

CHAN 3086(2)



CHANDOS

OPERA IN
ENGLISH

PUCCINI

TURANDOT

PETER MOORES FOUNDATION



Lebrecht Music Collection

Giacomo Puccini

Giacomo Puccini (1858–1924)

Turandot

Lyric drama in three acts

Libretto by Giuseppe Adami and Renato Simoni, after Gozzi's dramatic fairy-tale

Princess Turandot.....	Jane Eaglen	<i>soprano</i>	
The Emperor Altoum, her father.....	Nicolai Gedda	<i>tenor</i>	
Timur, the dispossessed King of Tartary.....	Clive Bayley	<i>bass</i>	
Calaf, his son.....	Dennis O'Neill	<i>tenor</i>	
Liù, a slave-girl.....	Mary Plazas	<i>soprano</i>	
Ping, Grand Chancellor.....	Peter Sidhom	<i>baritone</i>	
Pang, General Purveyor.....	} Ministers.....	Mark Le Brocq	<i>tenor</i>
Pong, Chief Cook.....		Peter Wedd	<i>tenor</i>
A Mandarin.....	Simon Bailey	<i>baritone</i>	
Prince of Persia.....	Mark Le Brocq	<i>tenor</i>	
The executioner (Pu-Tin-Pao).....		<i>silent role</i>	

Geoffrey Mitchell Choir

New London Children's Choir

Ronald Corp musical director

Philharmonia Orchestra

David Parry

Gareth Hancock assistant conductor

COMPACT DISC ONE

Act I

[1]	'People of proud Peking' <i>Mandarin, Crowd, Guards, Liù, Unknown Prince, Timur</i>	4:11	[p. 84]
[2]	'When all was lost' <i>Timur, Unknown Prince, Liù, Crowd</i>	1:21	[p. 85]
[3]	'Sharpen the axe!' <i>Crowd, Executioner's Assistants</i>	2:27	[p. 86]
[4]	'Is the moon never rising?' <i>Crowd</i>	4:45	[p. 87]
[5]	'How young to die!' <i>Crowd, Unknown Prince, White Priests of the Procession</i>	5:27	[p. 88]
[6]	'Son, are you mad?' <i>Timur, Unknown Prince, Liù, Prince of Persia, Crowd</i>	1:47	[p. 88]
[7]	'What do you want? Who are you?' <i>Ping, Pong, Pang, Unknown Prince</i>	1:54	[p. 89]
[8]	'Why so much noise?' <i>Turandot's Handmaidens, Ping, Pong, Pang, Unknown Prince, Timur</i>	1:45	[p. 91]
[9]	'Nights without a gleam of starlight...' <i>Pang, Pong, Ping, Voices of the Shadows, Unknown Prince, Timur</i>	2:35	[p. 92]
[10]	'I beg you, hear me' <i>Liù</i>	2:29	[p. 93]
[11]	'Don't cry for me, Liù' <i>Unknown Prince, Liù, Timur</i>	2:07	[p. 93]
[12]	'Ah! How can you ignore us?' <i>Timur, Liù, Ping, Pong, Pang, Unknown Prince, Crowd</i>	2:36	[p. 93]

Act II

Scene 1

[13]	'Hallo Pang! Hallo Pong!'	3:10	[p. 96]
[14]	'I've a house in fair Honan' <i>Ping, Pong, Pang</i>	4:11	[p. 97]
[15]	'Do you remember when the Royal Prince of Samarkand came?' <i>Ping, Voices within, Pong, Pang</i>	5:17	[p. 98]

Scene 2

[16]	'With the three enigmas ready' <i>Crowd</i>	4:26	[p. 101]
[17]	'I am the pris'ner of a ghastly promise' <i>Emperor, Unknown Prince, Crowd</i>	4:20	[p. 101]
[18]	'People of proud Peking!' <i>Mandarin, Crowd</i>	1:50	[p. 102]
[19]	'Within this Palace a story lives forever' <i>Turandot, Crowd</i>	2:38	[p. 102]
[20]	'O Princes who in caravans of splendour' <i>Turandot, Unknown Prince, Crowd</i>	3:24	[p. 102]
[21]	'O stranger, now listen!' <i>Turandot, Unknown Prince, Sages, Emperor, Crowd, Liù</i>	7:54	[p. 103]
[22]	'Emp'ror and father! Son of Heaven!' <i>Turandot, Emperor, Crowd, Unknown Prince</i>	3:01	[p. 104]
[23]	'Three enigmas that you asked me' <i>Raimondo, Lucia</i>	4:18	[p. 105]

TT 78:13

COMPACT DISC TWO

Time Page

Act III

Scene 1

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|------|---|---------------|
| [1] | ‘The Princess Turandot commands’
<i>Heralds, Distant Voices</i> | 3:18 [p. 106] |
| [2] | ‘None shall sleep now!’
<i>Unknown Prince, Women’s Voices, Ping, Pong, Pang</i> | 3:30 [p. 106] |
| [3] | ‘These girls should please you!’
<i>Ping, Pong, Pang, Maidens, Unknown Prince, Crowd, Guards</i> | 4:07 [p. 107] |
| [4] | ‘How pale you look, O stranger!’
<i>Turandot, Unknown Prince, Liù, Crowd, Ping, Timur</i> | 3:18 [p. 109] |
| [5] | ‘Yes, I love him so deeply!’
<i>Liù, Turandot, Ping, Unknown Prince, Crowd</i> | 3:21 [p. 110] |
| [6] | ‘You who with ice are shrouded’
<i>Liù, Crowd, Unknown Prince</i> | 2:58 [p. 111] |
| [7] | ‘Liù!... Liù!... Wake up!’
<i>Timur, Ping, Crowd, Pong, Pang</i> | 4:49 [p. 112] |
| [8] | ‘Deathly Princess, so heartless!’
<i>Unknown Prince, Turandot</i> | 3:24 [p. 113] |
| [9] | ‘What have you done?’
<i>Turandot, Unknown Prince, Voices</i> | 3:15 [p. 113] |
| [10] | ‘I never wept before’
<i>Turandot, Unknown Prince</i> | 4:47 [p. 114] |

Scene 2

- | | | |
|------|---|---------------|
| [11] | ‘Glory to our Emp’ror!’
<i>Crowd, Turandot</i> | 3:32 [p. 115] |
|------|---|---------------|

TT 40:26



Jane Eaglen as Turandot and
Dennis O'Neill as Calaf

Jane Eaglen as Turandot



Dennis O'Neill as Calaf



Turandot – Old and new

'An opera really new for Puccini' – such was the view of Andrea Della Corte, critic of the Turin paper *La Stampa*, reporting on the premiere of *Turandot* in 1926 at La Scala, Milan; and it was echoed in musical circles throughout the world, nowhere more strongly than in Britain, where its composer's fame (or, as was often the case, notoriety) rested on *La bohème*, *Tosca* and *Madam Butterfly*. In fact novelty had always been a preoccupation with Puccini, as it had been with Verdi; hence his habitual readiness to take up a wide variety of subjects only to drop them once he found himself unable to reduce them to his own terms. The gestation of *Turandot* was a particularly long and tormented one, during which he was at times tempted to abandon the entire project and even, so he told his English confidante, Sybil Seligman, to adapt the music already written for it to a new plot devised by Giovacchino Forzano (author of *Suor Angelica* and *Gianni Schicchi*) with a similar Chinese ambience. His difficulties were compounded by the literary pretensions of his two librettists, Renato Simoni and Giuseppe Adami, both of them playwrights of

minor distinction, neither of whom was prepared to serve up conventional operatic fodder in the manner of their nineteenth-century predecessors such as Piave or Ghislanzoni. It was Simoni who first put forward the idea of Gozzi's 'fiaba' at a meeting with Puccini in Milan early in 1920; and he handed the composer a copy of Schiller's adaptation of it in the translation by Andrea Maffei. Puccini bit at once. 'I think we should keep to this subject,' he wrote back. 'Altogether I think that *Turandot* is the most normal and human of all Gozzi's theatrical works. So *Turandot*, then, by way of the modern mind, yours, Adami's and my own.' The poets duly drew up a scheme which satisfied him in broad outline; but it would undergo drastic alterations over the next four years. Of particular interest here is a letter from Puccini to Simoni written in August, 1920: 'Have you given much thought to the new introduction of the little woman? I do beg you, make it succeed as God wills – that is, excellently.' So it would seem that the slave-girl Liù as substitute for Gozzi's scheming Princess Adelma was

probably Puccini's idea. It would certainly be typical of one who thirty years before had insisted on the need for a 'luminous figure' with whom the audience can sympathise.

The opera's growth and gradual transformation can be briefly charted. At first Act I comprised two scenes, the second of which ended with the solving of the riddles. Act II dealt with the frantic search for Calaf's identity, the bribes offered to him by Turandot's ministers and the torture of Liù; Act III with the Princess's final surrender. By September 1921 Puccini was demanding that the last two acts be amalgamated into one – but fortunately not for long. By the New Year the present distribution had been arrived at, Act I ending with the ensemble in which Timur, Liù and the ministers try vainly to dissuade the Prince from his enterprise. March 1922 saw the addition of the opening scene of Act II, conceived as a kind of intermezzo ('una chitarrara', as Puccini called it), to be followed in August by the insertion of Turandot's 'In questa reggia' (Within this Palace), though this would not be composed until April 1923. In the meantime Puccini had taken the fateful decision for Liù to die during her torture (in the original scheme she had been given a brief

duet with Turandot at the start of Act III). Hereby he created a problem whose solution would elude him until the end. The conversion of a glacial, vindictive Fury, who has witnessed the self-sacrifice of an innocent victim without turning a hair, into a warm, loving human being, is a task that would have daunted the greatest musical genius. Over the next two years Puccini was tireless in his demands for a suitable text for his final duet; and there are some who believe that if only his librettists had managed to supply it in time, he might have completed the opera to his satisfaction. But that seems to me unlikely. To misquote Shakespeare's Mark Antony, his heart was in the coffin there with Liù.

Indeed the pure-hearted girl who dies for love is rightly held up as Turandot's link with its predecessors in the Puccini canon. But it is by no means the only one, least of all on the musical level. More perceptive than Della Corte, Giulio Cesare Paribene of *L'Ambrosiano* observed that '*Turandot* bears witness to the whole of its author's life in music, in the sense that it sums up all the evolutionary phases of a composer who, while remaining true to himself, does not disdain to take note of all the discoveries of our present, restless age in

the matter of form and expression.' In other words Puccini, like Verdi and unlike his confrères of the 'giovane scuola', possessed the secret of self-renewal through the assimilation of elements from the avant-garde of his time, into his own personal idiom. What is less often pointed out is how soon that idiom was established. Plain, diatonic melodies supported by unusually rich and varied harmonies are to be found as early as 1884 in the youthful *Le villi*. Here too one notices a penchant for what might be called the 'soft discord' in which the semitonal clash is avoided – not used as a special effect but simply as part of a straightforward musical discourse. This would in due course put at his disposal a range of pentatonic (i.e. black-note) harmony which would serve him well for the Japanese colours of *Madam Butterfly* and the *chinoiserie* of *Turandot*, for both of which Puccini helped himself to authentic folk-melodies. Eventually his vocabulary would expand to take in the far sharper dissonances of his last opera; but their roots can generally be traced to an earlier period.

One of the boldest harmonic combinations in *Turandot* occurs at the point where the ghosts of the princess's beheaded suitors make their shadowy appearance on the ramparts,

longing for another sight of their beloved. Here tonality is virtually suspended, and with it all sense of motion. But a similar passage, more simply conceived, can be found in the off-stage chorus of exhausted revellers that Puccini added to the revision of his *Edgar* made in 1905, the year of *Madam Butterfly*. In the same opera's original version (1889) Puccini first discloses that fondness for a succession of parallel, often unrelated chords which would remain with him throughout his career; it was merely that with the passage of time these chords would become more elaborate, partly under the influence of composers such as Debussy and Stravinsky. Another favourite procedure, likewise forestalled in *Edgar*, is the persistent alternation of two chords as a way of screwing up dramatic tension. An outstanding instance is the finale of Act I of *Tosca* where Scarpia unveils his villainous intentions against the background of a congregational *Te Deum*. Nowhere is this device more powerfully used than in the ensemble that concludes the first act of *Turandot*, where it conveys to perfection the emotional tug-of-war between Calaf and the bystanders. In *Manon Lescaut*, *La bohème* and *La rondine* Puccini launches his opening scene with two contrasting themes, the first

lively and strongly accented, the second lyrically flowing. *Turandot* begins in much the same way; but here not only are the two ideas internally expanded, but the harmonic distance between them has been immeasurably increased. The initial orchestral gesture followed by the Mandarin's proclamation belong to the post-war age, while the melody that directs our attention to Liù and Timur harks back to the Puccini of the 1890s with its downward tending line, each phrase ending with that hallmark of the composer's style, evident since *Le villi*, namely the falling fifth. Yet both ideas are juxtaposed without the slightest sense of incongruity. Nothing in the score illustrates more succinctly Puccini's ability to get the best of both worlds, old and new. Nor amid all the daring modernisms of his swansong had he lost his ability to pull out of the hat a melody of enduring popular appeal: witness, 'Nessun dorma' (None shall sleep now).

