la demande de Puccini, chargea le librettiste Luigi Illica de convertir le mélodrame en cinq actes de Sardou en un livret d'opéra en trois actes. Le 13 décembre 1891 Ricordi annonça dans sa revue la *Gazzetta Musicale* que Puccini allait composer *Tosca*.

Ces projets s'évaporerent soudain au mois de décembre 1892 quand Sardou, qui avait un côté très pratique, décida après avoir entendu de la musique de Puccini que ce n'était pas aussi prometteur que Ricordi le lui avait laissé

entendre. Plus probablement encore le dramaturge, ayant exigé une part des profits de *La Tosca* de Puccini, fut déçu par le peu d'argent qu'avaient rapporté *Le Villi* et *Edgar*. Ricordi n'informa pas Puccini de ce changement de situation. Pendant ce temps-là, Puccini avait composé *Manon Lescaut*, bien que Massenet eût déjà mis en musique ce sujet avec succès, moins de dix ans auparavant. Dans ses efforts à faire avancer la carrière de Puccini, Giulio Ricordi se procura même les droits italiens de *Manon* de Massenet dans l'intention d'en empêcher l'interprétation en Italie avant que l'opéra de Puccini *Manon Lescaut* fût bien établi au sein du répertoire. Présenté au Teatro Regio de Turin en février 1893, *Manon Lescaut* se révéla être un succès très encourageant.

Le 29 juillet 1893 Ricordi écrivit à l'agent de Sardou que Puccini, n'ayant pas encore connaissance de l'opinion de Sardou, était froissé par le long silence de celui-ci et avait complètement abandonné le projet. Mais en octobre 1893 Sardou, qui avait évidemment appris la réussite de *Manon Lescaut* lors de la première, annonça à Ricordi que Puccini devrait être après tout le compositeur de *Tosca*. Encouragé par l'enthousiasme avec lequel *Manon Lescaut* avait été reçu, Puccini vit dans

le changement d'opinion soudain de Sardou un geste grossier et insultant. Le changement d'avis de Puccini laissa Ricordi avec le livret de *Tosca* d'Illica sur les bras. (Il est à noter que le titre de l'opéra omet l'article défini "La" de la pièce). L'éditeur tenta alors avec ruse d'intéresser à ce sujet un autre compositeur de son écurie. C'est à ce moment seulement qu'entra en scène Alberto Franchetti (1860–1942).

Un certain nombre d'écrivains, s'adonnant au jeu autrefois populaire de dénigrer Puccini, ont déclaré que Puccini ne commença vraiment à s'intéresser au sujet de la *Tosca* que lorsqu'il apprit que Franchetti y travaillait et que Puccini et Ricordi dupèrent Franchetti en lui faisant croire que le sujet était loin d'être idéal, permettant ainsi à Puccini de l'utiliser tout à son gré. Deborah Burton a démontré de façon concluante la fausseté de cette impression en faisant des recherches très complètes dans les archives Ricordi sur les papiers ayant rapport à la composition de *Tosca*. Au mois de juillet 1894, le livret d'Illica fut remis au riche Franchetti, qui acquit les droits de Sardou pour la somme de 25,000 livres.

Franchetti avait fait sensation en 1892 lorsque, sur une recommandation de Verdi, il remporta une commande du Teatro Carlo

Felice de Gênes afin d'écrire un opéra sur le sujet de Christophe Colomb pour célébrer le quatre centième anniversaire du voyage du navigateur et de sa découverte de ce qui était en fait l'hémisphère ouest.

Le succès que remporta Franchetti avec son *Cristoforo Colombo* démontra que ses talents étaient mieux mis en valeur dans un spectacle de type reconstitution historique que dans un spectacle favorisant l'interaction dramatique des personnages. C'est Franchetti lui-même qui décida que *Tosca* ne convenait pas à son talent particulier et au mois de mars 1895, il discutait avec Illica des changements du livret. Deux mois plus tard il avait définitivement abandonné le projet car, comme il l'expliqua par la suite, "Je n'y sentais pas la musique".

Pendant ce temps, Puccini composait *La bohème* (Turin, 1896) sur un livret d'Illica et de Giuseppe Giacosa, œuvre qui allait remporter un succès encore plus grand que *Manon Lescaut*. En juillet 1895 Ricordi avait tenté de persuader Puccini que le livret d'Illica de *Tosca*, désormais de nouveau entre ses mains puisque Franchetti y avait définitivement renoncé, constituait une œuvre idéale pour faire suite à *La bohème*. Il fallut attendre un certain temps avant que Puccini ne se mît au travail.

L'une des idées de Giulio Ricordi les plus utiles, et les plus fructueuses également, fut d'envoyer un compositeur pour superviser la présentation de ses œuvres lors des premières productions de celles-ci dans les grands théâtres afin d'établir une tradition authentique. Ainsi au cours des deux années suivantes, Puccini passa une grande partie de son temps à superviser les débuts de *La bohème* dans divers opéras. Au mois de juin 1898 il se trouvait à Paris pour la première représentation de *La bohème* à l'Opéra-Comique dans une traduction française. Il profita de son séjour à Paris avec Ricordi pour faire une visite d'usage à Sardou, alors âgé de soixante-sept ans et c'est à cette occasion que l'enthousiasme de Puccini pour *Tosca* se ranima. Illica, avec l'aide de Giacosa, retravailla le livret pour qu'il corresponde aux exigences du sens théâtral du compositeur. Puccini contribua même personnellement au livret, écrivant les paroles de l'un des plus grands moments de la partition, l'air du ténor du troisième acte "Le ciel luisait d'étoiles" (E lucevan le stelle/All the stars shone in heaven).

Tosca remporta un grand succès lors de la première qui eut lieu au Teatro Costanzi de Rome le 14 janvier 1900. Six mois plus tard l'œuvre fut présentée à Londres et l'année

suivante à New York. Depuis lors c'est devenu l'une des œuvres de Puccini les mieux établies dans le répertoire et toute soprano ayant un penchant pour les œuvres dramatiques s'y trouve attirée comme à un aimant.

Trois airs, deux pour ténor, et l'air de la soprano du deuxième acte "D'art et d'amour je vivais toute" (Vissi d'arte, vissi d'amore/Life has taught me singing and loving) sont les morceaux les plus connus de la partition. Ils comptent également parmi les extraits d'opéra les plus fréquemment enregistrés dans le monde entier, et on les trouve souvent en bis fort appréciés du public dans des programmes de concert. Ils ont en commun certaines caractéristiques parmi lesquelles le lyrisme et l'expressivité émotionnelle riches de Puccini. Par ailleurs, ils sont relativement courts, aucun d'entre eux ne durant plus de trois minutes environ, puisqu'ils sont conçus de manière à ne pas interrompre l'action. En plus de ces trois solos, la soprano et le ténor prennent part à deux duos d'amour saisissants: l'un dans le premier acte et l'autre dans le dernier acte, juste avant le faux simulacre d'exécution.

Le personnage du sadique Baron Scarpia a également des solos mais, étant donné sa mauvaise nature, ses moments proéminents en tant que baryton sont rares en dehors du

contexte de l'interprétation de l'opéra. Son premier solo est le Te Deum de la fin du premier acte dans lequel, sur une séquence sans cesse répétée à la basse, il décrit son désir de posséder Tosca tandis que, pendant ce temps-là, l'assemblée se réunit pour chanter un hymne victorieux. Dans le deuxième acte, avant que l'on fasse entrer Mario pour l'interroger, Scarpia expose avec violence son approche hédoniste brutale de la vie et de ses plaisirs. Plus tard, toujours dans le deuxième acte, en réponse à Tosca qui lui demande comment elle pourrait sauver Mario, il laisse brièvement entrevoir son côté prédateur dans une ligne vocale puissante.

Toujours à propos de Scarpia, le thème que l'on retrouve le plus souvent dans la partition est celui qui est lié à son personnage. Ce thème est la première musique que l'on entend, une forte succession d'accords juste avant le lever de rideau du premier acte. Ces accords réapparaissent, ayant subi des transformations, lorsque l'amant de Tosca, le peintre Cavaradossi, dit au fugitif Angelotti où se cacher pour échapper à Scarpia. Par la suite, toujours dans le premier acte, lorsque Scarpia lui-même entre dans l'église, ayant retrouvé la piste d'Angelotti, ces accords sinistres lui servent de carte de visite. Après avoir exposé sa

nature hypocrite et lubrique au cours du Tè Deum, l'acte se termine par les "accords de Scarpia" retentissant de façon menaçante. À la fin du deuxième acte, cependant, alors que Tosca dispose des bougies autour du cadavre de Scarpia, les accords se font de nouveau entendre mais ils sont désormais harmonisés de manière différente et joués "aussi doucement que possible" selon les indications de la partition.

Un autre thème réapparaît régulièrement avec un effet poignant et on l'entend d'abord dans la section en mi majeur du duo d'amour du premier acte entre Tosca et Mario Cavaradossi, qui commence avec les paroles "Ma jalouse!" (Mia gelosa!/Why so jealous?). D'après une note dans la partition autographe de *Tosca*, renforcée par le fait qu'elle est écrite sur un morceau de papier à musique séparé, cette ravissante mélodie est apparemment la première musique qu'ait composée Puccini pour cette œuvre. Cette mélodie réapparaît, désormais développée de manière impressionnante, sous forme d'accompagnement de la deuxième sortie de Tosca au premier acte – après sa discussion désagréable avec Scarpia. Puccini y fait également allusion dans le prélude du troisième acte et quelques minutes plus tard,

juste après "Le ciel luisait d'étoiles", ce thème sert de base à l'impétueuse musique accompagnant l'entrée de Tosca.

Puccini utilise également la musique à des fins descriptives, ce qu'il fait de manière très éloquente dans le prélude du troisième acte. Nous entendons non seulement dans les coulisses le jeune berger chanter une chansonnette dans le dialecte local, mais nous entendons également retentir sous des angles différents des cloches proches et lointaines tandis que le jour se lève sur le Castel Sant'Angelo. Et dans le deuxième acte, Puccini utilise de la musique non seulement comme base du discours lyrique et de l'atmosphère mais également en tant que sonorité que les personnages sur scène entendent en musique de fond provenant des coulisses, comme c'est le cas du chant du berger. Au tout début du deuxième acte, un petit orchestre en coulisses joue une gavotte. Et, peu après, apparemment dans les appartements de la reine au Palazzo Farnese, Tosca et le chœur chantent une cantate pour célébrer une victoire qui, ironiquement, se révèle être par la suite une défaite des forces royalistes.

Nous trouvons d'autres exemples de musique ambiante dans le premier acte, dans l'église romaine de Sant'Andrea della Valle.

Juste avant l'arrivée de Mario, le sacristain s'agenouille et récite l'Angelus, dans un tempo marqué *Andante religioso*. À la fin de cet acte, tandis que l'église se remplit de fidèles, on chante un Tè Deum pendant que les cloches sonnent et que l'on tire des coups de canon pour les festivités.

Dans une intrigue si pleine d'action intense et clairement motivée, il y a peu de place pour l'effusion lyrique. L'un des plus grands talents de Puccini en tant que compositeur lyrique est son sens aigu de ce que l'on appelle "le minutage théâtral". Il connaissait parfaitement la durée optimale de chaque section. Par exemple, la soudaineté avec laquelle nous sommes lancés dans l'action au début du premier acte est en parfait contraste avec le prélude tranquille du troisième acte rempli de sons de cloches, où ce commencement lent crée un suspense qui ne disparaît qu'avec la soudaine violence des quelques dernières minutes.

Tosca subit beaucoup de critiques à cause du côté mélodramatique de l'intrigue. C'est toutefois une erreur de confondre l'opéra avec son intrigue. Tous les opéras sont des amalgames dans lesquels musique et intrigue sont devenus inséparables. La partition bien mesurée de Puccini transforme les personnages

peu intéressants de Sardou en des personnages mémorablement expressifs, tout à fait humains dans leurs forces et leurs faiblesses. On ne s'attendrait pas de nos jours à voir *La Tosca* de Sardou au théâtre, mais l'opéra de Puccini est bien établi dans le répertoire et cela apparemment pour longtemps.

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Traduction: Florence Daguerré de Hureaux

Argument

Acte I

L'intérieur de l'église Sant'Andrea della Valle
Angelotti entre en hâte dans l'église et se glisse à l'intérieur de la chapelle privée de la famille Attavanti. Sa sœur qui a épousé le marquis Attavanti a caché la clé de la chapelle à son intention lors d'une visite à l'église pour prier. Le sacristain entre pour nettoyer des pinces appartenant à Cavaradossi qui est en train de finir un tableau représentant Marie-Madeleine. Le peintre y a mêlé les charmes de sa Tosca bien-aimée à la beauté d'une inconnue qu'il a vue prier dans l'église. Lorsque le sacristain s'en va, Angelotti, qui sort de sa cachette, est reconnu par Cavaradossi qui ferme à clé la porte de l'église. Angelotti explique qu'il vient

de s'échapper du château Saint-Ange où il avait été emprisonné sur l'ordre de Scarpia.

Leur conversation est interrompue par le son de la voix de Tosca à l'extérieur de l'église, Angelotti retourne dans la chapelle. Cavaradossi fait entrer Tosca qui est troublée de voir que le portrait de Marie-Madeleine ressemble à la marquise Attavanti. Cavaradossi explique qu'il a vu cette dernière prier dans la chapelle, mais qu'il ne savait pas qui elle était, les deux amants chantent ensuite un duo d'amour. Une fois Tosca partie, Cavaradossi et Angelotti préparent la fuite de ce dernier: quand la nuit tombera, portant un déguisement, il devra se rendre en hâte à la villa de Cavaradossi et se cacher dans un puits du jardin. On entend un coup de canon provenant de la citadelle – il signale que l'évasion d'Angelotti a été découverte. Le sacristain entre en même temps pour annoncer la (fausse) nouvelle de la défaite de Napoléon à Marengo. Un foule joyeuse emplit l'église et Scarpia, entrant accompagné de Spoletta, commande au sacristain de préparer un Te Deum pour célébrer la victoire. Il ordonne à ses hommes de chercher des indices pouvant les amener à Angelotti, et ces indices sont bien entendu trouvés: une clé, un panier vidé de ses provisions que Cavaradossi a laissé et un

éventail appartenant à la sœur d'Angelotti, la marquise Attavanti. Lorsque Tosca revient, Scarpia se sert de l'éventail pour éveiller la jalousie de la jeune femme qui se rend en tout hâte à la villa, espérant y surprendre les deux coupables. Scarpia donne l'ordre qu'on la suive, se réjouissant d'avance à l'idée d'attraper le fugitif et d'obtenir les faveurs de Tosca.

Acte II

Les appartements de Scarpia au palais Farnèse
Scarpia dîne seul tandis qu'à l'étage inférieur la reine Caroline reçoit. Spoletta entre pour annoncer que la villa de Cavaradossi a été fouillée en vain, mais qu'ils ont arrêté le peintre et l'ont amené au palais. Pendant que Tosca chante une cantate en l'honneur de la reine, Scarpia interroge Cavaradossi en présence du bourreau et d'un juge. Comme le peintre nie toute connaissance d'Angelotti, Scarpia ordonne qu'il soit torturé dans une pièce attenante. Questionnée, Tosca refuse aussi de révéler la cachette d'Angelotti jusqu'à ce que, entendant les plaintes de son amant, elle mentionne le puits se trouvant dans le jardin. La torture s'arrête et Sciarrone entre avec la nouvelle que Napoléon a triomphé à la bataille de Marengo.

Cavaradossi, qui entame un hymne à la

gloire de la liberté, est remis aux arrêts par Scarpia et emmené pour être fusillé à l'aube. Scarpia promet alors de remettre le peintre en liberté à condition que Tosca cède à ses avances. Spoletta revient pour annoncer qu'Angelotti s'est tué lorsqu'ils l'ont découvert, et Tosca accepte de se donner à Scarpia. Ce dernier dit à Spoletta de simuler une exécution "comme pour Palermi". Tosca insiste pour qu'il rédige un sauf-conduit pour Cavaradossi et elle; mais, tandis qu'il s'exécute, la jeune femme, voyant un couteau, le frappe avec.

Acte III

Une terrasse du château Saint-Ange

On entend un jeune berger chanter en conduisant son troupeau. Cavaradossi demande plume et papier pour écrire une lettre d'adieu à Tosca. Spoletta entre accompagné de Tosca, puis se retire. Tosca montre le sauf-conduit à Cavaradossi qui est ravi et soulagé. Tosca est soucieuse de voir son amant bien jouer son rôle au moment de l'exécution. Il ne peut guère faire autrement, car il est tué – les fusils étaient chargés. La nouvelle du meurtre de Scarpia s'est répandue et ses agents sont à la poursuite de Tosca. Elle monte sur les remparts et se jette dans le vide.

Après avoir étudié au Royal Northern College of Music grâce à une bourse de Peter Moores, **Jane Eaglen** est aujourd'hui une personnalité marquante de l'opéra. Elle a connu un succès inégalé dans des rôles aussi différents que ceux de Norma (notamment avec Scottish Opera, le Seattle Opera, le Los Angeles Opera, l'Opéra national de Paris-Bastille et dans le cadre du Festival de Ravenne) et Brünnhilde (avec Scottish Opera, le Lyric Opera de Chicago, Opera Pacific, le Teatro alla Scala à Milan ainsi qu'à San Francisco et Vienne); son soprano dramatique remarquable lui a valu des critiques dithyrambiques dans le monde entier. Parmi ses autres rôles majeurs, notons Isolde, La Gioconda, Donna Anna, Turandot, Amelia, Tosca et Ariadne. Ses interprétations à l'opéra font l'unanimité en Europe comme sur le continent américain, au Metropolitan Opera à New York, à l'Opéra d'état de Vienne, au Teatro Colon à Buenos Aires, à l'English National Opera ainsi que sur les scènes de Munich, Bologne et Madrid. Elle chante aussi en concert dans le monde entier, s'associant à d'illustres musiciens comme Sir Simon Rattle, Klaus Tennstedt, Bernard Haitink, Claudio Abbado, Zubin Mehta, Daniel Barenboim et James Conlon, pour n'en citer que quelques-uns. Elle travaille souvent en studio et a

enregistré entre autres le rôle-titre de *Medea in Corinto* pour Opera Rara et, pour Chandos en collaboration avec la Peter Moores Foundation, la présente version de *Tosca* qui remporta un prix de la Music Industries Association.

