

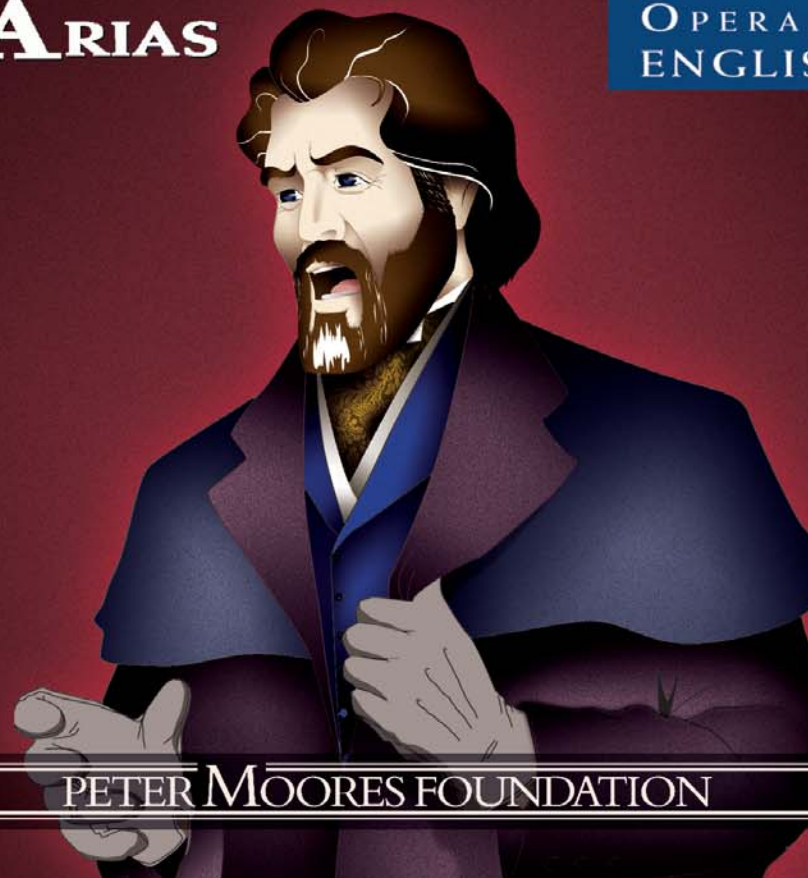
CHAN 3044



John
Tomlinson

Great Operatic ARIAS

CHANDOS
OPERA IN
ENGLISH



PETER MOORES FOUNDATION

Bill Cooper

John Tomlinson during the recording sessions



Great Operatic Arias

with

John Tomlinson

George Frideric Handel (1685–1759)
from Acis and Galatea

Polyphemus' Recitative and Air

- [1] 'I rage, I rage, I rage, I melt, I burn!' –
'O ruddier than the cherry'

Time Page

4:43 58

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)
from The Abduction from the Seraglio

Osmin's Song, Act I

- [2] 'When a maiden takes your fancy'
(Wer ein Liebchen hat gefunden)

2:57 58

Osmin and Blonde's Duet, Act II

- [3] 'I'm going, but take my advice'
(Ich gehe, doch rate ich dir)
with **Helen Williams** soprano

3:46 58

Pedrillo and Osmin's Duet, Act II

- [4] 'Vivat Bacchus! Long live Bacchus!'
(Vivat Bacchus! Bacchus lebe!)
with **Barry Banks** tenor

2:20 60

George Frideric Handel
from Samson, Act II

Harapha's Air

- [5] 'Honour and arms scorn such a foe'

6:29 60

Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901)
from Simon Boccanegra, Prologue

Fiesco's Scena and Aria

- [6] 'A last farewell I bid you'
(A te l'estremo addio) –
'My soul is torn with suffering'
(Il lacerato spirito)
with **Geoffrey Mitchell Choir**

Time Page

6:19 60

Modest Mussorgsky (1839–1881)
Mephistopheles' Song of the Flea (from Goethe's 'Faust')

- [7] 'There lived a king of old'
(Zhil bil korol kogdato)

3:37 61

Alexander Borodin (1833–1887)
from Prince Igor

Prince Igor's Aria, Act II

- [8] No rest, no slumber'
(Ni sna, ni otdikha)

8:00 62

Galitsky's Aria, Act I

- [9] 'The Prince has drunk his fill?' –
'The sober life of boredom'
(Greshno tait)
with **Geoffrey Mitchell Choir**

4:07 62

	Time	Page
Khan Konchak's Aria, Act II		
¹⁰ 'Igor, listen' (Zdorov li, Knaz?)	5:42	63
Alexander Sergeyevich Dargomizhsky (1813–1869) <i>from Russalka, Act I</i> Miller's Song		
¹¹ 'Like every maiden in the whole of Russia' (Okh, toto vse vi devky molodiye)	4:06	64
Giuseppe Verdi <i>from Ernani, Act I</i> Silva's Scena and Cavatina		
¹² 'Can I believe it?' (Che mai vegg'io!) – 'Vain illusion! When I believed her' (Infelice! ...e tuo credevi) with Geoffrey Mitchell Choir	7:09	65
Liza Lehmann (1862–1918) <i>from In a Persian Garden</i> Myself when young		
¹³ 'Myself when young did eagerly frequent'	3:43	66

Sir Arthur Sullivan (1842–1900)
from The Mikado, Act II

The Mikado's Song		
¹⁴ 'A more humane Mikado... My object all sublime' with Geoffrey Mitchell Choir	4:30	66

Jacques Offenbach (1819–1880)
from Geneviève de Brabant

Gendarmes' Duet		
¹⁵ 'We're public guardians bold yet wary' with Andrew Shore baritone	2:45	67

Sir Arthur Sullivan
from The Pirates of Penzance, Act II

Policeman's Song		
¹⁶ 'When a felon's not engaged in his employment' with Geoffrey Mitchell Choir	2:37	68

John Tomlinson bass
Philharmonia Orchestra
Gareth Hancock, Stephen Clarke assistant conductors
David Parry

Bonus track:

Modest Mussorgsky

from Boris Godunov, Prologue, Scene 2
(Coronation Scene)

Boris's Prayer

[17] 'My soul is sad'
(Skorbit dusha!)

John Tomlinson bass
Chorus of Opera North
Choristers of Leeds Parish Church
English Northern Philharmonia
Paul Daniel

(from CHAN 3007)

Time Page

3:59 68

TT 77:42

Further appearances in **Opera in English**

John Tomlinson: *Julius Caesar* (CHAN 3019(3)), *Mary Stuart* (CHAN 3017(2)), *Rigoletto* (CHAN 3030(2)), *Werther* (CHAN 3033(2)) and highlights from *Boris Godunov* (CHAN 3007) and *Der Rosenkavalier* (CHAN 3022)

Helen Williams: *The Elixir of Love* (CHAN 3027(2)) and *Il trovatore* (CHAN 3036(2))

Barry Banks: *Don Pasquale* (CHAN 3011(2)) and *The Elixir of Love* (CHAN 3027(2))

Andrew Shore: *Don Pasquale* (CHAN 3011(2)), *The Elixir of Love* (CHAN 3027(2)), *The Barber of Seville* (CHAN 3025(2)), *La bohème* (CHAN 3008(2)), *Tosca* (CHAN 3000(2)) and highlights from *Der Rosenkavalier* (CHAN 3022)

John Tomlinson as Harapha in The Royal Opera's
1985 production of Handel's *Samson*

Zoe Dominic



Great Operatic Arias

Charles Burney in his *General History of Music* makes a striking remark: 'Handel's genius and fire never shine brighter than in the bass songs which he composed for Boschi and Montagnana.' Giuseppe Maria Boschi sang in Handel's Venetian opera *Agrippina* (1709), in *Rinaldo* (1711), and then as the bass in all Handel's operas during the eight years of the Royal Academy at the King's Theatre (1720–8). We don't know who was the bass in the Duke of Chandos's musical establishment at Cannons, but the role of Polyphemus in *Acis and Galatea* (1718) points to an able singer. Winton Dean describes the one-eyed giant, feaster on human flesh, but tenderly in love with Galatea, as 'Handel's first immortal stage figure'. In this pastoral, the composer treats the ogre with a humorous and almost affectionate touch. The tune of Polyphemus' amorous ditty 'O ruddier than the cherry' [1] was in fact composed by Reinhard Keiser, for the opera *Janus* (Hamburg, 1698); but the tootling of a sopranino recorder high above the tune – a merry, fanciful depiction of the gigantic panpipe constructed for the giant's 'capacious mouth' – is, so far as we know, Handel's own invention.

Handel's basses, when not subsidiary characters such as captains or companions, can be kindly mages, grave fathers or – like Polyphemus, and like Harapha in *Samson* – blustering braggarts. The part of Harapha was composed for Theodore Reinhold, Handel's principal bass from 1736 to 1751. His later bass characters could also be tragic heroes – Reinhold was Handel's first Saul and his first Hercules – but Harapha, the giant of Gath taunting the blinded Samson, conforms to the earlier type as he boasts in his braggadocio virtuoso display of octave leaps, stepwise ascents running through the registers, and coloratura. To close the middle section of the aria 'Honour and arms' [2], on 'I disdain' Mr Tomlinson extends the written range by a fourth, down to bottom D.

Mozart, like Handel, wrote important bass roles for a benevolent mage, a stern father, and a ferocious blusterer viewed in humorous fashion. His first Osmin was Karl Ludwig Fischer, famous for a compass that extended from bottom C to high A, and for his florid technique. (Mozart even thought of rewriting *Idomeneo* so that Fischer could sing the title

role.) With Fischer in his cast for *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, Mozart made Osmin a more important character than he had been in the source libretto. Osmin's first aria, 'When a maiden takes your fancy' [2], playfully pictures his amorous possessiveness and morose suspicions – and also exploits one of Fischer's specialities as a melody obsessively centred on middle G suddenly plunges to low G and then takes an octave-and-a-fifth leap upward.

In Osmin's duet with Blonde, 'I'm going, but take my advice' [3], Mozart pits a spirited, fearless young Englishwoman against the bloodthirsty keeper of the seraglio: a wide-ranging soprano against a wide-ranging bass. (She was Therese Teyber, and her role runs from low A flat up to E *in altissimo*, just a semitone below the Queen of the Night's famous Fs.) Osmin tries to cow his 'slave' into obedience in a stepwise descent to bottom E followed by a soaring arpeggio. Blonde, unimpressed, mimics and mocks him.

'Vivat Bacchus!' [4] is a lively drinking-song after Pedrillo has persuaded Osmin to taste wine for the first time. Haydn's opera *L'incontro improvviso*, another escape-from-the-seraglio comedy with a cast of two sopranos, two tenors and a bass, composed seven years before Mozart's, has a comparable tenor-bass

duet ('Old Mohammad wasn't thinking when he put a ban on drinking'); its start is rhythmically identical.

The bass role in Ottocento *opera seria* was typically a noble, authoritative ruler, a grave priest, or a loving, possibly severe father. Don Ruy Gomez de Silva in Verdi's *Ernani* is an exception: the bass as a lover, one of the three men – the tenor, the baritone and the bass – who seek the heroine's hand. Elvira is in fact betrothed to her elderly guardian, Silva. The aria 'Vain illusion! When I believed her' [2] is his lament and reproach when, entering her chamber on the eve of his wedding, he finds the other two men there. The Venetian company for which Verdi composed *Ernani* did not have a leading bass, and Silva was originally designated a *basso comprimario* role. But in later productions, when the great bass Ignazio Marini undertook the part, a 'vengeance cabaletta' was added to the brief solo. Its authorship remains in doubt. The coda is lifted from *Nabucco*, and self-borrowing of that kind, common enough among Verdi's predecessors, was not his practice. On the other hand, the piece did appear in *Ernani* scores published in his lifetime, and in modern performances of the opera it is more often heard than not. (A

complete recording of *Ernani* sung in English is soon to be released on Chandos [CHAN 3052(2)].)

Father-and-daughter – and usually baritone-and-soprano – relationships are recurrent in Verdi's operas, from the first of them, *Oberto*, through *Nabucco*, *I Lombardi*, *Giovanna d'Arco*, *Luisa Miller*, *Stiffelio*, *Rigoletto*, *La forza del destino*, *Aida*, and the unwritten *King Lear*, to *Falstaff*. Two are linked in **Simon Boccanegra**: Jacopo Fiesco, in the aria recorded here, 'My soul is torn with suffering' [6], grieves for his dead daughter Maria; and Simon grieves for the loss of the daughter born to Maria and him (whom he later finds again, however). Fiesco was from the start designated a *primo basso profondo* role. In Verdi's revised version of the opera, first performed in 1881, the part was taken by the great bass Edouard de Reszke.

Dargomizhsky's *Russalka*, with a libretto after Pushkin, first appeared in St Petersburg in 1856, and after a Maryinsky Theatre revival in 1865 the opera became established in the Russian repertory. The Miller, father of a maiden who, jilted by a prince, throws herself into the Dnieper and becomes a water nymph, was one of Chaliapin's favourite roles. He sang it in 1893 in Tiflis. Three years later it became his first Maryinsky success, when he stepped

in at short notice for an indisposed colleague. He sang the role in London in 1931, at the Lyceum, and I knew people who remembered vividly his mad scene in Act III, when he appeared 'only half-human, a strange creature in rags, with an insane look in his eyes, resembling a prophetic bird'. Dargomizhsky deliberately mingled manners Italianate, ethnic and 'realistic'. Here we have the song, 'Like every maiden in the whole of Russia' [11], that opens the opera: in jolly, opéra-comique vein, tragedy still far off, the Miller gives his daughter some worldly advice very much in the spirit of Rocco's 'gold' aria in *Fidelio*.

Buffo duets for two basses (one of whom might be termed 'baritone' by today's styling) were a regular feature of comic opera. Famous examples occur in Rossini, and in Donizetti's *Don Pasquale*. Verdi wrote one in his comedy *Un giorno di regno*. Bellini used the combination to serious, stirring effect in the duet that closes the second act of *I puritani*. Verdi mingled *serio* and *buffo* in *La forza del destino*'s duet between Melitone and Padre Guardiano, and later in the *duettino* exchanges between Falstaff and Ford. Offenbach's **Geneviève de Brabant** first appeared in 1859. The 'Couplets des deux hommes d'armes', or Gendarmes' Duet [16], was added for a revival

in 1867 (the year of Napoleon III's Grand Exposition, and of *Don Carlos*). The censor tried to stop it ('We cannot have the gendarmerie held up to ridicule') but was persuaded that only medieval, not modern, policemen were being mocked; and the duet became the hit of the show. *Geneviève de Brabant* reached New York in 1868 and London in 1871. During World War I the duet became newly celebrated as 'The Marines' Hymn': 'From the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli'. A recording of 'We're public guardians bold yet wary' made in 1933 by Harold Williams and Malcolm McEachern (the Jetsam of *Flotsam and Jetsam*) was for many years a favourite of BBC listeners. In 1958 *The New Yorker* captioned a cartoon of atom scientists on the march with 'From the cyclotron of Berkeley to the labs of M.I.T.,/We're the lads that you can trust to keep our country free'.