True, such moments become increasingly rare after *Madam Butterfly*. But if the growing complexity of Puccini's style would alienate the groundlings, it vastly enhanced his stature among the musical pioneers of his day. After hearing a performance of *La fanciulla del West* Anton Webern wrote to his teacher Arnold

Schoenberg, 'This is a score with all absolutely original sound. Magnificent! Not a trace of Kitsch! And I'm speaking at first hand. I must say I enjoyed it enormously.' He was preaching to the converted. To Schoenberg Puccini was simply 'a great man' – no mean tribute from the inventor of the twelve-note system!

It remains to mention one further characteristic of Puccini's late style. Beginning with *Manon Lescaut* he had organised his acts through an underlying interplay of recurring motifs, often less specifically referential than those of Wagner, whom he so much admired. In the works that followed *La fanciulla* these motifs persist; but there is a growing tendency, especially noticeable in *Il tabarro*, to subsume them in large blocks of contrasted material, which reaches its peak in *Turandot*. One may search in vain for any precedent in Verdi or Rossini. To find anything remotely similar one must go back to the operas of Monteverdi. With his last stage work, then, Puccini may be said to have set his seal not only on a career of forty years, but on an Italian tradition that reaches back three centuries.

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Synopsis

COMPACT DISC ONE

Act I

The walls of the great Violet City: the Imperial City. The massive ramparts enclose almost the whole stage in a semi-circle.

[1] The crowd listens to a decree that the princess Turandot will marry only the prince who solves her three riddles. Anyone who stands trial and fails will be executed. The people call for the executioner, and for the death of Turandot's latest victim, the Prince of Persia, at moonrise.

Timur, the exiled King of Tartary, is among the crowd. His son Calaf, who has also been forced into exile, recognises him after years of separation, [2] – [3] and learns that Timur owes his life to a slave-girl, Liù, who accompanies him. They are all unknown in Peking.

[4] – [5] Pu-Tin-Pao leads the Prince of Persia to execution. The crowd now calls upon Turandot to appear and grant mercy, but she refuses. [6] Calaf is so overwhelmed at this first sight of the princess that he resolves to try his fortune with Turandot's enigmas.

[7] The Imperial functionaries, Ping, Pang

and Pong, try to stop him. [8] – [9] Turandot's handmaidens call for silence but the ghosts of her previous suitors urge him on. Nothing, neither the sight of Pu-Tin-Pao returning with the head of the Prince of Persia, [10] – [12] nor the entreaties of Liù, can dissuade him. Calaf strikes the gong which signals his challenge.

Act II

Scene One

[13] Ping, Pang and Pong discuss the preparations for what will be either a wedding or a funeral. They compare their recollections of all the princes who have died for Turandot, [14] – [15] and grow nostalgic for the country retreats where they could retire if the decree did not hold them to their lugubrious duties. Trumpets announce Calaf's trial.

Scene Two

[16] The Court assembles to hear Turandot's latest suitor stand the trial of the riddles.

[17] – [18] Her father, the Emperor, in vain entreats the Unknown Prince to stand down.

[19] Turandot begins the ceremony by telling how her ancestor, the princess Lo-u-Ling, was raped and murdered by Tartar invaders, and how she is intent upon avenging this memory. [20] She warns Calaf that, although

there are three riddles, death is one. Calaf responds that life is one.

[21] Turandot poses the first enigma: what rises at night, invoked by all the world, only to die at dawn reborn in the heart? Calaf rightly answers: hope. The second riddle is what darts like a flame but is not a flame, that grows cold with death yet blazes with dreams of conquest? Turandot is furious when Calaf solves it with the answer: blood. Thirdly she demands what inflames you, white yet dark, that enslaves if it wants you free, but in taking you captive makes you king? Calaf answers: Turandot.

[22] The Emperor holds his daughter to her solemn vow to marry the suitor who solved her enigmas. [23] Triumphant Calaf offers her a last chance: if she can discover his name before daybreak, he is prepared to die. The Emperor prays for his success.

COMPACT DISC TWO

Act III

Scene One

[1] – [2] That night, enclosed within the palace gardens, Calaf hears the Imperial heralds searching the city for someone who can reveal his identity. When dawn breaks, he knows that he will win.

[3] Ping, Pang and Pong offer him women, wealth or glory if he will leave the Princess alone. They are threatening him with torture at the moment when the guards bring in Timur and Liù. [4] They summon Turandot, who watches as the slave-girl offers herself to protect the old man, and yet refuses to yield under torture. [5] Asked what gives her such strength, Liù replies that it is love. Turandot is moved for a moment and then orders her ministers to tear the secret from her. [6] Liù commits suicide. [7] Timur curses the people who have brought about her death.

[8] Calaf now confronts Turandot, tears off her veil and kisses her. [9] She is mortified, believing that she has lost; Calaf proclaims that this is only the beginning of their love. [10] Turandot begs him to leave with his secret and Calaf replies that there is no mystery anymore – he is Calaf, the son of Timur. Turandot is thrilled that he is now in her power.

Scene Two

[11] Before the people Turandot declares that she knows the stranger's name, and that it is Love.

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Nicola Majocchi



Jane Eaglen has one of the most formidable reputations in the opera world today. Born in Lincoln, she studied at the Royal Northern College of Music, where she was supported by a Peter Moores Foundation scholarship, and went on to sing at English National Opera.

Enjoying unique success in the contrasting roles of Norma and Brünnhilde, hers is a dramatic soprano of outstanding achievement earning spectacular reviews worldwide. Her performances as Brünnhilde (*Siegfried*) for the Lyric Opera of Chicago and her subsequent complete *Ring* there, with Riccardo Muti at La Scala, Milan, in San Francisco and in Vienna gained equally fine reviews. Previous portrayals of Brünnhilde include those for Opera Pacific and Scottish Opera. Her success as Norma for Scottish Opera (in a production supported by the Peter Moores Foundation) was followed by critically acclaimed performances at the Ravenna Festival with Muti, for Seattle Opera, Los Angeles Opera, at the Bastille, Paris, and Scottish Opera.

Other memorable operatic performances include Isolde in Seattle, repeated at the Metropolitan Opera and the Lyric Opera of Chicago to formidable reviews; her role debut as La Gioconda for the Lyric Opera of Chicago; Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*) at the Metropolitan Opera – previously performed for Vienna State Opera and in Los Angeles, Munich and Bologna; the title role in *Turandot* at The Royal Opera, the Metropolitan Opera with Pavarotti, in Vienna, Madrid, Seattle, Bologna and at the Bastille, Paris; Amelia (*Un ballo in maschera*) in Bologna and at the Bastille; the title role in *Tosca* for English National Opera, the Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires, and in concert with the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra; and the title role in *Ariadne auf Naxos* for English National Opera.

Equally at home on the concert platform engagements include Verdi's *Requiem* with Simon Rattle and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra; Mahler's Eighth Symphony with Klaus Tennstedt; Act III of *Götterdämmerung* with Bernard Haitink and the Boston Symphony Orchestra; *Nabucco* in Ravenna with Riccardo Muti; *Gurrelieder* with Claudio Abbado at the Salzburg and Edinburgh Festivals; *Norma* in concert at the

Tivoli Festival in Copenhagen and at Carnegie Hall; and Strauss's *Four Last Songs* with Daniel Barenboim and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Jane Eaglen's recordings include a disc of arias by Wagner and Bellini, another with arias by Strauss and Mozart, Mahler's Eighth Symphony, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Bruckner's Mass, *Norma*, *Medea in Corinto* for Opera Rara, and, for Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation the award-winning *Tosca*, and *Aida*. She also features on the soundtrack of the film adaptation of Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*.



Born in Wales of Irish and Welsh parents, **Dennis O'Neill** is one of the world's leading tenors and a specialist in the works of Verdi. He has enjoyed a long association with the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden,

where his many roles have included Rodolfo (*La Bohème*), the Duke (*Rigoletto*), Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*), Edgardo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Macduff

(*Macbeth*), Gustavo (*Un ballo in maschera*), Foresto (*Attila*), Otello, Don Carlos, Radames (*Aida*), Aroldo (in concert), Carlo (*Giovanna d'Arco*), and Jacopo (*I due Foscari*).

For the Metropolitan Opera he has appeared as Alfredo (*La traviata*), Radames (*Aida*), Turiddu (*Cavalleria rusticana*) and Canio (*Pagliacci*). Other North American engagements have included Chicago Lyric Opera, San Francisco, San Diego, Vancouver Opera and concerts with the Philadelphia, Cleveland, Montreal, and Ottawa Symphonies, and for the Cincinnati Festival. A frequent guest at the Bayerische Staatsoper, Munich, his debut in *Un ballo in maschera* was followed by a new production of *Il trovatore*, as well as *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Tosca*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Aida* and the title role in *Otello*. Elsewhere he has visited the opera houses of Vienna, Berlin, Bonn, Cologne, Hamburg, Munich, Nice, Zurich, Paris, Oslo, Brussels, Barcelona, Lisbon, Oviedo, the Arena di Verona and Turin, as well as English National Opera. He enjoys a close relationship with Welsh National Opera.

Dennis O'Neill is also a busy concert artist and has sung throughout Europe. His own television series for the BBC were enormously popular, and he has subsequently completed a

television film on Caruso. Recordings for Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation are *Aida*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *Tosca*, *La Bohème*, *Il trovatore*, and a disc of Great Operatic Arias. Dennis O'Neill was awarded the CBE in the 2000 New Year's Honours list.

Nicolai Gedda is internationally acknowledged as one of the greatest artists of our time and has been acclaimed for his command of a

repertoire which encompasses almost every style and period in the field of opera, oratorio, operetta, song or orchestral works.

Born in Stockholm, the son of a Russian bass and a Swedish mother, he made his professional début at

the Royal Opera Stockholm in 1952 in *Le Postillon de Longjumeau*. In the audience was Herbert von Karajan, who immediately engaged him to sing in his recording of Bach's B minor Mass. Thus the year 2002 marks fifty years of recording for Nicolai Gedda. In 1953 he made his debut at La Scala, Milan followed

in 1954 by his debut at the Paris Opera and in 1957 with his Metropolitan Opera debut (in the title role of Gounod's *Faust*). Since his debut with The Royal Opera in 1965 (as the Duke of Mantua in Verdi's *Rigoletto*) he returned to sing Benvenuto Cellini, Alfredo, Gustavus III in *Un ballo in maschera*, Nemorino and Lensky. He created leading roles in Barber's *Vanessa* and Menotti's *The Last Savage* at the Metropolitan Opera.

His operatic triumphs have ranged from the works of Haydn and Mozart to Stravinsky, Orff, Barber and Menotti, while in recital he is regarded as an outstanding interpreter of lieder. He also has the distinction of being the most recorded tenor in the world with 200 recordings to his credit. These include complete opera performances of *The Abduction from the Seraglio* (for Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation), *Guillaume Tell*, *La bohème*, *Faust*, *Werther*, *Manon*, *Così fan tutte* and *Benvenuto Cellini*.

Mary Plazas studied with Ava June at the Royal Northern College of Music, where she was supported by the Peter Moores Foundation and the Countess of Munster Musical Trust. She made her operatic debut in 1992 with English National Opera as the



Heavenly Voice (*Don Carlos*), and is currently a company principal. Roles have included Mimì, Leila, Adina, Nannetta, Micaëla, Marzelline (*Fidelio*), Lauretta, Oscar, Dorabella and the title role in *The*

Cunning Little Vixen (English National Opera); Mimì, Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Tebaldo (*Don Carlos*) and Elisetta (*Il matrimonio segreto*) for Opera North; Donna Elvira (Glyndebourne Touring Opera); Anne Trulove (New Israeli Opera and Opera Factory); and Echo (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) and Madame Silberklang (*Der Schauspieldirektor*) for Garsington Opera.

In 1996 she made her debut at the BBC Promenade Concerts with The Royal Opera as the Heavenly Voice, and in 1997 performed with The Royal Opera at Covent Garden and the Metropolitan Opera, New York in Pfitzner's *Palestrina*. She created the role of Tina in Jonathan Dove's *Flight* for Glyndebourne Touring Opera, repeating the role for Glyndebourne Festival Opera. She

sang the Duchess in Thomas Adès's *Powder her Face* by for Almeida Opera and at the Aldeburgh Festival, and also recorded the role for Channel 4 television. In summer 2001 she made her debut at the Bregenz Festival as Mimì, returning in the role in 2002.

Mary Plazas has given many recitals and concerts including solo recitals at the Wigmore Hall, Purcell Room, and the Karajan Centre in Vienna. She has also performed at the Cheltenham, Aldeburgh and Chester Festivals. Concerts include Haydn's *Creation*, Tippett's *A Child of our Time*, Mahler's Symphony No. 8, Mozart's *Requiem*, Brahms's *German Requiem*, Shostakovich's Symphony No. 14, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 and Saint-Saëns's *The Promised Land*.

Recordings include Mercadante's *Emma d'Antiochia*, and Pacini's *Maria Regina d'Inghilterra* (both for Opera Rara), *Dido and Aeneas* for Chandos, *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*, and, for Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation, Marguerite in *Faust*, Adina, Zerlina and Micaela.