Né au Pays de Galles de parents irlandais et gallois, **Dennis O'Neill**, un spécialiste des œuvres de Verdi, compte aujourd'hui parmi les plus grands ténors au monde. Il collabore depuis longtemps avec le Royal Opera à Covent Garden où il a récemment interprété Rodolfo (*La bohème*), le duc de Mantoue (*Rigoletto*), Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*), Edgardo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Gustavo (*Un ballo in maschera*), Otello, Don Carlos et Radames (*Aida*).

En Amérique du nord, il a chanté au Metropolitan Opera (*La traviata*, *Aida*, *La bohème*, *Rigoletto*, *Cavalleria rusticana* et *Pagliacci*, ces deux derniers titres, chose rare, figurant au même programme), au Lyric Opera de Chicago, à l'Opéra de San Francisco, à ceux de San Diego et Vancouver, et il s'est produit en concert avec l'Orchestre symphonique de Philadelphie et ceux de Cleveland, Montréal et Ottawa, participant également au Festival de Cincinnati. Il est fréquemment invité à travailler avec l'Opéra

d'état de Bavière à Munich où il a chanté entre autres dans *Il trovatore*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Tosca* et *Simon Boccanegra*. Il s'est également produit sur d'autres scènes lyriques européennes, à Vienne, Berlin, Bonn, Cologne, Hambourg, Nice, Zurich, Paris, Oslo, Bruxelles, Vérone, Turin et Barcelone.

Parmi ses nombreux enregistrements, notons des disques en soliste, le Requiem de Verdi avec Sir Colin Davis, *La fanciulla del West* avec Leonard Slatkin, ses vidéos de *Der Rosenkavalier* avec Sir George Solti, de *Die Fledermaus* avec Kiri Te Kanawa sous la baguette de Plácido Domingo, de *Macbeth* avec Giuseppe Sinopoli et *Mefistofele* avec l'Opéra de San Francisco. Pour Chandos, en collaboration avec la Peter Moores Foundation, il a enregistré *La bohème*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci* et, en soliste, un disque d'airs d'opéra.

Gregory Yurisich est aujourd'hui l'un des plus grands barytons du monde; son répertoire comprend les rôles-titres de *Nabucco*, *Rigoletto*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Falstaff* et *Guillaume Tell* de même que les rôles de Giorgio Germont, Iago, Stankar (*Stiffelio*), Amonasro, Barak (*Die Frau ohne Schatten*), Escamillo, Telramund (*Lohengrin*), Balstrode (*Peter Grimes*), Sharpless, les quatre scélérats dans *Les Contes*

d'Hoffmann, Alfio (*Cavalleria rusticana*) et Tonio (*Pagliacci*). Sa carrière l'a mené sur les scènes lyriques et dans les festivals du monde entier, depuis le Royal Opera à Covent Garden, l'English National Opera, le San Francisco Opera, Opera Australia, le Los Angeles Opera, le Victoria State Opera, l'Opéra de Lyon, le Châtelet théâtre musical à Paris, l'Opéra national de Paris-Bastille, le Théâtre royal de la Monnaie à Bruxelles, le Washington Opera et l'Opéra d'état Unter den Linden à Berlin jusqu'au Festival de Bregenz, au Festival international de Melbourne, au Festival international d'Edimbourg et au Festival des arts de Hong Kong, se produisant aussi sur la scène lyrique ou en concert à Belfast, Genève, Munich, Athènes, Tel Aviv et Brisbane. Il a travaillé avec les plus grands noms, Dame Joan Sutherland, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Plácido Domingo, José Carreras, Dennis O'Neill, Zubin Mehta, Sir Charles Mackerras et Sir Roger Norrington entre autres; il a fait plusieurs enregistrements, disques et vidéos, participant entre autres à celui de *Tosca* réalisé par Chandos en collaboration avec la Peter Moores Foundation, un enregistrement qui reçut un Prix de la Music Industries Association.

Né à Canterbury, **Peter Rose** étudia la musique à l'Université d'East Anglia puis fut l'élève d'Ellis Keeler à la Guildhall School of Music and Drama à Londres. Il fit ses débuts sur la scène lyrique dans le rôle du Commandeur avec le Glyndebourne Festival Opera à Hong Kong en 1986 et fut première basse du Welsh National Opera jusqu'en 1989. Il a chanté avec les principaux chefs d'orchestre dans le monde et les plus grandes troupes lyriques britanniques comme The Royal Opera à Covent Garden, l'English National Opera et Scottish Opera. Sa carrière internationale l'a conduit au Metropolitan Opera à New York, à l'Opéra-Comique à Paris, à l'Opéra d'état allemand à Berlin, à l'Opéra d'état de Hambourg, à l'Opéra d'état de Vienne, au Lyric Opera de Chicago et au New Israeli Opera à Tel Aviv de même qu'à San Francisco, Amsterdam, Cologne, Rome et Seattle. Il a aussi participé aux plus grands festivals dans le monde entier, à Orange, Aix-en-Provence, Istanbul, Bregenz et à Florence (Maggio musicale). Il a été entre autres Ramfis, Fasolt, Hunding, Pimène, Osmin, le roi Marke, le baron Ochs, Rocco, Bottom (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Banquo (*Macbeth*), Cadmus/Somnus (*Semele*), Gessler (*Guillaume Tell*), Mustafa (*L'italiana in Algeri*)

et Walter (*Luisa Miller*). Parmi ses nombreux enregistrements, notons pour Chandos, en collaboration avec la Peter Moores Foundation, la présente version primée de *Tosca* et *Il barbiere di Siviglia*.

Andrew Shore est considéré comme le principal baryton bouffe en Grande-Bretagne aujourd'hui, remarquable pour ses talents de chanteur et d'acteur. Il a travaillé avec la plupart des grandes compagnies britanniques, comme l'English National Opera, le Royal Opera à Covent Garden, Opera North, le Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Scottish Opera et le Welsh National Opera, se produisant sur de nombreuses scènes lyriques internationales, comme l'Opéra de San Diego, le New Israeli Opera, l'Opéra national de Paris-Bastille, l'Opéra-Comique, le Gran teatre del Liceu à Barcelone ainsi qu'à Lyon, Nantes, Montpellier, Copenhague, Amsterdam, Vancouver et Ottawa. Il a tenu entre autres les rôles-titres de *Wozzeck*, *Falstaff*, *King Priam*, *Gianni Schicchi* et *Don Pasquale*, chantant aussi *Dulcamara* (*L'elisir d'amore*), *Don Alfonso* (*Così fan tutte*), *Figaro* (*Le nozze di Figaro*), *Papageno*, le roi *Dodon* (*Le Coq d'or*), *Leandro* (*L'Amour des trois oranges*), *Dikoj* (*Katja Kabanova*), *Dr Kolenaty* (*L'Affaire*

Makropoulos), *Chichkov* (*Souvenirs de la maison des morts*), *Frank* (*Die Fledermaus*), le baron (*La Vie parisienne*), le baron *Trombonok* (*Il viaggio a Reims*), *Varlaam* (*Boris Godounov*) et *Faninal* (*Der Rosenkavalier*). Pour Chandos en collaboration avec la Peter Moores Foundation, il a enregistré *L'elisir d'amore*, *Don Pasquale*, *La bohème* et des extraits de *Der Rosenkavalier*, de même qu'*Il barbiere di Siviglia* et cette version primée de *Tosca*.

Le ténor **John Daszak** fit ses études à la Guildhall School of Music and Drama à Londres, au Royal Northern College of Music avec Robert Alderson grâce à une bourse de Peter Moores et à l'Accademia d'Arte Lirica en Italie. Il étudie à présent avec David Pollard. Parmi ses rôles lyriques, notons, pour le Welsh National Opera, *Don José* (*Carmen*), *Steva* (*Jenùfa*), le rôle-titre de *Peter Grimes* dans la mise en scène de Peter Stein et, pour l'English National Opera, *Steva*, *Achilles* (*King Priam*), *Dimitri* (*Boris Godounov*), dans la mise en scène de Francesca Zambello), *Skouratov* (*Souvenirs de la maison des morts*), *Jack* (*Mahagonny*), *Pang* (*Turandot*) et *Max* (*Der Freischütz*), mis en scène par David Pountney). Sa carrière internationale l'a conduit à l'Opéra des Pays-Bas, à l'Opéra de Nice (Le grand prisonnier

dans *Souvenirs de la maison des morts*), à Opera Zuid (Michel dans *Julietta* de Martinů), à Lausanne (Jack) et au Festival de Bregenz (Yannakos dans *La Passion grecque* de Martinů). Il chante fréquemment en concert et a participé à des versions de concert d'*Alzira* de Verdi (Royal Opera House à Covent Garden), d'*Oberon* (sous Richard Hickox), de *Renard* de Stravinsky (Birmingham Royal Ballet), d'*Otello* (sous Sir Colin Davis) et de *Candide* (sous Kent Nagano). Il compte parmi ses enregistrements cette version primée de *Tosca* pour Chandos en collaboration avec la Peter Moores Foundation.

Le baryton **Christopher Booth-Jones** débuta sa carrière lyrique en tournée avec le Welsh National Opera for All avant de se produire avec le Welsh National Opera, le Glyndebourne Festival Opera et le Glyndebourne Touring Opera, Kent Opera et l'English Music Theatre. Pour l'English National Opera, il a été *Papageno*, *Guglielmo* (*Così fan tutte*), *Dr Falke*, *Schaunard*, *Denisov* (*Guerre et Paix*), *Silvio*, *Pantalone* (*L'Amour des trois oranges*), *Elviro* (*Serse*), le comte *Almaviva* (*Le nozze di Figaro*), le maître de musique (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), *Faninal* (*Der Rosenkavalier*) et *Giorgio Germont*. Il s'est

également produit avec le Royal Opera à Covent Garden et avec Opera North, interprétant entre autres les rôles du comte *Danilo* (*Die lustige Witwe*), d'*Ottokar* (*Der Freischütz*), du Père (*Hänsel und Gretel*), de *Demetrius* (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) et de *Claudio* (*Béatrice et Bénédict*). Parmi ses enregistrements, notons *Carmen*, *Billy Budd*, *Serse*, *Pacific Overtures* de Sondheim et, pour Chandos en collaboration avec la Peter Moores Foundation, *Giulio Cesare*.

Ashley Holland fit ses études à l'université de Warwick et au Royal Northern College of Music où, boursier de Peter Moores, il remporta le concours Webster Booth/Esso et la Médaille d'or Curtis. Il a récemment remporté le prestigieux concours lyrique RANIERI I cestelli à l'Opéra d'état de Hambourg. Il est actuellement l'un des principaux barytons de l'English National Opera avec qui il a chanté entre autres *Belcore* (*L'elisir d'amore*), *Lescaut* (*Manon*), *Zurga* (*Les Pêcheurs de perles*), *Sharpless* (*Madama Butterfly*), *Guglielmo* (*Così fan tutte*) et *Cecil* (*Maria Suarda*). Il a également été *Don Giovanni* pour l'Opéra de Calgary, *Bosun* (*Billy Budd*) pour l'Opéra national de Paris-Bastille et il a participé à des versions de concert de *Linda di Chamounix* et

Candide. Parmi ses projets les plus récents et ceux à venir, notons Ford (*Falstaff*) au Semper Opera à Dresde, Masetto pour le Royal Opera à Covent Garden, Enrico (*Lucia di Lammermoor*) au Lyric Opera de Chicago et Ottokar (*Der Freischütz*) et Marcello (*La bohème*) à l'English National Opera. Pour Chandos, en collaboration avec la Peter Moores Foundation, il a enregistré *L'elisir d'amore* ainsi que cette version primée de *Tosca*.

Durant sa carrière de chanteur, Geoffrey Mitchell aborda un répertoire remarquablement varié, depuis la musique ancienne jusqu'à la musique contemporaine, se produisant en Scandinavie, en Allemagne, dans l'ancienne Tchécoslovaquie, au Canada et en Australasie. Après avoir fait ses premières armes de chef d'orchestre avec la BBC, il décida de prendre une part active dans ce domaine avec ses propres chanteurs et fonda le **Geoffrey Mitchell Choir**. L'ensemble travaille depuis longtemps avec Opera Rara pour qui il a réalisé plus de trente enregistrements. Ce Chœur ne cesse d'élargir sa réputation, travaillant avec la BBC et plusieurs maisons de disques internationales. Pour Chandos, le Geoffrey Mitchell Choir a participé à plusieurs enregistrements pour Opera in English, une

série de disques très prisés financée par la Peter Moores Foundation.

Le **Peter Kay Children's Choir** offre à de jeunes chanteurs l'occasion de se produire à l'opéra, en concert, dans des publicités (télévision et radio), lors de concerts de bienfaisance, dans le cadre des productions du Glyndebourne Festival Opera et celles de théâtres au Royaume-Uni, en France, en Belgique, en Hollande, en Allemagne, Italie, Espagne et aux États-Unis. Les membres sont recrutés sur invitation et sur audition parmi les jeunes ayant déjà chanté pour l'English National Opera où Peter Kay est responsable des enfants, parmi les membres du Finchley Children's Music Group, du New London Children's Choir, du Centre for Young Musicians, des Jennifer Lilleystone Singers et parmi les enfants des écoles et autres chorales de Londres et du sud de l'Angleterre. Pour le Concert du Millénaire au Dome à Londres, c'est ce Chœur qui fournit les solistes dans *A New Beginning* de John Tavener. Le Chœur travaillera fréquemment avec l'English National Opera et le Welsh National Opera tout au long de l'an 2000.

Depuis ses excellents débuts en 1945, lorsqu'il fut fondé par Walter Legge essentiellement

pour jouer dans des enregistrements, le **Philharmonia Orchestra** n'a cessé d'attirer certains des plus grands chefs d'orchestre du XXe siècle. Certains furent associés de près à l'Orchestre: Otto Klemperer (son tout premier chef principal), Lorin Maazel, Riccardo Muti, Giuseppe Sinopoli, Carlo Maria Giulini, Sir Andrew Davis, Vladimir Ashkenazy et Esa-Pekka Salonen. Sous la direction de leur chef principal actuel, Christoph von Dohnanyi, et celle de Leonard Slatkin, souvent invité à prendre sa relève, l'Orchestre s'est fermement installé au cœur de la vie musicale britannique, non seulement à Londres puisqu'il est orchestre en résidence au Royal Festival Hall, mais aussi en province où il se produit régulièrement.

Le Philharmonia Orchestra a remporté plusieurs prix importants et soulevé l'enthousiasme des critiques pour la vitalité et la chaleur exceptionnelle de son jeu. On a aussi fait l'éloge de ses programmes novateurs dans lesquels l'ensemble s'engage à interpréter et commander des œuvres nouvelles par les plus grands compositeurs contemporains, comme James MacMillan, son actuel compositeur en résidence.

L'Orchestre fait souvent des tournées internationales; aucun autre orchestre

symphonique dans le monde ne possède une discographie aussi importante, avec plus de mille disques à son actif. Notons entre autres plusieurs disques d'airs d'opéra pour Opera Rara ainsi que onze intégrales d'opéras (*Ugo, conte di Parigi*, *Ne m'oubliez pas*, *Emilia di Liverpool*, *L'assedio di Calais*, *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* et *Maria de Rudenz* de Donizetti, *Dinorah* de Meyerbeer, *Medea in Corinto* de Mayr, *Orazi e Curiazi* de Mercadante, *Maria, regina d'Inghilterra* de Pacini et *Otello* de Rossini). L'Orchestre a fait de nombreux disques pour Chandos, en particulier, dans la série Opera in English financée par la Peter Moores Foundation, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Faust*, *La bohème*, cette version primée de *Tosca* et six récitals solistes d'airs d'opéra (avec Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny et John Tomlinson, les trois derniers devant paraître en 2000.)

Après avoir étudié avec Sergiu Celibidache, **David Parry** commença sa carrière comme assistant de Sir John Pritchard. Il fit ses débuts avec l'English Music Theatre avant de devenir l'un des chefs d'orchestre au Städtische Bühnen à Dortmund et à Opera North. Directeur musical d'Opera 80 de 1983 à 1987,

il est directeur musical d'Almeida Opera depuis sa fondation en 1992.

Sa carrière, nationale et internationale, est extrêmement remplie, aussi bien sur la scène lyrique qu'en concert. Il a dirigé plusieurs productions de l'English National Opera et collabore régulièrement avec le Philharmonia Orchestra. C'est avec *Così fan tutte* qu'il fit ses débuts au Festival de Glyndebourne en 1996, une scène qu'il retrouva l'an dernier pour diriger la création mondiale de *Flight* de Jonathan Dove.