Berlioz (in his *Damnation of Faust*) and Beethoven (in his Six Songs, Op. 75, published in 1810) are among the many composers who have set the 'Song of the Flea' from Goethe's *Faust*: Mephistopheles' sardonic contribution to the student conviviality in Auerbach's tavern. (It's a song *about* a flea, but the English title is so well established that only

pedantry would seek to alter its ambiguity.) Mussorgsky's setting [7] was his last song. It was composed, little more than a year before his death at the age of forty-two, during the 1879 concert tour in southern Russia that he undertook as accompanist to the contralto Darya Leonova, who had been the Hostess in the three-scene 'sampler' of *Boris Godunov* presented at the Maryinsky Theatre in 1873. (John Tomlinson has recorded highlights of the opera on CHAN 3007.) Commentators have often regretted that this product of his disordered, alcoholic final years should have become his best known song; the *Nursery*, *Sunless*, and *Songs and Dances of Death* cycles are far greater. But the effectiveness of **Mephistopheles' Song of the Flea** is evident. Chaliapin's best-selling record of it, coupled with the 'Song of the Volga Boatmen', made it internationally famous.

The Pirates of Penzance, apart from some preliminary sketching, was composed and brought to performance in New York. W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan were there for *H.M.S. Pinafore*. At the Fifth Avenue Theatre the *Pirates* opened on New Year's Eve 1879 with Blanche Roosevelt as Mabel, Giovanni Chiari di Brocolini (John Clarke, from Brooklyn) as the Pirate Chief, and

Mr F. Clifton as 'Edward, a Sergeant of Police'. The audience, the *Herald* reported, was one of the largest and most fashionable of the season, including Mrs Vanderbilt ('without diamonds') and Mrs J.J. Astor. The day before, a single copyright-securing premiere of the *Pirates* had been presented in the Royal Bijou Theatre at Paignton, Devon: a sketchy matinée performance, given by the cast that was touring *Pinafore* in Torquay. It used headscarves to add a piratical touch to nautical costume and where necessary performed score-in-hand. In America the *Pirates* was a hit. Three touring companies were assembled and Sullivan conducted their openings in Philadelphia, Newark and Buffalo. Then he sailed back for the London premiere which took place on 3 April 1880. *The Times* declared that Rutland Barrington as the Sergeant of Police was 'simply sublime'. The Policeman's Song [16] was regularly encored. In his autobiography Barrington says he asked Gilbert for perhaps a new stanza to sing. 'Encore', Gilbert replied, means 'sing it again, not sing something different!'

The *Mikado* appeared at the Savoy Theatre in March 1885. Barrington sang Pooh-Bah, and the title role was taken by Richard Temple. His song recorded here nearly disappeared: at the dress rehearsal Gilbert announced that 'A more

humane Mikado... My object all sublime' [14] would be cut. There was company protest. It was reinstated – and was on the first night and often thereafter encored.

John Tomlinson sings the arias of three of the characters in Borodin's opera *Prince Igor*: the reckless, treacherous, irresponsible Prince Galitsky, Prince Igor's brother-in-law, who hopes to gain the rule of the realm should Igor perish in his campaign against Khan Konchak [9]; Igor as captive in Khan Konchak's camp, reflecting on his defeat, remembering his beloved wife and mourning the fate of his country [8]; and Khan Konchak, who (in Richard Taruskin's phrase) 'oozes magnanimity towards this "honored guest"' and proposes an alliance with him (which Igor refuses, thereby winning Konchak's admiration) [10]. Chaliapin's regular role was Prince Galitsky which he first sang in 1896, at the Maryinsky. In 1914, for Thomas Beecham's season at Drury Lane, he added Khan Konchak and thereafter often sang both roles in a single performance. The two roles are designated 'bass', while Igor is a 'baritone'. But lines are hard to draw; categories are not fixed. Basses, 'bass-baritones', and baritones sing Mozart's Don Giovanni and Leporello, Wagner's Wotan and Hans Sachs, Mussorgsky's

Boris Godunov. Chaliapin, too, recorded Igor's aria as well as Galitsky's and Konchak's.

Music was Borodin's 'hobby'. He was a distinguished professor at St Petersburg's Medico-Surgical Academy, but he wrote music (symphonies, chamber music, a great opera) whose lyrical beauty has proved unfading. Borodin began *Prince Igor* in 1869. At his death in 1887 it was still unfinished. Liadov, Rimsky-Korsakov, and Glazunov all contributed to the score, which had its first performance, at the Maryinsky, in 1890.

There are probably no longer, as once there were, copies of *The Rubāiyāt of Omar Khayyām, the Astronomer-Poet of Persia*, rendered into English verse by Edward FitzGerald, on every bookshelf: slim volumes, attractively bound, of a poem once so popular that quotations from it fill six columns of *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*. (I have three copies of the *Rubāiyāt*: those that both my mother and my father acquired in their teens, and a beautiful modern facsimile of the manuscript copy written and illustrated by William Morris in 1872, now in the British Library.) And there are probably no longer, as once there were, copies of Liza Lehmann's *In a Persian Garden* in every domestic piano bench. FitzGerald's *The Rubāiyāt of Omar*

Khayyām first appeared in 1859. Liza Lehmann's cycle of thirteen settings from it, represented on this disc by 'Myself when young' [13], had its first performance in 1896 at a private concert with Emma Albani, Hilda Wilson, Ben Davies and David Bispham the distinguished singers, and then at the Monday Popular Concerts where, until her retirement in 1894, Liza Lehmann herself had been a favourite singer. Clara Schumann was sometimes her accompanist. She retired on her marriage to the painter and composer Herbert Bedford and devoted herself to composition. Operas included *The Vicar of Wakefield*. Among the many singers who recorded songs by her are Nellie Melba and Joan Hammond ('The Magdalen at Michael's Gate'), Clara Butt and her three sisters ('The Birth of the Flowers', a quartet Lehmann wrote for them), John McCormack ('Ah, moon of my delight', from the *Persian Garden*), and Beatrice Lillie ('There are fairies at the bottom of my garden'). She was the first president of the Society of Women Musicians. The composer David Bedford, the conductor Stuart Bedford, and the baritone and stage director Peter Lehmann Bedford are her grandsons.

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The bass **John Tomlinson** was born in Lancashire and won a scholarship to study at the Royal Manchester College of Music (now the Royal Northern College of Music). He has sung regularly with English National Opera since 1974, with The Royal Opera, Covent Garden since 1976 and has also appeared with Opera North, Scottish Opera, Glyndebourne Festival and Touring Operas and Kent Opera. Abroad he has sung at the Bayreuth Festival every year since 1988, where he has been heard as Heinrich (*Lohengrin*), Wotan (*Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*), the Wanderer (*Siegfried*), King Mark (*Tristan und Isolde*) and Gurnemanz and Titurel (*Parsifal*). He has also sung in Paris, Amsterdam, Berlin (both the German Opera and German State Opera), Geneva, Lisbon, New York, San Francisco and San Diego, and at the festivals of Edinburgh, Orange, Aix-en-Provence and Salzburg as well as at the Maggio musicale in Florence. His operatic repertoire further includes Sarastro, Rocco (*Fidelio*), King Philip (*Don Carlos*), the Landgraf (*Tannhäuser*), Hans Sachs (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*), Hagen (*Götterdämmerung*), Baron Ochs, Moses (*Moses und Aron*), Lindorf, Coppélius, Dr Miracle and Dapertutto (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*), Golaud (*Pelléas et Mélisande*), the title roles in

Boris Godunov, *Oberto* and *Attila*, and the Green Knight (Sir Harrison Birtwistle's *Gawain*), a role he created at the opera's world premiere at The Royal Opera, Covent Garden in 1991.

He has a large concert repertoire and has sung with all the leading British orchestras as well as in Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Belgium, Holland, Denmark and the USA. His many recordings include, for Opera Rara, Donizetti's *Gabriella di Vergy* and, for Chandos, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Britten's *Billy Budd* and, in association with the Peter Moores Foundation, *Julius Caesar*, *Mary Stuart*, *Rigoletto*, *Werther* and discs of highlights from *Boris Godunov* and *Der Rosenkavalier*.

John Tomlinson was awarded a CBE in the 1997 New Year's Honours list.

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 in 1998 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 d'Inghilterra*. For Chandos he has conducted seven recordings of operatic arias (with Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny, John Tomlinson and Della Jones, the last to be issued during 2001), as well as *Faust*, *Don Pasquale*, *The Elixir of Love*, *Il trovatore*, *La bohème*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, the award-winning *Tosca* and highlights from *Der Rosenkavalier*, all in association with the Peter Moores Foundation.



John Tomlinson as Coppelius,
with Susan Parry as
Nicklausse, in English
National Opera's 1997/98
production of Offenbach's
The Tales of Hoffmann

Bill Raftery

John Tomlinson as
John Claggart in The
Royal Opera's 1995
production of
Britten's *Billy Budd*



Clive Barba/Performing Arts Library

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.

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.

Whilst still in his early twenties, Peter Moores had started



Christina Buron/PMF

Peter Moores, CBE, DL

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 repertoire 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.

Große Opernarien

In seiner "General History of Music" (Allgemeine Musikgeschichte) macht der englische Komponist und Musikhistoriker Charles Burney die überraschende Anmerkung: "Händels Genie und Feuer leuchten nirgendwo so hell wie in den Baß-Arien, die er für Boschi und Montagnana komponierte." Giuseppe Maria Boschi sang in Händels venezianischer Oper *Agrippina* (1709), im *Rinaldo* (1711), und schließlich während der acht Jahre der Royal Academy am King's Theatre (1720–28) als führender Bassist in allen Opern Händels. Es ist nicht bekannt, welcher Baß dem musikalischen Etablissement des Herzogs von Chandos in Cannons zur Verfügung stand, doch die Partie des Polyphemus in *Acis and Galatea* (1718) deutet auf einen fähigen Sänger hin. Winton Dean beschreibt den einäugigen Riesen, der sich von Menschenfleisch ernährt, gleichzeitig aber voller Zärtlichkeit in Galatea verliebt ist, als "Händels erste unsterbliche Bühnenfigur". In diesem Hirtenspiel behandelt der Komponist das Ungeheuer mit einem Hauch von Humor und macht ihn geradezu liebenswert. Die Melodie von Polyphemus'

verliebter Weise "O ruddier than the cherry" [1] stammt zwar eigentlich von Reinhard Keiser und wurde für die Oper *Janus* (Hamburg, 1698) komponiert, doch bei dem Dudeln einer Sopraninoblockflöte hoch über der Melodie – einer fröhlich-verstiegenen Darstellung der riesigen Panflöte, die für den "umfangreichen Mund" des Ungeheuers konstruiert worden war –, handelt es sich, soweit bekannt ist, um eine Erfindung Händels.

Händel wählt für seine Baßpartien, insofern es sich nicht um Nebenfiguren wie etwa Kapitäne oder Gefährten handelt, oft die Figur des wohlwollenden Weisen, des ernstesten Vaters, oder – wie bei Polyphemus oder Harapha in *Samson* – des ungehobelten Prahlers. Die Partie des Harapha wurde für Theodore Reinhold, Händels bevorzugten Baß zwischen 1736 und 1751, komponiert. Später wies er seinen Bässen auch einmal die Rolle des tragischen Helden zu – Reinhold war Händels erster Saul und sein erster Herkules –, während Harapha, der Riese von Gath, der den erblindeten Samson verhöhnt, mit seinen voller Bravour zur Schau gestellten virtuosen

Oktavsprüngen, stufenweisen Aufstiegen durch alle Register sowie Koloraturen der ersten Gruppe angehört. Als Schluß des Mittelteils der Arie "Honour and arms" [5] wird beim Text "I disdain" der notierte Umfang von Mr Tomlinson um eine Quarte nach unten erweitert, und zwar bis zum großen D.

Wie Händel schrieb auch Mozart wichtige Baßpartien für einen wohlwollenden Weisen, einen ernstesten Vater und einen heftigen Prahler, den er jedoch humorvoll betrachtet. Sein erster Osmin war Karl Ludwig Fischer, berühmt für seinen Stimmumfang, der vom großen C bis zum eingestrichenen A reichte, und für seine agile Technik. (Mozart hatte sogar erwogen, *Idomeneo* umzuschreiben, damit Fischer die Hauptrolle singen könnte.) Weil Fischer zur Besetzung der **Entführung aus dem Serail** gehörte, sorgte Mozart dafür, daß Osmins Rolle wichtiger wurde, als es im Libretto ursprünglich vorgesehen war. Osmins erste Arie "When a maiden takes your fancy" (Wer ein Liebchen hat gefunden) [2] schildert auf spielerische Art und Weise seine besitzerergreifenden Liebesansprüche und mißmutigen Verdächtigungen. Außerdem macht sie sich eine von Fischers Spezialitäten zunutze, indem eine Melodie, die wie besessen

um das kleine G kreist, plötzlich zum großen G hinabstürzt, um dann eine Duodezime nach oben zu springen.

In Osmins Duett mit Blonde, "I'm going, but take my advice" (Ich gehe, doch rate ich dir) [3], stellt Mozart dem blutrünstigen Haremswächter eine temperamentvolle, furchtlose junge Engländerin gegenüber: ein Sopran mit großem Umfang und ein Baß mit ebenfalls großem Umfang. Die Sopranistin der Uraufführung war Therese Teyber, und die Partie reicht vom kleinen As bis zum dreigestrichenen E, also nur ein Halbton unter den berühmten Fs der Königin der Nacht. Osmin versucht seine "Sklavin" durch einen stufenweisen Abstieg bis zum großen E, dem ein schwungvoll emporsteigendes Arpeggio folgt, einzuschüchtern. Blonde bleibt nicht nur unbeeindruckt, sondern ahmt ihn nach und macht sich über ihn lustig.

"Vivat Bacchus!" [4] ist ein spritziges Trinklied, das erklingt, nachdem Pedrillo Osmin überredet hat, zum ersten Mal Wein zu probieren. In Haydns Oper *L'incontro improvviso*, bei der es sich ebenfalls um eine Flucht-aus-dem-Serail-Komödie mit einer Besetzung von zwei Sopranen, zwei Tenören und einem Baß handelt und die sieben Jahre vor Mozarts Singspiel entstand, gibt es ein

vergleichbares Duett für Tenor und Baß, dessen Anfang rhythmisch identisch ist.

In der *Opera seria* des Ottocento verkörperte der Bassist typischerweise einen edelmütigen, respekt einflößenden Herrscher, einen ernsten Priester, oder einen liebevollen, vielleicht aber auch strengen Vater. Don Ruy Gomez de Silva in Verdis *Ernani* bildet eine Ausnahme: hier ist der Baß ein Geliebter, und zwar einer der drei Männer – Tenor, Bariton und Baß –, die um die Hand der Heldenin werben. Elvira ist ihrem alten Vormund, Silva, versprochen. Die Arie “Vain illusion! When I believed her” (Infelice! ...e tuo credevi) [12] ist voll der Klage und Verbitterung darüber, daß er am Vorabend ihrer Hochzeit beim Betreten von Elviras Kammer auf die beiden anderen Männer trifft. Die venezianische Opernkompanie, für die Verdi *Ernani* schrieb, hatte keinen führenden Bassisten, so daß die Rolle des Silva ursprünglich als *Basso comprimario* vorgesehen war. In späteren Produktionen, als der große Baß Ignazio Marini die Partie übernahm, wurde dem kurzen Solo jedoch eine “Rache-Caballetta” hinzugefügt. Ihr Ursprung ist zweifelhaft. Die Coda wurde dem *Nabucco* entlehnt, eine Praxis die zwar unter Verdis Vorgängern gängig war, von ihm selbst aber nicht praktiziert wurde. Dennoch

erscheint diese Musik in den Partituren von *Ernani*, die noch zu Lebzeiten des Komponisten veröffentlicht wurden, und bei modernen Aufführungen wird sie in der Regel mit einbezogen. (Eine komplette Einspielung von *Ernani*, in englischer Sprache, erscheint demnächst bei Chandos [CHAN 3052(2)].)