Trained at the Royal Northern College of Music, where he was a Peter Moores Scholar, **Clive Bayley** sings regularly with the major opera companies in a repertoire ranging from



Monteverdi to Verdi, Puccini, Berg, Britten and Birtwistle. He made his debut with The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, in the premiere of Harrison Birtwistle's *Gawain* and subsequently appeared as Colline in *La bohème*, Hans Foltz in *Die Meistersinger* and Castro in *La fanciulla del West*. He has had notable successes with Opera North in Verdi's *Jerusalem*, as Sparafucile (*Rigoletto*), the Monk (*Don Carlos*), Raleigh (*Gloriana*), the Referee in Benedict Mason's *Playing Away*, Ferrando (*Il trovatore*), Arkel (*Pelléas and Mélisande*), Wurm (*Luisa Miller*), the title role in *Le nozze di Figaro*, the Doctor (*Wozzeck*); with Opera Factory in *Don Giovanni*; with English National Opera in *Billy Budd*, *Wozzeck*, as Cadmus (*Semele*), the four Villains in *The Tales of Hoffmann*, Ferrando (*Il trovatore*), Collatinus (*The Rape of Lucretia*), and Pistol in *Falstaff*. Abroad Clive Bayley has appeared with Netherlands Opera, Seattle Opera, in Lisbon and Lausanne. Other engagements have included the Fisherman in Kurt Weill's *The Royal Palace* at the

BBC Promenade concerts and performances with Glyndebourne Festival and Touring Operas.

Recordings for Chandos include *Troilus and Cressida*, *Billy Budd*, and, for Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation *Falstaff*, *Madam Butterfly*, *Don Giovanni*, *Boris Godunov* highlights, *Don Pasquale* and *Il trovatore*.



Peter Sidhom was born in Egypt of a Maltese-Italian mother and an Egyptian father, and settled in England at the age of ten. After reading Modern Languages at London University, he studied singing with Hervey

Alan and Josephine Veasey.

Peter Sidhom has appeared at many of the world's leading international opera houses including the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (Schaunard in *La bohème*, Monterone in *Rigoletto*, Capulet in *Roméo et Juliette*, Paolo in *Simon Boccanegra*, Donner in *Das Rheingold*); Opéra Bastille, Paris; La Monnaie, Brussels (*Il tabarro*, *Gianni Schicci*); Teatro

Comunale, Florence (*Der Zwerg*); San Francisco Opera (*The Ring*); Glyndebourne Festival (*Simon Boccanegra*); Théâtre du Capitole, Toulouse (*La bohème* and *Lohengrin*); Staatstheater, Stuttgart (*Tosca*) Teatro Real de Madrid (*Der Rosenkavalier*); Teatro La Fenice (*Billy Budd*). He has sung leading and title roles with Welsh National Opera, English National Opera, Opera North and Scottish Opera.

Equally at home on the concert platform, Peter Sidhom has appeared in all of the major concert halls in England. He has worked with numerous conductors including Richard Armstrong, David Atherton, Martyn Brabbins, James Conlon, Paul Daniel, Andrew Davis, Christoph von Dohnányi, Mark Elder, Bernard Haitink, Richard Hickox, Oliver Knussen, Sir Charles Mackerras, Antonio Pappano, Carlo Rizzi and Edo de Waart. His recordings include *La traviata* and *Rigoletto*, the role of Pascoe in Ethel Smyth's *The Wreckers*, and *Carmina Burana*.

Mark Le Brocq held a choral scholarship to St. Catharine's College, Cambridge where he read English. He won an Entrance Scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music to Study with Kenneth Bowen and later continued his



studies at the National Opera Studio.

He was a Company Principal with English National Opera, where his many roles included Tamino (*The Magic Flute*), Paris (*King Priam*), Count Almaviva (*The Barber of Seville*), Narraboth (*Salome*), Don Ottavio, Monostatos, Rodriguez (Massenet's *Don Quixote*), Odoardo (*Ariodante*), Doctor Maxwell in *The Silver Tassie*, and Siward in *A Better Place*. Guest appearances have included roles for Opera Northern Ireland, Garsington Opera and the Aix-en Provence Festival.

Mark Le Brocq has performed as a recital and oratorio soloist in the USA, France, Germany, Spain and the Middle East, as well as all the major London venues. He has appeared with the Gabrieli Consort/Paul McCreesh at festivals throughout Europe. Concert engagements have included the Mozart and Verdi *Requiems*, Beethoven's Mass in C and *Choral Fantasia*, *Messiah*, and *La resurrezione*. Recordings include *Il trovatore*

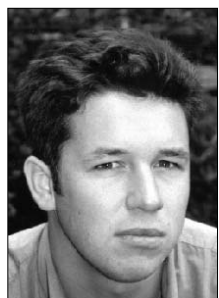
for Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation, *Samson*, *Judas Maccabaeus*, Purcell's *Hail Bright Cecilia*, Handel's *Utrecht Te Deum* and Boyce's *I Was Glad*.



Christian Steiner

Peter Wedd studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama with William McAlpine and at the National Opera Studio, where he received support from the Peter Moores Foundation. Operatic engagements have included Cascada (*Die lustige Witwe*) for The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, Federico (*L'Arlesiana*) and Pluto (*Orphée aux enfers*) for Opera Holland Park, and Don José (*Carmen*) for Welsh National Opera. He joined The Royal Opera, Covent Garden as a principal tenor in the 1999/2000 season.

Peter Wedd's wide concert repertoire ranges from *Messiah* and Pergolesi's *Magnificat* to the *Glagolitic Mass* and Britten's *Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings*. He appears on the Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation recording of Verdi's *Ernani*.



Simon Bailey is a graduate of the Royal Northern College of Music (where he was a Peter Moores Scholar) and Clare College, Cambridge where he was a choral scholar. Upon graduation Simon was immediately accepted

by the Academy of the Teatro alla Scala, Milan.

At La Scala Simon has sung a number of roles including Schaunard (*La bohème*), Jailer (*Dialogues des Carmélites*), First Apprentice (*Wozzeck*), Lakai (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) and Hobson (*Peter Grimes*) and has worked with James Conlon, Riccardo Muti, Jeffrey Tate and the late Giuseppe Sinopoli. He has also sung roles in *Turandot* and Verdi's *Un giorno di regno*.

Simon Bailey recently made his debut in the world-premiere of Coghi's *Tatjana* directed by Peter Stein at La Scala and sang his first major production of *Le nozze di Figaro* for Opéra de Rouen. He will appear in a series of roles for Oper Frankfurt which will include Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*) and Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*).

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

The **New London Children's Choir** was launched by its Musical Director Ronald Corp in 1991 with the aim of introducing children to the challenges and fun of singing and performing all types of music. Since then the Choir has appeared in all the major London concert halls, worked with the UK's finest symphony orchestras and conductors, collaborated with opera companies in the UK and abroad, made dozens of recordings and

broadcasts, and been invited to appear at many major festivals.

The extensive discography of the New London Children's Choir encompasses recordings of Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker*, Shostakovich's *Song of the Forests*, Prokofiev's *Ivan the Terrible*, Rutland Boughton's *Bethlehem* and Vaughan Williams' *Hugh the Drover*, Mahler's Symphony No. 3, Holst's *The Planets*, and Britten's *St Nicolas* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. It has also made recordings for film and premiered over thirty new works.

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

Royal Festival Hall, but also in the wider community through regional residencies.

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

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

Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny, Andrew Shore, and two with John Tomlinson.)



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.

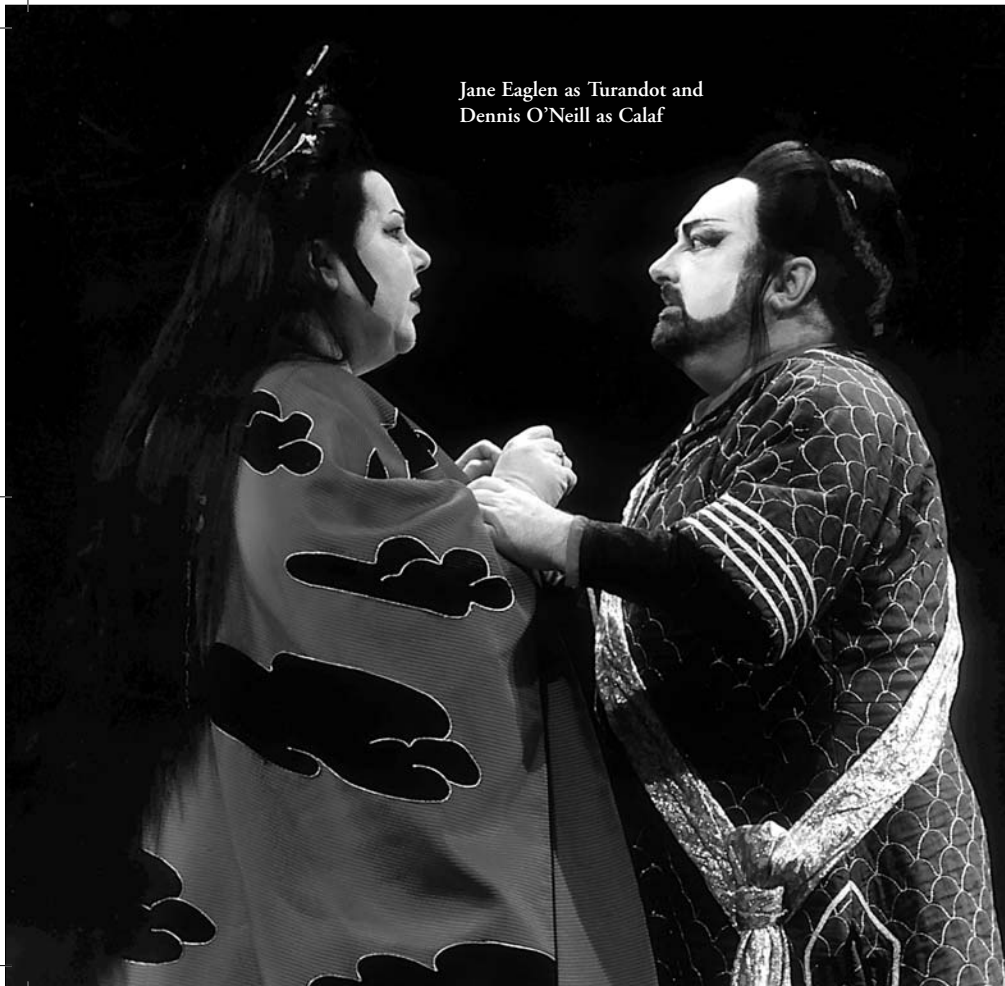
His work in the recording studio includes the BBC Television production of Marschner's *Der Vampyr* and twenty-one complete opera recordings under the sponsorship of the Peter Moores Foundation. Among these are

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 nine recordings of operatic arias (with Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny, John Tomlinson, Andrew Shore and Della Jones), as well as *Lucia of Lammermoor*, *Aida*, *Faust*, *Don Giovanni*, *Ernani*, *Don Pasquale*, *The Elixir of Love*, *La bohème*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *Il trovatore* the award-winning *Tosca* and highlights from *Der Rosenkavalier*, all in association with the Peter Moores Foundation.



Jane Eaglen as Turandot

Jane Eaglen as Turandot and
Dennis O'Neill as Calaf



Jane Eaglen as Turandot

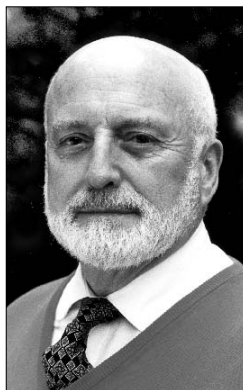


PETER MOORES, CBE, DL

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.



Bill Cooper/PMF

Peter Moores, CBE, DL

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

PETER MOORES FOUNDATION

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

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

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

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

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

Jane Eaglen as Turandot and
Dennis O'Neill as Calaf



Turandot – Alt und neu

“Eine für Puccini wirklich neue Oper” – so beschrieb Andrea Della Corte, der Kritiker der Turiner Zeitung *La Stampa*, 1926 die Uraufführung von *Turandot* an der Mailänder Scala. Es war ein Urteil, dem man sich in aller Welt anschloss und dies nirgendwo emphatischer als in Großbritannien, wo der Komponist seinen guten (und häufig auch schlechten) Ruf solchen Werken wie *La bohème*, *Tosca* und *Madama Butterfly* verdankte. Tatsächlich war Puccini, ebenso wie Verdi, aber schon immer um Neuerungen bemüht; so erklärt sich seine Angewohnheit, die verschiedensten Themen aufzugreifen und ebenso schnell abzustoßen, wenn es ihm nicht gelang, sie seinen eigenen Vorstellungen zu unterwerfen. Die Entstehung von *Turandot* erwies sich als besonders langwierig und qualvoll. Verschiedentlich war er versucht, das Projekt ganz aufzugeben, war sogar, wie er seiner englischen Vertrauten Sybil Seligman mitteilte, dazu bereit, die bereits geschriebene *Turandot*-Musik für einen neuen Text von Giovacchino Forzano (dem Autoren von *Suor Angelica* und *Gianni Schicchi*) mit einem ähnlichen chinesischen Milieu umzuarbeiten.