Il séjourne fréquemment en Espagne où il a dirigé en concert la plupart des grands orchestres espagnols. C'est lui qui dirigea la première espagnole de *Peter Grimes* à Madrid et en 1996 la première production espagnole de *The Rake's Progress*. Il a dirigé en Allemagne, en Suède, aux Pays-Bas, au Festival de Pesaro en Italie, au Festival international de Hong-Kong, au Japon pour une tournée de *Carmen* et au Mexique avec l'Orchestre symphonique d'UNAM. Il a récemment dirigé plusieurs

nouvelles productions dont *Fidelio* au Festival de Nouvelle-Zélande, *Maria Stuarda* au Théâtre de Bâle et *Lucia di Lammermoor* avec le New Israeli Opera.

En studio, il a participé entre autres à la production de la BBC Television de *Der Vampyr* de Marschner, dirigeant aussi vingt et une intégrales d'opéras financées par la Peter Moores Foundation. Plusieurs de ces intégrales furent enregistrées pour Opera Rara et primées, *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* de Donizetti recevant en Belgique le Prix Cecilia. Pour Chandos, Parry a dirigé six enregistrements d'airs d'opéra (avec Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny et John Tomlinson, les trois derniers devant paraître durant 2000) de même que *Faust*, *Don Pasquale*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *La bohème*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci* et des extraits de *Der Rosenkavalier* sans parler du présent enregistrement primé de *Tosca*, tous ces enregistrements étant réalisés en collaboration avec la Peter Moores Foundation.

Giacomo Puccini: Tosca

Fu nel 1889 che il trentacinquenne Giacomo Puccini vide, due volte, Sarah Bernhardt nel melodramma di Victorien Sardou, *La Tosca* (dell'anno 1887), e lo riconobbe quale un soggetto che assai avrebbe desiderato convertire in opera. Il dramma, inteso come strumento per l'arte della Bernhardt, offriva all'attrice ampie possibilità di gagliardi istrionismi. La trama, posta in un ambiente pseudo-storico, le assegnava il ruolo di cantante lirica: capricciosa, gelosa, amorosa, vulnerabile, micidiale, affranta e, in un ultimo gesto teatrale, suicida allorché si getta dai bastioni di Castel Sant'Angelo.

Vedendo il dramma recitato in francese, lingua che Puccini conosceva appena, egli afferrò la potenzialità de *La Tosca* come soggetto che ben si adattava alla scena lirica, dato che le opere non comunicano con le sole parole.

A questo momento Puccini aveva composto due opere, *Le Villi* e *Edgar*: in ambedue i casi il successo non era stato incondizionato. Eppure tutt'e due avevano dimostrato sufficienti promesse da persuadere l'editore musicale milanese Giulio Ricordi a continuare a pagare a Puccini un modesto appannaggio

nella speranza che producesse un genuino successo, tale da fruttare ricchi profitti per Casa Ricordi e generosi diritti d'autore per il compositore. Spronato dalla convinzione che *La Tosca* di Sardou offriva materiale oltremodo promettente per un'opera, nell'autunno del 1890 Puccini persuase Ricordi a scoprire dall'agente parigino di Sardou a quali condizioni Sardou avrebbe venduto i diritti per una versione operistica del suo dramma. Nel gennaio 1891, quando pareva raggiunto un accordo sui diritti, Ricordi, dietro suggerimento di Puccini, diede al librettista Luigi Illica il compito di ridurre il melodramma in cinque atti di Sardou in un testo per un'opera in tre atti. Il 13 dicembre 1891 un annuncio che Puccini avrebbe composto *La Tosca* apparve sulla *Gazzetta Musicale*, organo interno di Casa Ricordi.

Tali prospettive svaporarono improvvisamente nel dicembre 1892 allorché Sardou, che aveva in sé una natura profondamente pratica, avendo ascoltato alcuni estratti della musica di Puccini decise che non appariva così promettente come Ricordi aveva cercato di prospettarla, ma –

molto probabilmente – l'autore, che aveva preteso una percentuale sui proventi del *La Tosca* operistica, era rimasto deluso dalla negligibile capacità di guadagno dimostrata da *Le Villi* e da *Edgar*. Ricordi non informò Puccini di questo sviluppo. Frattanto Puccini aveva composto *Manon Lescaut*, nonostante la popolare versione di Massenet dello stesso soggetto non avesse ancora dieci anni di vita. Nei suoi sforzi di promuovere la carriera di Puccini Giulio Ricordi persino s'impadronì dei diritti italiani della *Manon* di Massenet con l'intenzione di precludere la sua rappresentazione in Italia fin quando la *Manon Lescaut* di Puccini non si fosse affermata nel repertorio. Presentata al Teatro Regio di Torino nel febbraio 1893 *Manon Lescaut* registrò un successo incoraggiante.

Il 29 luglio 1893 Ricordi scrisse all'agente di Sardou che Puccini, tuttora all'oscuro dell'opinione di Sardou, era offeso dal lungo silenzio e si era interamente ritirato dal progetto. Ma nell'ottobre 1893 Sardou, che ovviamente aveva ricevuto buoni rendiconti del lancio di *Manon Lescaut*, informò Ricordi che, dopotutto, Puccini sarebbe stata la persona adatta a comporre *Tosca*. Esaltato dall'entusiasmo con il quale la sua *Manon Lescaut* era stata ricevuta, Puccini interpretò il

subitaneo cambiamento d'opinione di Sardou come un gesto grossolano ed un insulto personale. Il mutamento d'animo di Puccini lasciò il libretto scritto da Illica per *Tosca* sulle spalle di Ricordi. (A proposito, il titolo dell'opera omette l'articolo "La" che appare nel dramma). A questo punto l'astuto editore si mise a cercare d'interessare al soggetto un altro compositore della sua scuderia. È solo a questo momento che entra in argomento Alberto Franchetti (1860–1942).

Un certo numero di scrittori che hanno partecipato nello sport, un tempo popolare, di denigrare Puccini, hanno affermato che l'interesse di Puccini al soggetto della *Tosca* venne risvegliato solo quando seppe che Franchetti stava lavorando, e che Puccini e Ricordi ingannarono Franchetti circa la sua adattabilità, con ciò lasciando a Puccini via libera per la sua realizzazione. Che tale impressione sia falsa è stato pienamente dimostrato da Deborah Burton che ha fatto minuziose ricerche negli archivi di Ricordi per quanto si riferisce alla composizione di *Tosca*. Nel luglio 1894 il libretto di Illica venne trasferito al fascaloso Franchetti che acquistò i diritti da Sardou per 25.000 lire.

Franchetti aveva fatto un po' di scalpore nel 1892, allorché, raccomandato da Verdi, aveva

vinto una commissione dal Teatro Carlo Felice di Genova per un'opera su Colombo in commemorazione del quattrocentesimo anniversario della partenza del navigatore al largo dell'oceano e la sua scoperta di quello che fu rivelato essere l'emisfero occidentale.

Il successo che Franchetti ebbe con il suo *Cristoforo Colombo* dimostrò che il suo talento traeva maggior vantaggio da un soggetto spettacolare che non dall'azione drammatica reciproca dei personaggi. Fu lo stesso Franchetti a decidere che *Tosca* non era un soggetto adatto alle sue particolari capacità, e nel marzo 1895 stava discutendo con Illica la possibilità di modificare il libretto. Due mesi dopo aveva definitivamente abbandonato il progetto giacché, come spiegò in seguito, "Non vi sentivo la musica".

Nel frattempo Puccini stava componendo *La bohème* (Torino, 1896) su libretto di Illica e Giuseppe Giacosa, opera che finì per avere persino maggior successo della *Manon Lescaut*. Nel luglio 1895 Ricordi si apprestò a persuadere Puccini che il libretto per *Tosca* di Illica, ormai nuovamente in sue mani dopo che Franchetti aveva definitivamente deciso di non metterlo in musica, si presentava come ideale successore di *Bohème*. Passò del tempo prima che Puccini iniziasse a lavorarci.

Una delle idee più utili – e per di più vantaggiose – che ebbe Giulio Ricordi fu quella di mandare il compositore a presiedere alla presentazione delle sue opere nei loro primi allestimenti in importanti teatri, affinché si potesse stabilire una tradizione autentica. E così, durante i due anni successivi, Puccini passò gran parte del suo tempo a presiedere alla presentazione de *La bohème* in diversi centri. Nel giugno del 1898 era a Parigi al tempo in cui *La bohème*, tradotta in francese, veniva rappresentata per la prima volta localmente all'Opéra-Comique. Mentre lui e Ricordi erano a Parigi, fecero una visita di circostanza al sessantasettenne Sardou, e fu in questa occasione che l'entusiasmo di Puccini per *Tosca* venne definitivamente risvegliato. Illica, in collaborazione con Giacosa, rifece il libretto per adattarlo all'esigente senso del teatro del compositore. Puccini persino collaborò personalmente al libretto, fornendo le parole per uno dei più popolari momenti dell'opera, l'aria del tenore dell'Atto III "E lucevan le stelle" (All the stars shone in heaven).

Alla prima, che ebbe luogo al Teatro Costanzi a Roma, il 14 gennaio 1900, *Tosca* ebbe grande successo, e sei mesi dopo fu presentata a Londra, e l'anno successivo a New

York. Da allora si è dimostrata una delle più durevoli delle opere di Puccini, ed ogni soprano con talento drammatico è attratta dal personaggio come da una calamita.

Tre arie, due per il tenore, e l'aria del soprano nell'Atto II "Vissi d'arte, vissi d'amore" (Life has taught me singing and loving), sono i momenti più famosi della partitura. Esse sono fra i pezzi d'opera più frequentemente incisi di tutto il repertorio lirico esistente nel mondo e s'incontrano spesso come popolari bis in programmi di concerti. Hanno in comune certe qualità: il lirismo lussureggiante di Puccini e la sua espressività emotiva. Inoltre, sono relativamente brevi (nessuna di esse dura più di tre minuti circa) giacché hanno lo scopo di non intralciare l'impulso drammatico. Oltre questi tre pezzi solistici, soprano e tenore partecipano in due duetti d'amore di grande effetto: uno nel primo atto e l'altro nell'ultimo, poco prima della non proprio finta esecuzione.

Il carattere del sadistico Barone Scarpia ha pure i suoi momenti solistici, ma vista la sua malefica natura i momenti prominenti del baritono raramente s'incontrano nell'opera fuori del contesto dell'azione. Il primo di questi è alla conclusione del Te Deum

nell'Atto I, in cui descrive, su una ripetizione inesorabile nel basso, il suo desiderio di possedere Tosca, mentre i fedeli si uniscono nel cantare un inno alla vittoria. Nell'Atto II, prima che Mario venga portato nella stanza per essere interrogato, Scarpia concisamente elucida il suo atteggiamento, brutalmente edonistico, verso la vita e i suoi piaceri. E più in là, nell'Atto II, la sua risposta alla domanda di Tosca di quanto costerebbe salvare la vita a Mario, è un breve sfogo del suo istinto predatorio inserito in una linea vocale ascendente.

E a proposito di Scarpia, il tema più eminentemente ricorrente nella partitura è connesso al suo carattere. Questo tema è il primo frammento musicale che si senta: una rumorosa sequenza di accordi poco prima che la tela si alzi sull'Atto I. Essi riappaiono, in forma alterata, quando l'amante di Tosca, il pittore Cavaradossi, dice al fuggiasco Angelotti dove nascondersi da Scarpia. E più avanti, nell'Atto I, quando lo stesso Scarpia entra in chiesa, sulla traccia di Angelotti, questi minacciosi accordi si presentano come il suo biglietto da visita. Dopo che egli ha esposto la sua natura ipocrita e lasciva durante il Te Deum, l'atto si conclude con gli accordi di "Scarpia" che squillano minacciosamente. Al

termine dell'Atto II, peraltro, quando Tosca pone le candele intorno al cadavere di Scarpia, gli accordi si sentono di nuovo, ma adesso armonizzati diversamente e suonati "più piano possibile" secondo le istruzioni della partitura.

Un altro tema che ricorre con emozionante effetto è quello che appare dapprima nella sezione in mi maggiore del duetto d'amore di Tosca e Mario Cavaradossi nell'Atto I, che comincia con parole "Mia gelosa!" (Why so jealous?). Secondo una nota nel manoscritto autografo di *Tosca*, sostanzialmente dal fatto che è scritta su un fascicolo separato di carta da musica, questa incantevole melodia è apparentemente il primo pezzo di musica composto da Puccini per quest'opera. Questa melodia ritorna, abbondantemente sviluppata, come accompagnamento alla seconda uscita di scena di Tosca nell'Atto I – dopo il suo conturbante colloquio con Scarpia. Un accenno alla stessa appare nel preludio dell'Atto III, e pochi minuti dopo, direttamente al seguito di "E lucevan le stelle", questo tema serve da base alla musica impetuosa che accompagna l'ingresso di Tosca.

Puccini adopera la musica anche per scopi descrittivi, in modo particolarmente eloquente nel preludio all'Atto III. Non solo sentiamo un pastorello, fuori scena, che canta una

canzonetta nel dialetto locale, ma sentiamo anche, in varie prospettive, campane che suonano, vicine e lontane, mentre sorge il giorno su Castel Sant'Angelo. E Puccini, nell'Atto II, fornisce musica non solo di base per il discorso operistico e per l'atmosfera, ma anche come suoni che i personaggi sulla scena sentono come musica fuori scena, com'è il caso della canzonetta del pastorello. Vicino all'inizio dell'Atto II un'orchestrina fra le quinte sta suonando una gavotta. E poco dopo, apparentemente dagli appartamenti della Regina in Palazzo Farnese, si sentono Tosca ed un coro che cantano una cantata per celebrare una vittoria che, ironicamente, più tardi risulta essere stata una sconfitta per la regale armata.

Altri esempi di musica atmosferica sono nell'Atto I, ambientato nella chiesa romana di Sant'Andrea della Valle. Poco prima dell'arrivo di Mario, il Sagrestano si genuflette e recita l'Angelus, in un tempo marcato *Andante religioso*. Alla fine di quell'atto, mentre la chiesa si riempie di fedeli, si canta un Te Deum, mentre afesta suonano le campane e tuona il cannone.

In una trama così fitta di azione intensa e chiaramente motivata, c'è appena tempo per espansività lirica. Uno dei più preziosi doni di Puccini quale compositore di opere liriche è il

suo acuto senso del cosiddetto “orologio teatrale”. Egli comprese qual’era la perfetta durata di qualsiasi tipo di episodio. Per esempio, la repentinità con la quale veniamo scaraventati nell’azione all’inizio dell’Atto I è innetto contrasto con il preludio dell’Atto III, tranquillo e pieno di scampanii, in cui il passo moderato dell’inizio crea un senso di ansiosa sospensione che verrà risolta solo dall’improvvisa violenza dei pochi minuti finali.

Tosca è un’opera che ha avuto la sua parte di detrattori, di critici che provano avversione per il melodramma della trama. È però un errore confondere l’opera con la sua storia. Tutte le opere sono un amalgama in cui musica e trama si sono fusi inseparabilmente. La partitura pucciniana, così finemente controllata, tramutai meschini personaggi di Sardou in esseri memorabilmente espressivi, interamente umani nella loro forza e nelle loro debolezze. Oggi non ci si potrebbe menomamente aspettare d’incontrare *La Tosca* di Sardou sulla scena di un teatro di prosa, ma l’opera di Puccini è un cardine del repertorio attivo e dà tutte le prove di volerci restare per un bel po’ di tempo.

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La trama

Atto I

Interno della chiesa di Sant’Andrea della Valle
Angelotti entra di fretta nella chiesa e s’infilta nella cappella privata della famiglia Attavanti. Sua sorella, che è sposata con il Marchese Attavanti, ha nascosto per lui la chiave della cappella mentre era in chiesa a pregare. Entra il Sagrestano e si mette a sciacquare dei pennelli appartenenti a Cavaradossi che sta terminando un dipinto della Maddalena. Il pittore ha mescolato le grazie della sua amata Tosca con la bellezza di una donna sconosciuta che ha visto in preghiera nella chiesa. Quando esce il Sagrestano Angelotti emerge ed è riconosciuto da Cavaradossi che chiude a chiave la porta della chiesa. Angelotti spiega che è appena fuggito da Castel Sant’Angelo dove era stato imprigionato per ordine di Scarpia.

Essi vengono interrotti dalla voce di Tosca fuori della chiesa e Angelotti ritorna nella cappella. Cavaradossi fa entrare Tosca che è turbata dal fatto che la Maddalena somiglia alla Marchesa Attavanti. Cavaradossi spiega che l’ha vista in chiesa in preghiera ma che non sapeva chi era e canta con Tosca un duetto d’amore. Quando Tosca è partita

Cavaradossi e Angelotti progettano un piano di fuga per quest’ultimo: a buio egli dovrà affrettarsi, mascherato, alla villa di Cavaradossi e nascondersi in un pozzo nel giardino. Si sente dal Castello un colpo di cannone che segnala la scoperta della fuga di Angelotti. Allo stesso tempo il Sagrestano entra con la (falsa) notizia della sconfitta di Napoleone a Marengo. La chiesa si riempie di una folla festosa e Scarpia entra, accompagnato da Spoletta, ordinando al Sagrestano di fare preparativi per un Te Deum in onore della vittoria. Ingiunge ai suoi sbirri di scovare indizi sul nascondiglio di Angelotti e questi vengono presto trovati: una chiave, un canestro, svuotato delle provviste che Cavaradossi aveva lasciato, ed un ventaglio appartenente alla sorella di Angelotti, la Marchesa Attavanti. Quando torna Tosca Scarpia usa il ventaglio per accendere la sua gelosia ed essa accorre alla villa sperando di sorprendervi la coppia fedigrafa. Scarpia ordina che venga seguita e pregusta la soddisfazione di acchiappare il fuggiasco e godere i favori di Tosca.