Es gibt in Verdis Opern zahlreiche Vater-Tochter-Beziehungen (normalerweise Bariton/Sopran), von der ersten, *Oberto*, über *Nabucco*, *I Lombardi*, *Giovanna d'Arco*, *Luisa Miller*, *Stiffelio*, *Rigoletto*, *La forza del destino*, *Aida*, und den ungeschriebenen *King Lear*, bis hin zum *Falstaff*. In *Simon Boccanegra* sind zwei solche Beziehungen miteinander verwoben: Jacopo Fiesco trauert in der hier eingespielten Arie “My soul is torn with suffering” (Il lacerato spirito) [13] um seine verstorbene Tochter Maria, während Simon den Verlust der Tochter, die ihm von eben jener Maria geboren wurde, beklagt – er findet sie später jedoch wieder. Die Rolle des Fiesco war von vornherein als *Primo Basso Profondo* gedacht. In Verdis 1881 uraufgeführter Neufassung der Oper übernahm die Partie der große Baß Edouard de Reszke.

Dargomyschskijs *Russalka*, mit Textbuch nach Puschkin, wurde zunächst 1856 in St. Petersburg aufgeführt, und nach seiner

Wiederaufnahme am Marinskij-Theater im Jahre 1865 erhielt das Werk einen festen Platz im russischen Repertoire. Der Müller, dessen Tochter sich, nachdem sie von einem Prinzen sitzengelassen wurde, in den Dnieper stürzt und zu einer Wassernymphe wird, war eine von Schaljapins Lieblingsrollen. Er sang sie bereits 1893 in Tiflis. Drei Jahre später feierte er mit ihr am Marinskij seinen ersten Erfolg, als er kurzfristig für einen indisponierten Kollegen einsprang. 1931 sang er die Partie in London, am Lyceum, und mir sind noch Leute bekannt, denen seine Interpretation der Wahnsinnszene des dritten Aktes lebhaft in Erinnerung geblieben ist, in der es schien, als sei er “nur noch halb Mensch, ein seltsames Wesen in Lumpen, einen irren Blick in den Augen, einem prophetischen Vogel ähnelnd.” Dargomyschskij mischte ganz bewußt italienische, folkloristische, und “realistische” Stilelemente miteinander. Diese Einspielung entnimmt die Arie “Like every maiden in the whole of Russia” (Okh, toto vse vi devky molodiye) [14], die die Oper eröffnet: in fröhlicher Stimmung à la opéra-comique, noch fern aller Tragik, gibt der Müller seiner Tochter einige weltliche Ratschläge, ähnlich wie Rocco in seiner “Goldarie” im *Fidelio*.

Buffduette für zwei Bässe – von denen heutzutage einer wohl als Bariton bezeichnet würde – waren ein fester Bestandteil der komischen Oper. Berühmte Beispiele dafür gibt es bei Rossini, und auch in Donizettis *Don Pasquale*. Auch Verdi schrieb eines in seiner Komödie *Un giorno di regno*. Bellini verwendete diese Kombination ebenfalls mit ernsthafter und fesselnder Wirkung im Schlußduett des zweiten Aktes von *I puritani*. In *La forza del destino* ließ Verdi beim Duett zwischen Melitone und Padre Guardiano einen Serio- mit einem Buffo-Baß singen, genauso wie auch später im Duettino zwischen Falstaff und Ford. Offenbachs *Geneviève de Brabant* erschien zunächst 1859. “Couplets des deux hommes d’armes”, oder das Gendarmen Duett [15] wurde 1867 für eine Wiederaufnahme hinzugefügt – also im Jahr der Grande Exposition von Napoleon III. und der Entstehung des *Don Carlos*. Die Zensur versuchte es zu verbieten (“Es geht nicht, daß die Gendarmerie der Lächerlichkeit preisgegeben wird”), ließ sich aber schließlich davon überzeugen, daß nur mittelalterliche und nicht etwa moderne Polizisten gemeint waren, woraufhin das Duett zum Höhepunkt des Abends wurde. *Geneviève de Brabant* wurde 1868 in New York und 1871 in

London aufgeführt. Im Ersten Weltkrieg erlangte das Duett als Hymne des Marinekorps der Vereinigten Staaten: "From the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli" erneut Berühmtheit. Jahrelang erfreute sich eine aus dem Jahre 1933 stammende Aufnahme mit Harold Williams und Malcolm McEachern von "We're public guardians bold yet wary" bei den Zuhörern der BBC besonderer Beliebtheit. 1958 erschien in der Zeitschrift *The New Yorker* eine Karikatur marschierender Nuklearwissenschaftler mit der Unterschrift "From the cyclotron of Berkeley to the labs of M.I.T./We're the lads that you can trust to keep our country free".

Zu den vielen Komponisten, die das "Lied vom Floh" – Mephistos höhnischen Beitrag zur Studentengeselligkeit in Auerbachs Keller – aus Goethes *Faust* vertonten, gehören auch Berlioz (in *La Damnation de Faust*) und Beethoven (in seinen 1810 veröffentlichten Sechs Liedern, op. 75). Bei Mussorgskys Vertonung [7] handelt es sich um sein letztes Lied. Es entstand 1879 während einer Konzertreise im Süden Rußlands, wo er die Altistin Darya Leonova begleitete, die in einem Drei-Szenen-Ausschnitt aus *Boris Godunow*, der 1873 im Marinskij-Theater aufgeführt worden war, die Wirtin gesungen

hatte, also nur etwa ein Jahr vor seinem Tod im Alter von 42 Jahren. (Ausschnitte aus *Boris Godunow* mit John Tomlinson sind als CHAN 3007 erhältlich.) In Fachkreisen wird oft bedauert, daß ausgerechnet dieses Lied, Produkt seiner ungeordneten, alkoholisierten letzten Jahre, zu Mussorgskys bekanntestem werden sollte; die Zyklen *Die Kinderstube*, *Ohne Sonne* und *Lieder und Tänze des Todes* sind von viel größerer Bedeutung. Die Wirkung von **Mephistopheles' Lied vom Floh** liegt jedoch auf der Hand. Durch Schaljapins erfolgreiche Aufnahme, in der es der Sänger mit dem "Lied der Wolgaschiffer" verband, gelangte das Lied zu internationalem Ruhm.

Abgesehen von einigen vorbereitenden Skizzen wurde **The Pirates of Penzance** in New York komponiert und uraufgeführt. W.S. Gilbert und Arthur Sullivan waren bereits für eine Produktion von *H.M.S. Pinafore* vor Ort. Im Fifth-Avenue-Theater hatte *The Pirates* Sylvester 1879 mit Blanche Roosevelt als Mabel, Giovanni Chiari di Brocolini (John Clarke aus Brooklyn) als Anführer der Piraten und Mr F. Clifton als "Edward, ein Polizeisergeant" Premiere. Das Publikum, so berichtete der *Herald*, war eines der größten und vornehmsten der Saison, dem auch Mrs Vanderbilt ("ohne Diamanten") und

Mrs J.J. Astor angehörten. Am Vortag hatte zur Sicherung der Urheberrechte eine einzige Aufführung der *Pirates* am Royal Bijou Theatre in Paignton im englischen Devon stattgefunden – eine recht lückenhafte Matinée-Vorstellung, ausgeführt durch Sänger, die gerade mit dem Stück *Pinafore* in Torquay ein Gastspiel gaben. Um den seemännischen Kostümen einen Hauch von Piratentum zu verleihen, wurden Kopftücher benutzt, und teilweise sangen die Darsteller mit Noten in der Hand. In Amerika war *Pirates* ein großer Erfolg. Es wurden drei Tourneetheater zusammengestellt, und Sullivan dirigierte jeweils die Eröffnungen in Philadelphia, Newark und Buffalo. Dann fuhr er mit dem Schiff zurück nach England, um am 3. April 1880 die Londoner Erstaufführung zu dirigieren. Rutland Barrington als Polizeisergeant war "einfach überragend", so die *Times*. Das Gesang des Polizisten [8] mußte regelmäßig als Zugabe gegeben werden. Barrington schrieb in seiner Autobiographie, er habe Gilbert um eine neue Strophe gebeten, woraufhin dieser geantwortet habe, "Encore" hieße "nochmal singen, nicht etwas anderes singen!"

Der **Mikado** wurde im März 1885 am Savoy Theatre uraufgeführt. Barrington sang

Pooh-Bah, und die Titelrolle wurde von Richard Temple übernommen. Die hier eingespielte Arie wäre fast nicht zur Aufführung gekommen: in der Generalprobe kündigte Gilbert an, "A more humane Mikado... My object all sublime" [14] würde gestrichen. Im Theater gab es aber Protest, und so wurde sie doch mit aufgenommen – und bei der Premiere wie auch später oft als Zugabe gegeben.

Mr Tomlinson singt in dieser Einspielung die Arien dreier Figuren aus Borodins Oper **Fürst Igor**: die des tollkühnen, verräterischen und unverantwortlichen Fürsten Galitsky, des Schwagers von Fürst Igor, der hofft, die Herrschaft des Landes an sich reißen zu können, sollte Igor in seiner Kampagne gegen Khan Konchak ums Leben kommen [9]; die des gefangenen Igor, der im Lager von Khan Konchak über seine Niederlage nachdenkt, sich an seine geliebte Frau erinnert, und um das Schicksal seines Landes trauert [8]; und die des Khan Konchak, der, um Richard Taruskin zu zitieren, "seinem 'Ehrengast' gegenüber vor Großmut überfließt", und ihm ein Bündnis vorschlägt. Dies lehnt Igor jedoch ab und gewinnt dadurch Konchaks ehrliche Bewunderung [10]. Schaljapin pflegte die Rolle des Fürsten Galitsky zu singen, erstmals 1896

im Marinskij-Theater. 1914 kam Khan Konchak dazu, und zwar für die Thomas-Beecham-Saison im Theater Drury Lane, danach sang er oftmals beide Partien in ein und derselben Vorstellung. Beide Rollen sind als "Baß" bezeichnet, während für den Igor ein "Bariton" verlangt wird. Die Grenzen sind jedoch schwer zu definieren, und eine genaue Festlegung der Kategorien ist kaum möglich. Sowohl Bässe als auch "Baß-Baritone" und Baritone singen Mozarts Don Giovanni und Leporello, Wagners Wotan und Hans Sachs, oder Mussorgskys Boris Godunow. Auch Schaljapin nahm sowohl Igors Arie als auch die Galitskys und Konchaks auf.

Für Borodin war Musik ein "Hobby"; er war ein hochangesehener Professor an der St. Petersburger Medizinisch-Chirurgischen Akademie. Und dennoch komponierte er Musik (Sinfonien, Kammermusik, eine großartige Oper), deren lyrische Schönheit unvergänglich bleibt. Borodin begann 1869 mit der Arbeit an *Fürst Igor*. Als er 1887 starb, blieb die Oper unvollendet. Liadow, Rimski-Korsakow und Glazunow trugen alle zur Partitur bei, und die Erstaufführung fand 1890 im Marinskij-Theater statt.

Wahrscheinlich findet sich heutzutage nicht mehr wie früher in jedem Bücherregal eine

Ausgabe des *Rubáiyát von Omar Khayyám, dem persischen Astronomen und Dichter*, von Edward FitzGerald ins Englische übertragen: schlanke, schön gebundene Bände eines Gedichts, das einst so beliebt war, daß *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* Zitate daraus sogar sechs Spalten widmet. (Ich besitze drei Exemplare des *Rubáiyát*: jeweils eines von meiner Mutter und meinem Vater aus ihren jungen Jahren, und ein wunderschönes modernes Faksimile einer 1872 von William Morris geschriebenen und illustrierten Kopie des Manuskripts, welche sich jetzt in der British Library befindet.) Genausowenig sind wahrscheinlich heute, im Gegensatz zu früher, in jeder Klavierbank Exemplare von Liza Lehmanns *In a Persian Garden* zu finden. FitzGerald's *Der Rubáiyát von Omar Khayyám* erschien erstmals 1859. Liza Lehmanns Zyklus von dreizehn Vertonungen aus dieser Dichtung – hier durch "Myself when young" ^[3] vertreten – wurde erstmals 1896 bei einem privaten Konzert mit den bekannten Sängern Emma Albani, Hilda Wilson, Ben Davies und David Bispham aufgeführt, danach bei den populären "Montagskonzerten", wo Liza Lehmann, bis sie sich 1894 von der Bühne zurückzog, selbst eine beliebte Sängerin gewesen war. Sie wurde

manchmal sogar von Clara Schumann begleitet. Als sie den Maler und Komponisten Herbert Bedford heiratete, kehrte sie der Bühne den Rücken und widmete sich der Komposition. Zu ihren Opern gehört auch *The Vicar of Wakefield*. Ihre Lieder wurden u.a. von Nellie Melba und Joan Hammond ("The Magdalen at Michael's Gate"), Clara Butt und ihren drei Schwestern ("The Birth of the Flowers", ein Quartett, das Lehmann extra für sie komponierte), John McCormack ("Ah, moon of my delight" aus dem *Persian Garden*), und Beatrice Lillie ("There are fairies at the bottom of my garden") eingespielt. Sie war die erste Präsidentin der Society of Women Musicians. Der Komponist David Bedford, der Dirigent Stuart Bedford, und der Bariton und Bühnenregisseur Peter Lehmann Bedford sind ihre Enkel.

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Übersetzung: Bettina Reinke-Welsh

Der in Lancashire geborene Bass **John Tomlinson** absolvierte als Stipendiat das Royal Manchester College of Music (heute: Royal Northern College of Music). Regelmäßig singt er seit 1974 an der English National Opera und seit 1976 an der Royal Opera, Covent

Garden. Außerdem ist er an der Opera North, der Scottish Opera, in Glyndebourne und mit der Glyndebourne Touring Opera sowie der Kent Opera aufgetreten. Seit 1988 singt er jedes Jahr bei den Bayreuther Festspielen, wo man ihn als Heinrich (*Lohengrin*), Wotan (*Das Rheingold* und *Die Walküre*), Wanderer (*Siegfried*), König Marke (*Tristan und Isolde*) sowie Gurnemanz und Titulel (*Parsifal*) erlebt hat. Weitere Stationen waren Paris, Amsterdam, Berlin (Deutsche Oper und Deutsche Staatsoper), Genf, Lissabon, New York, San Francisco und San Diego, die Festspiele von Edinburgh, Orange, Aix-en-Provence und Salzburg sowie der Maggio musicale in Florenz. Sein Opernrepertoire umfasst auch die Rollen von Sarastro, Rocco (*Fidelio*), Philipp II. (*Don Carlos*), Landgraf (*Tannhäuser*), Hans Sachs (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*), Hagen (*Götterdämmerung*), Baron Ochs, Moses (*Moses und Aron*), Lindorf, Coppélius, Docteur Miracle und Dapertutto (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*), Golaud (*Pelléas et Mélisande*), die Titelrollen von *Boris Godunow*, *Oberto* und *Attila* sowie den Grünen Ritter (Sir Harrison Birtwistles *Gawain*), dem er 1991 bei der Welturaufführung der Oper an der Royal Opera, Covent Garden erstmals Gestalt gab.