Es half ihm nicht, dass die beiden Librettisten, Renato Simoni und Giuseppe Adami, literarische Ambitionen hatten und als einigermaßen bekannte Dramatiker davon Abstand nahmen, konventionelle Opernstoffe nach Art von Piave, Ghislanzoni oder anderen im 19. Jahrhundert zu liefern. Es war Simoni, der Anfang 1920 in Mailand bei einer Besprechung mit Puccini dessen Interesse auf Gozzis “Fiaba” lenkte und ihm schließlich die Version Schillers in einer Übersetzung von Andrea Maffei zugänglich machte. Puccini war sofort einverstanden. “Ich glaube, bei diesem Thema sollten wir bleiben”, schrieb er zurück. “Alles in allem glaube ich, dass *Turandot* das normalste und menschlichste aller Bühnenwerke Gozzis ist. Also dann *Turandot*, im modernen Sinne, dem Ihrigen, Adamis und meinem.” Die Dramatiker entwarfen ein Handlungsgerüst, das Puccini prinzipiell zusagte, in den nächsten vier Jahren aber noch drastischen Änderungen unterzogen werden sollte. Von besonderem Interesse ist in diesem Zusammenhang ein Brief, den Puccini im August 1920 an Simoni schrieb: “Haben Sie sich viel Gedanken über die neue Einführung

des Fräuleins gemacht? Ich bitte Sie, lassen Sie es nach Gottes Willen gelingen – will sagen, ausgezeichnet.” Offenbar war also die Sklavin Liù als Ersatz für die intrigente Prinzessin Adelma bei Gozzi ein Einfall Puccinis. Jedenfalls wäre dies typisch für den Mann, der dreißig Jahre zuvor auf einer “strahlenden Gestalt” bestanden hatte, um das Publikum mitfühlen zu lassen.

Das Wachstum und die allmähliche Transformation der Oper lässt sich in kurzen Zügen umreißen. Anfänglich bestand der 1. Akt aus zwei Szenen und endete mit der Beantwortung der Rätsel. Der 2. Akt drehte sich um die hektischen Bemühungen, die Identität Calafs in Erfahrung zu bringen, die ihm von den Ministern Turandots vorgehaltenen Versprechungen und die Folter Liùs; der 3. Akt brachte die endgültige Kapitulation der Prinzessin. Im September 1921 bestand Puccini darauf, die beiden letzten Akte zu einem zu verschmelzen – aber glücklicherweise dachte er schnell wieder um. Zum Jahreswechsel hatte man sich auf die endgültige Grundstruktur geeinigt, und der 1. Akt endete mit dem Ensemble, in dem Timur, Liù und die Minister vergeblich versuchen, den Prinzen von seinem Vorhaben abzubringen. Im März 1922 wurde der 2. Akt

um die Eröffnungsszene bereichert, eine Art Intermezzo (“una chitarrara”, laut Puccini), und im August folgte der Einschub von Turandots Arie “In questa reggia” (Within this palace), die allerdings erst im April 1923 komponiert wurde. Unterdessen hatte Puccini die folgenschwere Entscheidung getroffen, Liù in der Folterszene sterben zu lassen (ursprünglich war ihr noch ein kurzes Duett mit Turandot zu Beginn des 3. Akts zgedacht gewesen). Dies warf ein Problem auf, dessen Lösung ihm bis zum Ende versagt blieb. Die Transformation einer eiskalten, rachsüchtigen Furie, die ohne mit der Wimper zu zucken das Selbstopfer eines unschuldigen Menschen hinnimmt, zu einem warmen, liebevollen Wesen, war eine Schreckensaufgabe selbst für das größte musikalische Genie. In den nächsten beiden Jahren war Puccini unermüdlich in seinen Forderungen nach einem geeigneten Text für das Abschlussduett, und man hat argumentiert, dass es Puccini vielleicht beschieden gewesen wäre, die Oper zu seiner Zufriedenheit zu vollenden, wenn nur seine Librettisten ihre Aufgabe rechtzeitig erfüllt hätten. Aber diese These halte ich für unwahrscheinlich. In Anlehnung an Shakespeares Mark Antony könnte man eher sagen, dass Puccini sein Herz mit Liù im Sarg verlor.

In der Tat sorgt die junge Frau mit dem reinen Herzen, die aus Liebe in den Tod geht, für die Verknüpfung von *Turandot* mit den vorausgegangenen Werken Puccinis. Es gibt auch noch andere Bindeglieder, vor allem in musikalischer Hinsicht. Mit tieferem Einblick als der eingangs zitierte Della Corte bemerkte Giulio Cesare Paribene in *L'Ambrosiano*: „*Turandot* zeugt vom ganzen Leben ihres Schöpfers in der Musik, denn die Oper fasst alle Entwicklungsphasen eines Komponisten zusammen, der sich selbst stets treu blieb und dennoch nicht davor zurückschreckte, alle Entdeckungen unserer heutigen, rastlosen Zeit im Hinblick auf Form und Ausdruck zur Kenntnis zu nehmen.“ Mit anderen Worten beherrschte Puccini, ganz so wie Verdi, aber im Gegensatz zu seinen Kollegen der „giovane scuola“, das Geheimnis der Selbsterneuerung durch die Assimilation von Elementen der zeitgenössischen Avantgarde in sein eigenes, persönliches Idiom. Weniger häufig wird hervorgehoben, wie rasch dieses Idiom Gestalt annahm. Einfache, diatonische Melodien, von ungewöhnlich reich- und vielfältigen Harmonien unterstützt, finden sich bereits 1884 in seinem Frühwerk *Le villi*. Hier fällt auch schon ein Penchant für die „weiche Diskordanz“ auf, die Halbtonreibungen

vermeidet – nicht zur Erzielung gewollter Effekte, sondern nur im Rahmen der einfachen musikalischen Abhandlung. Dies sollte ihm mit der Zeit die pentatonische Harmonien (d.h. die schwarzen Noten) erschließen, die er dann mit großem Erfolg bei der japanischen und chinesischen Klangfärbung von *Madama Butterfly* und *Turandot* einsetzte – in beiden Fällen unter Anlehnung an authentische Volksmusik. Sein musikalisches Vokabular erfasste schließlich auch die weitaus schärferen Dissonanzen, die in seiner letzten Oper zum Ausdruck kommen, aber ihre Wurzeln lassen sich in eine frühere Zeit zurückverfolgen.

Eine der gewagtesten harmonischen Kombinationen ergibt sich in *Turandot* an der Stelle, wo die Geister der enthaupteten Freier auf den Stadtmauern ihren schemenhaften Auftritt haben, voller Sehnsucht nach dem Anblick ihrer Geliebten. Hier ist die Tonalität praktisch aufgehoben und mit ihr jegliches Bewegungsgefühl. Eine ähnliche, wenn auch schlichtere Passage erlebt man aber auch schon bei dem Chor hinter der Bühne, den Puccini 1905, dem Jahr von *Madama Butterfly*, bei der letzten Überarbeitung von *Edgar* einfügte. In der Originalfassung dieser Oper (1889) gibt

Puccini auch erstmals seine Vorliebe für eine Reihe von parallelen, oft nicht miteinander verwandten Akkorden zu erkennen, die ihn sein Leben lang begleiten sollte; mit der Zeit wurden diese Akkorde dann kunstvoller gearbeitet, nicht zuletzt unter dem Eindruck von Komponisten wie Debussy und Strawinsky. Ein weiteres bevorzugtes Mittel, das sich in Edgar andeutet, ist die hartnäckige Abwechslung zweier Akkorde zur Steigerung der dramatischen Spannung. Ein hervorragendes Beispiel hierfür ist das Finale im 1. Akt von *Tosca*, wo Scarpia seine niederträchtigen Absichten vor dem Hintergrund eines Te Deum enthüllt. Nirgendwo kommt dieses Mittel mächtiger zum Einsatz als in dem Ensemble zum Abschluss des 1. Akts von *Turandot*, wo es das emotionale Tauziehen zwischen Calaf und den Beistehenden auf perfekte Weise illustriert. In *Manon Lescaut*, *La bohème* und *La rondine* leitet Puccini die Eröffnungsszene jeweils mit zwei Kontrastthemen ein, das erste lebhaft und stark akzentuiert, das zweite lyrisch fließend. *Turandot* beginnt auf ähnliche Weise, doch erfahren hier nicht nur die beiden Themen eine innere Erweiterung, sondern es wird auch die harmonische Distanz zwischen ihnen unermesslich vergrößert. Die anfängliche

Orchestererklärung und die folgende Proklamation des Mandarin gehören der Nachkriegszeit an, während die Melodie, die unsere Aufmerksamkeit auf Liù und Timur lenkt, an den Puccini vor der Jahrhundertwende erinnert, mit ihrer Abwärtstendenz und der seit *Le villi* für den Komponisten so typischen Beendigung jeder Phrase durch eine fallende Quinte. Und doch stehen sich beide Ideen ohne den geringsten Widerspruch gegenüber. Nichts in der Partitur veranschaulicht prägnanter die Fähigkeit Puccinis, sowohl der alten als auch der neuen Zeit das Beste abzugewinnen. Ebenso wenig verliert er in der gewagten Modernität seines Schwanengesangs die Fähigkeit, eine Melodie von unvergänglicher Schönheit hervorzuzaubern: Man denke an „Nessun dorma“ (None shall sleep now).

Sicherlich trifft zu, dass solche Momente nach *Madama Butterfly* seltener werden. Doch wenn die zunehmende Komplexität in Puccinis Stil die orthodoxen Kritiker vor den Kopf stieß, so verhalf sie ihm unter den musikalischen Wegbereitern der Zeit zu hohem Ansehen. Nach einer Aufführung von *La fanciulla del West* schrieb Anton Webern seinem Lehrer Arnold Schönberg, die Partitur habe einen absolut neuartigen Klang.

Hervorragend! Keine Spur von Kitsch! Und er spreche aus eigener Erfahrung. Das Werk habe ihm ungemein gefallen. Dabei rannte Webern offene Türen ein. Für Schönberg war Puccini schlicht "ein großer Mann" – kein schlechter Tribut von dem Erfinder des Zwölftonsystems!

Ein letztes typisches Merkmal im Spätstil Puccinis ist noch zu erwähnen. Seit *Manon Lescaut* hatte er die Akte vor dem Hintergrund des Zusammenspiels wiederkehrender Motive durchorganisiert, oft weniger spezifisch ehrerbietig als bei dem von ihm so bewunderten Wagner. Nach *La fanciulla* bleiben diese Motive erhalten; aber es zeigt sich – besonders in *Il tabarro* – eine zunehmende Tendenz, sie in größere Blöcke von Kontrastmaterial zu integrieren, die mit *Turandot* ihren Höhepunkt erreicht. Vergeblich sucht man bei Verdi oder Rossini nach Präzedenzfällen. Dazu müsste man schon bis zu den Opern Monteverdis zurückgehen. Mit seinem letzten Bühnenwerk hat Puccini also nicht nur unter eine vierzig Jahre lange Schaffenszeit, sondern auch unter eine italienische Tradition, die drei Jahrhunderte weit zurückreicht, sein Siegel gesetzt.

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Handlung

COMPACT DISC ONE

1. Akt

Vor den Mauern der großen "violetten Stadt", der "Kaiserstadt". Die mächtige Befestigung schließt fast die gesamte Bühne halbkreisförmig ein.

[1] Dem Volk wird verkündet, die Prinzessin Turandot werde nur den Mann heiraten, der ihre drei Rätsel lösen könne. Wer die Probe nicht bestehe, verwerke sein Leben. Die Menge ruft nach dem Henker, um das jüngste Opfer Turandots, den Prinzen von Persien, bei Mondaufgang hinrichten zu lassen.

Im Gedränge verbirgt sich Timur, der vertriebene König der Tataren. Sein Sohn Calaf, der ebenfalls auf der Flucht ist, erkennt ihn nach Jahren der Trennung wieder [2] – [3] und erfährt, dass Timur der jungen Sklavin Liù, die ihn begleitet, sein Leben verdankt. Niemand kennt die Drei in Peking.

[4] – [5] Pu-Tin-Pao führt den Prinzen von Persien zur Hinrichtungsstätte. Nun ruft die Menge nach Turandot: Sie soll Gnade walten lassen. Die Prinzessin erscheint, ist aber unerbittlich. [6] Ihr Anblick schlägt Calaf sofort in Bann, und er beschließt, Turandot zu gewinnen.

[7] Die kaiserlichen Minister Ping, Pang und Pong versuchen, ihn umzustimmen.

[8] – [9] Die Kammerfrauen Turandots bitten um Ruhe, doch die Schatten der hingerichteten Freier spornen Calaf an. Nichts, weder der Anblick von Pu-Tin-Pao, der mit dem Haupt des Prinzen von Persien zurückkehrt, [10] – [12] noch das Flehen Liùs, kann ihn von seinem Vorhaben abbringen. Calaf schlägt gegen den Gong, um sich im Palast anzumelden.

2. Akt

1. Szene

[13] Ping, Pang und Pong erörtern die Vorbereitungen für das, was entweder eine Hochzeit oder eine Beerdigung werden wird. Sie erinnern sich an all die Prinzen, die für Turandot gestorben sind, [14] – [15] und sehnen sich nach einem Ruhestand auf dem Lande, der ihnen durch ihre traurigen Pflichten versagt bleibt. Trompeten verkünden den Beginn der Rätselprobe Calafs.