Atto II

L’appartamento di Scarpia nel Palazzo Farnese.
Scarpia sta cenando da solo mentre la Regina

Carolina tiene festa al piano di sotto. Entra Spoletta con la notizia che la ricerca nella villa di Cavaradossi non ha portato frutti, ma che lo hanno arrestato e portato al palazzo. Mentre Tosca sta cantando una Cantata in onore della Regina, Scarpia interroga Cavaradossi alla presenza del boia e di un giudice. Cavaradossi nega di sapere alcunché di Angelotti e Scarpia ordina che gli venga applicata la tortura nella stanza adiacente. Anche Tosca, quando viene interrogata, si rifiuta di rivelare il nascondiglio di Angelotti fin quando, udendo i gemiti del suo amante, menziona il pozzo nel giardino. Viene sospesa la tortura ed entra Sciarone con la notizia della vittoria di Napoleone a Marengo.

Cavaradossi esplode in un inno alla libertà e di conseguenza Scarpia lo fa mettere di nuovo agli arresti ed egli viene portato via per essere fucilato all’alba. Scarpia allora promette di far liberare il pittore a condizione che Tosca si sottometta ai suoi desideri. Spoletta torna con la notizia che Angelotti si è suicidato quando lo hanno scoperto e Tosca acconsente a cedere alle voglie di Scarpia. Questi dice a Spoletta di preparare una finta esecuzione “come nel caso di Palermi”. Tosca insiste che egli firmi un salvacondotto per Cavaradossi e per lei. Mentre egli lo sta scrivendo Tosca scorge un coltello e lo pugnala.

Atto III

Uno spalto di Castel Sant'Angelo.

Si sente cantare un pastorello che guida il gregge. Cavaradossi chiede carta e penna per scrivere una lettera d'addio a Tosca. Spoletta appare con Tosca e poi parte. Tosca mostra a Cavaradossi il salvacondotto ed egli è racconsolato e felice. Tosca è ansiosa che il suo amante reciti bene la sua parte quando arriva il momento dell'esecuzione, ciò che egli fa con naturalezza giacché i moschetti sono caricati ed egli viene ucciso. È giunta notizia dell'assassinio di Scarpia e gli sbirri sono alla caccia di Tosca. Ella sale sui bastioni del castello e si getta nel vuoto.

Traduzione: Marcella Barzetti

Borsista Peter Moores al Royal Northern College of Music, **Jane Eaglen** attualmente possiede una delle reputazioni più formidabili nel mondo dell'opera. Ha goduto di un successo unico nei ruoli contrastati di Norma (in particolare alla Scottish Opera, Seattle Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Opéra national de Paris-Bastille e al Festival di Ravenna) e Brunilde (Scottish Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Opera Pacific, Teatro alla Scala di Milano e a San Francisco e Vienna), il suo è

un soprano drammatico dai sorprendenti risultati, che si è guadagnato critiche spettacolari in tutto il mondo. Altri ruoli principali da lei interpretati sono Isolde, La Gioconda, Donna Anna, Turandot, Amelia, Tosca e Ariadne, e le sue apparizioni nei teatri lirici di tutta l'Europa e dell'America del Nord e del Sud, tra i quali The Metropolitan Opera, New York, Opera nazionale di Vienna, Teatro Colon, Buenos Aires, English National Opera e nei teatri lirici di Monaco, Bologna e Madrid, le hanno conquistato un unanime consenso. I suoi concerti sui palcoscenici di tutto il mondo hanno comportato apparizioni con Sir Simon Rattle, Klaus Tennstedt, Bernard Haitink, Claudio Abbado, Zubin Mehta, Daniel Barenboim e James Conlon tra molti altri illustri musicisti. È un'artista attiva nelle registrazioni, le cui interpretazioni includono i ruoli della protagonista in *Medea in Corinto* di Mayr per Opera Rara e, per Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation, questa *Tosca* che ha vinto il *Music Industries Association Award*.

Nato in Galles da genitori irlandesi e gallesi, **Dennis O'Neill** è uno dei principali tenori a livello mondiale e uno specialista nei lavori di Verdi. Ha potuto collaborare a lungo con The

Royal Opera, Covent Garden, dove ha recentemente interpretato, tra gli altri, Rodolfo (*La bohème*), il Duca (*Rigoletto*), Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*), Edgardo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Gustavo (*Un ballo in maschera*), Otello, Don Carlos e Radames (*Aida*).

I suoi impegni nordamericani comprendono The Metropolitan Opera (*La traviata*, *Aida*, *La bohème*, *Rigoletto*, *Cavalleria rusticana* e *Pagliacci*, nelle ultime due, insolitamente, si è esibito nella stessa serata), Lyric Opera di Chicago, San Francisco Opera, San Diego Opera, Vancouver Opera nonché concerti con le Orchestre Sinfoniche di Filadelfia, Cleveland, Montreal e Ottawa e al Festival di Cincinnati. È spesso ospite dell'Opera nazionale della Baviera, a Monaco, dove le sue interpretazioni includono *Il trovatore*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Tosca* e *Simon Boccanegra*. Altrove in Europa ha visitato i teatri lirici di Vienna, Berlino, Bonn, Colonia, Amburgo, Nizza, Zurigo, Parigi, Oslo, Bruxelles, Verona, Torino e Barcellona.

Le sue innumerevoli registrazioni includono album da solista, il Requiem di Verdi con Sir Colin Davis, *La fanciulla del West* con Leonard Slatkin, video di *Der Rosenkavalier* con Sir George Solti, *Die Fledermaus* con Kiri Te Kanawa diretta da Plácido Domingo, *Macbeth*

con Giuseppe Sinopoli e *Mefistofele* con l'Opera di San Francisco. Per Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation ha registrato *La bohème*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci* e un disco da solista di arie d'opera.

Gregory Yurishich è uno dei principali baritoni al mondo il cui repertorio comprende i ruoli da protagonista di *Nabucco*, *Rigoletto*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Falstaff* e *Guillaume Tell* nonché Giorgio Germont, Iago, Stankar (*Stiffelio*), Amonasro, Barak (*Die Frau ohne Schatten*), Escamillo, Telramund (*Lohengrin*), Balstrode (*Peter Grimes*), Sharpless, i quattro villani in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Alfio (*Cavalleria rusticana*) e Tonio (*Pagliacci*). La sua carriera lo ha portato nei teatri lirici e nei festival di tutto il mondo, tra i quali The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, English National Opera, San Francisco Opera, Opera Australia, Los Angeles Opera, Victoria State Opera, Opéra de Lyon, Châtelet théâtre musical, Parigi, Opéra national de Paris-Bastille, Théâtre royal de la Monnaie, Bruxelles, Washington Opera e Opera nazionale Unter den Linden, Berlino, ai Festival di Bregenz, Melbourne International Festival, Edinburgh International Festival e Hong Kong Arts Festival, nonché a palcoscenici per concerti e opere a Belfast,

Ginevra, Monaco, Atene, Tel Aviv e Brisbane. Ha lavorato con artisti del calibro di Dame Joan Sutherland, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Plácido Domingo, José Carreras, Dennis O'Neill, Zubin Mehta, Sir Charles Mackerras e Sir Roger Norrington ed ha inciso varie registrazioni video e sonore, tra cui questa *Tosca* vincitrice del *Music Industries Association Award* per la Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation.

Nato a Canterbury, **Peter Rose** ha studiato musica all'Università dell'East Anglia ed ha studiato con Ellis Keeler alla Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Ha debuttato nell'opera nel ruolo di Commendatore al Glyndebourne Festival Opera di Hong Kong nel 1986 ed è stato basso principale con la Welsh National Opera fino al 1989. Si è esibito diretto dai primi direttori al mondo ed è apparso con tutte le maggiori compagnie liriche britanniche, tra cui The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, English National Opera e Scottish Opera. All'estero ha cantato alla Metropolitan Opera, New York, all'Opéra-Comique, Parigi, Opera nazionale tedesca, Berlino, Opera nazionale di Amburgo, Opera nazionale di Vienna, Lyric Opera di Chicago e New Israeli Opera, Tel Aviv, nonché a San Francisco,

Amsterdam, Colonia, Roma e Seattle. È anche apparso nei principali festival di tutto il mondo, come quelli di Orange, Aix-en-Provence, Istanbul, Bregenz e al Maggio musicale di Firenze. Tra i numerosi ruoli da lui interpretati Ramfis, Fasolt, Hunding, Pimen, Osmin, Re Marke, Barone Ochs, Rocco, Bottom (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Banquo (*Macbeth*), Cadmus/Somnus (*Semele*), Gessler (*Guillaume Tell*), Mustafa (*L'italiana in Algeri*) e Walter (*Luisa Miller*). Le sue numerose registrazioni comprendono, per Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation, questa *Tosca* che si è aggiudicata un premio e *Il barbiere di Siviglia*.

Andrew Shore è riconosciuto come il primo baritono *buffo* della Gran Bretagna e come sorprendente cantante/attore. Ha lavorato per tutte le principali compagnie britanniche, compresa la English National Opera, The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, Opera North, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Scottish Opera e Welsh National Opera, oltre ad essere apparso all'estero con San Diego Opera, New Israeli Opera, Opéra national de Paris-Bastille, Opéra-Comique, Gran teatre del Liceu a Barcellona, nonché a Lione, Nantes, Montpellier, Copenaghen, Amsterdam,

Vancouver e Ottawa. I suoi numerosi impegni hanno incluso il ruolo da protagonista in *Wozzeck*, *Falstaff*, *King Priam*, *Gianni Schicchi* e *Don Pasquale*, nonché Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*), Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*), Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Papageno, Re Dodon (*Le Coq d'or*), Leandro (*L'amore delle tre melarance*), Dikoy (*Kát'a Kabanová*), Dr Kolenaty (*Il caso Makropulos*), Shishkov (*Da una casa di morti*), Frank (*Die Fledermaus*), il Barone (*La Vie parisienne*), il Barone Trombonok (*Il viaggio a Reims*), Varlaam (*Boris Godunov*) e Faninal (*Der Rosenkavalier*). Le sue registrazioni per Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation comprendono *L'elisir d'amore*, *Don Pasquale*, *La bohème* e brani scelti da *Der Rosenkavalier* oltre *Il barbiere di Siviglia* e questa *Tosca*, vincitrice di un premio.

Il tenore **John Daszak** ha studiato alla Guildhall School of Music and Drama, il Royal Northern College of Music diretto da Robert Alderson, dove è stato borsista Peter Moores, e all'Accademia d'Arte Lirica in Italia. Attualmente studia con David Pollard. I suoi ruoli operistici hanno incluso Don José (*Carmen*), Steva (*Jenìfa*) e il ruolo da protagonista nella produzione di Peter Stein del *Peter Grimes* alla Welsh National Opera, e

Steva, Achilles (*King Priam*), Dimitri (la produzione di Francesca Zambello del *Boris Godunov*), Skuratov (*Da una casa di morti*), Jack (*Mahagonny*), Pang (*Turandot*) e Max (la produzione di David Pountney di *Der Freischütz*) alla English National Opera. All'estero è apparso all'Opera dei Paesi Bassi e a l'Opéra de Nice (il condannato in *Da una casa di morti*), Opera Zuid (Michel in *Julietta* di Martinů), a Losanna (Jack) e al Festival di Bregenz (Yannakos in *La Passione greca* di Martinů). Parte di un fitto programma di concerti, ha partecipato a esibizioni concertistiche dell'*Alzira* di Verdi (Royal Opera House, Covent Garden), *Oberon* (diretto da Richard Hickox), *Renard* di Stravinsky (Birmingham Royal Ballet), *Otello* (diretto da Sir Colin Davis) e *Candide* (diretto da Kent Nagano). Le registrazioni includono questa *Tosca* vincitrice di un premio per Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation.

Christopher Booth-Jones, baritono, ha iniziato la sua carriera operistica in tournée con la Welsh National Opera for All e ha continuato ad esibirsi con la Welsh National Opera, al Glyndebourne Festival nonché Touring Operas, Kent Opera e all'English Music Theatre. Ruoli all'English National

Opera hanno incluso Papageno, Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*), Dr Falke, Schaunard, Denisov (*Guerra e pace*), Silvio, Pantaloon (*L'amore delle tre melarance*), Elviro (*Serse*), Il Conte di Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Maestro della musica (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Faninal (*Der Rosenkavalier*), e Giorgio Germont. È apparso anche con la Royal Opera, Covent Garden, e con l'Opera North dove ha interpretato i ruoli del Conte Danilo (*Die lustige Witwe*), Ottokar (*Der Freischütz*), il Padre (*Hänsel und Gretel*), Demetrius (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) e Claudio (*Béatrice et Bénédicte*). Tra le registrazioni: *Carmen*, *Billy Budd*, *Serse*, *Pacific Overtures* di Sondheim e, per Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation, *Giulio Cesare*.

Ashley Holland ha studiato all'Università di Warwick e al Royal Northern College of Music, dove ha vinto la Competizione Webster Booth/Esso e la Medaglia d'oro Curtis (Curtis Gold Medal) ed è stato borsista Peter Moores. Recentemente ha vinto anche la prestigiosa competizione lirica RANIERI I cestelli presso l'Opera nazionale di Amburgo. Attualmente è il principale baritono della English National Opera dove, tra gli altri, ha interpretato i ruoli di Belcore (*L'elisir d'amore*), Lescaut (*Manon*), Zurga (*Les Pêcheurs de perles*), Sharpless

(*Madama Butterfly*), Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) e Cecil (*Maria Stuarda*). Tra le altre apparizioni il Don Giovanni per Calgary Opera, Bosun (*Billy Budd*) per l'Opéra national de Paris-Bastille e alcuni ruoli in esibizioni concertistiche in *Linda di Chamounix* e *Candide*. Tra le apparizioni più recenti e tra quelle future troviamo Ford (*Falstaff*) alla Semper Opera di Dresda, Masetto presso The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, Enrico (*Lucia di Lammermoor*) alla Lyric Opera di Chicago e Ottokar (*Der Freischütz*) e Marcello (*La bohème*) presso la English National Opera. Per Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation ha registrato *L'elisir d'amore* oltre a questa *Tosca* vincitrice di un premio.

La carriera di cantante di Geoffrey Mitchell racchiude un repertorio notevole che spazia dalla musica antica a quella contemporanea e che l'ha portato in Scandinavia, Germania, nella ex Cecoslovacchia, in Canada e Australasia. L'esperienza di direzione degli inizi con la BBC lo ha condotto ad un maggiore coinvolgimento con i suoi stessi cantanti e inoltre alla creazione del **Geoffrey Mitchell Choir**. Le prime registrazioni sono sfociate nel coinvolgimento a lungo termine del Coro con

Opera Rara, per la quale ha inciso più di trenta registrazioni. Il Coro gode di una fama sempre maggiore con ulteriore lavoro dalla BBC e da case discografiche internazionali. Per la Chandos il Geoffrey Mitchell Choir ha partecipato a numerose registrazioni nelle applaudite serie di Opera in English con il patrocinio della Peter Moores Foundation.

Il **Peter Kay Children's Choir** fornisce ai giovani cantanti opportunità in opere, concerti, spot (TV e Radio), eventi di beneficenza, Glyndebourne Festival Opera e produzioni teatrali in Regno Unito, Francia, Belgio, Olanda, Germania, Italia, Spagna e USA. La sua appartenenza avviene per invito e audizione, e porta i partecipanti da coloro che hanno già esperienza nelle interpretazioni canore alla English National Opera dove Peter Kay è Consulente per i bambini, al Finchley Children's Music Group, New London Children's Choir, al Centre for Young Musicians, The Jennifer Lilleystone Singers, a scuole e altri cori di tutta Londra e del sud dell'Inghilterra. Per il Concerto del Millennio al Dome il Coro ha fornito i solisti per *A New Beginning* di John Tavener. Nel 2000 è in programma di cantare anche numerosi ruoli per la English e la Welsh National Operas.

Dai buoni auspici degli inizi nel 1945, quando fu creata da Walter Legge principalmente come orchestra di registrazione, la **Philharmonia Orchestra** ha continuato ad attirare alcuni fra i direttori più importanti del ventesimo secolo. Hanno collaborato più frequentemente con l'Orchestra Otto Klemperer (primo Direttore Principale), Lorin Maazel, Riccardo Muti, Giuseppe Sinopoli, Carlo Maria Giulini, Sir Andrew Davis, Vladimir Ashkenazy e Esa-Pekka Salonen. Attualmente diretta dal Direttore Principale Christoph von Dohnanyi e con Leonard Slatkin in qualità di Direttore Ospite Principale, l'Orchestra ha consolidato la sua posizione centrale nella vita musicale britannica, non solo a Londra dove è Orchestra Residente al Royal Festival Hall, ma anche nella società in senso più ampio attraverso soggiorni sul territorio.

L'Orchestra ha ricevuto diversi premi importanti ed ha conquistato il plauso della critica grazie alla sua vitalità e al calore unico del suono. È stata lodata sia per la sua programmazione innovativa, al centro della quale vi è un impegno ad interpretare e commissionare una musica nuova dei principali compositori viventi al mondo, tra i quali l'attuale Compositore in Visita James MacMillan.

L'Orchestra si reca frequentemente all'estero in tournée ed è l'orchestra sinfonica più registrata al mondo con ben più di 1000 incisioni all'attivo. Tra queste vi sono, per Opera Rara, parecchi dischi di arie d'opera nonché undici opere complete (*Ugo, conte di Parigi*, *Ne m'oubliez pas*, *Emilia di Liverpool*, *L'assedio di Calais*, *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* e *Maria de Rudenz* di Donizetti, *Dinorah* di Meyerbeer, *Medea in Corinto* di Mayr, *Orazi e Curiazi* di Mercadante, *Maria, regina d'Inghilterra* di Pacini e *Otello* di Rossini). L'Orchestra ha registrato numerosi dischi per la Chandos, tra cui, nelle serie di Opera in English con il patrocinio della Peter Moores Foundation, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Faust*, *La bohème*, questa *Tosca* vincitrice di un premio e sei album con recital da solista di arie d'opera (con Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny e John Tomlinson, le ultime tre usciranno nel 2000).