Tomlinson verfügt über ein umfangreiches Konzertrepertoire. Er hat mit allen namhaften britischen Orchestern gesungen und auch in Deutschland, Frankreich, Spanien, Italien, Belgien, Holland, Dänemark und den USA konzertiert. Stellvertretend für seine vielen Schallplattenaufnahmen seien hier nur genannt für Opera Rara Donizettis *Gabriella di Vergy* und für Chandos Beethovens Neunte, Brittens *Billy Budd* und (in Verbindung mit der Peter Moores Foundation) *Giulio Cesare*, *Maria Stuarda*, *Rigoletto*, *Werther* sowie Auszüge aus *Boris Godunow* und *Der Rosenkavalier*.

John Tomlinson wurde 1997 den Orden eines Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) verliehen.

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 1998 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 des Labels Opera Rara, die mehrere Preise gewonnen haben, beispielsweise den belgischen Prix Cecilia für Donizettis *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra*. Für Chandos hat er die Aufzeichnung von sieben Programmen mit Opernarien geleitet (mit Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles,

Yvonne Kenny, John Tomlinson und Della Jones – die letztgenannte kommt im Jahr 2001 heraus), außerdem *Faust*, *Don Pasquale*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Il trovatore*, *La bohème*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, die preisgekrönte *Tosca* und Highlights aus dem *Rosenkavalier*, jeweils in Zusammenarbeit mit der Peter Moores Foundation.



Bill Raftery

John Tomlinson as Baron
Ochs in English National
Opera's 1996/97
production of Strauss's
Der Rosenkavalier



Catherine Ashmore

John Tomlinson as King Fisher in
The Royal Opera's 1996 production of
Tippett's *The Midsummer Marriage*

Grands airs d'opéra

Dans son *General History of Music* (Histoire Générale de la Musique), Charles Burney fait une remarque frappante: “Le génie et le feu de Haendel ne brillent jamais autant que dans les airs pour basse qu’il composa pour Boschi et Montagnana.” Giuseppe Maria Boschi chanta dans l’opéra vénitien de Haendel *Agrippina* (1709), dans *Rinaldo* (1711), puis dans les rôles de basse de tous les opéras de Haendel pendant les huit années de la Royal Academy au King’s Theatre (1720–1728). Nous ne savons pas qui était la basse dans l’établissement musical du duc de Chandos à Cannons, mais le rôle de Polyphemus dans *Acis and Galatea* (1718) semble indiquer qu’il s’agissait d’un habile chanteur. Winton Dean décrit le géant cyclope, avide de chair humaine, mais tendrement amoureux de Galatea, comme étant la “première figure de scène immortelle de Haendel”. Dans cette pastorale, le compositeur traite l’ogre avec une touche d’humour presque affectueuse. L’air de la chansonnette amoureuse de Polyphemus, “O ruddier than the cherry” (Plus rouge que la cerise) ^[1], fut en fait composé par Reinhard Keiser pour l’opéra *Janus* (Hambourg, 1698);

toutefois, les notes très aiguës de la flûte à bec sopranino qui se déploient au-dessus de la mélodie – une description joyeuse et fantaisiste de la gigantesque flûte de pan construite pour la “bouche énorme” du géant – sont, autant qu’on le sache, de l’invention de Haendel.

Quand ils ne sont pas des personnages secondaires tels que des capitaines ou des compagnons, les rôles de basse de Haendel peuvent être de gentils mages, de graves pères ou – comme Polyphemus, et Harapha dans *Samson* – de bruyants fanfarons. La partie de Harapha fut composée pour Theodore Reinhold, la basse principale de Haendel de 1736 à 1751. Ses personnages de basse plus tardifs pouvaient également être des héros tragiques – Reinhold fut le premier Saul et le premier Hercules de Haendel – mais Harapha, le géant de Gath qui se moque de Samson aveuglé, se conforme au type précédent tandis qu’il se vante en une démonstration de virtuosité faite de sauts d’octave, de traits ascendants courant par degrés à travers tout le registre, et de coloratures. Pour conclure la section médiane de l’air “Honour and arms”

(Honneur et armes) ^[5], John Tomlinson étend le registre écrit par une quarte descendant au ré grave sur les mots “I disdain” (Je dédaigne).

Mozart, comme Haendel, écrivit d’importants rôles de basse pour un mage bienveillant, un père sévère, et un féroce fanfaron présenté d’une manière humoristique. Son premier Osmin fut Karl Ludwig Fischer, célèbre pour un registre allant d’un grave jusqu’à la aigu, et pour sa technique exubérante. (Mozart songea même à récrire *Idomeneo* afin que Fischer puisse chanter le rôle titre.) Avec Fischer dans sa distribution pour *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (L’Enlèvement au sérail), Mozart fit d’Osmin un personnage plus important qu’il n’avait été dans le livret d’origine. Le premier air d’Osmin, “When a maiden takes your fancy” (Quand une jeune fille vous plaît) ^[2], dépeint gaiement le caractère possessif de son amour et ses soupçons moroses – et exploite également l’une des spécialités de Fischer dans une mélodie obstinément centrée sur le sol médian qui plonge subitement au sol grave puis fait un saut à la douzième supérieure.

Dans le duo entre Osmin et Blonde, “I’m going, but take my advice” (Je m’en vais, mais écoute mon conseil) ^[3], Mozart oppose une jeune Anglaise pleine d’esprit et sans peur au

gardien assoiffé de sang du sérail: une soprano dotée d’un vaste registre contre une basse possédant également un vaste registre. (Il s’agissait de Therese Teyber, et la tessiture de son rôle s’étend du la bémol grave au mi *in altissimo*, juste un demi-ton au-dessous des célèbres fa de la Reine de la nuit.) Osmin tente d’intimider son “esclave” pour qu’elle lui obéisse en une descente par degrés jusqu’au mi grave suivie d’un arpège ascendant. Blonde, nullement impressionnée, l’imite et se moque de lui.

“Vivat Bacchus!” (Vive Bacchus!) ^[4] est une joyeuse chanson à boire chantée après que Pedrillo a convaincu Osmin de goûter du vin pour la première fois. Composé sept ans avant l’œuvre de Mozart, une autre comédie ayant pour sujet la fuite d’un harem, l’opéra de Haydn *L’incontro improvviso*, conçu pour deux sopranos, deux ténors et une basse, possède un duo ténor-basse comparable (“Le vieux Mohammed n’a pas réfléchi quand il a interdit de boire de l’alcool”); son début est identique sur le plan rythmique.

Le rôle de basse dans l’*opera seria* de l’Ottocento était typiquement un noble, un monarque autoritaire, un prêtre grave, ou un père aimant parfois sévère. Le Don Ruy Gomez de Silva d’*Ernani* de Verdi est une

exception: c'est une basse amoureuse, l'un des trois hommes – le ténor, le baryton et la basse – à se disputer la main de l'héroïne. Elvira est en fait fiancée à son vieux tuteur, Silva. L'air "Vain illusion! When I believed her" (Illusion vaine! Quand je l'ai crue) ^[12] exprime sa lamentation et ses reproches quand, entrant dans la chambre d'Elvira la veille de son mariage, il y trouve les deux autres hommes. La compagnie vénitienne pour laquelle Verdi composa *Ernani* ne possédait pas de basse de premier plan, aussi Silva était-il à l'origine qualifié de rôle *basso comprimario*. Mais quand la grande basse Ignazio Marini prit le rôle lors de productions plus tardives, une "cabaletta de vengeance" fut ajoutée au bref solo. L'identité de son auteur demeure incertaine. La coda est tirée de *Nabucco*, et ce genre d'auto-emprunt, assez commun chez les prédécesseurs de Verdi, n'était pas dans sa manière de faire. D'autre part, ce morceau figure dans les partitions d'*Ernani* publiées de son vivant, et dans les représentations modernes de l'opéra, la tendance est plutôt de le chanter que de l'ignorer. (Un enregistrement complet d'*Ernani* chanté en anglais sera bientôt publié par Chandos [CHAN 3052(2)].)

Les rapports père-fille – et habituellement baryton-soprano – reviennent fréquemment

dans les opéras de Verdi, depuis le premier, *Oberto*, en passant par *Nabucco*, *I Lombardi*, *Giovanna d'Arco*, *Luisa Miller*, *Stiffelio*, *Rigoletto*, *La forza del destino*, *Aida*, le *Roi Lear* non écrit, jusqu'à *Falstaff*. Deux rapports de ce genre possèdent un lien dans *Simon Boccanegra*: Jacopo Fiesco, dans l'air enregistré ici, "My soul is torn with suffering" (Mon âme est déchirée par la souffrance) ^[6], pleure sa fille défunte Maria; et Simon pleure la disparition de la fille née de son union avec Maria (qu'il retrouvera cependant plus tard). Fiesco fut désigné dès le départ comme étant un rôle de *primo basso profondo*. Dans la version de l'opéra révisée par Verdi, et représentée pour la première fois en 1881, le rôle fut tenu par la grande basse Edouard de Reszke.

Russalka de Dargomizhski, sur un livret inspiré de Pouchkine, fut donné pour la première fois à Saint-Petersbourg en 1851, puis après une reprise au Théâtre Maryinski en 1865, il entra dans le répertoire russe. Le Meunier, père d'une jeune fille qui, abandonnée par un prince, se jette dans le fleuve Dniepr et devient une nymphe des eaux, était l'un des rôles préférés de Chaliapine. Il le chanta en 1893 à Tiflis. Trois ans plus tard, il devint son premier succès au

Théâtre Maryinski, quand il remplaça à la dernière minute un collègue souffrant. Il chanta le rôle au Lyceum de Londres en 1931, et j'ai connu des gens qui se souvenaient très clairement de sa scène de folie à l'Acte III, quand il apparaissait "seulement à moitié humain, une étrange créature en haillons, avec une lueur de folie dans le regard, ressemblant à un oiseau prophétique". Dargomizhski mélangea délibérément des éléments italiens, ethniques et "réalistes". Nous entendons ici l'air "Like every maiden in the whole of Russia" (Comme toutes les filles de Russie) ^[11] qui ouvre l'opéra: dans une veine joyeuse proche de l'opéra comique, et encore très éloignée de la tragédie à venir, le Meunier donne à sa fille quelques conseils pratiques tout à fait dans l'esprit de l'aria "d'or" de Rocco dans *Fidelio*.

Les duos *buffo* pour deux basses (l'une d'elles pouvant être qualifiée de "baryton" selon la terminologie actuelle) étaient un élément régulier dans l'opéra comique. On en trouve des exemples célèbres chez Rossini, et dans *Don Pasquale* de Donizetti. Verdi en composa un dans sa comédie *Un giorno di regno*. Bellini utilisa cette combinaison pour créer un effet grave et émouvant dans le duo qui conclut le deuxième acte de *I puritani*.

Verdi méla *serio* et *buffo* dans le duo entre Melitone et Padre Guardiano dans *La forza del destino*, et plus tard dans les échanges *duettino* entre Falstaff et Ford. *Geneviève de Brabant* d'Offenbach fut représenté pour la première fois en 1859. Les "Couplets des deux hommes d'armes" ou Duo des Gendarmes ^[15] fut ajouté pour une reprise de l'opéra en 1867 (l'année de la Grande Exposition de Napoléon III, et de *Don Carlos*). La censure tenta de s'y opposer ("Nous ne pouvons pas admettre que la gendarmerie soit tournée en ridicule"), mais elle fut persuadée que les policiers dont on se moquerait étaient médiévaux et non pas modernes, et le duo devint le plus gros succès du spectacle. *Geneviève de Brabant* fut donné à New York en 1868 et à Londres en 1871. Au cours de la Première Guerre mondiale, le duo trouva une nouvelle célébrité en devenant l'hymne de la Marine américaine: "From the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli" (Des salles de Montezuma aux plages de Tripoli). L'enregistrement de "We're public guardians bold yet wary" (Nous sommes des gardes courageux et prudents) réalisé en 1933 par Harold Williams et Malcolm McEachern (le Jetsam de *Flotsam and Jetsam*) fut pendant de nombreuses années l'un des morceaux préférés des auditeurs de la BBC. En 1958,

The New Yorker publia un dessin représentant des savants travaillant sur l'atome accompagné par la légende suivante: "Du cyclotron de Berkeley aux labos de M.I.T./On est les gars à qui vous pouvez faire confiance pour conserver notre pays libre".

Berlioz (dans sa *Damnation de Faust*) et Beethoven (dans ses Six Lieders, op. 75, publiés en 1810) figurent parmi les nombreux compositeurs à avoir mis en musique le "Chant de la Puce" du *Faust* de Goethe: la contribution sardonique de Méphistophélès à la convivialité étudiante dans la taverne d'Auerbach. (Il s'agit d'un chant à propos d'une puce, mais le titre est si bien établi qu'il serait pédant de vouloir modifier son ambiguïté.) La version de Moussorgski [7] fut sa dernière mélodie. Il la composa à peine plus d'un an avant sa mort à l'âge de quarante-deux ans, pendant la tournée de concerts de 1879 dans le sud de la Russie qu'il effectua en qualité d'accompagnateur de la contralto Darya Leonova, qui avait été l'Hôtesse dans "l'échantillon" en trois scènes de *Boris Godounov* présenté au Théâtre Maryinski en 1873. (John Tomlinson a enregistré des extraits de l'opéra sur le disque CHAN 3007.) Des commentateurs ont souvent regretté que ce produit de ses dernières années, qui furent

marquées par le déséquilibre mental et l'alcoolisme, devait devenir sa mélodie la plus connue; ses cycles comme *Enfantines*, *Sans Soleil* et *Chants et Danses de la Mort* sont d'une importance beaucoup plus grande. Mais l'efficacité du **Chant de la Puce de Méphistophélès** est évidente. Il devint célèbre dans le monde entier grâce à un enregistrement réalisé par Chaliapine sur lequel figure également le "Chant des Bateliers de la Volga", et qui se vendit à des millions d'exemplaires.

En dehors de quelques esquisses préliminaires, **The Pirates of Penzance** (Les Pirates de Penzance) fut composé et monté sur scène à New York. W.S. Gilbert et Arthur Sullivan y étaient venus pour une production de *H.M.S. Pinafore*. La première des *Pirates* eut lieu au Fifth Avenue Theatre le soir de la Saint-Sylvestre de 1879, avec Blanche Roosevelt dans le rôle de Mabel, Giovanni Chiari di Brocolini (John Clarke, de Brooklyn) dans celui du Chef des Pirates, et F. Clifton dans le rôle de "Edward, un Sergent de Police". Le *Herald* rapporta que le public ce soir-là fut l'un des plus nombreux et des plus chics de la saison, et comptait notamment Mme Vanderbilt ("sans diamants") et Mme J.J. Astor. La veille, une audition unique

destinée à assurer les droits de copyright des *Pirates* avait été donnée en première au Royal Bijou Theatre de Paignton dans le Devon en Angleterre: une représentation sommaire donnée en matinée par la distribution qui jouait *Pinafore* en tournée à Torquay. Les chanteurs portèrent des cicatrices au visage pour ajouter une note pirate aux costumes marins, et durent chanter avec la partition en main. En Amérique, les *Pirates* fut un immense succès. Trois compagnies itinérantes furent montées, et Sullivan dirigea leurs premières à Philadelphie, Newark et Buffalo. Ensuite, il revint en Angleterre pour la création londonienne qui eut lieu le 3 avril 1880. *The Times* déclara que Rutland Barrington, qui tint le rôle du Sergent de Police, fut "tout simplement sublime". Le "Policeman's Song" (Chant du policier) [16] fut régulièrement bissé. Dans son autobiographie, Barrington raconte qu'il avait demandé à Sullivan s'il pouvait lui écrire une strophe supplémentaire. "Bis", lui répondit Gilbert, signifie "chantez-le à nouveau", et non pas "chantez quelque chose d'autre!"