2. Szene

[16] Der Hof versammelt sich, um dem Drama um Turandot und ihren neuen Freier beizuwohnen. [17] – [18] Vergeblich appelliert der Kaiser, Turandots Vater, an den

unbekannten Prinzen, sein Vorhaben aufzugeben. [19] Turandot beginnt mit einer Erläuterung ihrer Motive: Eine Vorfahrin, die Prinzessin Lo-u-Ling, wurde von tatarischen Eindringlingen geschändet und in den Tod getrieben. Dieses Schicksal will Turandot sühnen. [20] Sie warnt Calaf, er werde drei Rätsel lösen müssen, und schon eine falsche Antwort bringe den Tod. Calaf erwidert, er werde alle drei lösen.

[21] Turandot stellt die erste Frage: Welches Phantom, das ein jeder fassen möchte, wird jede Nacht geboren, um jeden Tag zu sterben? Calaf weiß die Antwort: die Hoffnung. Was lodert wie eine Flamme, ohne Flamme zu sein, erkalte mit dem Zugrundegehen, glüht auf beim Traum vom Sieg? Dass Calaf mit "Blut" auch auf die zweite Frage die richtige Antwort gibt, versetzt Turandot in Wut, und sie stellt ihm das letzte Rätsel: Eis, das Dich entzündet und durch Dein Feuer noch mehr erstarrt. Wenn es Dich frei will, vertieft es Deine Knechtschaft, aber wenn es Dich zum Knecht nimmt, wirst Du König. Wovon spricht sie? Calaf erwidert: Turandot.

[22] Der Kaiser besteht darauf, dass seine Tochter ihr Versprechen einhält und den Freier heiratet, der ihre Rätsel gelöst hat. [23] Doch Calaf will keine Gewalt, sondern ihre Liebe,

und so stellt er sie vor ein Rätsel: Wenn sie zum Morgengrauen seinen Namen nennen kann, will er sterben. Der Kaiser betet für seinen Erfolg.

COMPACT DISC TWO

3. Akt

1. Szene

[1] – [2] Während Calaf im Palastgarten den Morgen erwartet, durchstreifen die Ausrufer des Kaisers die Stadt. Alle müssen versuchen, den Namen des Prinzen zu erfahren. Doch er weiß: Bei Tagesanbruch wird er gewinnen.

[3] Ping, Pang und Pong versprechen ihm erst den Himmel auf Erden, wenn er von der Prinzessin ablasse, dann drohen sie ihm mit Folter. Plötzlich werden Timur und Liù von den Wachen herbeigeführt. [4] Um den alten Mann zu schützen, behauptet die Sklavin vor Turandot, sie allein kenne den Namen des Unbekannten, werde ihn aber selbst unter der Folter nicht verraten. [5] Die Liebe mache sie stark. Turandot ist einen Moment lang gerührt, bevor sie die Minister anweist, Liù das Geheimnis zu entreißen. [6] Doch Liù gelingt es, sich selbst zu töten. [7] Timur verflucht die Menschen, die ihren Tod herbeigeführt haben.

[8] Calaf konfrontiert nun Turandot, reißt ihr den Schleier vom Gesicht und küsst sie.

[9] Sie kann sich mit ihrer Eroberung nicht abfinden; Calaf erklärt, dies sei erst der Beginn ihrer Liebe. [10] Turandot bittet ihn zu gehen und sein Geheimnis mit sich zu nehmen. Doch nun verrät er sich selbst – er ist Calaf, der Sohn Timurs. Turandot ist berauscht von dem Gefühl, ihn in ihrer Macht zu haben.

2. Szene

[11] Vor dem Hof verkündet Turandot, sie kenne den Namen des Unbekannten. Sein Name sei Gemahl.

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Übersetzung: Andreas Klatt

Jane Eaglen genießt in der heutigen Opernwelt ein fast unvergleichliches Renommee. Geboren im englischen Lincoln, studierte sie am Royal Northern College of Music, wo sie von einem Stipendium der Peter Moores Foundation unterstützt wurde, und sang dann an der English National Opera. Einzigartige Erfolge erzielte sie in den gegensätzlichen Rollen der Norma und der Brünnhilde – ihr dramatischer Sopran ist zu solch großen Leistungen fähig, dass sie sich

weltweit spektakuläres Lob errungen hat. Ebenso hervorragende Kritiken bekam sie für ihre Auftritte als Brünnhilde (im *Siegfried*) an der Lyric Opera of Chicago und dann für ihren kompletten *Ring* am gleichen Haus sowie mit Riccardo Muti an der Mailänder Scala, in San Francisco und in Wien. Zuvor hatte sie die Brünnhilde schon an der Opera Pacific und der Scottish Opera gegeben. Ihrem Erfolg als Norma an der Scottish Opera (in einer von der Peter Moores Foundation unterstützten Produktion) folgten von der Kritik gelobte Darbietungen bei den Festspielen von Ravenna mit Muti, an der Seattle Opera, der Los Angeles Opera, an der Opéra Bastille in Paris und der Scottish Opera.

Zu ihren weiteren unvergesslichen Opernauftritten gehören die Isolde in Seattle, die sie jüngst erneut an der Metropolitan Opera und der Lyric Opera of Chicago sang (und dafür großartige Rezensionen bekam), ihr Debüt in der Rolle der Gioconda an der Lyric Opera of Chicago, Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*) an der Metropolitan Opera – die sie zuvor schon an der Wiener Staatsoper sowie in Los Angeles, München und Bologna gegeben hatte –, die Titelrolle in *Turandot* am Royal Opera House Covent Garden, an der

Metropolitan Opera (mit Pavarotti), in Wien, Madrid, Seattle, Bologna und an der Opéra Bastille, Amelia (*Un ballo in maschera*) in Bologna und an der Opéra Bastille, die Titelrolle in *Tosca* an der English National Opera, am Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires und als konzertante Aufführung mit dem Cleveland Symphony Orchestra, außerdem die Titelrolle der *Ariadne auf Naxos* für die English National Opera.

Jane Eaglen ist ebenso auf dem Konzertpodium zuhause, und zu ihren Engagements zählen Verdis Requiem mit Simon Rattle und dem City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Mahlers Achte Sinfonie mit Klaus Tennstedt, der dritte Akt der *Götterdämmerung* mit Bernard Haitink und dem Boston Symphony Orchestra, *Nabucco* in Ravenna mit Riccardo Muti, die *Gurrelieder* mit Claudio Abbado bei den Festspielen von Salzburg und Edinburgh, *Norma* in einer konzertanten Aufführung beim Kopenhagener Tivoli Festival und in der Carnegie Hall sowie Strauss' *Vier letzte Lieder* mit Daniel Barenboim und dem Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Jane Eaglens Aufnahmen auf Tonträger umfassen eine CD mit Arien von Wagner und Bellini, eine weitere mit Arien von Strauss und

Mozart, Mahlers Achte Sinfonie, Beethovens Neunte, Bruckners Messe, *Norma*, *Medea in Corinto* für Opera Rara, und für Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation die preisgekrönte *Tosca* und *Aida*. Sie ist außerdem auf dem Soundtrack der Filmfassung von Jane Austens *Sense and Sensibility* zu hören.

In Wales als Sohn irischer und walisischer Eltern geboren, gehört **Dennis O'Neill** heute als Spezialist für die Werke Verdis zu den führenden Tenören der Welt. Er kann auf eine lange Verbindung zum Royal Opera House Covent Garden zurückblicken, und dort gehörten zu seinen zahlreichen Rollen u.a. Rodolfo (*La Bohème*), der Herzog (*Rigoletto*), Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*), Edgardo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Macduff (*Macbeth*), Gustavo (*Un ballo in maschera*), Foresto (*Attila*), Otello, Don Carlos, Radames (*Aida*), Aroldo (im Konzert), Carlo (*Giovanna d'Arco*) und Jacopo (*I due Foscari*).

Für die Metropolitan Opera hat er Alfredo (*La traviata*), Radames (*Aida*), Turiddu (*Cavalleria rusticana*) und Canio (*Pagliacci*) gesungen. Des Weiteren ist er in Amerika an der Lyric Opera of Chicago, in San Francisco, San Diego, an der Vancouver Opera und im

Konzert mit den Sinfonieorchestern von Philadelphia, Cleveland, Montreal und Ottawa aufgetreten, außerdem beim Cincinnati Festival. Als häufiger Gast an der Bayerischen Staatsoper sang er in München nach seinem Debüt in *Un ballo in maschera* in einer Neuinszenierung von *Il trovatore* sowie im *Rosenkavalier*, in *Tosca*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Aida*, ferner die Titelrolle des *Otello*. Zudem hat er an den Opernhäusern von Wien, Berlin, Bonn, Köln, Hamburg, München, Nizza, Zürich, Paris, Oslo, Brüssel, Barcelona, Lissabon, Oviedo, in der Arena di Verona und in Turin sowie an der English National Opera gastiert. Daneben pflegt er eine enge Beziehung zur Welsh National Opera.

Denis O'Neill ist auch als Konzertsänger gefragt und hat in ganz Europa gesungen. Seine eigene Fernsehserien für die BBC waren außerordentlich populär, und er hat seither einen Fernsehfilm über Caruso fertig gestellt. Seine Aufnahmen für Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation umfassen *Aida*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *Tosca*, *La bohème*, *Il trovatore* sowie eine CD mit Großen Opernarien. Dennis O'Neill wurde zu Neujahr 2000 mit dem Orden *Commander of the British Empire* ausgezeichnet.

Nicolai Gedda ist international als einer der größten Künstler unserer Zeit anerkannt und wurde für seine Beherrschung eines Repertoires gefeiert, das nahezu jeden Stil und jede Epoche in Oper, Oratorium, Operette, Lied und Orchesterwerk umfaßt.

Der in Stockholm gebürtige Sohn eines russischen Bassisten und einer schwedischen Mutter feierte sein Debut 1952 an der Königlichen Oper Stockholm in *Le Postillon de Longjumeau*. Im Publikum befand sich damals Herbert von Karajan, der ihn umgehend für seine Aufnahme von Bachs H-Moll-Messe engagierte. Somit kann Nicolai Gedda 2002 auf fünfzig Jahre Aufnahmetätigkeit zurückblicken. 1953 hatte er sein Debut an der Mailänder Scala, gefolgt 1954 von ersten Auftritten an der Pariser Oper und 1957 an der Metropolitan Opera (in der Titelrolle von Gounods *Faust*). Seit seinem Debut an der Royal Opera 1965 (als Herzog von Mantua in Verdis *Rigoletto*) hat er dort Benvenuto Cellini, Alfredo, Gustavus III in *Un ballo in maschera*, Nemorino und Lensky gesungen. An der Metropolitan Opera schuf er führende Rollen in Barbers *Vanessa* und Menottis *The Last Savage*.

Seine Operntriumphe erstrecken sich von den Werken Haydns und Mozarts bis hin zu Stravinsky, Orff, Barber und Menotti, und in

Recitals wird er als herausragender Lied-Interpret geschätzt. Außerdem zeichnet er sich dadurch aus, mit 200 Einspielungen der meistaufgenommene Tenor zu sein. Hierzu zählen vollständige Opernaufführungen von *The Abduction from the Seraglio* (für Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation), *Wilhelm Tell*, *La Bohème*, *Faust*, *Werther*, *Manon*, *Così fan tutte* und *Benvenuto Cellini*.

Mary Plazas studierte bei Ava June am Royal Northern College of Music, wo sie von der Peter Moores Foundation und dem Countess of Munster Musical Trust unterstützt wurde. Ihr Operndebüt gab sie 1992 als Stimme vom Himmel (*Don Carlos*) an der English National Opera, wo sie derzeit Hauptsängerin ist. Zu ihren Rollen gehörten Mimì, Leila, Adina, Nannetta, Micaëla, Marzelline (Fidelio), Lauretta, Oscar, Dorabella und die Titelrolle in *Das schlaue Fuchslein* (English National Opera); Mimì, Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Tebaldo (*Don Carlos*) und Elisetta (*Il matrimonio segreto*) an der Opera North; Donna Elvira (Glyndebourne Touring Opera); Anne Trulove (New Israeli Opera und Opera Factory) sowie Echo (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) und Madame Silberklang (*Der Schauspieldirektor*) an der Garsington Opera.

1996 debütierte sie bei den BBC Promenade Concerts mit der Royal Opera als Stimme vom Himmel, und 1997 trat sie an der Royal Opera in Covent Garden und an der Metropolitan Opera, New York in Pfitzners *Palestrina* auf. Sie schuf die Rolle der Tina in Jonathan Doves *Flight* für die Glyndebourne Touring Opera und sang sie dann auch an der Glyndebourne Festival Opera. Sie sang die Duchess in *Powder her Face* von Thomas Adès mit der Almeida Opera, beim Aldeburgh Festival und in einer Fernsehaufnahme für Channel 4. Im Sommer 2001 debütierte sie bei den Bregenzer Festspielen als Mimì, die sie auch 2002 wieder singen sollte.

Mary Plazas hat zahlreiche Recitals und Konzerte gegeben, darunter Solorecitals in der Wigmore Hall, im Purcell Room und im Karajan-Zentrum in Wien. Außerdem ist sie bei den Festspielen von Cheltenham, Aldeburgh und Chester aufgetreten. Im konzertanten Rahmen hat sie Haydns *Schöpfung*, Tippetts *A Child of our Time*, Mahlers Sinfonie Nr. 8, Mozarts *Requiem*, Ein deutsches *Requiem* von Brahms, die Sinfonie Nr. 14 von Schostakowitsch, Beethovens Neunte und *The Promised Land* von Saint-Saëns gesungen.