David Parry ha studiato con Sergiu Celibidache ed ha cominciato la sua carriera come assistente di Sir John Pritchard. Ha debuttato all'English Music Theatre, quindi è diventato direttore d'orchestra presso la Städtische Bühnen Dortmund e la Opera North. È stato Direttore Musicale di Opera 80

dal 1983 al 1987 e dal 1992 è stato Direttore Musicale fondatore dell'Opera di Almeida.

Lavora copiosamente in opere e concerti, a livello nazionale ed internazionale. Ha diretto diverse produzioni presso la English National Opera e appare regolarmente con la Philharmonia Orchestra. Nel 1996 ha debuttato con *Così fan tutte* al Glyndebourne Festival, dove l'anno scorso ha diretto la prima mondiale di *Flight* di Jonathan Dove.

È un frequente visitatore della Spagna dove si è esibito in concerto con la maggior parte delle maggiori orchestre spagnole. Ha diretto la prima spagnola di *Peter Grimes* a Madrid e nel 1996 la prima produzione spagnola di *The Rake's Progress*. È apparso in Germania, Svezia, Paesi Bassi, al Festival di Pesaro in Italia, al Festival Internazionale di Hong Kong, in Giappone con una tournée della *Carmen* e in Messico con la UNAM Symphony Orchestra. Recenti nuove produzioni da lui dirette comprendono il *Fidelio* al Festival della Nuova Zelanda, *Maria Stuarda* al Teatro di Basilea e *Lucia di Lammermoor* alla New Israeli Opera.

Il suo lavoro in studio di registrazione comprende la produzione della BBC di *Der Vampyr* di Marschner nonché ventuno registrazioni operistiche complete con il patrocinio della Peter Moores Foundation. Tra

questi vi sono numerosi dischi per l'etichetta Opera Rara che hanno vinti parecchi premi, tra cui il belga Prix Cecilia per la *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* di Donizetti. Per Chandos ha diretto sei registrazioni di arie d'opera (con Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny e John

Tomlinson, le ultime tre usciranno nel 2000), nonché *Faust*, *Don Pasquale*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *La bohème*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci* e brani scelti da *Der Rosenkavalier* oltre a questa registrazione della *Tosca* vincitrice di un premio, tutte in collaborazione con la Peter Moores Foundation.



Gregory
Yurisch



Peter
Rose

COMPACT DISC ONE

Act I

Scene: The Church of Sant'Andrea della Valle

(On the right the Attavanti Chapel. On the left scaffolding: on it a large picture covered by a cloth. Various painter's tools. A basket.)

Angelotti

(Dressed like a prisoner, in rags, exhausted, trembling with fear, enters out of breath, almost running, from the side door. He looks around quickly.)

- [1] Ah! Here in safety! I'm in such a panic
I'm suspicious of everyone who passes.
(More calmly he looks around again carefully and surveys the place closely. He heaves a sigh of relief on seeing the column with the stoup of holy water and the Madonna.)
The font... And the column...
'In front of the Madonna'
is what my sister told me...
(He approaches, searches at the foot of the Madonna for the key and cannot suppress his joy at finding it.)
Here is the key...
and that must be the Chapel!
(He points at the Attavanti Chapel; cautiously he inserts the key into the lock, opens the gate and enters the Chapel closing the gate behind him, and disappears.)

- [2] **Sacristan** *(enters at the back holding a bunch of paint brushes and talking out loud as if addressing somebody)*
I don't believe it... Nothing but dirty brushes.
Why do all painters leave such mess behind them?
Signor, excuse me...
(He looks towards the scaffolding where the picture is and exclaims in surprise at seeing no-one there.)
No! There's no one!
I'd swear I heard him, he thinks he can avoid me.
My noble friend Cavaradossi.
(He puts the brushes down, gets on to the scaffolding, looks into the basket and says:)
No, I'm dreaming.
He's not had his lunch yet.
(He climbs down from the scaffolding. The Angelus sounds. The Sacristan kneels and prays quietly.)
Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariae,
et concepit de Spiritu Sancto.
Ecce ancilla Domini;
fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum
et verbum caro factum est et habitavit in nobis...
Cavaradossi *(from the side door, seeing the Sacristan kneeling)*
At prayer?
Sacristan *(rising)*
Saying the Angelus.
(Cavaradossi steps on to the scaffolding and uncovers the picture which is of Mary Magdalene with large blue eyes and flowing golden hair. The

painter stands silent in front, observing it carefully. Turning to speak to Cavaradossi, the Sacristan sees the uncovered picture and exclaims in astonishment:)
Holy Mother! How do you know her?

Cavaradossi

Know who?

Sacristan

That lovely lady: these last few mornings before the Madonna
(and he points at the Madonna where Angelotti had found the key)
praying with such devotion...

Cavaradossi

(smiling)
You saw her!

She was so rapt in contemplation, praying with such fervour, so I painted her likeness; a gift from heaven.

Sacristan

(shocked)
(Satan, get thee behind me!)

Cavaradossi

- [3] Give me my palette!
(The Sacristan obeys. Cavaradossi begins to paint rapidly, often pausing to study his work: the Sacristan comes and goes, carrying a small basin in which he continually washes brushes. Suddenly Cavaradossi stops painting; from his pocket he takes a medallion containing a miniature and his eyes wander from the medallion to the picture.)

How strange a thing is beauty,
in its differing faces!
So dark my Floria,
so passionate and loving.

Sacristan

(grumbling)
(To hear this heathen scorn the laws of Heaven!)

(He goes and gets water to clean the brushes.)

Cavaradossi

And you, my golden beauty,
in your innocent sweetness!
You have smiling blue eyes,
Tosca's blaze so darkly!

Sacristan *(returning from the back and still shocked)*
(To hear this heathen scorn the laws of Heaven!)

(He continues washing the brushes.)

Cavaradossi

Art is a strange enigma,
with the power to blend all kinds of beauty;
but though I paint the fair one
all my thoughts are of Tosca;
ah, my thoughts are all of you,
Tosca, of you!

Sacristan

They're all the same, these women,
who think they can compete
with the Madonna,
they all stink of the devil.
(Cavaradossi continues painting.)

(He dries the washed brushes, grumbling to himself.)
 (To hear this heathen scorn the laws of Heaven!
 Free-thinking dogs, atheists and schemers,
 who set themselves against the Holy Office!
 They're too far gone in evil!
 To hear this heathen scorn the laws of Heaven!
 They're nothing but incorrigible sinners!
(He lays the basin down under the scaffolding and
puts the brushes in a pot near the picture.)
 So let us make the sign against the devil.)
(to Cavaradossi)
 If you don't mind, I'll go.

Cavaradossi
 Yes, if you want to!

(He continues painting.)

Sacristan *(pointing to the basket)*
 You haven't eaten... Can you be fasting?

Cavaradossi
 No, I'm not hungry.

Sacristan *(with irony, rubbing his hands together)*
 Oh... What a pity!
(but he cannot repress a gesture of joy and a greedy
glance at the basket which he places aside a little;
he takes two pinches of snuff)
 Mind you lock up behind you.

Cavaradossi
 Go!

Sacristan
 Gone!

(The Sacristan leaves at the back. Cavaradossi
turns his back to the Chapel and continues to work.
Angelotti, assuming the church to be empty, appears
from behind the gate and inserts the key to open it.)

Cavaradossi *(turns on hearing the squeaking of the*
lock)
 Someone's inside there!

(Terrified by Cavaradossi's movement, Angelotti is
about to take refuge again in the Chapel, but,
looking up, he shouts out with a cry of joy which he
immediately represses. He has recognised the painter
and stretches his arms towards him having found
such unexpected help.)

Angelotti
 You! Cavaradossi!
 The man I needed!
(Cavaradossi doesn't recognise Angelotti and
remains, dazed, on the scaffolding. Angelotti moves
closer to make himself known.)
 Am I so much altered?
 Has prison changed my face so you don't know
 me?

Cavaradossi *(Recognising him, he quickly puts*
down his palette and brushes and comes down from
the scaffolding towards Angelotti, looking around
cautiously.)
 Angelotti! The Roman Republic's
 noble and persecuted Consul.

(He runs to close the side door.)

Angelotti
 I have escaped from Castel Sant'Angelo...

Cavaradossi
 I am yours to command.

Tosca *(from outside)*
 Mario!

Cavaradossi *(Hearing Tosca's voice, Cavaradossi*
signals Angelotti to be quiet.)
 It's Tosca's voice.
 Go and hide in the Chapel
 I'll send her off in just a moment.

Tosca *(from outside)*
 Mario!

Cavaradossi *(towards the small door from where*
Tosca's voice is heard)
 Here I am!

Angelotti *(Suddenly feeling weak, he leans against*
the scaffolding.)
 I am faint with exhaustion
 and with hunger...

Cavaradossi *(Quickly, he jumps onto the*
scaffolding, steps down with the basket and,
pushing him, urges Angelotti towards the Chapel.)
 This basket will soon revive you; there's wine too.

Angelotti
 Thank you!

Cavaradossi
 Quickly!

Angelotti
 Thank you!

Cavaradossi
 Quickly!

(Angelotti enters the Chapel.)

Tosca *(from outside, pettishly)*
 Mario! Mario! Mario!

Cavaradossi *(Affecting calm, he opens the door to*
Tosca.)
 I'm here.

(Tosca bursts in, pushes aside Mario who wants to
embrace her and looks around suspiciously.)

Tosca
 Why was it locked?

Cavaradossi
 The Sacristan insisted...

Tosca
 I heard you talking...

Cavaradossi
 To you!

Tosca
 To someone else; I heard you whisper.
 She's here.

Cavaradossi
 Who?

Tosca
Don't lie. It's a woman! I heard
her rapid steps and the rustle of her clothing...

Cavaradossi
Nonsense!

Tosca
You swear it?

Cavaradossi
I swear I love you!

Tosca (*reproaching him mildly*)
Oh! in front of the Madonna...
No, Mario, no, let me
pray for a moment, give my flowers.
(*She slowly approaches the Madonna and arranges
the flowers she has brought with her around the
statue. She kneels and prays devoutly, then crosses
herself and rises. She speaks to Cavaradossi who
meanwhile has started to resume his work.*)
Mario, listen to me... tonight I'm singing,
but I finish quite early. Come around to my
dressing room and meet me,
we'll drive down to your villa, we'll be alone
there.

Cavaradossi (*inattentive*)
This evening?

Tosca
The moon is full,
the heavy scent of flowers

fills the air and charms the heart.
Don't you feel happy?
(*She sits on the steps near Cavaradossi.*)

Cavaradossi (*absent-mindedly*)
Happy!

Tosca (*taken aback by his cold tone*)
Say it again!

Cavaradossi
Happy!

Tosca (*angry*)
I don't believe you. I don't believe you.
[5] Our little house in the country is waiting,
the shady garden forever inviting.
No one has seen our pretty olive grove,
place of secrets and of love.
We shall hear in the stillness,
through the starlit spaces
the murmurs of the night
with all its delicate voices!
From all the woods and meadows,
from fruitful vineyards, from towers,
from tombs of vanished glory,
all scented with flowers,
the whispers of the night go out
from one to another
and often promise falsely
vows that melt ev'ry lover.
Oh, blossom all you meadows,
all you fresh sea breezes, caress me,

shine on us sweetly, silver moon above.
Ah, you starry vaults of night, let passion rain
down.
Tosca burns with ardent love!

Cavaradossi
Ah, you bind me with your fetters,
my beloved.

Tosca
See how Tosca is all on fire with love!

Cavaradossi
My beloved, I'm yours!

Tosca (*resting her head on Cavaradossi's shoulder;
almost immediately he moves away a little, looking
over to where Angelotti disappeared*)
Oh, my darling!

Cavaradossi
Now you must let me finish.

Tosca
I don't want to.

Cavaradossi
It's important, you know!

Tosca (*annoyed, rising*)
I'm going, I'm going!
(*She moves away from Cavaradossi and, turning to
look at him, she sees the painting and rushes back
to Cavaradossi highly agitated.*)
But who is that golden vision up there?

Cavaradossi
Oh, just a model. You like her?

Tosca
She's too attractive!

Cavaradossi (*laughing and bowing*)
You praise me highly.

Tosca (*suspicious*)
Do I?
I've seen those pale blue eyes before, I'll swear it...

Cavaradossi (*with indifference*)
Oh, you must have seen many!

Tosca (*trying to remember*)
I know her! I know her...
It's Attavanti!

Cavaradossi (*laughing*)
Brava!

Tosca (*blind with jealousy*)
You know her? Love her?
She loves you? You love her?

Cavaradossi (*attempts to calm her*)
I never met her.

Tosca (*not listening to him, furious with jealousy*)
Those whispers, those rustling footsteps...
Ah, just now she was with you!

Cavaradossi
Please, listen.

Tosca

Ah, what a harlot!
You're false to me!

Cavaradossi (*serious*)

She comes here daily, kneels to the Madonna,
prays with deep devotion,
she never even saw me.

Tosca

Swear it.

Cavaradossi

I swear it.

Tosca (*her eyes still fixed on the picture*)

See how she stares intently!

Cavaradossi

Come on now!

Tosca

She laughs at me and mocks me.

Cavaradossi

What nonsense!

(*Cavaradossi pushes her gently down the steps. She descends backwards always looking at the picture and holding her hands high in Cavaradossi's hands.*)

Tosca (*reproaching him mildly*)

Ah! those eyes!

Cavaradossi (*he holds Tosca close to himself affectionately, gazing at her*)

What eyes in all the wide world can equal
those dark fiery eyes of my Tosca?
In them I find myself. My life and being
are only for Tosca.

Eyes that in love are tender, then blaze with anger.
What eyes can ever be found to equal
the dark eyes of Tosca?

Tosca (*in ecstasy, leaning her head on Cavaradossi's shoulder*)

Oh, how you understand me;
How you can make me love you!
(*maliciously*)
But make the eyes look darker!

Cavaradossi

Why so jealous?

Tosca

Yes, I know it,
I torment you night and morning.

Cavaradossi

Why so jealous?

Tosca

But I'm certain you'd forgive me.

Cavaradossi

Why so jealous?

Tosca

Yes, I'm certain you'll forgive me,
if you knew the pain of my love!

Cavaradossi

My Tosca, dearest Goddess,
I adore your ev'ry passion;
Wild fits of anger or the ecstasy of love!

Tosca

Yes, you would forgive me
if you knew the pain of my love!
Tell me how you love me truly,
come console me...
Tell me, tell me!

Cavaradossi

My dearest love,
my Floria Tosca,
I shall always love you.
Ah! Don't be jealous
for my love is all for you!

Tosca (*freeing herself from Cavaradossi*)

Oh! What are you doing?
My hair is all untidy.

Cavaradossi

Now go, I must work!

Tosca

Well, stay till this evening
and finish the picture. Make me a promise;
you'll talk to no women,
not golden-haired nor dark-haired,
no matter where they pray.
Promise me, Mario.

Cavaradossi

My love, I promise! Go!

Tosca

Why all this hurry?

Cavaradossi (*with mild reproach, aware of her jealousy*)

Not trust me?

Tosca (*falling into his arms and offering him her cheek*)

Yes, forgive me!

Cavaradossi (*smiling*)

Before the Holy Virgin?

Tosca

She understands me!

(*They kiss. Tosca, moving to go, looks at the picture again.*)

(*maliciously*)

But make the eyes look darker!

(*Tosca runs off quickly. Cavaradossi remains moved and pensive, listening for her steps to die away, then carefully he opens the door and looks outside. Seeing all clear, he runs to the Chapel. Angelotti appears at once from behind the gate. Cavaradossi opens the gate for Angelotti and they shake hands affectionately.*)

Cavaradossi (*to Angelotti who clearly has heard their conversation*)

My Tosca is so honest she believes
she has to tell all that she knows in confession.

I tell her nothing.
We have to move with caution.

Angelotti
We're alone here?

Cavaradossi
Yes. Now tell me what your plan is.

Angelotti
I have a simple choice:
to leave the country
or stay in Rome in hiding.
My young sister...

Cavaradossi
Attavanti?

Angelotti
Yes. She brought women's clothing
and concealed it there, under the altar...
raincoat, dress, hat, a fan.
(He looks around, frightened.)
I'll put them on
when it is dark this evening.

Cavaradossi
Now I follow!
Such caution in her manner,
such continual praying
in one so young and lovely
aroused my deep suspicion
of some forbidden love!
Now I follow!
Purest love of a sister!

Angelotti
She stopped at nothing
to rescue me from Scarpia, vile assassin!

Cavaradossi
Scarpia? That dirty bigot who
beneath the cloak of religion gratifies
his squalid lusts and passions.
There is no one he cannot buy over,
churchman as well as hangman!
Whatever it may cost me
I'll save your life!
But to stay here till evening is too risky.

Angelotti
Someone will see me!

Cavaradossi *(pointing)*
From this Chapel
you will come to an orchard, then to a stream
which winds along through the meadows
to my villa...

Angelotti
I know it...

Cavaradossi
Here is the door key...
I will rejoin you there this evening;
now, where did you say are the things your sister
left you?

(Angelotti goes to pick up the clothes hidden by his sister.)

Angelotti
Must I wear them?

Cavaradossi
There is no need, for now
the path is deserted...

Angelotti *(about to leave)*
God bless you!

Cavaradossi *(rushing again towards Angelotti)*
If anything happens
there is a well in the garden.
It's very deep,
but halfway down a small narrow passage
leads inside to a secret cavern;
it's absolutely safe and no one knows it!