The Mikado (Le Mikado) fut donné au Savoy Theatre en mars 1885. Barrington chanta Pooh-Bah, tandis que le rôle titre fut tenu par Richard Temple. Son air enregistré ici

fut à deux doigts de disparaître: au cours de la répétition générale, Gilbert annonça que "A more humane Mikado... My object all sublime" (Un Mikado plus humain... Mon but tout sublime) [14] serait coupé. La compagnie protesta. L'air fut réintroduit – et fut bissé lors de la première comme souvent par la suite.

John Tomlinson chante les airs de trois personnages de l'opéra de Borodine, **Le Prince Igor**: le téméraire, traître et irresponsable Prince Galitski, beau-frère du Prince Igor, qui espère obtenir la direction du royaume si Igor venait à périr dans sa campagne contre le khan Kontchak [9]; Igor en captivité dans le camp du khan Kontchak médite sur sa défaite, se souvenant de son épouse bien aimée et pleurant le sort de sa patrie [8]; et le khan Kontchak, qui (pour reprendre la phrase de Richard Taruskin) "déborde de magnanimité envers son 'hôte honoré'", et lui propose une alliance (qu'Igor refuse, se gagnant ainsi l'admiration de Kontchak) [10]. Le rôle régulier de Chaliapine était celui du Prince Galitski, qu'il incarna pour la première fois en 1896 au Théâtre Maryinski. En 1914, pour la saison de Thomas Beecham au Drury Lane Theatre, il ajouta celui du khan Kontchak, et par la suite il chanta souvent les deux rôles lors de la

même représentation. Les deux rôles sont qualifiés de “basse”, tandis que celui d’Igor est pour “baryton”. Mais les limites sont difficiles à établir; les catégories ne sont pas fixées. Des basses, “basses-barytons”, et barytons chantent Don Giovanni et Leporello de Mozart, Wotan et Hans Sachs de Wagner, Boris Godounov de Moussorgski. Chaliapine, lui aussi, enregistra l’air d’Igor tout comme celui de Galitski et de Kontchak.

La musique était le passe-temps de Borodine. Il était un éminent professeur de l’Académie Médico-Chirurgicale de Saint-Petersbourg, mais il écrivit de la musique (des symphonies, de la musique de chambre, un grand opéra) dont la beauté lyrique s’est révélée inaltérable. Borodine commença la composition du *Prince Igor* en 1869. A sa mort en 1887, l’opéra demeurerait inachevé. Liadov, Rimski-Korsakov et Glazounov travaillèrent tous à la partition qui fut jouée pour la première fois au Théâtre Maryinski en 1890.

On ne trouve probablement plus, comme c’était autrefois le cas, des exemplaires du *Rubāiyāt d’Omar Khayyām*, le *Poète-Astronome de Perse*, dans la traduction anglaise en vers réalisée par Edward FitzGerald, sur les étagères de toutes les bibliothèques: de minces volumes, élégamment reliés, d’un poème

autrefois si populaire que les citations de celui-ci remplissent six colonnes du *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* (Dictionnaire Oxford des Citations). (Je possède trois exemplaires du *Rubāiyāt*: les deux que mon père et ma mère achetèrent dans leur adolescence, ainsi qu’une belle version moderne en fac-similé du manuscrit copié et illustré en 1872 par William Morris, maintenant conservé à la British Library.) Et on ne trouve probablement plus aucun exemplaire, comme autrefois, de *In a Persian Garden* (Dans un jardin persan) de Liza Lehmann sur les tabourets de piano des particuliers. Le *Rubāiyāt d’Omar Khayyām* de FitzGerald parut pour la première fois en 1859. Le cycle des treize mélodies de Liza Lehmann utilisant des extraits de ce texte, et dont on peut entendre ici “Myself when young” (Moi-même quand j’étais jeune) ^[19], fut donné pour la première fois en 1896 lors d’un concert privé avec des chanteurs aussi distingués qu’Emma Albani, Hilda Wilson, Ben Davies et David Bispham, puis dans le cadre des Monday Popular Concerts (Concerts populaires du lundi) où, jusqu’à sa retraite en 1894, Liza Lehmann avait été l’une des chanteuses préférées. Clara Schumann fut parfois son accompagnatrice. Lehmann prit sa retraite quand elle épousa le peintre et

compositeur Herbert Bedford, puis se consacra elle-même à la composition. *The Vicar of Wakefield* (Le Vicaire de Wakefield) est l’un de ses opéras. Parmi les nombreux chanteurs qui ont enregistré ses mélodies figurent Nellie Melba et Joan Hammond (“The Magdalen at Michael’s Gate” [Marie-Madeleine à la porte de saint Michel]), Clara Butt et ses trois sœurs (“The Birth of the Flowers” [La Naissance des fleurs]), un quatuor que Lehmann composa pour elles), John McCormack (“Ah, moon of my delight” [Ah, lune qui fait mes délices], extraite du *Persian Garden*), et Beatrice Lillie (“There are fairies at the bottom of my garden” [Il y a des fées en bas de mon jardin]). Liza Lehmann fut la première présidente de la Society of Women Musicians (Société des Femmes musiciennes). Le compositeur David Bedford, le chef d’orchestre Stuart Bedford, et le baryton et metteur en scène Peter Lehmann Bedford sont ses petits-fils.

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Traduction: Francis Marchal

La basse anglaise **John Tomlinson** naquit dans le Lancashire et obtint une bourse pour étudier au Royal Manchester College of Music (aujourd’hui le Royal Northern College of

Music). Il se produit régulièrement avec l’English National Opera depuis 1974, avec le Royal Opera, Covent Garden depuis 1976 et il a aussi chanté avec Opera North, le Scottish Opera, le Glyndebourne Festival Opera et le Glyndebourne Touring Opera ainsi que Kent Opera. Il participe chaque année depuis 1988 au Festival de Bayreuth où il a été Heinrich (*Lohengrin*), Wotan (*Das Rheingold* et *Die Walküre*), le Voyageur (*Siegfried*), le roi Marke (*Tristan und Isolde*) ainsi que Gurnemanz et Titurel (*Parsifal*). Il s’est aussi produit à Paris, Amsterdam, Berlin (avec le Deutsche Oper et le Staatsoper), Genève, Lisbonne, New York, San Francisco et San Diego, prenant part aux Festivals d’Edimbourg, d’Orange, d’Aix-en-Provence et de Salzbourg ainsi qu’au Mai Musical de Florence. Son répertoire lyrique comprend aussi les rôles de Sarastro, Rocco (*Fidelio*), Philippe II (*Don Carlos*), le landgrave (*Tannhäuser*), Hans Sachs (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*), Hagen (*Götterdämmerung*), Baron Ochs, Moïse (*Moses und Aron*), Lindorf, Coppelius, Dr. Miracle et Dapertutto (*Les Contes d’Hoffmann*), Golaud (*Pelléas et Mélisande*), les rôles-titres de *Boris Godounov*, *Oberto* et *Attila* ainsi que le Chevalier vert (dans *Gawain* de Sir Harrison Birtwistle), un rôle qu’il créa lors de la première mondiale de

l'opéra au Royal Opera, Covent Garden en 1991.

Il a un vaste répertoire de concert et a chanté avec les principaux orchestres britanniques ainsi qu'en Allemagne, en France, en Espagne, en Italie, en Belgique, en Hollande, au Danemark et aux Etats-Unis. Parmi ses nombreux enregistrements, notons, pour Opera Rara, *Gabriella di Vergy* de Donizetti, pour Chandos, la Neuvième Symphonie de Beethoven, *Billy Budd* de Britten et en association avec la Peter Moores Foundation, *Giulio Cesare*, *Maria Stuarda*, *Rigoletto*, *Werther* et des disques d'extraits de *Boris Godounov* et *Der Rosenkavalier*.

John Tomlinson se vit conférer par la reine le titre honorifique de commander de l'ordre de l'empire britannique (CBE) le 1er janvier 1997.

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 en 1998 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 sept enregistrements d'airs d'opéra (avec Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny, John Tomlinson

et Della Jones, le dernier devant paraître durant 2001) de même que *Faust*, *Don Pasquale*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Il trovatore*, *La bohème*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, l'enregistrement primé de *Tosca* et des extraits de *Der Rosenkavalier*, tous ces enregistrements étant réalisés en collaboration avec la Peter Moores Foundation.

Catherine Ashmore



John Tomlinson as Don Basilio in The Royal Opera's 1985 production of Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia*

John Tomlinson as The Green Knight in The Royal Opera's 1991 world premiere production of Birtwistle's *Gawain*



Clive Bada/Performing Arts Library

Grandi arie operistiche

Nella sua *General History of Music*, Charles Burney fa un'affermazione sorprendente: "Il genio e lo splendore di Handel sono evidenti al massimo nelle melodie per basso composte per Boschi e Montagnana". Di Handel, Giuseppe Maria Boschi interpretò l'opera veneziana *Agrippina* (1709), il *Rinaldo* (1711), e poi fu il basso di tutte le opere del compositore negli otto anni in cui diresse la Royal Academy, presso il King's Theatre (1720–8). Non conosciamo l'identità del basso nella cerchia musicale del duca di Chandos a Cannons, ma il ruolo di Polifemo in *Acis and Galatea* (1718) fa pensare che si trattasse di un bravo cantante. Il ciclope cannibale, ma teneramente innamorato di Galatea, è definito da Winton Dean "il primo personaggio teatrale immortale di Handel". In quest'opera pastorale, il compositore tratta il gigante con umorismo e quasi con affetto. La melodia della canzonetta d'amore di Polifemo, "O ruddier than the cherry" ^[1] era stata composta in realtà da Reinhard Keiser, per l'opera *Janus* (Amburgo, 1698); ma il tono vellutato di un flauto dolce soprano sulla melodia, un'allegria descrizione spensierata del gigantesco flauto di

Pan costruito per la "capace bocca" del gigante, è, per quanto ne sappiamo, un'invenzione originale di Handel.

Nelle opere di Handel, quando non sono personaggi secondari, per esempio capitani o compagni, i bassi possono essere dei maghi gentili, dei padri austeri oppure, come Polifemo e Harapha nel *Samson*, degli spaccani millantatori. La parte di Harapha fu composta per Theodore Reinhold, primo basso di Handel dal 1736 al 1751. I personaggi affidati a un basso in seguito furono anche eroi tragici – Reinhold fu il primo Saul di Handel e il suo primo Ercole – ma Harapha, il gigante di Gath che schernisce il Sansone accecato, rientra nella tipologia precedente, con il suo sfoggio virtuosistico millantatore di salti di ottave, le scale ascendenti che attraversano i vari registri e la coloratura. Per concludere la sezione centrale dell'aria "Honour and arms" ^[5], su "I disdain", Tomlinson amplia la gamma scritta di una quarta, portandola ad un re basso.

Come Handel, Mozart compose importanti ruoli per basso per un mago benevolo, un padre severo e un feroce smargiasso visto in

chiave umoristica. Il suo primo Osmino fu Karl Ludwig Fischer, famoso per una gamma vocale che andava dal do basso al la alto e per la sua florida tecnica. (Addirittura Mozart pensò di riscrivere *Idomeneo* perché Fischer potesse interpretare il ruolo di protagonista). Con Fischer nel cast per *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (Il ratto dal serraglio), Mozart fece di Osmino un personaggio più importante di quanto non fosse stato nel libretto originale. La prima aria di Osmino, "When a maiden takes your fancy" (Wer ein Liebchen hat gefunden) ^[2], ritrae giocosamente la sua possessività amorosa e i cupi sospetti e inoltre sfrutta una delle specialità di Fischer: una melodia ossessivamente incentrata sul sol centrale improvvisamente scende fino al sol basso e poi fa un balzo verso l'alto di un'ottava e una quinta.

Nel duetto tra Osmino e Bionda, "I'm going, but take my advice" (Ich gehe, doch rate ich dir) ^[3], Mozart contrappone un'energica e intrepida giovane inglese al sanguinario custode dell'harem: un soprano di vasta gamma contro un basso di vasta gamma. (La donna era Therese Teyber, e il suo ruolo va dal la bemolle basso fino a un mi *in altissimo*, appena un semitono sotto i famosi fa della Regina della Notte). Osmino cerca di

intimidire la sua "schiava" per sottometterla, in una discesa graduale fino al mi basso, seguita da un arpeggio ascendente. Impassibile, Bionda gli fa il verso e lo prende in giro.

"Vivat Bacchus!" ^[4] è un vivace motivo conviviale, intonato da Pedrillo dopo aver convinto Osmino ad assaggiare il vino per la prima volta. L'opera di Haydn *L'incontro improvviso*, un'altra commedia di fuga da un harem con un cast di due soprani, due tenori e un basso, composta sette anni prima di quella di Mozart, contiene un duetto analogo tra tenore e basso ("Old Mohammad wasn't thinking when he put a ban on drinking"); il suo inizio è identico dal punto di vista ritmico.

Generalmente, il ruolo del basso nell'opera seria dell'Ottocento si identificava con la figura di un governante nobile e autorevole, un sacerdote serio o un padre amoroso, possibilmente severo. Fa eccezione Don Ruy Gomez de Silva nell'*Ernani* di Verdi: il basso è un innamorato, uno dei tre pretendenti alla mano dell'eroina – tenore, baritono e basso. Elvira è appunto promessa all'anziano tutore, Silva. L'aria "Vain illusion! When I believed her" (Infelice! ...e tuo credevi) ^[12] è un lamento e un rimprovero nel momento in cui, entrando nella camera della fanciulla, alla vigilia del matrimonio, il tutore vi trova gli

altri due uomini. La compagnia veneziana per cui Verdi compose l'*Ernani* non aveva un primo basso e Silva inizialmente fu destinato a un ruolo di *basso comprimario*. Ma negli allestimenti successivi, quando la parte passò al grande basso Ignazio Marini, al breve assolo fu aggiunta una "cabaletta di vendetta". L'identità dell'autore rimane in dubbio. La coda è ripresa dal *Nabucco*; tra i predecessori di Verdi era normale prendere a prestito brani dalle proprie opere, ma questa non era un'abitudine del compositore. Comunque, il brano compare nelle partiture di *Ernani* pubblicate durante la sua vita e si ascolta ancora molto spesso nelle moderne esecuzioni dell'opera. (È prevista la prossima uscita di una versione integrale di *Ernani* in inglese per l'etichetta Chandos [CHAN 3052(2)].)

I rapporti tra padre e figlia, spesso baritono e soprano, sono ricorrenti nelle opere verdiane, a partire dalla prima, *Oberto*, passando per *Nabucco*, *I Lombardi*, *Giovanna d'Arco*, *Luisa Miller*, *Stiffelio*, *Rigoletto*, *La forza del destino*, *Aida*, e *Re Lear* non scritto, fino ad arrivare a *Falstaff*. Due sono collegate nel **Simon Boccanegra**: Jacopo Fiesco, nell'aria registrata qui, "My soul is torn with suffering" (Il lacerato spirito) [8], piange Maria, la figlia morta; e Simon piange per la perdita della

figlia nata da lui e Maria (che però ritroverà più tardi). Fin dal primo momento, quello di Fiesco fu un ruolo per *primo basso profondo*. Nella versione riveduta da Verdi dell'opera, eseguita per la prima volta nel 1881, la parte fu interpretata dal grande basso Edouard de Reszke.