Ihre Schallplattenaufnahmen umfassen Mercadantes *Emma d'Antiochia* und Pacinis

Maria Regina d'Inghilterra (beide für Opera Rara), *Dido and Aeneas* für Chandos, *L'Enfant et les sortilèges* und, für Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation, Marguerite in *Faust*, Adina, Zerlina und Micaela.

Clive Bayley war Stipendiat der Peter Moores Foundation am Royal Northern College of Music und singt heute regelmäßig mit den großen Opernensembles. Sein Repertoire reicht von Monteverdi über Verdi, Puccini, Berg und Britten bis zu Birtwistle. Er debütierte an der Royal Opera Covent Garden in der Uraufführung von Harrison Birtwistles *Gawain* und trat später als Colline in *La bohème*, Hans Foltz in *Die Meistersinger* und Castro in *La fanciulla del West* auf. Beachtliche Erfolge verzeichnete er mit der Opera North in Verdis *Jerusalem*, als Sparafucile (*Rigoletto*), Mönch (*Don Carlos*), Raleigh (*Gloriana*), Referee in Benedict Masons *Playing Away*, Ferrando (*Il trovatore*), Arkel (*Pelléas et Mélisande*), Wurm (*Luisa Miller*), in der Titelrolle von *Le nozze di Figaro* und als Doktor (*Wozzeck*); mit der Opera Factory in *Don Giovanni*; mit der English National Opera in *Billy Budd*, *Wozzeck*, als Cadmus (*Semele*), die vier dämonischen Gegenspieler (*The Tales of Hoffmann*), Ferrando

(*Il trovatore*), Collatinus (*The Rape of Lucretia*) und Pistol (*Falstaff*). Im Ausland ist Clive Bayley an der Nederlandse Opera und der Seattle Opera sowie in Lissabon und Lausanne aufgetreten. Zu seinen weiteren Verpflichtungen zählten Fischer in Kurt Weills *Royal Palace* bei den BBC Promenade Concerts sowie Auftritte an der Glyndebourne Festival Opera und mit der Glyndebourne Touring Opera.

Für Chandos hat er *Troilus and Cressida* und *Billy Budd* und für Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation *Falstaff*, *Madam Butterfly*, *Don Giovanni*, *Boris Godunov* (Auswahl), *Don Pasquale* und *Il trovatore* aufgenommen.

Peter Sidhom, in Ägypten als Sohn einer maltekisch-italienischen Mutter und eines ägyptischen Vaters geboren, übersiedelte mit zehn Jahren nach England. Er studierte zunächst neuere Sprachen an der London University, bevor er sein Gesangsstudium bei Hervey Alan und Josephine Veasey aufnahm.

Peter Sidhom ist an führenden Opernbühnen der Welt aufgetreten: Royal Opera Covent Garden (Schaunard in *La bohème*, Monterone in *Rigoletto*, Capulet in *Roméo et Juliette*, Paolo in *Simon Boccanegra*, Donner in *Das Rheingold*); Opéra Bastille,

Paris; La Monnaie, Brüssel (*Il tabarro*, *Gianni Schicci*); Teatro Comunale, Florenz (*Der Züwerg*); San Francisco Opera (*Ring des Nibelungen*); Glyndebourne Festival (*Simon Boccanegra*); Théâtre du Capitole, Toulouse (*La bohème* und *Lohengrin*); Staatstheater Stuttgart (*Tosca*); Teatro Real de Madrid (*Der Rosenkavalier*); Teatro La Fenice (*Billy Budd*). Er hat Haupt- und Titelrollen an der Welsh National Opera, English National Opera, Opera North und Scottish Opera gesungen.

Seine ebenso erfolgreichen Konzertauftritte haben ihn an alle wichtigen Veranstaltungsorte in England geführt. Zu den zahlreichen Dirigenten, mit denen er zusammengearbeitet hat, gehören Richard Armstrong, David Atherton, Martyn Brabbins, James Conlon, Paul Daniel, Andrew Davis, Christoph von Dohnányi, Mark Elder, Bernard Haitink, Richard Hickox, Oliver Knussen, Sir Charles Mackerras, Antonio Pappano, Carlo Rizzi und Edo de Waart. Seine Schallplattenaufnahmen umfassen *La traviata* und *Rigoletto*, Pascoe in Ethel Smyths *The Wreckers* sowie *Carmina Burana*.

Mark Le Brocq war Chorstipendiat am St. Catharines College in Cambridge, wo er Anglistik studierte. Mit einem Entrance-

Stipendium ging er an die Royal Academy of Music, um bei Kenneth Bowen zu studieren, bevor er seine Ausbildung am National Opera Studio fortsetzte.

Als Hauptsänger an der English National Opera sang er u.a. Tamino (*The Magic Flute*), Paris (*King Priam*), Count Almaviva (*The Barber of Seville*), Narraboth (*Salome*), Don Ottavio, Monostatos, Rodriguez (Massenets *Don Quixote*), Odoardo (*Ariodante*), Doctor Maxwell in *The Silver Tassie* und Siward in *A Better Place*. Außerdem gastierte er an der Opera Northern Ireland, Garsington Opera und bei den Festspielen von Aix-en-Provence.

Mark Le Brocq ist mit Recitals und als Oratoriumssolist in den USA, Frankreich, Deutschland, Spanien und Nahost sowie in allen namhaften Konzertsälen Londons aufgetreten. Mit dem Gabrieli Consort unter der Leitung von Paul McCreesh hat man ihn bei Festspielen in ganz Europa erlebt. Zu seinen Konzertverpflichtungen gehörten u.a. die *Requiems* von Mozart und Verdi, Beethovens Messe C-Dur und *Chorfantasie*, *Messiah* und *La resurrezione*. Seine Diskografie umfasst *Il trovatore* für Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation, *Samson*, *Judas Maccabaeus*, Purcells *Hail Bright Cecilia*, Händels *Utrecht Te Deum* und Boyces *I Was Glad*.

Peter Wedd studierte an der Guildhall School of Music and Drama bei William McAlpine und am National Opera Studio, wo er von der Peter Moores Foundation unterstützt wurde. Zu seinen Opernauftritten gehörten Cascada (*Die lustige Witwe*) an der Royal Opera Covent Garden, Federico (*L'Arlesiana*) und Pluto (*Orphée aux enfers*) an der Opera Holland Park und Don José (*Carmen*) an der Welsh National Opera. In der Spielzeit 1999/2000 trat er als Haupttenor der Royal Opera Covent Garden bei.

Sein breit gefächertes Konzertrepertoire reicht von *Messiah* und Pergolesis *Magnificat* bis zur *Glagolitischen Messe* und Britzens *Serenade for Tenor, Horn und Strings*. Für Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation hat er Verdis *Ernani* aufgenommen.

Simon Bailey war Stipendiat der Peter Moores Foundation am Royal Northern College of Music, und er studierte am Clare College in Cambridge, wo er Chorstipendiat war. Nach seinem Abschluss wurde er sofort an die Akademie der Mailänder Scala aufgenommen.

An der Scala hat er u.a. Schaunard (*La bohème*), Kerkermeister (*Dialogues des Carmelites*), Erster Handwerksbursche (*Wozzeck*), Lakai (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) und Hobson (*Peter Grimes*) gesungen, unter der

Leitung von Dirigenten wie James Conlon, Riccardo Muti, Jeffrey Tate und Giuseppe Sinopoli. Außerdem hat er Rollen in *Turandot* und Verdis *Un giorno di regno* gesungen.

Simon Bailey sang vor kurzem in der Welturaufführung von Coghis *Tatjana* unter der Leitung von Peter Stein an der Scala und in seiner ersten wichtigen Inszenierung von *Le nozze di Figaro* an der Opéra de Rouen. An der Oper Frankfurt wird er u.a. Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*) und Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*) singen.

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

Mitchell Choir an zahlreichen Aufnahmen der hervorragend kritisierten Reihe Opera in English unter der Schirmherrschaft der Peter Moores Foundation teilgenommen.

Der **New London Children's Choir** wurde 1991 von seinem musikalischen Leiter Ronald Corp gegründet, um Kindern die Herausforderungen und die Freuden des Singens und der Darbietung von Musik in jeder Form zu vermitteln. Dies führte zu Auftritten in allen wichtigen Konzertsälen Londons, der Zusammenarbeit mit den besten Sinfonieorchestern und Dirigenten Großbritanniens sowie Opernensembles im In- und Ausland, zahlreichen Schallplatten-aufnahmen und Rundfunkkonzerten sowie Einladungen zu vielen wichtigen Festivals.

Die umfangreiche Diskografie des Chors umfasst Tchaikowskis *Nussknacker*, Schostakowitschs *Lied von den Wäldern*, Prokofjews *Iwan der Schreckliche*, Rutland Boughtons *Bethlehem* und *Hugh the Drover* von Vaughan Williams, Mahlers Sinfonie Nr. 3, *Die Planeten* von Holst und Britzens *St. Nicolas* und *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Außerdem hat der Chor Filmmusik aufgenommen und über dreißig neue Werke zur Aufführung gebracht.

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

Das Orchester hat mehrere bedeutende Preise gewonnen und mit seiner Vitalität und seinem einzigartig warmen Klang den Beifall der Kritik gefunden. Außerdem wurde es für seine innovative Programmgestaltung gepriesen, in deren Kern die Zielsetzung steht, neue Stücke der weltweit führenden lebenden Komponisten, zum Beispiel seines derzeitigen

Gastkomponisten James MacMillan, zu spielen und in Auftrag zu geben.

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

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*-Tournee 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 neun Programmen mit Opernarien geleitet (mit Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny, John Tomlinson, Andrew Shore und Della Jones), außerdem *Lucia of Lammermoor*, *Aida*, *Don Giovanni*, *Ernani*, *Faust*, *Don Pasquale*, *The Elixir of Love*, *La bohème*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *Il trovatore*, die preisgekrönte *Tosca* und Highlights aus dem *Rosenkavalier*, jeweils in Zusammenarbeit mit der Peter Moores Foundation.

Turandot – Ancien et nouveau

“Un opéra vraiment innovateur pour Puccini” – telle fut l’appréciation d’Andrea Della Corte, critique du journal turinois *La Stampa*, lors de la création de *Turandot* en 1926 à La Scala de Milan. Cette opinion fut répercutée dans les cercles musicaux à travers le monde, et tout particulièrement en Grande-Bretagne où la renommée de son compositeur (ou sa notoriété, comme c’était souvent le cas) reposait sur *La bohème*, *Tosca* et *Madama Butterfly*. Comme Verdi, Puccini avait toujours eu le souci d’innover; de là son habituelle propension à aborder des sujets très divers pour les abandonner aussitôt qu’il se trouvait incapable de les réduire en ses propres termes. La gestation de *Turandot* fut un processus particulièrement long et tourmenté au cours duquel le compositeur était très tenté d’abandonner le projet et en arriva même, comme il le dit à sa confidente anglaise Sybil Seligman, à adapter la musique déjà composée à une nouvelle intrigue imaginée par Giovacchino Forzano (auteur de *Suor Angelica* et *Gianni Schicchi*) baignant dans une même ambiance chinoise. Ses difficultés furent aggravées par les prétentions littéraires de ses

librettistes, Renato Simoni et Giuseppe Adami, tous deux des dramaturges de peu de talent nullement préparés à répondre à la demande de l’opéra conventionnel à la manière de leurs prédécesseurs du dix-neuvième siècle tels Piave ou Ghislanzoni. C’est Simoni qui le premier avança l’idée de la “fable” de Gozzi lors d’une réunion avec Puccini à Milan au début de 1920, et il remit au compositeur une copie de la traduction d’Andrea Maffei de l’adaptation qu’en avait faite Schiller. Puccini mordit aussitôt. “Je crois que nous devrions nous en tenir à ce sujet” lui répondit-il par courrier. “Dans l’ensemble, je pense que *Turandot* est la plus normale et humaine de toutes les œuvres théâtrales de Gozzi. Ce sera donc *Turandot*, dans une conception moderne, la vôtre, celle d’Adami et la mienne.” Les poètes établirent un plan en temps voulu qui plut à Puccini dans les grandes lignes, mais il allait subir des modifications drastiques au cours des quatre années qui suivirent. Une lettre de Puccini à Simoni écrite en août 1920 est d’un intérêt tout particulier ici: “Avez-vous bien réfléchi à la nouvelle présentation de la petite femme? Je vous en supplie, faites en sorte que ce soit un

succès, comme Dieu le veut – c’est-à-dire excellent.” Ce serait donc Puccini qui aurait eu l’idée de substituer la jeune esclave Liù à l’intrigante princesse Adelma. Et cela semble en effet caractéristique de quelqu’un qui trente ans auparavant avait insisté sur la nécessité d’une “figure lumineuse” avec laquelle le public pouvait sympathiser.