(A cannon shot; they look at each other very shaken.)

Angelotti
The alarm from the castle!

Cavaradossi
They will guess where you're hiding.
And Scarpia will marshall his agents.

Angelotti
Good-bye, friend!

Cavaradossi *(with sudden resolution)*
I'm coming too. We must be careful.

Angelotti
Someone is here!

Cavaradossi *(with enthusiasm)*
Shoot to kill if we're challenged!

(They exit quickly from the Chapel. The Sacristan enters running, flustered.)

Sacristan *(shouting)*
Great news, Signor Cavaradossi!
(He looks towards the scaffolding and is surprised not to find the painter there.)
Where's he gone? Oh, that's annoying.
If you mortify a heathen,
you are granted an indulgence!
(They run on from all sides, Acolytes, Brethren, Students and the Chapel Choir. They all enter in riotous fashion.)

[7] All the Choir in here at once!
Quickly!

Choir *(in great confusion)*
What then?

Sacristan *(pushing them towards the Sacristy)*
Come on, don't dawdle!

Choir
What has happened?

Sacristan
Haven't they told you? Bonaparte.
The scoundrel Bonaparte.

Choir
Go on! Go on!

Sacristan

They've been plucked and drawn and quartered.
Now they're boiling in a pot.

Choir

Tenors

What's he saying?

Boys and Sopranos

Imagination!

Sacristan

It is absolutely true.
They have just received dispatches.

Choir

Will there be a celebration?

Sacristan

We are to have a torchlight procession,
also a gala tonight at the Palace.
For the occasion a new cantata
with Floria Tosca!
And in the churches hymns to the Lord!
Now go and get ready and stop this noise!
Go, go, go and get dressed.

Choir (*laughing and shouting joyously*)

Ah, ah, ah, ah, ah,
ah, ah, ah, ah, ah!

Sopranos and Tenors

Double money. Te Deum.

All

Gloria!

Praise the King!

We shall have a celebration!

Sacristan

Go and get ready!

Choir

An evening of gala!
We shall have a celebration!
Praise the King! Praise the King!
Te Deum... Gloria!
Great victorious celebra...

*(The shouting and laughter reaches a climax when
an ironic voice suddenly interrupts the vulgar din.
It is Scarpia who appears suddenly from the small
door: behind him Spoletta and some Guards.
Seeing Scarpia they all stop, pallid with fear as if
under a spell.)*

Scarpia

8 You make the church a fairground!
Show respect!

Sacristan (*stammering, frightened*)

Your Excellency, the great victory.

Scarpia

Are you ready for the Te Deum?
*(They all move off downhearted and the Sacristan
also tries to disappear but Scarpia quickly detains
him.)*

Stay here, you!

Sacristan (*softly, terrified*)

I'm not moving!

Scarpia (*to Spoletta*)

And you, go, ferret out everything,
and search every corner!

Spoletta

At once, sir!

(He signals two men to follow him.)

Scarpia (*to other Guards who obey*)

Guard every entrance, don't arouse suspicion!
(to the Sacristan)
As for you, think well before you answer.
Today a dangerous prisoner
has broken out of Castel Sant'Angelo...
He headed for this church.

Sacristan

Oh God, protect us!

Scarpia

Maybe he's still here.
Now where's the Chapel of the Attavanti?

Sacristan

There it is!
(He goes to the gate and sees it ajar.)
It's open! Oh, saints above!
Another key!

Scarpia

How intriguing... Go in then.
*(They enter the Chapel, then return: Scarpia,
somewhat annoyed, holds a closed fan which he
waves nervously.)*

(to himself)

It was a careless mistake
to fire the cannon. The bird
flew up and away
from our clutches.
Here's a clue that may guide us...
Whose is it?
(waving it in the air)
This fan!
Some accomplice must have helped him to
escape.
*(He remains pensive, then looks closely at the fan;
suddenly he notices a coat-of-arms on it and
exclaims forcefully.)*
The Marchesa Attavanti! It's her crest!
*(He looks around, searching every corner of the
church: his eyes stop on the scaffolding, on the
painter's tools, on the picture... and he recognises
the well-known features of the Attavanti in the face
of the saint.)*
And that's her portrait!
(to the Sacristan)
Do you know who did this painting?

Sacristan

The Cavalier Cavaradossi...

Scarpia

Him!

*(One of the Guards who followed Scarpia returns
from the Chapel carrying the basket that
Cavaradossi gave to Angelotti.)*

Sacristan (*seeing it*)

Heavens! There's his basket!

Scarpia (*pursuing his thoughts*)

Him! The lover of Tosca!

He's on our black list. Believes in Voltaire!

Sacristan (*who had gone to look in the basket*)

Empty! Empty!

Scarpia

What is it?

(*seeing the Guard with the basket*)

Come on!

Sacristan (*taking the basket*)

He found this basket in the Chapel.

This fellow here.

Scarpia

Is it familiar?

Sacristan

Very! The painter brings it here

(*hesitant and frightened*)

but, if I may, sir...

Scarpia

Spit it out, spit it out!

Sacristan

I left it here myself,
filled with food and wine this morning,
the painter's tasty lunch!

Scarpia (*attentive, investigating the situation*)

Well then, he ate it!

Sacristan

Not in the Chapel,

as he hadn't a key,

and, what is more, he had said he wasn't hungry.

That's why I placed the basket here in safety.

(*He shows where he had hidden the basket and*

leaves it there, then, frightened by Scarpia's stern,

silent bearing, to himself:)

(Libera me Domine!)

Scarpia (*to himself*)

(Ah, that explains it.

So the Sacristan's provisions

fed the hungry Angelotti!)

(*Tosca enters, greatly excited: she goes straight to the*

scaffolding, but, not finding Cavaradossi there, still

very agitated, goes in search of him down the

central nave of the church. Scarpia, having seen

Tosca enter, has swiftly hidden himself behind the

column with the stoup of holy water, making an

imperious sign to the Sacristan to stay put. The

Sacristan, trembling, embarrassed, approaches the

painter's scaffolding.)

Tosca? She must not see me.

(With a handkerchief Iago

drove a jealous lover to utter madness.

I'll use a fan!)

Tosca (*returns to the scaffolding, calling*

impatiently in a loud voice)

9 Mario?! Mario?!

Sacristan (*approaching Tosca*)

Do you mean Cavaradossi?

Who knows where he's gone?

As if by magic

he's completely disappeared.

(*He sneaks away.*)

Tosca

Has he tricked me? No... no...

He won't betray our love,

he won't betray our love!

(*Scarpia turns round the column and presents*

himself to Tosca, who is surprised by his sudden

appearance. He dips his fingers into the stoup and

offers her the holy water; outside, the church bells

are ringing inviting people to church.)

Scarpia (*insinuating and courteous*)

Tosca, dear angel,

if you'll allow

my hand awaits you,

grace it with your fingers;

now don't misunderstand me,

I only want to offer holy water.

Tosca (*touches Scarpia's fingers and crosses herself*)

Thank you, Signor.

(*Gradually people enter the church and go up the*

principal nave, Parishioners, Bourgeois, Peasants,

Locals, Soldiers, Shepherds, Beggars, etc: then a

Cardinal with the Chapter proceeds to the main

altar; the congregation, turning towards the main

altar, crowd together in the principal nave.)

Scarpia

Your lead is the one we follow.

With heaven's grace and its sweet inspiration,

you revive human faith in God our Saviour

through the pow'r of your singing!

Tosca (*abstracted and pensive*)

Kindly spoken.

Scarpia

It is rare that a woman

and in such a profession

should come to church at all to kneel in prayer.

Tosca (*surprised*)

I don't follow.

Scarpia

To another who may look like an angel,

(*He points at the portrait.*)

visiting a church may have as a motive

just a meeting of lovers!

Tosca (*losing her temper*)

What? Of lovers?

But prove it! But prove it!

Scarpia (*showing her the fan*)

A useful thing to have for painting.

Tosca (*seizes it*)

For painting? But where was it?

Scarpia

There, by the canvas.

Something must have startled
our naughty love bird,
and as she flew away
she lost her feathers!

Tosca (*examining the fan*)
The coronet! The crest!
The Attavanti! The one I suspected...

Scarpia
(So my plan is effective!)

Tosca (*With great feeling, holding back tears with difficulty, she is oblivious of the place and Scarpia.*)
I came here full of sorrow
just to tell him: when evening falls
we cannot be together.
Tonight the lovesick Tosca is a captive!

Scarpia
(Now my poison bites deeper.)

Tosca
At the gala this evening I'm a prisoner!

Scarpia
(Poison, bite even deeper.)
(*in dulcet tones*)
Someone has made you deeply unhappy.
Why are these tears of bitterness falling
over your lovely delicate features?
Fairest of ladies, what has upset you?

Tosca
Nothing!

Scarpia (*insinuating*)
I'd give my life
to be able to console you.

Tosca (*not listening to him*)
I stand here weeping while in another's arms
he makes a joke of my feelings.

Scarpia
(Poison, bite deeper.)

Tosca (*very bitterly*)
Where are they?
If only I could surprise and catch them.
(*even more worried*)
Oh, what a suspicion.
The villa gave refuge to two pairs of lovers.
He's unfaithful... He's unfaithful...
My pretty nest is defiled and degraded!
(*decisively*)
I'll go there now and catch them!
(*She turns threateningly to the painting.*)
You shall not have my Mario, I swear it.

Scarpia (*shocked, as if reproaching her*)
In church!

Tosca
God will forgive me...
For he sees how I'm weeping...
(*Tosca leaves greatly agitated: Scarpia accompanies her, feigning reassurance. As soon as Tosca has left, the church gradually fills up with people. Scarpia returns to the column and makes a sign. Spoletta appears at once.*)

Scarpia

[10] Three agents, go in a carriage...
Quickly! Follow wherever she leads you...
Don't lose her... Be careful!

Spoletta
We will, sir. Where do we meet you?

Scarpia
Palazzo Farnese!
(*Spoletta exits hurriedly.*)
(*with a sardonic smile*)
Go, Tosca!
Now your fate is ruled by Scarpia...
Go, Tosca!
(*Cannon shots are heard.*)
Now Scarpia unleashes the savage falcon
guarding your jealous passion.
Maybe I'll profit from your doubts and
suspicions! Now your fate is ruled by Scarpia...
Go, Tosca!

(*Scarpia bows and prays as the Cardinal passes.
The Cardinal blesses the congregation which bows reverently.*)

Chapter
Adjutorum nostrum in nomine Domini.

All
Qui fecit coelum et terram.

Chapter

Sit nomen Domini bene dictum.

All
Et hoc nunc et usque in saeculum.

Scarpia
Two targets draw me,
I must have my way.
The head of Angelotti
is a prize I long for.
Ah, but to quell
the dark imperious eyes of Tosca,
see her grow faint and languish in my arms,
feel her surrender, languishing in my arms...
One to the gallows
and my arms round the other.

Choir
Te Deum laudamus:
te Dominum confitemur!

(*The sacred song from the back of the church stirs Scarpia, as though waking him from a dream. He composes himself, makes the sign of the cross looking all around him.*)

Scarpia
Tosca, you turn my thoughts away from God!

Scarpia and Choir
Te aeternum Patrem omnis terra veneratur!

End of Act I

COMPACT DISC TWO

Act II

Scene: Palazzo Farnese

(The Farnese Palace. Scarpia's room on the upper floor. A well-furnished table. A large window looking out to the Palace courtyard. It is night. Scarpia is sitting at the table and dining. From time to time he interrupts his meal for reflection. He takes out his watch: he is restless and deep in thought.)

Scarpia

- [1] Tosca, my falcon.
Surely by now my savage hounds
have tracked them to their hiding place.
At dawn the gallows
will welcome traitor Angelotti
and his fine accomplice Mario!
(He rings the bell, Sciarrone appears.)
Is Tosca here yet?

Sciarrone

Yes, sir, an officer
has gone to find her.

Scarpia *(pointing to the window)*

Open it. Darkness has fallen.
(From the floor below, where the Queen of Naples, Maria Carolina, is giving a party in honour of Melas, the sound of an orchestra can be heard.)
Still no cantata; they're waiting for Tosca,
so they strum a gavotte.

(to Sciarrone)

Go down and wait for Tosca at the entrance.
Tell her I'll be expecting her
after the performance...
(Sciarrone moves to leave; calling him back.)
Or better,
(He gets up, goes over to the desk and hastily writes a note.)

make sure she gets this letter.
(handing it to Sciarrone, who exits)
Now she will come...
(He returns to the table and, pouring himself something to drink, says:)
For the love of her Mario!
For the love of her Mario
she will be mine, completely mine.
People who love like Tosca
find only grief and betrayal.

- [2] Richer far is the flavour
of a violent conquest
than a gentle surrender...
Romantic whispers and sighing
in the milky moonlit dawn
are much overrated.
I can't strum the strings of a guitar
or read fortunes in the flowers,
I do not choose to simper
or to coo like a turtle dove!
(He rises but does not move away from the table.)
Conquest! I conquer
whatever I lust for.
When I'm sated I cast it from me,

turn to new sensations.
God has made beautiful wines,
beautiful women... I want them all!
I must devour all the fruits of creation.

(He drinks.)

Sciarrone *(entering)*

Spoletta's back now.

Scarpia

Splendid! Show him in.
(Sciarrone goes out to call Spoletta and accompanies him into the room, then remains by the door at the back. Scarpia sits down and questions Spoletta without looking at him, whilst continuing his meal.)
Well then, Spoletta. Did you have good hunting?

Spoletta *(moving forward a little frightened)*

(Saint Ignatius protect me!)
Close on the track of the lady we followed.
We found a lonely old house
hidden by bushes and pine trees.
She went inside and came out some time later.
I gave the word to scale the wall around the garden
and we entered and stormed the villa.

Scarpia

My clever Spoletta!

Spoletta *(wavering)*

Then I scratched around... rummaged...

(Scarpia perceives Spoletta's hesitation, stands up, pale with anger and frowning.)

Scarpia

And Angelotti?

Spoletta

He wasn't there, sir!

Scarpia *(with increasing anger)*

You mongrel! You filthy traitor!
Your ugly snout will whimper on the gallows!

Spoletta *(trembling, he seeks to mitigate Scarpia's rage)*

Dear God!
(timidly)
The painter was there...

Scarpia

Cavaradossi?

Spoletta *(nodding in agreement and adding immediately)*

He knows where the other is hiding...
He was so scornful; every word
that he said was sarcastic and mocking.

- [3] It seemed wise to arrest him...

Scarpia *(with a sigh of satisfaction)*

That sounds better!

(Scarpia paces up and down in thought. He stops suddenly – from the open window can be heard the Cantata performed by the Choir in the Queen's room. So Tosca has returned – she is there – beneath him.)

Choir

Sale, ascende l'uman cantico,
varca spazi, varca celi
per ignoti soli empirei
profetati dai Vangeli,
a te giunge o re dei re!

Spoletta (*pointing to the antechamber*)
He is there.

Scarpia (*An idea strikes him and immediately he says to Spoletta:*)

Now you may bring the prisoner in.
(*Spoletta exits.*)
(*to Sciarrone*)

We'll need Roberti,
and see the judge is ready.

(*Sciarrone exits. Scarpia sits at the table again. Spoletta and three Guards bring in Cavaradossi, then Roberti the torturer, the Judge.*)

Cavaradossi (*proud, advancing impetuously*)
You insult me.

Scarpia (*with affected courtesy*)
Cavalier, please take a chair, I beg you.

Cavaradossi
Tell my why.

Scarpia (*pointing to a seat on the opposite side of the table*)
Be seated.

Cavaradossi (*refusing*)
I'm waiting.

Scarpia

I see!
(*He stares at Cavaradossi before questioning him.*)
You've heard of the escape from...

Tosca

A te quest'inno di gloria voli a te
Or voli quest'uman inno di gloria a te.

Choir

Questo canto voli a te.
Quest'inno di gloria a voli a te.
Sommo Iddio della vittoria
che fosti innanzi ai secoli,
alle cantiche degli angeli.

Tosca

Sale, ascende l'uman cantico
varca spazi, varca celi.
A te o re dei re!

Choir

Sale, ascende l'uman cantico
varca spazi, varca celi.
A te giunge, o re dei re!

Cavaradossi (*Hearing Tosca's voice, he exclaims with emotion:*)
That is Tosca!

Scarpia (*who had broken off to hear Tosca, continues*)
I'm sure you must have heard
of someone escaping from Castel Sant'Angelo.

Cavaradossi
I heard nothing.

Scarpia

Yet somebody claimed it was you
who assisted him in Sant'Andrea,
providing him with food and with clothing...

Cavaradossi (*resolute*)
That's nonsense!

Scarpia (*continuing to remain calm*)
...and that later you took him
to your house outside the city...

Cavaradossi
Never. Now prove it.

Scarpia (*sweetly*)
I have a faithful witness.

Cavaradossi
The facts, man! Can you prove it?
My house was ransacked but your spies found
nothing.

Scarpia
Clearly he's been well hidden.

Tosca and Choir
Sale, ascende l'uman cantico
varca spazi, varca celi

Cavaradossi
Your spies are mistaken!

Spoletta (*Offended, he breaks in.*)
All the time we were searching,
he laughed and mocked us...

Cavaradossi

Of course I laughed, I'm laughing still.

Scarpia (*Terrifying, he rises.*)
You'll find tears more appropriate!
(*threatening*)
Be careful!
I warn you! I want answers!

Tosca and Choir
A te giunge, o re dei re!

(*Irritated and disturbed by the singing, Scarpia goes to close the window.*)

Scarpia (*imperious, to Cavaradossi*)
Where's Angelotti?