Russalka di Dargomyshkij, con un libretto ispirato a un'opera di Pushkin, fu presentata per la prima volta a San Pietroburgo nel 1856, e dopo un revival del teatro Marijnskij nel 1865, si affermò tra il repertorio russo. Il Mugnaio, padre di una fanciulla che, abbandonata da un principe, si getta nelle acque del Dnieper e viene trasformata in ninfa del fiume, fu uno dei ruoli preferiti di Chaliapine, che lo interpretò nel 1893 a Tiflis. Tre anni dopo divenne il suo primo successo al Marijnskij quando all'ultimo momento dovette sostituire un collega indisposto. Il cantante interpretò il ruolo a Londra nel 1931 al Lyceum e ho conosciuto persone che ricordavano vividamente la scena della sua follia nel terzo atto, quando compariva "umano solo per metà, una strana creatura vestita di stracci, con un bagliore folle nello sguardo, come quello di un uccello profetico". Dargomyshkij mischiò deliberatamente delle maniere di tipo italiano, popolari e

"realistiche". Qui abbiamo il brano "Like every maiden in the whole of Russia" [11], che apre l'opera: in una vena allegra da *opéra-comique*, mentre la tragedia è ancora lontana, il Mugnaio dà alla figlia alcuni consigli pratici, molto affini all'aria d'"oro" di Rocco nel *Fidelio*.

I duetti *buffi* per due bassi (uno dei quali si potrebbe chiamare "baritono" secondo l'uso odierno) erano una caratteristica regolare dell'opera comica. Esempi famosi ricorrono nella musica di Rossini e nel *Don Pasquale* di Donizetti. Verdi ne compose uno nella sua commedia *Un giorno di regno*. Bellini utilizzò l'abbinamento con un effetto serio ed esaltante nel duetto che conclude il secondo atto dei *Puritani*. Verdi mischiò serio e buffo nel duetto tra Melitone e il Padre Guardiano nella *Forza del destino*, e in seguito negli scambi del *duettino* tra Falstaff e Ford. **Geneviève de Brabant** di Offenbach comparve per la prima volta nel 1859. Il cosiddetto "duetto dei gendarmi" o "Couplets des deux hommes d'armes" [15], fu aggiunto per un revival del 1867 (l'anno della Grand Exposition di Napoleone III e del *Don Carlos*). La censura cercò di opporsi ("Non è ammissibile esporre al ridicolo la gendarmeria") ma venne persuasa che ad essere messi alla berlina erano solo i

poliziotti medievali, non quelli moderni; e il duetto fece il successo dello spettacolo. *Geneviève de Brabant* giunse a New York nel 1868 e a Londra nel 1871. Durante la prima Guerra mondiale, il duetto fu riscoperto e adottato come inno dei marine degli Stati Uniti: "From the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli". Una registrazione di "We're public guardians bold yet wary" effettuata nel 1933 da Harold Williams e Malcolm McEachern (il Jetsam di una famosa coppia, Flotsam e Jetsam) fu per molti anni molto amata dagli ascoltatori della BBC. Nel 1958 *The New Yorker* aggiunse a una vignetta che rappresentava gli scienziati dell'atomo in marcia una didascalia che diceva: "From the cyclotron of Berkeley to the labs of M.I.T./We're the lads that you can trust to keep our country free" (Dal ciclotrone di Berkeley ai laboratori del M.I.T./di noi ti puoi fidare per tenere libero il tuo paese).

Berlioz (nella *Damnation de Faust*) e Beethoven (nei Sei Lieder, Op. 75, pubblicati nel 1810) furono due dei numerosi compositori che musicarono la "Canzone della pulce" dal *Faust* di Goethe, il sardonico contributo di Mefistofele all'allegria conviviale studentesca nella cantina di Auerbach. La versione di Musorgskij [7] fu la sua ultima

canzone. Fu composta poco più di un anno prima della sua morte, avvenuta all'età di quarantadue anni, nel corso di una tournée di concerti nel 1879 in Russia meridionale. Il compositore l'aveva svolta per accompagnare il contralto Darya Leonova, che era stata la locandiera nel "campione" di tre quadri del *Boris Godunov* presentato al teatro Marijnskij nel 1873. (John Tomlinson ha registrato i brani salienti dell'opera sul disco CHAN 3007.) I commentatori spesso si sono rammaricati del fatto che questo prodotto dei suoi ultimi anni disordinati da alcolizzato sia diventato il suo motivo più famoso; i cicli *La camera dei bambini*, *Senza sole*, e *Canti e danze della morte* sono molto più grandi. Ma l'efficacia del **Canto della pulce di Mefistofele** è evidente. Il disco di Chaliapine, insieme con la "Canzone dei barcaioli del Volga" la rese famosa a livello internazionale ed ebbe un grande successo di vendite.

Fatta eccezione per alcuni abbozzi preliminari, l'operetta **The Pirates of Penzance** fu composta e rappresentata a New York. W.S. Gilbert e Arthur Sullivan si trovavano qui per alcune rappresentazioni di *H.M.S. Pinafore*. Il Teatro della Quinta Strada vide la prima di *Pirates* la vigilia di capodanno del 1879; Blanche Roosevelt interpretava il ruolo

di Mabel, Giovanni Chiari di Brocolini (John Clarke di Brooklyn) era Pirate Chief e Mr F. Clifton era "Edward, a Sergeant of Police". Il pubblico, come riferì l'*Herald*, era uno dei più numerosi e più alla moda della stagione e comprendeva la signora Vanderbilt ("senza diamanti") e la signora J.J. Astor. Il giorno precedente, una prima dei *Pirates* che si assicurò i diritti d'autore era stata proposta presso il Royal Bijou Theatre di Paignton, nel Devon: una rappresentazione difettosa, da matinée, presentata dal cast impegnato nelle repliche di *Pinafore* in tournée a Torquay. Furono utilizzati dei foulard per aggiungere un tocco piratesco ai costumi dei marinai e dove necessario, l'interpretazione si svolse con la partitura in mano. In America, *Pirates* riscosse grande successo. Furono riunite tre compagnie itineranti e Sullivan diresse le serate inaugurali di Philadelphia, Newark e Buffalo. Poi si imbarcò per rientrare a Londra per la prima, che si svolse il 3 aprile del 1880. *The Times* dichiarò che Rutland Barrington, interprete del ruolo di Sergeant of Police era stato "semplicemente sublime". La Canzone del poliziotto [9] ricevette regolarmente richieste di bis. Nella sua autobiografia, Barrington racconta di aver chiesto a Gilbert di preparargli una nuova strofa da cantare. Per

tutta risposta, Gilbert gli disse: "Bis significa ripetere, non aggiungere!"

The Mikado fu rappresentato al Savoy Theatre nel marzo del 1885. Barrington interpretò il ruolo di Pooh-Bah, e il ruolo di protagonista fu affidato a Richard Temple. La sua canzone registrata qui quasi scomparve: alla prova generale, Gilbert annunciò che "A more humane Mikado... My object all sublime" [14] sarebbe stata eliminata. Ci furono proteste nella compagnia, così venne ripristinata e inclusa nella prima e spesso da allora eseguita come bis.

John Tomlinson canta le arie di tre personaggi di **Principe Igor**, l'opera di Borodin: quella del principe Galitskij, sprezzante, traditore e irresponsabile cognato del principe Igor, che spera di guadagnarsi il regno se il cognato dovesse morire nella campagna contro Khan Konciac [9]; quella di Igor, prigioniero nell'accampamento di Khan Konciac, mentre riflette sulla sua sconfitta, ricorda la moglie amata e piange il destino del suo paese [8]; e quella Khan Konciac, che (per dirla con Richard Taruskin) "trasuda magnanimità nei confronti del proprio 'onorato ospite'" e gli propone un'alleanza (che Igor rifiuta, conquistandosi in tal modo l'ammirazione di Konciac) [10]. Normalmente

Chaliapine interpretava il ruolo del principe Galitskij, che aveva cantato per la prima volta nel 1896, al teatro Marijnskij. Nel 1914, per la stagione di Thomas Beecham al Drury Lane, aggiunse quello di Khan Konciac e in seguito spesso cantò entrambi i ruoli nello stesso spettacolo. I due ruoli sono indicati per "basso", mentre Igor è "baritono". Ma è difficile fare delle delimitazioni e le categorie non sono fisse. Bassi, "baritoni-bassi" e baritoni cantano allo stesso modo le parti di Don Giovanni e Leporello di Mozart, di Wotan e di Hans Sachs di Wagner, di Boris Godunov di Musorgskij. Anche Chaliapine registrò l'aria di Igor, oltre a quelle di Galitskij e Konciac.

La musica era un "hobby" per Borodin, che era un illustre professore all'Accademia militare di medicina di San Pietroburgo. Ma egli compose musica (sinfonie, musica da camera, una grande opera) di una bellezza lirica che si è rivelata immortale. Borodin iniziò a comporre *Il principe Igor* nel 1869. Alla sua morte, avvenuta nel 1887, l'opera era ancora incompiuta. Liadov, Rimskij-Korsakov e Glazunov diedero ognuno un contributo alla partitura, che venne eseguita per la prima volta al Marijnskij nel 1890.

Probabilmente nelle abitazioni inglesi non si

trovano più, come una volta, copie del *Rubáiyát* di Omar Khayyam adattate in versi inglesi da Edward FitzGerald: si trattava di volumi snelli, elegantemente rilegati, di un poema un tempo così popolare che le citazioni tratte da esso riempiono sei colonne dell'*Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*. (Io ho tre copie del *Rubáiyát*: quelle che mia madre e mio padre avevano acquistato da giovani e un bellissimo facsimile moderno del manoscritto con le illustrazioni di William Morris del 1872, oggi conservato alla British Library.) E probabilmente oggi chi ha un pianoforte in casa non conserva più, come una volta, una copia del volume di Liza Lehmann intitolato **In a Persian Garden**. *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyam* di FitzGerald fu pubblicato per la prima volta nel 1859. Il ciclo di tredici adattamenti dei suoi brani composto da Liza Lehmann, che include "Myself when young" ^[3] registrato in questo disco, fu eseguito per la prima volta nel 1896 in occasione di un concerto privato a cui parteciparono gli illustri cantanti Emma Albani, Hilda Wilson, Ben Davies e David Bispham, e poi in occasione dei Monday Popular Concerts dove, fino al 1894, anno in cui si ritirò, Liza Lehmann stessa era stata una delle cantanti preferite. Talvolta

l'accompagnava Clara Schumann. La cantante si ritirò quando sposò il pittore e compositore Herbert Bedford, per dedicarsi interamente alla composizione. Le sue opere comprendono *The Vicar of Wakefield*. Tra i numerosi cantanti che hanno registrato le sue melodie vanno ricordati Nellie Melba e Joan Hammond ("The Magdalen at Michael's Gate"), Clara Butt e le sue tre sorelle ("The Birth of the Flowers", un quartetto composto per loro dalla Lehmann), John McCormack ("Ah, moon of my delight", tratta dal *Persian Garden*), e Beatrice Lillie ("There are fairies at the bottom of my garden"). Liza Lehmann fu la prima a presiedere la Society of Women Musicians. Il compositore David Bedford, il direttore d'orchestra Steuart Bedford, e il baritono e regista teatrale Peter Lehmann Bedford sono suoi nipoti.

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Traduzione: Emanuela Guastella

John Tomlinson, basso, è nato nel Lancashire e ha vinto una borsa di studio al Royal Manchester College of Music (oggi Royal Northern College of Music). Si esibisce regolarmente dal 1974 con l'English National Opera e dal 1976 con la Royal Opera del

Covent Garden. Ha cantato inoltre con Opera North, Scottish Opera, Glyndebourne Festival e Touring Opera e Kent Opera. Dal 1988 partecipa ogni anno al festival di Bayreuth, dove ha interpretato i ruoli di Heinrich (*Lohengrin*), Wotan (*Das Rheingold* e *Die Walküre*), il Viandante (*Siegfried*), re Marke (*Tristan und Isolde*), Gurnemanz e Titurel (*Parsifal*). Ha cantato inoltre a Parigi, Amsterdam, Berlino (Deutsche Staatsoper e Deutsche Oper), Ginevra, Lisbona, New York, San Francisco e San Diego, ed è intervenuto ai festival di Edimburgo, Orange, Aix-en-Provence e Salisburgo, oltre a partecipare al Maggio musicale fiorentino. Il suo repertorio operistico comprende anche i ruoli di Sarastro, Rocco (*Fidelio*), Re Filippo (*Don Carlos*), il Langravio (*Tannhäuser*), Hans Sachs (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*), Hagen (*Götterdämmerung*), il Barone Ochs, Mosè (*Moses und Aron*), Lindorf, Coppelius, Dottor Miracolo e Dapertutto (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*), Golaud (*Pelléas et Mélisande*), il ruolo di protagonista di *Boris Godunov*, *Oberto* e *Attila* e quello del Green Knight (*Gawain* di Sir Harrison Birtwistle), da lui creato nel 1991, in occasione della prima mondiale dell'opera al Covent Garden.

John Tomlinson ha un vasto repertorio

concertistico e si è esibito con le principali orchestre britanniche e all'estero in Germania, Francia, Spagna, Italia, Belgio, Olanda, Danimarca e USA. Tra le sue numerose registrazioni sono da ricordare *Gabriella di Vergy* di Donizetti, per Opera Rara. Per Chandos ha registrato la Nona sinfonia di Beethoven, *Billy Budd* di Britten e, in collaborazione con la Peter Moores Foundation, *Giulio Cesare*, *Maria Stuarda*, *Rigoletto*, *Werther* e due dischi dei momenti salienti delle opere *Boris Godunov* e *Der Rosenkavalier*.

John Tomlinson è stato insignito del titolo di CBE, un'onorificenza inglese, nel 1997.

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 nel 1998 ha diretto la prima mondiale di *Flight* di Jonathan Dove.