Le développement de l’opéra et sa graduelle transformation peuvent être esquissés en quelques mots. À l’origine l’Acte I comprenait deux scènes dont la seconde se terminait par la résolution des énigmes. L’Acte II évoquait la recherche frénétique de l’identité de Calaf, les pots-de-vin que lui offraient les ministres de Turandot et la torture de Liù; l’Acte III, la capitulation finale de la princesse. En septembre 1921, Puccini demandait que les deux derniers actes soient fondus en un seul – pas pour longtemps heureusement. Au Nouvel An, la distribution actuelle était adoptée, l’Acte I se terminant par l’ensemble dans lequel Timur, Liù et les ministres tentent en vain de dissuader le prince de s’engager dans l’entreprise envisagée. En mars 1922, la scène introductive de l’Acte II, conçue comme une sorte d’intermezzo (“una chitarrara”, comme l’appelait Puccini) fut ajoutée, puis en août fut inséré le “In questa reggia” (Within this Palace)

de Turandot, qui ne fut toutefois composé qu’en avril 1923. Entre temps, Puccini avait pris la décision fatidique de faire mourir Liù pendant qu’on la torturait (dans le plan original, elle chantait un bref duo avec *Turandot* au début de l’Acte III). Il créait ainsi un problème dont la solution allait lui échapper jusqu’à la fin. Convertir en un être humain chaleureux et aimant une Furie vindicative et de marbre qui, sans sourciller, a regardé une innocente victime faire le sacrifice de sa personne est une tâche qui aurait découragé le plus grand génie musical. Pendant les deux années qui suivirent, Puccini demanda inlassablement que lui soit fourni un texte approprié pour ce duo final; et certains pensent qu’il aurait suffi que ses librettistes le lui remettent à temps pour qu’il termine l’opéra comme il l’entendait. Mais cela me semble improbable. Pour évoquer un peu mal à propos Marc-Antoine dans Shakespeare, son cœur était enseveli, là, avec Liù.

En effet, la jeune fille au cœur pur qui meurt d’amour est à juste titre considérée comme le lien de *Turandot* avec ses prédécesseurs selon les critères de Puccini. Mais ce n’est nullement le seul, et certainement pas sur le plan musical. Plus perspicace que Della Corte, Giulio Cesare

Paribene de *L'Ambrosiano* fit remarquer que “*Turandot* témoigne de l’ensemble de la vie musicale de son auteur, en ce sens qu’il résume toutes les phases de l’évolution d’un compositeur qui, tout en restant fidèle à lui-même, ne dédaigne pas de tenir compte des découvertes de l’époque actuelle, très tumultueuse, en matière de forme et d’expression.” En d’autres termes, Puccini comme Verdi, et contrairement à ses confrères de la “*giovane scuola*”, détenait le secret de sa propre régénération par l’assimilation dans son idiome personnel d’éléments de l’avant-garde de son temps. Le fait que ce langage ait pris forme précocement est moins souvent souligné. On trouve des mélodies simples, diatoniques que supportent des harmonies exceptionnellement riches et variées dès 1884 dans son opéra de jeunesse *Le villi*. Ici aussi, on remarque une inclination pour ce qu’on pourrait appeler la “douce discordance” dans laquelle le choc des demi-tons est évité, n’étant pas utilisé pour créer un effet particulier, mais uniquement comme élément d’un discours musical franc et direct. Le moment venu, ceci allait mettre à sa disposition une palette harmonique pentatonique (c’est-à-dire les clefs noires) d’une grande utilité pour restituer les coloris japonais de *Madam Butterfly* et la “chinoiserie” de

Turandot, pour lesquels Puccini puisa à la source des mélodies folkloriques authentiques. Finalement son vocabulaire allait s’étendre jusqu’à intégrer les dissonances beaucoup plus marquées de son dernier opéra; mais leurs racines se retrouvent généralement dans une époque antérieure.

L’une des combinaisons harmoniques les plus audacieuses dans *Turandot* apparaît au moment où les fantômes des prétendants décapités de la princesse font leur sombre apparition sur les remparts dans l’espoir d’apercevoir une fois encore leur bien-aimée. Ici, la tonalité est comme suspendue, et avec elle toute impression de mouvement. Mais un passage similaire, conçu de manière plus limpide, se retrouve dans le cœur des noces épuisés qui chantent en coulisse, que Puccini ajouta dans la révision d’*Edgar* faite en 1905, l’année de *Madama Butterfly*. Dans la version originale de ce même opéra (1889), Puccini dévoile sa prédilection pour les successions d’accords parallèles, souvent sans lien aucun, qui fut présente tout au long de sa carrière. Mais avec le temps, ces accords se sont faits plus élaborés, partiellement sous l’influence de compositeurs tels Debussy et Stravinski. Un autre procédé qu’affectionne Puccini, annoncé aussi dans *Edgar*, est l’alternance constante de

deux accords pour accroître la tension dramatique. Un exemple exceptionnel est le finale de l’Acte I de *Tosca* où Scarpia dévoile ses intentions infâmes avec en toile de fond un *Te Deum* chanté par l’assemblée des fidèles. Ce procédé n’a nulle part un impact aussi puissant que dans l’ensemble qui conclut le premier acte de *Turandot* où il traduit à la perfection le conflit émotionnel acharné entre Calaf et son entourage. Dans *Manon Lescaut*, *La bohème* et *La rondine*, Puccini lance la scène introductive avec deux thèmes contrastés, le premier animé et très rythmé, le second, d’un lyrisme fluide. *Turandot* commence d’une manière très similaire, mais ici outre le fait que les deux idées sont intrinsèquement développées, la distance harmonique entre elles a été démesurément augmentée. L’envolée orchestrale initiale suivie de la proclamation du Mandarin appartiennent à l’époque de l’après-guerre tandis que la mélodie qui nous invite à porter le regard sur Liù et Timur se rattache au Puccini des années 1890 avec sa ligne qui fléchit, chaque phrase portant pour terminer le sceau stylistique du compositeur, manifeste depuis *Le villi*, soit la quinte descendante. Les deux idées, toutefois, sont juxtaposées sans que perce la moindre incongruité. Rien dans la partition n’illustre aussi succinctement l’aptitude de Puccini à tirer

le meilleur parti des deux mondes, l’ancien et le nouveau. Et en dépit des nombreux et audacieux modernismes de son chant du cygne, il n’a pas perdu non plus son habileté à faire apparaître comme par magie une mélodie au succès durable: “*Nessun dorma*” (None shall sleep now) en est le témoin.

Pareils moments deviennent de plus en plus rares, il est vrai, après *Madam Butterfly*. Mais si par la complexité croissante de son style, Puccini s’aliénait une grande partie de son auditoire habituel, il rehaussait son prestige auprès des pionniers de la musique du moment. Après avoir entendu une exécution de *La fanciulla del West*, Anton Webern écrivit à son maître Arnold Schoenberg: “Ceci est une partition dont toute la sonorité est d’une originalité absolue. Magnifique! Pas trace de kitsch! Et mon opinion est de première main. Je dois dire que cela m’a plu énormément.” Il prêchait un converti. Pour Schoenberg, Puccini était tout simplement “un grand homme” – un hommage non négligeable de la part de l’inventeur de la musique dodécaphonique!

Il reste à mentionner une autre caractéristique du style tardif de Puccini. Commenant dans *Manon Lescaut*, il avait organisé ses actes autour d’une interaction sous-jacente de motifs récurrents, aux

références souvent moins spécifiques que celles de Wagner qu'il admirait tant. Dans les œuvres qui suivirent *La fanciulla*, ces motifs sont toujours présents, mais on remarque une tendance de plus en plus nette, particulièrement manifeste dans *Il tabarro* et qui culmine dans *Turandot*, à les subsumer en large blocs de matériau contrasté. C'est en vain que l'on chercherait un quelconque précédent chez Verdi ou Rossini. Pour trouver un procédé tant soit peu similaire, il faut retourner aux opéras de Monteverdi. On peu donc prétendre qu'avec cette dernière œuvre scénique, Puccini a marqué de son sceau une carrière de quarante ans, mais aussi une tradition italienne de trois siècles.

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Synopsis

COMPACT DISC ONE

Acte I

Les murs de la grande cité violette: la cité impériale. Les remparts massifs entourent presque toute la scène, en hémicycle.

[1] La foule écoute un décret édictant que seul le prince qui résoudra les trois énigmes que

proposera la princesse Turandot pourra l'épouser. Quiconque se présentera à l'épreuve et échouera sera exécuté. La foule réclame le bourreau et exige la mort de la dernière victime de Turandot, le prince de Perse, au lever de la lune.

Timur, roi des Tartares en exil, est parmi la foule. Son fils Calaf qui a aussi été condamné à l'exil le reconnaît après des années de séparation [2] – [3] et apprend que Timur doit sa vie à une jeune esclave, Liù, qui l'accompagne. Ils sont tous inconnus à Pékin.

[4] – [5] Pu-Tin-Pao mène le prince de Perse au supplice. La foule implore Turandot d'apparaître et de le gracier, mais elle refuse. [6] Calaf est tellement bouleversé par cette première vision de la princesse qu'il se résout à tenter sa chance en essayant de répondre aux énigmes de Turandot.

[7] Les fonctionnaires impériaux, Ping, Pang et Pong essayent de l'en dissuader. [8] – [9] Les servantes de Turandot demandent le silence, mais les fantômes de ses anciens soupirants incitent Calaf à affronter l'épreuve. Rien, ni le spectacle de Pu-Tin-Pao qui réapparaît avec la tête du prince de Perse, [10] – [12] ni les supplications de Liù ne peuvent le dissuader. Calaf frappe le gong qui annonce son défi.

Acte II

Première scène

[13] Ping, Pang et Pong discutent des préparatifs de ce qui sera ou noces ou funérailles. Ils comparent leurs souvenirs des princes qui sont morts pour Turandot [14] – [15] et sont emplis de nostalgie en pensant aux coins reculés où ils pourraient se retirer si le décret ne les astreignait pas à leur lugubre mission. Des trompettes annoncent l'épreuve de Calaf.

Deuxième scène

[16] La Cour se réunit pour voir le dernier prétendant de Turandot affronter l'épreuve des énigmes. [17] – [18] L'Empereur, son père, incite en vain le prince inconnu à renoncer au défi. [19] Turandot ouvre la cérémonie en contant comment son ancêtre la princesse Lo-u-Ling fut enlevée et assassinée par les envahisseurs tartares et combien elle est soucieuse de venger sa mémoire. [20] Elle avertit Calaf que la mort est l'une des trois épreuves. Calaf répond que la vie en est une.

[21] Turandot lui soumet la première énigme: ce qui ne naît la nuit, invoqué par l'univers entier, que pour s'éteindre à l'aube ressuscité dans le cœur? Calaf répond correctement: l'espoir. La seconde énigme est celle-ci: ce qui

rayonne comme une flamme mais n'est pas une flamme, ce qui refroidit avec la mort mais brûle de rêves de conquête? Turandot est furieuse lorsque Calaf résout l'énigme en répondant: le sang. Elle pos enfin la troisième question: ce qui vous enflamme, blanche et sombre cependant, ce qui asservit si elle vous veut libre, mais vous tenant captif vous fait roi? Calaf répond: Turandot.

[22] L'Empereur veille au respect de l'engagement solennel de sa fille d'épouser le prétendant qui a résolu ses énigmes.

[23] D'un ton triomphant, Calaf lui offre une dernière chance: si Turandot peut découvrir son nom avant le lever du jour, il est préparé à mourir. L'Empereur prie pour son succès.

COMPACT DISC TWO

Acte III

Première scène

[1] – [2] Cette nuit-là, enfermée dans les jardins du palais, Calaf entend les hérauts impériaux parcourir la ville à la recherche de quelqu'un qui peut révéler son identité. Quand pointe le jour, il sait que l'attend la victoire.

[3] Ping, Pang et Pong lui offrent des femmes, la richesse et la gloire s'il laisse la princesse en paix. Ils le menacent de le torturer au moment où les gardes introduisent Timur et Liù. [4] Ils font venir Turandot qui assiste au spectacle de la jeune esclave s'offrant pour protéger le vieil homme et refusant cependant de céder sous la torture. [5] A la question de savoir ce qui lui donne tant de courage, Liù répond: l'amour. Après quelques secondes d'émotion, Turandot donne ordre à ses ministres de lui arracher son secret. [6] Liù se suicide. [7] Timur maudit la foule qui l'a conduite à la mort.

[8] Calaf affronte maintenant Turandot, déchire son voile et l'embrasse. [9] Elle est mortifiée, pensant qu'elle est vaincue. Calaf proclame qu'il s'agit seulement de l'aube de leur amour. [10] Turandot le prie de partir avec son secret et Calaf répond qu'il n'y a plus de mystère – il est Calaf, le fils de Timur. Turandot est transportée d'émotion à l'idée qu'il soit maintenant en son pouvoir.

Deuxième scène

[11] Face à la foule, Turandot déclare qu'elle connaît le nom de l'étranger, c'est: l'Amour.

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Traduction: Marie-Françoise de Meeûs

Jane Eaglen possède l'une des réputations les plus extraordinaires dans le monde de l'opéra aujourd'hui. Né à Lincoln, elle a étudié au Royal Northern College of Music de Manchester grâce au soutien d'une bourse de la Peter Moores Foundation, puis elle est entrée à l'English National Opera. Rencontrant un succès sans précédent dans les rôles contrastés de Norma et de Brünnhilde, sa voix est celle d'une soprano dramatique exceptionnelle recevant des critiques sensationnelles dans le monde entier. Ses interprétations de Brünnhilde (*Siegfried*) au Lyric Opera de Chicago, ses prestations dans le *Ring* intégral donné ensuite dans ce même théâtre, sous la direction de Riccardo Muti à La Scala de Milan, à San Francisco et à Vienne lui ont valu également les critiques les plus enthousiastes. Auparavant, elle chanta le rôle de Brünnhilde à l'Opera Pacific et au Scottish Opera. Son succès dans le rôle-titre de *Norma* au Scottish Opera (dans une production soutenue par la Peter Moores Foundation) fut suivi par des interprétations acclamées par la critique au Festival de Ravenne avec Muti, à l'Opéra de Seattle, à l'Opéra de Los Angeles, à l'Opéra-Bastille à Paris, et au Scottish Opera.