Cavaradossi
I don't know.

Scarpia
You gave him a basket of provisions?

Cavaradossi
Never!

Scarpia
And clothing?

Cavaradossi
Never!

Scarpia
And refuge in your villa,
and that's where he's hiding?

Cavaradossi (*forcefully*)
Never! Never!

Scarpia (*astutely, appearing calm again*)
Now, Cavaliere, do consider;
all this defiant obstinacy will not help you.
A prompt confession
saves you from intolerable pain.
Let me advise you; answer;
tell me, where is he hiding?

Cavaradossi
I don't know.

Scarpia
I ask you for the last time. Say where!

Cavaradossi
I don't know.

Spoletta
Good, he's in for a whipping.

(*Tosca enters gasping: she sees Cavaradossi and runs to embrace him.*)

Scarpia (*seeing Tosca*)
(Here she is!)

Tosca
Mario, you here?!

Cavaradossi (*softly to Tosca who indicates she has understood*)
No word of what you saw today or they'll kill me!

Scarpia
Mario Cavaradossi, the judge is waiting;
you must now bear witness.
(*He signals Sciarrone to open the door leading into the torture chamber, then turning to Roberti:*)
First the normal procedure...
later... I'll give orders.
(*Sciarrone opens the door. The Judge enters and the others follow him, leaving Tosca and Scarpia. Spoletta withdraws to the door at the back of the room. Sciarrone closes the door. Tosca acts surprised: Scarpia, with affected politeness, reassures her.*)

4 Now you and I can talk
like friends together.
There's no need to look so frightened.

Tosca (*sits, with studied calm*)
I'm perfectly at ease...

(*Scarpia passes behind the sofa where Tosca is sitting and leans against it.*)

Scarpia
The fan is quite forgotten?

Tosca (*feigning indifference*)
So stupid to be jealous.

Scarpia
The Attavanti was not installed at the villa?

Tosca
No: no one was with him.

Scarpia
No one? You're absolutely certain?

Tosca
I'm so easily jealous.
No one! No one!

(*Scarpia takes a chair, puts it in front of Tosca, sits down and stares at her.*)

Scarpia
Indeed?!

Tosca (*very annoyed*)
No one there!

Scarpia
So much passion? Is there something
you're frightened of betraying?
(*turning towards the door of the torture chamber, calling:*)
Sciarrone: what says our noble friend?

Sciarrone (*appears round the edge of the door*)
Nothing.

Scarpia (*louder*)
Then persuade him.

(*Sciarrone re-enters, closing the door.*)

Tosca (*laughing*)
Oh! It's useless!

Scarpia
(*Gravely: he rises and walks around.*)
We shall see, my dear lady.

Tosca
Clearly, if he's to please you, he had better tell lies?

Scarpia
Only the truth can assist him
to shorten hours of horrible suffering.

Tosca (*surprised*)
Of horrible suffering? What d'you mean?
What's happening inside there?

Scarpia
The law must be maintained to the letter.

Tosca
Oh! God! But tell me what you mean...

Scarpia
(*with an expression of ferocity and with increasing force*)
His hands and feet are tied
and there's a ring of iron with spikes around his temples.
At each denial they tighten further
tearing his flesh.

Tosca (*jumping to her feet*)
Is it true? Is it true?
You poisonous murderer...

(*She listens with great anxiety, her hands nervously clutching the back of the sofa.*)

Cavaradossi (*a prolonged cry*)
Ah...

Tosca
They're killing him. Oh God... Oh God...

Scarpia

But you could save him.

Tosca

I will... You must stop them this minute.

Scarpia (*turning and going up to the door*)

Sciarrone, release him.

Sciarrone (*appearing at the door*)

Completely?

Scarpia

Completely.

(*Sciarrone returns to the torture chamber, closing the door.*)

And now I want the truth...

Tosca

Let me see him!...

Scarpia

No!

(*Gradually Tosca succeeds in drawing near to the door.*)

Tosca

Mario!

Cavaradossi (*within, painfully*)

Tosca!

Tosca

Are they hurting you still?

Cavaradossi

No. Have courage.

Say nothing, nothing.

I scorn the pain.

Scarpia (*approaching Tosca*)

⁵ Enough. Tosca, your answer.

Tosca (*encouraged*)

I know nothing.

Scarpia

That sample did not move you?

(*moves to approach the door*)

Roberti, we'll continue.

Tosca

No! You mustn't.

Scarpia

Then will you answer?

Tosca

No! No! You monster...

I hate you. You monster,

you'll kill him, you'll kill him...

Ah, you'll kill him!

Scarpia

But you are the one who will kill him,

by your silence.

(*He laughs.*)

Tosca

You're laughing, deriding my torment.

Scarpia (*with cruel irony*)

On stage you were never more tragic than this.

(*Tosca, horrified, moves away from Scarpia who with sudden ferocity turns to Spoletta, shouting:*)

Throw open the door.

Let her hear how he suffers.

(*Spoletta opens the door and stands upright on the threshold.*)

Cavaradossi (*from within*)

I defy you!

Scarpia (*shouting to Roberti*)

Still tighter! Still tighter!

Cavaradossi (*from within*)

I defy you!

Scarpia (*to Tosca*)

Your answer.

Tosca

I cannot.

Scarpia

Come on now!

Tosca

Ah! I know nothing!

(*desperate*)

Do I have to lie?

Scarpia

Say, where is Angelotti?

Tosca

No! No!

Scarpia

Say, where is Angelotti?

Speak up, tell me truly,

don't lie to me again.

Where is he hiding?

Say where!

Tosca

Ah! ah! ah! I can't bear it!

Ah! What horror!

Ah! This torture must stop.

It's more than I can bear,

more than I can bear,

more than I can bear!

Cavaradossi (*a loud moan*)

Ah!

(*Tosca turns imploringly to Scarpia who motions to Spoletta to allow Tosca to approach: she goes up close to the door and, aghast at what she sees, turns to Cavaradossi.*)

Tosca (*in anguish*)

Mario... allow me

to tell him?

Cavaradossi

No! No!

Tosca

I cannot bear any more...

Cavaradossi

Nonsense. Tell what?

You don't know...

Scarpia

(Annoyed by Cavaradossi's words and fearing that Tosca will be heartened to keep silent, he bellows to Spoletta.)

Roberti, shut him up!

(Spoletta enters the torture chamber but soon returns while Tosca, overcome by emotion, falls on the sofa and in a sobbing voice turns to Scarpia, who stands by impassively and silently.)

Tosca

I have never done you harm.
So how can you inflict all this torture on my spirit,
yes, my spirit.

Spoletta

Judex ergo cum sedebit
quidquid latet apparebit.
Nil in ultum remanebit.

Tosca

Why do you torture my spirit?

Spoletta

Nil in ultum remanebit.

(Scarpia, making the most of Tosca's despair, goes to the torture chamber and signals for the torture to start again.)

Cavaradossi *(a heart-rending scream, intense and prolonged)*

Ah!

(At Cavaradossi's cry, Tosca jumps up and immediately whispers to Scarpia.)

Tosca

The well in the garden...

Scarpia

We'll find Angelotti?

Tosca

Yes!

Scarpia *(loud, towards the torture chamber)*

Enough, Roberti.

Sciarrone *(appearing at the door)*

He has fainted!

Tosca *(to Scarpia)*

You assassin!

I want to see him...

Scarpia *(to Sciarrone)*

Go, bring him in here!

(Sciarrone appears followed immediately by Guards who carry the unconscious Cavaradossi and place him on the sofa. Tosca rushes over to him but the ghastly sight of her lover covered in blood is too much for her and she covers her face in horror – then ashamed of her weakness, she kneels by him, kissing him and crying. Sciarrone, the Judge, Roberti and the Scribe exit at the back, whilst, at a sign from Scarpia, Spoletta and the Guards remain.)

Cavaradossi *(reviving)*

6 Floria!

Tosca

My darling...

Cavaradossi

My love...

Tosca

How you have suffered, my dearest love!
But God will punish this cruel fiend!

Cavaradossi

Tosca, did you tell them?

Tosca

No, my love...

Cavaradossi

You promise?

Tosca

No!

Scarpia *(vehemently, to Spoletta)*

Hidden in the garden well,
run, Spoletta!

(Spoletta exits.)

Cavaradossi *(rises inveighing against Tosca)*

You've betrayed me!...

Tosca *(beseeching)*

Mario!

Cavaradossi *(lets himself fall, breathless)*

I reject you!

Tosca

Mario!

Sciarrone *(breaking in, breathless)*

I have dreadful news to tell you!

Scarpia *(surprised)*

Tell me quickly what has happened?

Sciarrone

All our forces are defeated...

Scarpia

All defeated? How? Where?

Sciarrone

At Marengo...

Scarpia *(impatient, shouting)*

Spit it out man!

Sciarrone

Bonaparte has beaten us...

Scarpia

Melas...

Sciarrone

No! Melas retreated!

(Cavaradossi, hearing Sciarrone's words with increasing anxiety, finds the strength in his enthusiasm to get up and face Scarpia threateningly.)

Cavaradossi

Victorious! Victorious!
God of vengeance appear,
fill the wicked with fear!
Surge up, Liberty,
crushing all tyranny!

Tosca (desperate, clinging to Cavaradossi attempting to calm him)

Mario, quiet, be calm, I pray!

Cavaradossi

Do you see me take pride
in the torture you tried...
while your blood runs colds,
oh, Scarpia, you murderer!

Scarpia (smiles sarcastically)

Your blustering, shouting,
go on then, reveal the depths of infamy
in your nature.
You're dead already,
for the hangman's noose awaits you!

Tosca

Be calm! Mario!
(to Scarpia)
Pay no attention!
Be kind, be kind!

Cavaradossi

You murderer! You murderer!

Scarpia

Get out!

Tosca

Oh, pardon him! Mario!... with you... with you!

Scarpia (Irritated by Cavaradossi's words, he orders the Guards.)

I want him out of here!

Tosca

Oh, pardon him!
Mario... with you...

Scarpia

You're dead already!

Tosca

No, no!

Scarpia

Go, go!

Tosca

Ah! Mario, Mario!
...with you... with you!

(seeking to force her way but obstructed by Scarpia)

Scarpia (pushing Tosca back and closing the door)

Not you!

Tosca (with a groan)

Oh, save his life!

Scarpia

I?... You!

(He goes back to the table, sees his meal only half-finished and, smiling, recovers his calm.)

My supper has been rudely interrupted.

(seeing Tosca, downhearted, motionless, still beside the door)

Why so dejected?

Come, my lovely young lady, come and sit down.
Together we may find a way of rescuing your lover.
Now then...

(He sits down, inviting Tosca at the same time to do likewise.)

be seated... let's talk a little.

(He cleans a glass with a napkin, then looks at it through the light of the candelabra.)

We'll have some wine first, a fine Rioja.

(pouring, with courtesy)

A little, it would refresh you.

(Tosca sits down opposite Scarpia staring at him, then, resting her elbows on the table with her hands supporting her face and in a tone of the most profound contempt, she asks Scarpia:)

Tosca

7 How much?

Scarpia (impassive, pouring himself a drink)

How much?

Tosca

Your price!

Scarpia (He laughs.)

Ah, they say I'm corrupt
but a lovely woman cannot tempt me
with common bribes of money...

No!... No!...

(insinuating)

A lovely woman can never tempt me
with common bribes of money.

When I betray my oath of office and trust,
I'll ask some other payment;

I'll ask a far sweeter payment.

The moment I have prayed for!

How I have ached with love for the diva!

But tonight my eyes were opened:

(He gets up, very excited.)

I saw you as a woman!

All your tears were like lava, scalding my senses,

and the hatred darting out of your dark eyes

increased my hungry craving!

With the grace of a leopard

you enfolded your lover,

Ah! I vowed that you would be completely mine.

(Scarpia moves towards Tosca, extending his arms: Tosca, having listened motionless and petrified to Scarpia's lustful sentiments, rises abruptly and takes refuge behind the sofa.)

Tosca

Ah!

Scarpia

You'll be mine!

Tosca

Ah!

Scarpia (almost running after her)

You'll be mine!

Tosca (*horrified, runs to the window pointing to it*)
Ah! I'd rather swallow poison.

Scarpia (*coldly*)
Your Mario still remains my prisoner!

Tosca
Ah, I despise and hate this horrible bargain!

(*The idea occurs to her to go to the Queen and she runs towards the door. Scarpia, who guesses her thought, draws to one side.*)

Scarpia
I won't restrain you by force.
You're free to go, I mean it.
(*With a cry of joy Tosca moves to leave: Scarpia with a gesture detains her, laughing ironically.*)
But your hopes are misguided.
Royal pardons are seldom granted to a dead man.
(*Tosca retreats in horror and, staring at Scarpia, she falls onto the sofa: then in a gesture of supreme contempt and hatred she looks away from him.*)
(*in a convinced tone and with satisfaction*)
How you must hate me!

Tosca
Oh, God!

Scarpia (*approaching her*)
And that is how I want you!

Tosca (*with disgust*)
Do not touch me, you demon!
I hate you, hate you, hate you,
despise you, loathe you!

(*She avoids Scarpia in horror.*)

Scarpia (*drawing still closer to her*)
Does it matter?
Throbbing with anger... throbbing with desire!

Tosca
Viper!

Scarpia (*tries to seize her*)
Tosca!

Tosca (*takes refuge behind the table*)
Viper!

Scarpia (*pursuing Tosca*)
Tosca!

Tosca
Ah, help me!

Scarpia (*loudly*)
You're mine!

Tosca
Ah, help me!

Scarpia (*shouting*)
You're mine!

Tosca
Ah, help me!

(*They stop at the sound of a distant drumroll.*)

Scarpia
Listen! There's the drum beat.

They're starting. They will escort
the prisoners to the gallows.
And time is passing! See!
(*Having listened with great anxiety, Tosca draws away from the window and leans on the sofa, exhausted.*)
Work is going forward down there already.
Listen! You'll soon hear the firing squad.
For your Mario, one hour is left,
and you have the power to save him.

(*Tosca, overcome with grief, falls back onto the sofa. Unmoved, Scarpia goes and leans on a corner of the table, pours himself some coffee and drinks it whilst he continues to look at Tosca.*)

Tosca (*with great sorrow*)
[8] Life has taught me singing and loving.
I never did harm to one living creature.
Often in secret
I offered help to the poor and the needy.
Daily I pray sincerely.
My prayers
ascend from so many holy churches in Rome...
And every day my flowers grace the altar of God.
But now when I am suffering,
do you, dear Lord, reject me?
Ah, why do you reward your servant so?
I gave my jewels for the Madonna's mantle,
I gave my singing
to glorify the Angels of Heaven,
yet now in my distress,
ah, why, ah, why, dear Lord,
ah, why do you reward me so, dear Lord?

Scarpia
Your answer?

Tosca (*kneels before Scarpia*)
On my knees must I implore you?
Mercy... See, I stretch out my hands to beg you!
Hear me... Mercy.
All I ask is a single word of pity.

Scarpia
Your mystifying beauty, your loving nature,
I yield. The price is so meagre.
You gain a whole life, I the meekest fleeting
instant.

Tosca (*rising, contemptuously*)
No, no!
How you disgust me! No, no!

(*Knocking is heard at the door.*)

Scarpia
Who's there?

Spoletta (*entering hurriedly and all out of breath*)
Your Lordship, Angelotti took his life on our
arrival.

Scarpia (*to Spoletta*)
So then, let them hang his corpse on the gallows!
And what about his friend?

Spoletta
The Cavalier Cavaradossi?
Everything's ready, your lordship.

Tosca
(Heaven help me!)

Scarpia
(*to Spoletta*)
Don't go yet.
(*softly to Tosca*)
Your answer?
(*Tosca nods in agreement and, weeping out of shame, buries her head in the cushions on the sofa.*)
(*to Spoletta*)
Listen.

Tosca (*immediately interrupting Scarpia*)
But give the word to free him this instant!

Scarpia (*to Tosca*)
We have to move with care.
I can't be seen to release him.
The world must believe
that Cavaradossi has been shot.
(*He points to Spoletta.*)
This faithful man will arrange it all.

Tosca
How can I trust you?

Scarpia
I'll give him his orders
here in your presence.
(*to Spoletta*)
Spoletta, close it.
(*Spoletta quickly goes to close the door, then returns near Scarpia.*)

(*stares meaningfully at Spoletta who nods repeatedly to show that he understands Scarpia's intentions*)

I have changed my decision.
I want the prisoner to be shot.
(*Tosca jumps up, terrified.*)
Now mark me,
just as we did in the case of Palmieri...

Spoletta
An execution...

Scarpia (*suddenly, with clear deliberation*)
...but a fake one as we did with Count Palmieri!
You understand me?

Spoletta
I understand you.

Scarpia
Go.

Tosca
I want to tell him myself.

Scarpia
You shall.
(*to Spoletta*)
He will arrange it.
Mind now; as dawn is breaking...

Spoletta
Yes. Just like Palmieri...

(*Spoletta leaves. Scarpia stands by the door, listens to Spoletta's footsteps, then, changing his expression and gestures, approaches Tosca passionately.*)

Scarpia
I've done as you commanded.

Tosca (*stopping him*)
Just one moment.
You must give me a safe-conduct
so that I can leave the country with him.

Scarpia (*with courtesy*)
Do you intend to leave us?

Tosca
Yes, for ever!

Scarpia
Then may your wish be granted.
[9] (*He goes over to his desk and begins to write, stopping to ask Tosca:*)
Which route have you chosen?

Tosca
The shortest!

Scarpia
Civitavecchia?

Tosca
Yes.