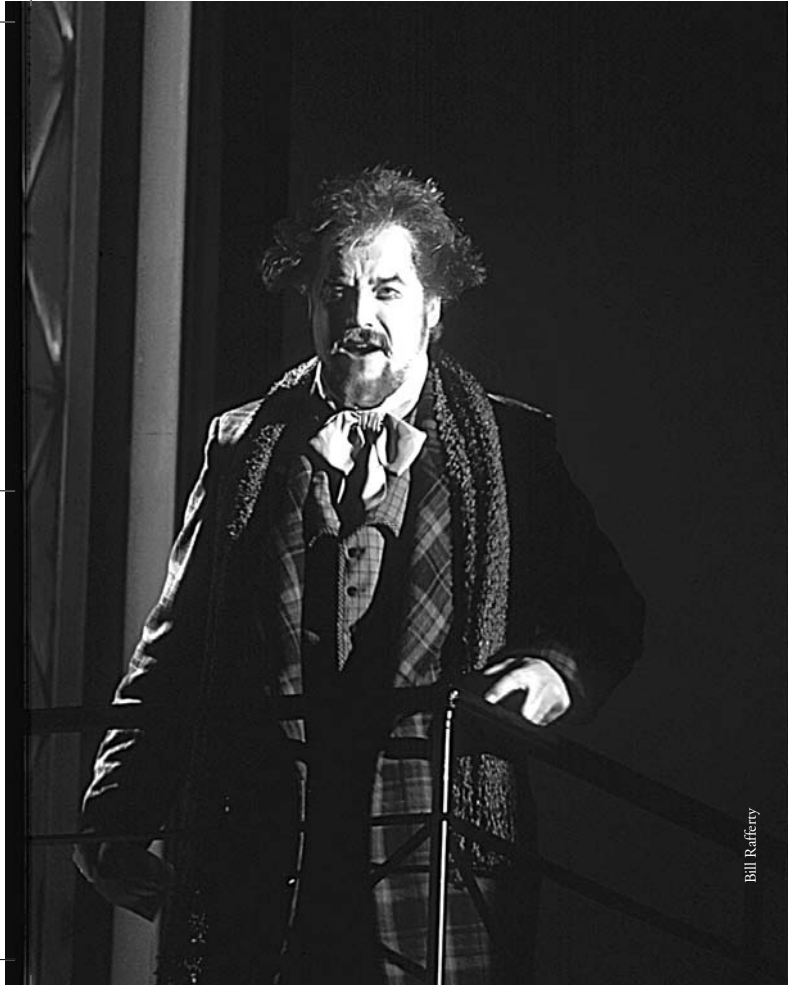
È un frequente visitatore della Spagna dove si è esibito in concerto con la maggior parte delle maggiori orchestre spagnole. Ha diretto la prima spagnola di *Peter Grimes* a Madrid e nel 1996 la prima produzione spagnola di *The Rake's Progress*. È apparso in Germania, Svezia, Paesi Bassi, al Festival 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 sette registrazioni di arie d'opera (con Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny, John Tomlinson e Della Jones, la ultima uscirà nel 2001), nonché *Faust*, *Don Pasquale*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Il trovatore*, *La bohème*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *Tosca* (vincitrice di un premio) e brani scelti da *Der Rosenkavalier*, tutte in collaborazione con la Peter Moores Foundation.

Fyodor Chaliapin as the Miller in the Mad Scene from Act III of Dargomizhsky's *Russalka*





John Tomlinson as
Coppelius in
English National
Opera's 1997/98
production of
Offenbach's
*The Tales of
Hoffmann*

Bill Rafferty



John Tomlinson in the title role in English National Opera's 1998/99 production of
Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*

Bill Rafferty

from Acis and Galatea

Recitative

Polyphemus

- [1] I rage, I rage, I melt, I burn!
The feeble god has stabb'd me to the heart.
Thou trusty pine, prop of my godlike steps,
I lay thee by!
Bring me a hundred reeds of decent growth,
to make a pipe for my capacious mouth;
in soft, enchanting accents let me breathe
sweet Galatea's beauty, and my love.

Air

Polyphemus

O ruddier than the cherry,
O sweeter than the berry,
O nymph more bright than moonshine night,
like kidnappings blithe and merry!

Ripe as the melting cluster,
no lily has such lustre;
yet hard to tame as raging flame,
and fierce as storms that bluster!

Da capo

J. Gay *et al.*, after Ovid

from The Abduction from the Seraglio

Act I

Song

Osmin

- [2] When a maiden takes your fancy,
and you feel that she'll be true,
you must kiss her and caress her,
to your heart you fondly press her,
as the perfect wife for you.
Trallalera, trallalera.

To be sure that she'll stay faithful
you must lock her up at night:
if a stranger's eyes distract her,
if a stranger's smiles attract her,
she'll fly off to new delight!
Trallalera, trallalera.

When the moon is shining brightly,
you must keep a watchful eye!
Bold young strangers come invading,
if she hears them serenading,
then to virtue say good-bye.
Trallalera, trallalera.

Act II

Duet

Osmin

- [3] I'm going, but take my advice:
don't let that Pedrillo come near you.

Blonde

Still singing that same old refrain,
then why should I bother to hear you,
you know I can't bear you!

Osmin

I warn you...

Blonde

No more, sir, of that tone!

Osmin

Damnation!

Blonde

Go, leave me alone!

Osmin

Not likely, I'll not move an inch,
no, I'll not move an inch
'till you swear obedience to me.

Blonde

Obey you, you poor, stupid fellow!
Though you were the Almighty himself,
you were the great Almighty himself!

Osmin

O Englishmen, you are misguided
to grant to your women such freedom.

Blonde

My freedom, my heart has been guided
and never been subject to slavery;
however my fate is decided,

I shall be free,
I am no slave.

Osmin

So I am defied and derided,
and by my own slave!
What a way to behave!

Blonde

Be off now.

Osmin

Be off now, you say?

Blonde

You heard me.

Osmin

Then here I shall stay.

Blonde

I think it is time you were going.

Osmin

Impertinence now you are showing!

Blonde

You better watch out for your eyes,
I know how to scratch and to bite.

Osmin

Well, maybe I ought to be going,
I'm not in the mood for a fight.

Act II

Duet

Pedrillo

- [4] Vivat Bacchus! Long live Bacchus!
Bacchus is the man for me!

Osmín

If I dared to drink this liquor.
What if Allah chanced to see?

Pedrillo

Forget your scruples.
Come try it! Come try it!
No longer, no longer delay!

Osmín

Now I have drunk it,
now I have downed it!
A brave man, a brave man am I!

Pedrillo and Osmín

Long life to the ladies,
the blonde ones, the dark ones.
Long life to the ladies,
we drink your health!

Pedrillo

It's stupendous!

Osmín

It's tremendous!

Pedrillo and Osmín

Ah! This wine is Paradise!

Osmín

Vivat Bacchus! Long live Bacchus!
Bacchus, who invented wine!

Pedrillo and Osmín

Vivat Bacchus! Long live Bacchus!
Bacchus, who invented wine.
Long life to the ladies, *etc.*

J.G. Stephanie, after C.F. Bretzner,
translated by Andrew Porter

from Samson, Act II

Air

Harapha

- [5] Honour and arms scorn such a foe,
though I could end thee at a blow;
poor victory, to conquer thee,
or glory in thy overthrow!

Vanquish a slave that is half slain:
so mean a triumph I disdain.

Da capo

J. Milton, adapted by N. Hamilton

from Simon Boccanegra, Prologue

Scena and Aria

Fiesco

- [6] A last farewell I bid you, my noble palace,
cold mausoleum for my daughter Maria.
Now she's dead, you'll protect her...

Oh, how I curse him, the cowardly seducer!

And you, Virgin of Heaven,
how could you suffer my daughter to be ravished?
Ah! To say that... is madness!
Grant me forgiveness!

My soul is torn with suffering,
burning with indignation.
I must endure the torment
of death and degradation.

Chorus

Maria! Miserere!

Fiesco

The blessed crown of martyrdom
is Heaven's gift to thee...
Risen to where the Angels are,
pray now, Maria, for me!

Chorus

The heavens now receive her!
But we shall never meet in this world!
We shall not meet again!

F.M. Piave (and G. Montanelli), after A.G. Gutiérrez,
English translation of the 1881 libretto
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**Mephistopheles' Song of the Flea (from
Goethe's 'Faust')**

- [7] There lived a king of old,
and on him lived a flea.
A flea? A flea!
He loved him like his own son,

and nursed him tenderly!

A Flea? Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, a flea!
The king called in his tailor,
a craftsman of repute:
'Just measure up my friend the flea,
make him a velvet suit!'
A flea in a suit?
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, a flea!
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, in a suit?
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, a flea in a suit?

The flea was dressed in velvet
and jewels of every sort.
The king gave him the freedom
of the royal court. Ha, ha!
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, a flea!
The king made him his chanc'lor,
he wore a special gown
and brought to court his fam'ly
and neighbours from the town. Ha, ha!
Soon all the court was itching,
the queen herself had bites!
But no one dared be seen to scratch
or harm the little mites. Ha, ha!

The palace was infested,
the fleas grew big and fat
while we, the common people,
just kill a flea like that!
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

J.W. v. Goethe,
translated from the Russian by John Tomlinson

from Prince Igor

Act II

Aria

Prince Igor

- [8] No rest, no slumber for my weary, aching soul.
 I long for sleep, the joy of sweet oblivion,
 but visions from the past appear before me
 and haunt me through the night:
 the day when God eclipsed the sunlight;
 my glorious victory celebrations,
 my early conquests in the war,
 and how my victory turned into defeat;
 my capture when the fight was lost,
 the day my army was destroyed,
 Russia left leaderless, humbled and dishonoured.
 My princely fame has crumbled into ashes,
 a guilty captive is all I am.
 Shame, pitiful shame,
 shameful guilt is Igor's fate,
 a helpless prisoner of war.
 O God, I beg you for my freedom
 that I may strive to clear my guilty name,
 that I might save myself and Russia,
 save Russia from the invader's sword.

Only you, my darling angel,
 my dear wife, you will still accept me.
 Your pure heart is suff'ring with me.
 You will love me still.

At this moment, from your window,
 your bright eyes look out with longing,
 searching for me day and night
 and weeping bitter tears.
 Your husband is condemned to waste away the
 hours
 while Russia feels the scourge of war.
 War, pitiless war,
 tearing Russia into pieces
 while I lie languishing in chains.
 O God, I beg you for my freedom
 for I would rescue Russia from her shame.
 I would defend my native land.

No peace, no mercy for my weary, tortured soul,
 no hope of sleep, no solace in oblivion.
 Those visions of defeat and desolation
 pursue me through the night.
 There's no escape from hell.
 Tormented with remorse,
 wretched and guilty,
 dishonoured and alone.

Act I

Chorus

- [9] The Prince has drunk his fill?

Aria

Galitsky

The sober life of boredom's not for me,
 yet boredom is the whole existence of Prince Igor.
 If he's a prince, then he should relish princely
 pleasures,

there is so much to be enjoyed!
 If Igor vanished, then I could take over!
 My reign would be most glorious!
 Yes!

If Prince Igor were extinguished,
 there could be no more distinguished
 man to fill his shoes.
 I would not refuse.
 There would be perpetual feasting
 at my table, and the least thing
 anybody wanted,
 would forthwith be granted;
 I would govern fair and squarely,
 I would rule the people fairly
 well; they would be fine,
 always drinking wine,
 more wine, more wine,
 bring more wine!

After supper, I'd repair to
 sumptuous chambers for the night.
 Pretty maidens would be there to
 sing me lovesongs, sweet and light.
 They'd stroke and fondle their beloved
 sleeping prince; my most desired
 girl would stay; once I'd recovered,
 she and I would stoke the fire
 of Love!

I would rise up in the morning,
 I would have no time for yawning
 gaps in home affairs!

As a prince who cares!
 No one would be subjugated!
 They would all be allocated
 anything they craved.
 If they misbehaved...
 I would castigate them seldom,
 I would tell them 'very well done',
 we would all be fine,
 always drinking wine,
 more wine, more wine,
 bring more wine!

Act II

Aria

Khan Konchak

- [10] Igor, listen, you are not my prisoner.
 No, you are my guest and much loved.
 Igor, trust me, you know how I admire you
 for your fearlessness,
 for your gallantry.
 You know how I respect you;
 you know I am your friend, Prince.
 Now that the battle is done
 we are no longer foes,
 you are my welcome guest,
 I'm your generous host,
 you must tell me what clouds your spirit,
 what troubles you.

You'd like to ride my famous horses?
 Dwell in my finest tent?

Would you like my father's broadsword, sacred blade!?

The broadsword of my father's;
the source of rivers of blood shed
in many brutal conflicts.
Fear and death flow from my father's sword.

I, Khan Konchak, rule with a rod of iron.
I am Lord of all that you see.
I am ruthless, valiant and courageous.
All my people bow down,
they bow down at my feet;
you alone were fearless,
you did not cower before me.
No longer enemies, we are united as brothers,
Khan Konchak, Prince Igor, as comrades in arms:
this is my deepest wish,
put your trust in me.

If you wish, you may have very beautiful
slavegirls brought here to me from the Caspian.
You may choose one, just tell me your favourite,
she is yours as my gift!
We have women most charming and radiant,
tresses like serpents wind down to their shoulders,
black and gleaming eyes, flooding with ecstasy,
tender with longing, from under dark eyebrows
they gleam!
You may choose one, you may choose one,
just tell me, I give her to you!

A. Borodin, after V.V. Stasov,
translated by John Tomlinson

from Russalka, Act I

Song

Miller

- [11] Like every maiden in the whole of Russia,
you fall in love and lose your mind.
Although my wise advise makes no impression,
I'll try again for the hundredth time:
when some young man desires you
and tells you he admires you,
then take control, don't tremble with emotion,
but keep a clear and lucid mind. Yes!
First captivate him,
fascinate him,
lure him with your charms,
then reprimand
and slap his hand,
and you'll be in control!
You don't believe a word I've said;
because I'm old, I must be wrong!
We older people might as well be dead:
we have already lived too long.
We oldies have already lived too long!
It's hopeless! The hundredth time
was just as futile as the other ninety-nine
attempts to teach you sense.
Why do I waste my time,
you haven't heard
a single word!
You've let me down!
I thought I'd taught you what not to do
with a young man.

You need to steer his thoughts to marriage;
refer to it when'er you can.
Don't throw yourself away for nothing.
Don't throw yourself at any man.
He will not fancy you for ever:
you won't be pretty all your life! No!
So endeavour to ensure
that he takes you as his wife.
You must endeavour
to be clever,
then you will become his wife,
and love him all your life!
What? What is it?
There's no hope of marriage?
You're sure there is no hope?
Well... there's still a chance
he'll fill your hands
with precious gifts of love.
It's good of him
and good for you
and for the family.
But no! You'd never be so wise.
You'd rather gaze into his big blue eyes,
and hold him in your arms all day.
You'll never learn! No matter what I say.
It's hopeless! You'll never learn!
You will not get a wedding ring,
and if he gives you anything,
you won't accept.
You're so inept,
you're so unwise,
you'd rather gaze

into those eyes
of his all day,
no matter what I say!

A.S. Dargomizhsky, after A. Pushkin,
translated by John Tomlinson

from Ernani, Act I

Scena

Silva

- [12] Can I believe it?
Here in this sacred room of my ancient castle; by
the side of her who is to be my bride, I find
these two galant lovers, come here to be my
cavaliers and courtiers! One and all, be witness
that dishonour and treachery have besmirched
the name of Silva!

Cavatina

Silva

Vain illusion! When I believed her,
fair and pure as the snow-white lily!
For this woman has deceived me,
shame has fallen on my head.
Why, when lonely years weigh down upon me,
must dishonour still consume me?
Surely time should have healed all my longing
when my days of youth had fled.

This stain upon my honour shall not go
unavenged! My honour and my sword! Delay no
longer. Dishonoured Silva calls for retribution!

As long as I can wield a sword,
vengeance is in my power.
This infamy shall be repaid
though I myself shall die.
Although I'm trembling in my shame,
rage and disdain inspire me.
I swear that when I face the foe,
my arm shall never fail.

Chorus

He cannot stay his righteous rage
and justice shall prevail, we know
that justice shall prevail.

Silva

As long as I can wield a sword, *etc.*

Chorus

No, he cannot stay his righteous rage *etc.*
E.M. Piave, after V. Hugo,
translated by Tom Hammond,
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from In a Persian Garden

Myself when young

- [13] Myself when young did eagerly frequent
doctor and saint, and heard great argument,
but evermore
came out by that same door wherein I went.
With them, the seed of wisdom did I sow,
and with my own hand labour'd it to grow;

and this was all the harvest that I reap'd:
'I came like water, and like wind I go.'

Why, all the saints and sages who discuss'd
of the two worlds so learnedly, are thrust
like foolish prophets forth; their words to scorn
are scatter'd, and their mouths are stopt with
dust.