(*While Scarpia is writing, Tosca goes over to the table and with trembling hand takes the glass of wine, filled by Scarpia, but just as she lifts it to her mouth she notices a sharp pointed knife on the table; she glances briefly at Scarpia who is still writing, and with infinite care attempts to grasp the knife, which she then hides behind her back, leaning on the*

table and still eyeing Scarpia. Having finished writing the permit, he seals it, and folds it: then, opening his arms, he goes over to Tosca to embrace her.)

Scarpia
Tosca, now at last you're mine!
(*But his voluptuous tone suddenly changes into a terrible cry as Tosca stabs him fully in the chest.*)
God in heaven!

Tosca
That was the kiss of Tosca!

Scarpia
Ah, help me, murder!
(*Staggering, he tries to grab hold of Tosca who draws back, terrified.*)
Ah, help me! Murder! Ah!

(*Tosca finding herself caught between Scarpia and the table and realising that he is about to touch her, repels him in horror. Scarpia falls, screaming and choking in his own blood.*)

Tosca (*with hatred*)
You blood foams and chokes you.

Scarpia
Oh, help me!

Tosca
Your blood foams and chokes you.

Scarpia (*struggles in vain and tries to get up clinging to the sofa*)
Oh, help me!

Tosca

Ah!

Scarpia

Murder! Murder!

Tosca

The blow struck by a woman!

Scarpia

Please, help me!

Tosca

I repaid all your torture!

Scarpia (*growing weaker*)

Oh, help me! Murder!

(*He makes a final effort, then slumps backwards.*)

Tosca

Can you still hear me? Tell me!

Look at me! I am Tosca! Oh, Scarpia!

Scarpia

Oh, help me, I'm dying!

Tosca

Does your blood choke you?

Scarpia (*gasping for breath*)

Murder!

Tosca (*bending over Scarpia's face*)

Die and be damned.

Die! Die! Die!

Scarpia (*remaining rigid*)

Ah!

Tosca

It's over! Now I forgive him!

(*Without taking her eyes off Scarpia's body, Tosca goes to the table, takes a bottle of water and moistening a napkin she washes her fingers, then she tidies her hair, looking at herself in the mirror. She remembers the permit, searches for it on the desk but doesn't find it; she looks for it again, finally she sees it in the clasped hand of Scarpia. She lifts his arm and then lets it fall, inert, rigid, having removed from it the paper, which she hides in her breast. She stops to look at Scarpia's body.*)

And this is the man who terrorised the whole of Rome.

(*She extinguishes the candelabra above the table and is about to leave, but changes her mind and, seeing a lit candle on the desk, she takes it and lights the other candle. She places the candles on either side of Scarpia's head. She looks around again and, noticing a crucifix, she unhooks it from the wall and, carrying it devoutly, kneels to place it on Scarpia's chest; then she gets up and with great caution departs; closing the door behind her.*)

End of Act II

Act III

Scene: Castel Sant'Angelo

(*The platform of Castel Sant'Angelo. On the left, a prison cell: placed there is a bench, a chair and a table on which stands a lamp, a large register and*

writing implements. On one of the walls is a crucifix and a lamp suspended in front of it. On the right, the opening of a small staircase which rises to the platform. In the background the Vatican and St Peter's. It is still night: gradually as dawn approaches the light becomes a murky grey: the church bells sound for Matins. The voice of a Shepherd can be heard leading his flock.)

A Shepherd Boy

[10] No words can cheer me.

My heart is sad and heavy.

Blow, winds, and carry

my sighs of love away.

Can you not see my heart is breaking?

Golden haired beauty, soon I must die!

(*A Jailor with a lantern climbs up the stairs, goes to the cell and lights the lamp before the crucifix, then the one on the table: he sits down and waits half-asleep. A little later a patrol, led by a Sergeant on duty, climbs onto the platform accompanying Cavaradossi: the patrol stops and the Sergeant leads Cavaradossi into the cell, handing the Jailor a piece of paper. The Jailor examines it, opens the register and writes in it while questioning.*)

Jailor

Mario Cavaradossi?

(*Cavaradossi nods in agreement. The Jailor hands the pen to the Sergeant.*)

Please, sign.

(*The Sergeant signs the register, then leaves with*

the soldiers down the stairs. The Jailor turns to Cavaradossi.)

One hour is left you.

A priest is here.

Will you make your last confession?

Cavaradossi

No. But grant me, I beg you, one final favour.

Jailor

I'd like to.

Cavaradossi

I leave behind me someone

I love so dearly.

Would you give me leave

to write her a letter?

(*removing a ring from his finger*)

All that is left me of any value is this gold ring.

If you will promise that you'll deliver

what I write to a lady,

you may keep it.

Jailor (*hesitates a moment, then accepts and motions to Cavaradossi to sit at the table, while he sits on the bench*)

I promise.

Cavaradossi (*begins to write, but after a few lines memories interrupt his thoughts and he stops writing*)

[11] All the stars shone in heaven
and the night air was scented.

I heard the gate creak open

and then on the pathway a footstep.

I breathed her fragrant perfume,
 then she ran to embrace me.
 Oh, sweetest kisses, oh, languishing caresses!
 With trembling fingers
 I loosed the veil that hid her dark-eyed beauty!
 My dream of love
 has vanished now for ever.
 That hour has faded,
 and now no hope is left me...
 but now no hope is left me!
 And just when life was full of hope and promise,
 so full of promise!
(He bursts into tears covering his face with his hands.)
(Spoletta comes up the stairs accompanied by the Sergeant and followed by Tosca: the Sergeant carries a lantern, Spoletta indicates to Tosca where to find Cavaradossi, then calls the Jailor to him: together they return back down the stairs, but not without first having given an order to the Guard, who is at the back, to keep an eye on the prisoner. Tosca, who meanwhile has been highly agitated, sees Cavaradossi weeping: she rushes over to him and unable to speak for emotion she raises his head with both hands, showing him at the same time the permit. Cavaradossi, seeing Tosca, jumps to his feet surprised, then reads the paper that Tosca gives to him.)
 Ah! Safe-conduct for Floria Tosca...

Tosca and Cavaradossi
 and for the man who is her companion.

Tosca
 You're free to go!

Cavaradossi *(looks at the paper and reads the signature on it)*
 Scarpia!
 Kindness from Scarpia?
(looking at Tosca intently)
 His first act of true compassion...

Tosca *(takes the permit and replaces it in her bag)*
 His final one!

Cavaradossi
 His final one?

Tosca
 He demanded my love for your life.
 My tears and my pleas were useless.
 I turned, frantic with fear,
 to the Madonna, but she would not hear me.
 Then the monster informed me:
 now the gallows raise
 their hideous arms to heaven!
 The drums began their rolling.
 He laughed at me, the monster, and gloated,
 sharpened his claws to pounce on his prey!
 'You're mine now!' Yes,
 ready to die with shame, I promised.
 And then my eye was caught by a knife blade.
 He wrote the order that set us free,
 so certain I'd surrender.
 Deep in his heart I drove the shining blade.

Cavaradossi
 You? With this hand you destroyed him,
 for my sake, and you so good and kind!

Tosca
 Blood from his heart was all over my hands.

Cavaradossi *(taking Tosca's hands between his own lovingly)*

¹² Oh, hands of mercy, innocent and loving,
 oh, hands intended for compassion and goodness,
 and made to care for children and gather roses,
 and join in prayer for those in trouble!
 But those hands fashioned by the God of loving
 were chosen by the sacred goddess of justice.
 His death was your deed, oh, hands of retribution,
 oh, hands of mercy, innocent and loving!

Tosca *(snatching her hands away)*
 Listen... dawn is approaching.
(showing him the bag)
 I gathered all my money and jewels...
 and then we'll be together...
 But first – and now you will laugh –
 first they are going to shoot you,
 their rifles will have blank cartridges...
 Just a sham execution.
 They fire, you fall.
 Then the soldiers will leave us...
 and then to freedom, ah, then to freedom.
 Off to Civitavecchia... we'll take a boat there...
 put out to sea!

Cavaradossi
 Liberty!

Tosca
 Liberty!

Cavaradossi
 Out to sea!

Tosca
 No more grief in all the world...
 Smell the scent of roses?
 See how every living thing
 awaits the sunrise as if it were a lover!

Cavaradossi *(with more tender feeling)*
 I minded death because I had to leave you,
 for you're the soul of everything I live for;
 me deepest hope, my joy and tender longing...
 centre on you, for you alone inspire me.
 The flashing storms and paling skies of heaven
 take form and colour when you are beside me,
 and all the glorious beauties of nature
 touch my heart when you love and desire me.

Tosca
 Oh love, that knew the way to win your freedom,
 you be our guide on land, our pilot at sea!
 We'll follow where the voice of love is calling.
 We'll be alone, the two of us together,
 floating away, like clouds as sunset is falling...
 and then we'll find a paradise for ever,
 paradise for ever, paradise for ever!

(They remain impassioned, silent, then Tosca, bringing them back to reality looks around intently.)

What is keeping them?
(to Cavaradossi with great affection)

Mind now!

You have to fall at the moment
you hear the soldiers firing.

Cavaradossi

I'll not fail you.
When they fire I will fall down,
utterly lifeless.

Tosca *(insistent)*

But do be careful, try to fall correctly!
In the theatre we learn it,
I should know how to do it.

Cavaradossi *(interrupting her and drawing her close)*

Tell me again of our journey together;
your voice is sweeter than the lark at morning!

Tosca *(lets herself go as if in ecstasy, then becoming more and more excited)*

United in our exile
we shall create a world of love around us
with a glory of colour,

Tosca and Cavaradossi

with a glory of music by night and day...
World of love, shining with hope and
flaming with passion, ever increasing holy fire...

We feel your glorious joy...
We hear in our hearts music of sweet desire!

Tosca

I'll press upon your eyes a thousand kisses
and tell you how I love no one but you.

(Meanwhile a party of Soldiers mounts the stairs: an Officer marshals the Soldiers at the rear; Spoletta, the Sergeant and the Jailor follow: Spoletta gives the necessary instructions. The sky grows lighter as dawn rises and four o'clock sounds. The Jailor approaches Cavaradossi and, taking off his hat, points out the Officer, then, having taken the prison register, he descends the stairs.)

Jailor

Ready?

Cavaradossi

I am ready.

Tosca *(to Cavaradossi in a low voice and laughing secretly)*

(Don't forget now...
you hear them firing... down...)

Cavaradossi *(whispering, also laughing)*

(Down!)

Tosca

(Do not stir till you hear me give a signal.)

Cavaradossi

(No, my darling.)

Tosca

(And fall correctly.)

Cavaradossi *(smiling)*

(I'll copy Tosca's performance.)

Tosca

(Stop laughing.)

Cavaradossi *(becoming sombre)*

(Like this?)

Tosca

(Like that.)

(Cavaradossi follows the Officer first having said goodbye to Tosca, who moves to the left in the cell in order to follow what is going on on the platform. She sees the Officer and the Sergeant lead Cavaradossi to the wall opposite her: the Sergeant wants to blindfold Cavaradossi who, smiling, refuses. Such lugubrious preparations exhaust Tosca's patience.)

¹⁹ What a time they are taking!

I can't bear this delay!

Sunrise already...

Now what else will they think of?

It isn't serious. I know...

but still this waiting drives me frantic!

(The Officer and the Sergeant arrange the platoon of Soldiers, giving them the appropriate orders.)

Now then! At last they are ready...

My dear Mario's so handsome!

(Seeing the Officer ready to lower his sabre, Tosca

puts her hands over her ears to block out the sound of the shots, then she signals to Cavaradossi to fall. A volley of shots)

There! Fall Now!

(Seeing him on the ground she blows him a kiss.)

Ah, what an artist!

(The Sergeant approaches the body and observes it carefully; Spoletta also takes a look and dismisses the Sergeant, preventing him from giving the coup de grâce. The Officer lines up the Soldiers, the Sergeant withdraws the sentinel at the back, and then all follow Spoletta down the staircase. Tosca is very agitated: she watches these movements fearing that Cavaradossi, through impatience, might move and speak too soon.)

(to Cavaradossi, restrained)

Oh! Mario, do not move yet.

They're going now... Quiet. They're off.

There they go. There they go.

They mustn't see you moving.

(Seeing the platform deserted, she goes over to listen by the entrance to the stairs: she stops there, trembling, anxious, afraid suddenly that the Soldiers, rather than disappearing, will return to the platform. She listens. They have all gone. She goes over to the platform. She listens. They have all gone. She goes over to the parapet and, leaning out cautiously, she looks below, then runs towards Cavaradossi.)

Quickly up! Mario! Mario!

Now quickly! Let's go!

(touching him, troubled, turning him over)

Up, Up! Mario! Mario! Ah!
Murdered! Murdered! Murdered!
Oh! Mario, murdered? You? Like this?
You finish like this! You finish like this!
(With incoherent words, sighs, sobs she throws herself onto Cavaradossi, not fully comprehending his terrible fate.)
You murdered... murdered?

(Meanwhile from the courtyard below, from the parapet and above from the small staircase the voice of Sciarrone, Spoletta and other Soldiers can be heard gradually becoming more distinct.)

Spoletta
Ah!

Sciarrone
Ah!

Some Soldiers
Ah!

Sciarrone
I tell you someone's killed him!

Tosca
Mario...

Spoletta and Soldiers *(shouting)*
Scarpia?

Tosca *(weeping)*
Why have you left your Floria?

Sciarrone
Scarpia.

Tosca
Mario!

Spoletta
It must be Tosca.

Tosca
Mario!

Sciarrone and Soldiers *(closer)*
We must catch her!

Spoletta and Sciarrone
Stand guard at the bottom of the staircase!

Spoletta, Sciarrone and Soldiers
Stand guard at the bottom of the staircase!

(Spoletta appears on the stairs while Sciarrone behind him cries out pointing at Tosca.)

Sciarrone
She's there!

Spoletta
Ah! Tosca, you will pay most dearly for his life...

(Spoletta moves to throw himself on Tosca, but springing to her feet she pushes him away so violently that he almost falls back down the stairs, then she runs to the parapet and from the top cries out:)

Tosca
With my own!
Oh! Scarpia in sight of God!

(She throws herself into space.)

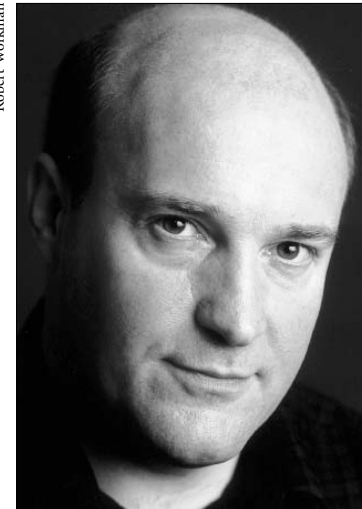
(Sciarrone and some Soldiers, having climbed the stairs in confusion, rush over to the parapet and

look below. Spoletta stands still, terrified and aghast.)

End of Opera

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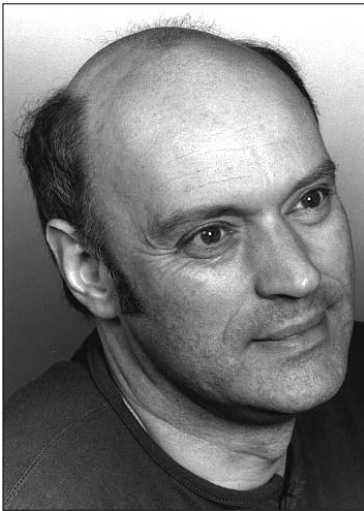
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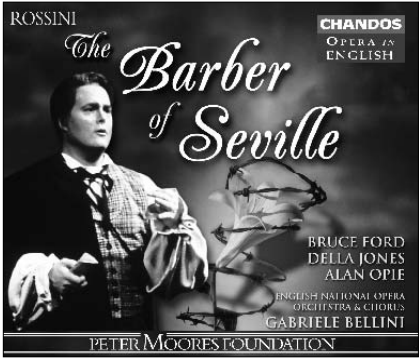


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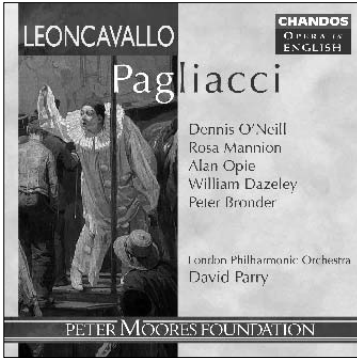


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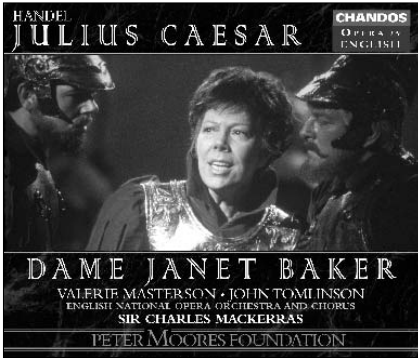


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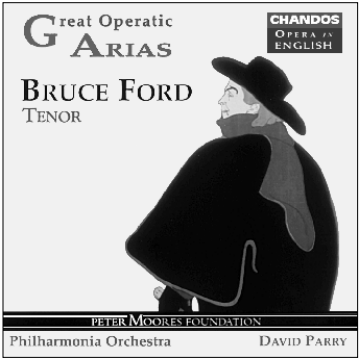


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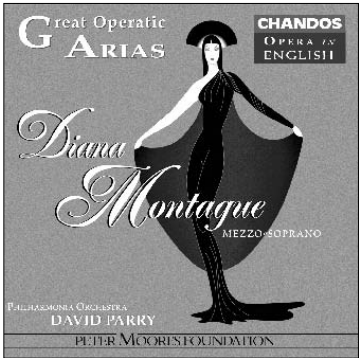


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