Myself when young did eagerly frequent *etc.*
E. FitzGerald, after O. Khayyám

from The Mikado, Act II

Song

Mikado

- [14] A more humane Mikado
never did in Japan exist,
to nobody second, I'm certainly reckoned
a true philanthropist.
It is my very humane endeavour
to make, to some extent,
each evil liver
a running river
of harmless merriment.

My object all sublime
I shall achieve in time
to let the punishment fit the crime,
the punishment fit the crime;
and make each prisoner pent
unwillingly represent
a source of innocent merriment,
of innocent merriment!

All prosy dull society sinners
who chatter and bleat and bore,
are sent to hear sermons
from mystical Germans
who preach from ten till four.
The amateur tenor whose vocal villainy's
all desire to shirk,
shall during off-hours exhibit his powers
to Madame Tussaud's wax work.
The lady who dies a chemical yellow
or stains her grey hair puce,
or pinches her figure,
is painted with vigour
in permanent walnut juice.
The idiot who in railway carriages
scribbles on window pains,
will always suffer
to ride on a buffer
in parliamentary trains.

My object all sublime *etc.*

Chorus

His object all sublime
he will achieve in time
to let the punishment fit the crime,
the punishment fit the crime;
and make each prisoner pent
unwillingly represent
a source of innocent merriment,
of innocent merriment!

Mikado

The advertising quack who wearies
with tales of countless cures,
his teeth, I've enacted,
shall all be extracted
by terrified amateurs.
The music hall singer attends a series
of masses and fugues and 'ops'
by Bach, interwoven
with Spohr and Beethoven,
at classical Monday Pops.
The billiard sharp whom anyone catches,
his doom's extremely hard.
He's made to dwell
in a dungeon cell
on a spot that's always barr'd.
And there he plays extravagant matches
in fitless fingerstalls,
on a cloth untrue
with a twisted cue,
and elliptical billiard balls!

My object all sublime *etc.*

Chorus

His object all sublime *etc.*

W.S. Gilbert

from Geneviève de Brabant

Gendarmes' Duet

- [15] We're public guardians bold yet wary,
and of ourselves we take good care.

To risk our precious lives we're chary,
when danger looms, we're never there!
But when we meet a helpless woman,
or little boys that do no harm,
we run them in, we run them in,
we show them we're the bold Gendarmes!

Sometimes our duty's extramural,
then little butterflies we chase.
We like to gambol in things rural,
commune with Nature face to face!
Unto our beat then back returning,
refresh'd by Nature's holy charm,
we run them in, we run them in,
we show them we're the bold Gendarmes!

If gentlemen will make a riot
and punch each other's heads at night,
we're quite disposed to keep it quiet
provided that they make it right.
But if they do not seem to see it
or give to us our proper terms,
we run them in, we run them in,
we show them we're the bold Gendarmes!

A. Jaime, E. Tréfeu and H. Crémieux
translated by David Parry

from The Pirates of Penzance, Act II

Policeman's Song

Sergeant with Chorus of Policemen

- [16] When a felon's not engaged in his employment,
or maturing his felonious little plans,

his capacity for innocent enjoyment
is just as great as any honest man's.
Our feelings we with difficulty smother
when constabulary duty's to be done.
Ah, take one consideration with another,
a policeman's lot is not an 'appy one.

When the enterprising burglar's not aburgling,
when the cut-throat isn't occupied in crime,
he loves to hear the little brook agurgling,
and listen to the merry village chime.
When the accoster's finished jumping on his
mother,
he loves to lie abasking in the sun.
Ah, take one consideration with another,
a policeman's lot is not an 'appy one.

W.S. Gilbert

from Boris Godunov, Prologue, Scene 2
(Coronation Scene)

Prayer

Boris

- [17] My soul is sad. A secret terror haunts me; with
evil presentiments my heart is stifled. O Lord
above, O Thou Almighty Father! From Heaven's
throne behold my contrite tears, and with Thy
blessing grant me holiness and strength, that
they may guide me. O make me good and
merciful as Thou; in glory let me rule my land...
Now let us kneel and pay our homage at the
tombs of Russia's monarchs. And then our

people all shall feast, yea, ev'ry man, from boyar
down to serf; all shall we greet, all gladly shall we
welcome!

Chorus

Glory, glory, glory! Long live our sovereign, Tsar
of Russia! Honour and glory to you our Father!
As the sun shines supreme in its glory! Over
Russia Tsar Boris now reigns in glory, and long
may he prosper! Glory, glory, glory!

M. Mussorgsky, after A. Pushkin and Karamzin,
translated by David Lloyd-Jones
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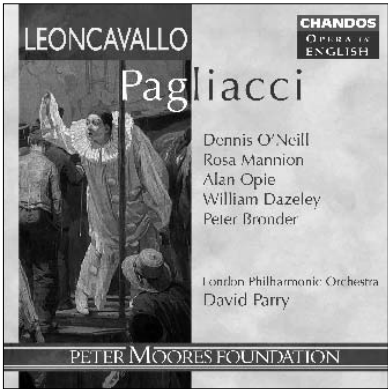


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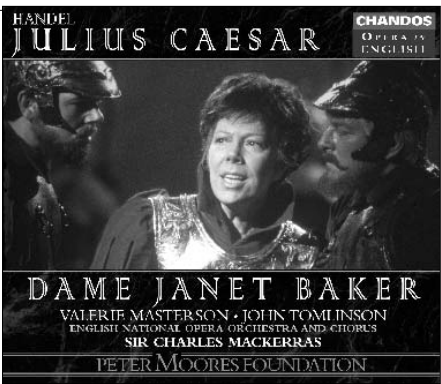


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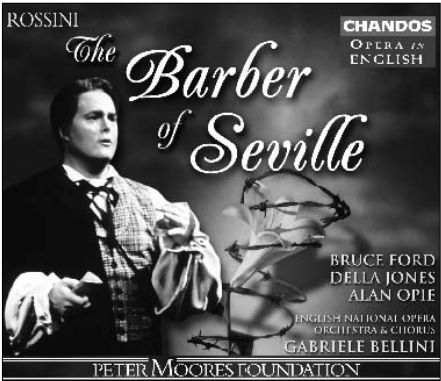


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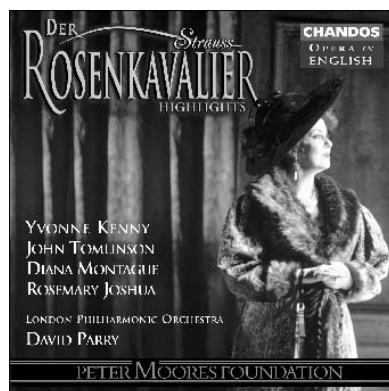


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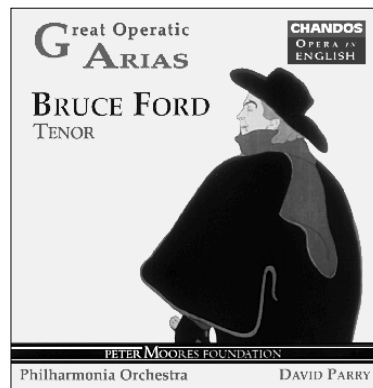
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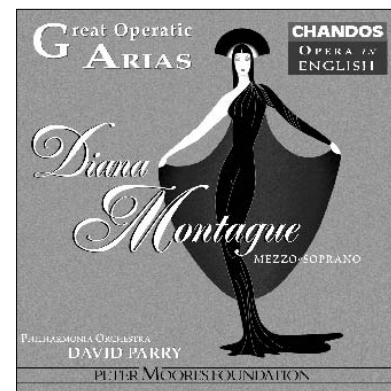
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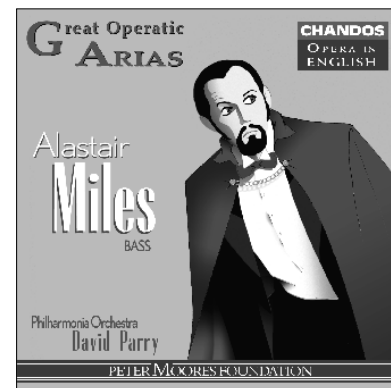
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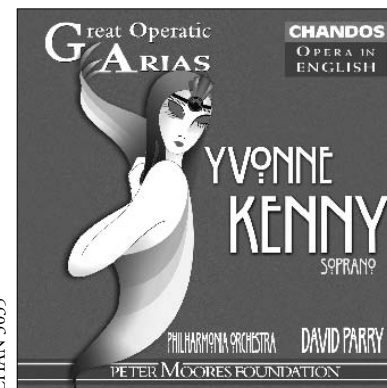
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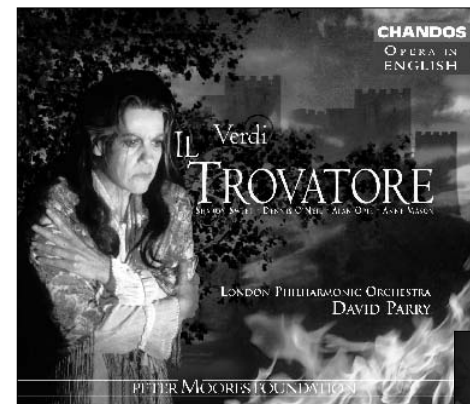
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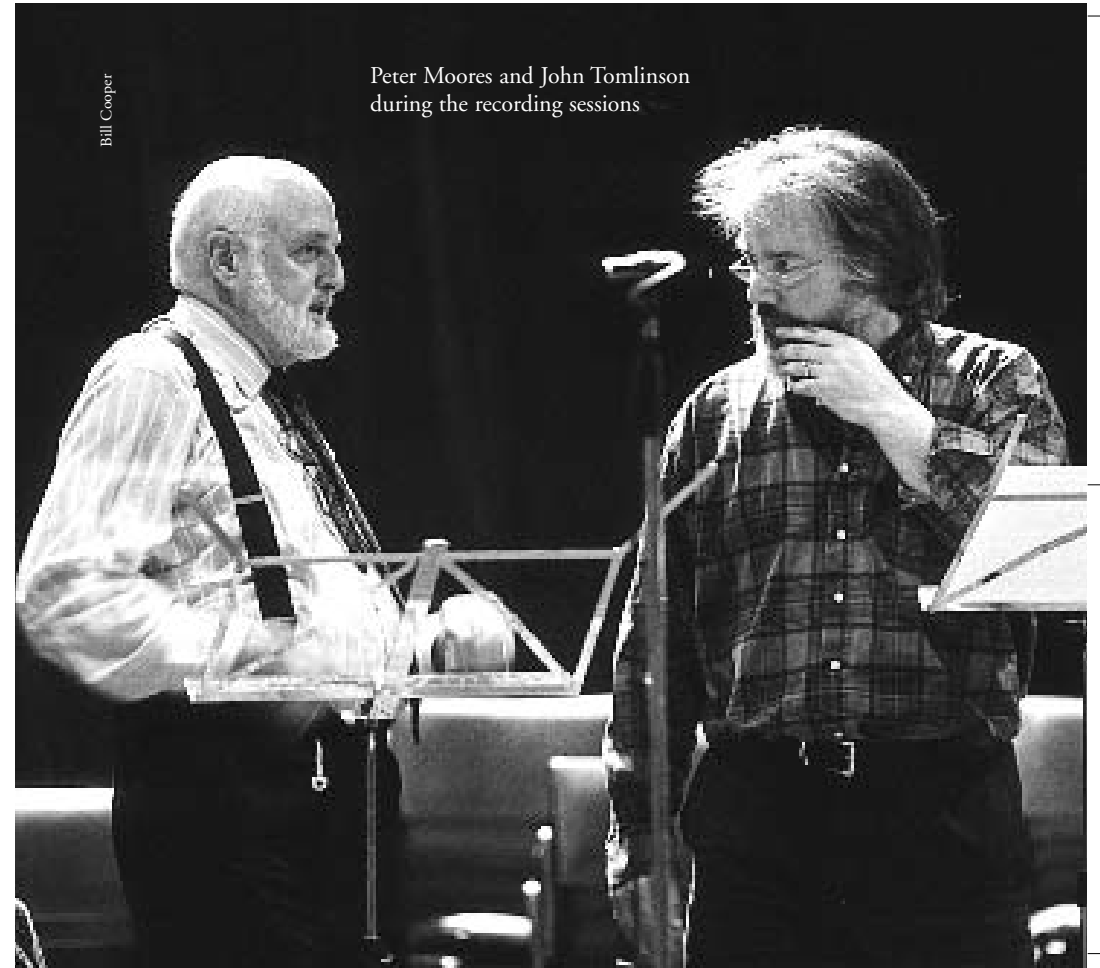
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Bill Cooper

Peter Moores and John Tomlinson
during the recording sessions

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CHAN 3044

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|----------|--|------|--|--|------|
| 1 | <i>from Handel's Acis and Galatea</i>
Polyphemus' Recitative and Air
'I rage, I rage, I rage, I melt, I burn!' –
'O ruddier than the cherry' | 4:43 | 10 | Khan Konchak's Aria, Act II
'Igor, listen' | 5:42 |
| 2 | <i>from Mozart's The Abduction from the Seraglio</i>
Osmin's Song, Act I
'When a maiden takes your fancy' | 2:57 | 11 | <i>from Dargomizhsky's Russalka, Act I</i>
Miller's Song
'Like every maiden in the whole of Russia' | 4:06 |
| 3 | Osmin and Blonde's Duet, Act II
'I'm going, but take my advice'
with Helen Williams soprano | 3:46 | 12 | <i>from Verdi's Ernani, Act I</i>
Silva's Scena and Cavatina
'Can I believe it?' –
'Vain illusion! When I believed her'
with Geoffrey Mitchell Choir | 7:09 |
| 4 | Pedrillo and Osmin's Duet, Act II
'Vivat Bacchus! Long live Bacchus!'
with Barry Banks tenor | 2:20 | 13 | <i>from Lehmann's In a Persian Garden</i>
Myself when young | 3:43 |
| 5 | <i>from Handel's Samson, Act II</i>
Harapha's Air
'Honour and arms scorn such a foe' | 6:29 | 14 | <i>from Sullivan's The Mikado, Act II</i>
The Mikado's Song
'A more humane Mikado... My object all sublime'
with Geoffrey Mitchell Choir | 4:30 |
| 6 | <i>from Verdi's Simon Boccanegra, Prologue</i>
Fiesco's Scena and Aria
'A last farewell I bid you' –
'My soul is torn with suffering'
with Geoffrey Mitchell Choir | 6:19 | 15 | <i>from Offenbach's Geneviève de Brabant</i>
Gendarmes' Duet
'We're public guardians bold yet wary'
with Andrew Shore baritone | 2:45 |
| 7 | Mussorgsky's Mephistopheles' Song of the Flea
(from Goethe's 'Faust')
'There lived a king of old' | 3:37 | 16 | <i>from Sullivan's The Pirates of Penzance, Act II</i>
Policeman's Song
'When a felon's not engaged in his employment'
with Geoffrey Mitchell Choir | 2:37 |
| 8 | <i>from Borodin's Prince Igor</i>
Prince Igor's Aria, Act II
'No rest, no slumber' | 8:00 | John Tomlinson bass
Philharmonia Orchestra
Gareth Hancock, Stephen Clarke assistant conductors | | |
| 9 | Galitsky's Aria, Act I
'The Prince has drunk his fill?' –
'The sober life of boredom'
with Geoffrey Mitchell Choir | 4:07 | 17 | Bonus track (from CHAN 3007)
Boris's Prayer <i>from</i> Mussorgsky's Boris Godunov | 3:59 |
| | | | TT 77:42 | | |

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