Parmi d'autres interprétations mémorables de Jane Eaglen, on citera Isolde à Seattle,

reprise au Metropolitan Opera de New York et au Lyric Opera de Chicago et recevant chaque fois des critiques extraordinaires; ses débuts dans le rôle de La Giaconda au Lyric Opera de Chicago; Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*) au Metropolitan Opera – précédemment chanté au Staatsoper de Vienne, à Los Angeles, à Munich et à Bologne; le rôle titre dans *Turandot* au Royal Opera de Covent Garden à Londres, au Metropolitan Opera de New York aux côtés de Pavarotti, à Vienne, Madrid, Seattle, Bologne et à l'Opéra-Bastille à Paris; Amelia (*Un ballo in maschera*) à Bologne et à l'Opéra-Bastille; le rôle titre dans *Tosca* à l'English National Opera, au Teatro Colon à Buenos Aires, et en version de concert avec le Cleveland Symphony Orchestra; et le rôle titre dans *Ariadne auf Naxos* à l'English National Opera.

Également familière des salles de concert, Jane Eaglen s'est produite dans le *Requiem* de Verdi avec Simon Rattle et City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra; dans la Huitième Symphonie de Mahler avec Klaus Tennstedt; dans l'Acte III de *Götterdämmerung* avec Bernard Haitink et le Boston Symphony Orchestra; dans *Nabucco* à Ravenne avec Riccardo Muti; dans les *Gurrelieder* avec Claudio Abbado au Festival de Salzbourg et au Festival d'Edimbourg; dans *Norma* au Festival

de Tivoli à Copenhague et au Carnegie Hall de New York; et dans les *Quatre derniers lieder* de Strauss avec Daniel Barenboim et le Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Parmi les enregistrements de Jane Eaglen, on citera un disque d'arias de Wagner et de Bellini, un autre consacré à des arias de Strauss et de Mozart, la Huitième Symphonie de Mahler, la Neuvième Symphonie de Beethoven, la Messe de Bruckner, *Norma*, *Medea in Corinto* pour Opera Rara, et pour Chandos et la Peter Moores Foundation l'enregistrement primé de *Tosca*, et *Aida*. Elle figure également sur la bande sonore de l'adaptation pour le cinéma de *Sense and Sensibility* de Jane Austin.

Né au Pays de Galles de parents irlandais et gallois, **Dennis O'Neill** est un des plus grands ténors du monde, et un spécialiste des œuvres de Verdi. Il a entretenu une longue association avec le Royal Opera de Covent Garden à Londres où ses nombreux rôles ont inclus Rodolfo (*La Bohème*), le Duc (*Rigoletto*), Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*), Edgardo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Macduff (*Macbeth*), Gustavo (*Un ballo in maschera*), Foresto (*Attila*), Otello, Don Carlos, Radames (*Aida*), Aroldo (en version de concert), Carlo (*Giovanna d'Arco*), et Jacopo (*I due Foscari*).

Aux Etats-Unis, Dennis O'Neill s'est produit au Metropolitan Opera de New York dans le rôle d'Alfredo (*La traviata*), Radames (*Aida*), Turiddu (*Cavalleria rusticana*) et Canio (*Pagliacci*). Il a également chanté au Chicago Lyric Opera, à San Francisco, à San Diego, à l'Opéra de Vancouver; il a donné des concerts avec les orchestres de Philadelphie, Cleveland, Montréal, Ottawa, et au Festival de Cincinnati. Souvent invité à se produire au Bayerische Staatsoper de Munich, ses débuts dans *Un ballo in maschera* furent suivis par une nouvelle production de *Il trovatore*, ainsi que par *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Tosca*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Aida* et le rôle titre dans *Otello*. Dennis O'Neill a par ailleurs chanté dans les théâtres lyriques de Vienne, Berlin, Bonn, Cologne, Hambourg, Munich, Nice, Zurich, Paris, Oslo, Bruxelles, Barcelone, Lisbonne, Oviedo, dans les Arènes de Vérone, à Turin, et à l'English National Opera. Il entretient des liens étroits avec le Welsh National Opera.

Dennis O'Neill donne également de nombreux concerts, et s'est ainsi produit à travers toute l'Europe. Ses propres séries pour la BBC Television ont été très populaires, et il a ensuite terminé un film télévisé consacré à Caruso. Parmi ses enregistrements pour Chandos et la Peter Moores Foundation

figurent *Aida*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *Tosca*, *La bohème*, *Il trovatore*, et un disque de Grands airs d'opéra. En l'an 2000, Dennis O'Neill a été décoré du titre de commandeur de l'Ordre de l'empire britannique (CBE).

Nicolai Gedda est reconnu dans le monde entier comme l'un des plus grands artistes de notre temps, et il a été acclamé pour sa maîtrise d'un immense répertoire couvrant presque tous les styles et les périodes dans les domaines de l'opéra, de l'oratorio, du lied et du chant avec orchestre.

Né à Stockholm d'un père russe (chanteur basse) et d'une mère suédoise, Nicolai Gedda fit ses débuts professionnels à l'Opéra royal de Stockholm en 1952 dans *Le Postillon de Longjumeau*. Herbert von Karajan se trouvait dans la salle, et l'engagea immédiatement pour chanter dans son enregistrement de la Messe en si mineur de J.S. Bach. Ainsi, l'année 2002 marque cinquante ans d'enregistrement pour Nicolai Gedda. Il fit ses débuts à La Scala de Milan en 1953, à l'Opéra de Paris en 1954, et au Metropolitan Opera de New York (dans le rôle titre de *Faust* de Gounod) en 1957. Après ses débuts au Royal Opera de Covent Garden en 1965 (dans le rôle du Duc de Mantoue dans *Rigoletto* de Verdi), il revint y chanter

Benvenuto Cellini, Alfredo, Gustavus III dans *Un ballo in maschera*, Nemorino et Lensky. Il créa des rôles importants dans *Vanessa* de Barber et dans *The Last Savage* de Menotti au Metropolitan Opera de New York.

Ses triomphes à l'opéra sont allés des œuvres de Haydn et de Mozart à celles de Stravinsky, Orff, Barber et Menotti. En récital, il est considéré comme un interprète exceptionnel de lieder. Il est également le ténor le plus enregistré au monde avec 200 disques à son actif. Parmi ceux-ci figurent des opéras complets tels que *The Abduction from the Seraglio* (pour Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation), *Guillaume Tell*, *La Bohème*, *Faust*, *Werther*, *Manon*, *Così fan tutte* et *Benvenuto Cellini*.

Mary Plazas a étudié au Royal Northern College of Music de Manchester grâce au soutien de la Peter Moores Foundation et du Countess of Munster Musical Trust. Elle a fait ses débuts lyriques en 1992 à l'English National Opera dans le rôle de la Voix céleste (*Don Carlos*), et y est actuellement "Company Principal". Elle a incarné des rôles tels que Mimì, Leila, Adina, Nannetta, Micaëla, Marzelline (*Fidelio*), Lauretta, Oscar, Dorabella et le rôle titre dans *Le Petit Renard*

(*rusé* (English National Opera); Mimì, Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Tebaldo (*Don Carlos*) et Elisetta (*Il matrimonio segreto*) à l'Opera North; Donna Elvira (Glyndebourne Touring Opera); Anne Trulove (Nouvel Opéra d'Israël et Opera Factory); l'Echo (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), et Madame Silberklang (*Der Schauspieldirektor*) au Garsington Opera.

En 1996, Mary Plazas a fait ses débuts au BBC Promenade Concerts de Londres avec le Royal Opera de Covent Garden dans le rôle de la Voix céleste, et en 1997, elle s'est produite au Royal Opera de Covent Garden et au Metropolitan Opera de New York dans *Palestrina* de Pfitzner. Elle a créé le rôle de Tina dans *Flight* de Jonathan Dove avec le Glyndebourne Touring Opera, puis a repris ce rôle au Festival de Glyndebourne. Elle a incarné la Duchesse dans *Powder her Face* de Thomas Adès à l'Almeida Opera et au Festival d'Aldeburgh, et a également enregistré ce rôle pour la chaîne de télévision anglaise Channel 4. Elle a fait ses débuts au Festival de Bregenz dans le rôle de Mimì au cours de l'été 2001, et y chante à nouveau ce rôle en 2002.

Mary Plazas a donné de nombreux récitals et concerts, notamment au Wigmore Hall et à la Purcell Room de Londres, et au Centre Karajan de Vienne. Elle s'est également

produite en Grande-Bretagne dans les festivals de Cheltenham, Aldeburgh et Chester. Au concert, elle a chanté dans *Die Schöpfung* de Haydn, *A Child of our Time* de Tippett, la Huitième Symphonie de Mahler, le *Requiem* de Mozart, *Ein deutsches Requiem* de Brahms, la Quatorzième Symphonie de Chostakovitch, la Neuvième Symphonie de Beethoven, et *La Terre promise* de Saint-Saëns.

Parmi les enregistrements de Mary Plazas figurent *Emma d'Antiochia* de Mercadante et *Maria Regina d'Inghilterra* de Pacini (pour Opera Rara), *Dido and Aeneas* pour Chandos, *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*, et pour Chandos et la Peter Moores Foundation, les rôles de Marguerite (*Faust*), Adina, Zerlina et Micaëla.

Clive Bayley a fait ses études musicales au Royal Northern College of Music de Manchester où il a bénéficié d'une bourse de la Peter Moores Foundation. Il se produit régulièrement sur les grandes scènes lyriques dans un répertoire s'étendant de Monteverdi jusqu'à Verdi, Puccini, Berg, Britten et Birtwistle. Il a fait ses débuts au Royal Opera de Covent Garden de Londres dans la création mondiale de *Gawain* de Harrison Birtwistle, puis y chanté les rôles de Colline dans *La bohème*, Hans Foltz dans *Die Meistersinger von*

Nürnberg, et Castro dans *La fanciulla del West*. Il a remporté d'importants succès à l'Opera North dans *Jerusalem* de Verdi, dans des rôles tels que Sparafucile (*Rigoletto*), le Moine (*Don Carlos*), Raleigh (*Gloriana*), le Referee dans *Playing Away* de Benedict Mason, Ferrando (*Il trovatore*), Arkel (*Pelléas et Mélisande*), Wurm (*Luisa Miller*), le rôle titre dans *Le nozze di Figaro*, le Docteur (*Wozzeck*); à l'Opera Factory dans *Don Giovanni*; à l'English National Opera dans *Billy Budd*, *Wozzeck*, le rôle de Cadmus (*Semele*), les quatre mauvais génies dans *The Tales of Hoffmann*, Ferrando (*Il trovatore*), Collatinus (*The Rape of Lucretia*), et Pistol (*Falstaff*). A l'étranger, Clive Bayley s'est produit à l'Opéra des Pays-Bas, au Seattle Opera, à Lisbonne et à Lausanne. Parmi ses autres engagements, on citera le rôle du Fisherman dans *The Royal Palace* de Kurt Weill aux BBC Promenade Concerts de Londres, et des prestations au Glyndebourne Festival et avec le Glyndebourne Touring Opera.

Pour Chandos, Clive Bayley a enregistré *Troilus and Cressida* et *Billy Budd*, et pour Chandos et la Peter Moores Foundation *Falstaff*, *Madam Butterfly*, *Don Giovanni*, des extraits de *Boris Godunov*, *Don Pasquale* et *Il trovatore*.

Né en Egypte d'une mère malto-italienne et d'un père égyptien, **Peter Sidhom** est venu s'installer en Angleterre à l'âge de dix ans. Après avoir étudié les langues modernes à l'Université de Londres, il a poursuivi des études de chant avec Hervey Alan et Josephine Veasey.

Peter Sidhom s'est produit dans de nombreux grand théâtres lyriques dans le monde entier, notamment au Royal Opera de Covent Garden (Schaunard dans *La bohème*, Monterone dans *Rigoletto*, Capulet dans *Roméo et Juliette*, Paolo dans *Simon Boccanegra*, Donner dans *Das Rheingold*); à Paris à l'Opéra Bastille; au théâtre de La Monnaie de Bruxelles (*Il tabarro*, *Gianni Schicci*); au Teatro Comunale de Florence (*Der Zwerg*); à l'Opéra de San Francisco (*Der Ring des Nibelungen*); au Festival de Glyndebourne (*Simon Boccanegra*); au Théâtre du Capitole de Toulouse (*La bohème* et *Lohengrin*); au Staatstheater de Stuttgart (*Tosca*); au Teatro Real de Madrid (*Der Rosenkavalier*); au Teatro La Fenice de Venise (*Billy Budd*). Il a chanté des rôles importants et des rôles titre au Welsh National Opera, à l'English National Opera, à l'Opera North et au Scottish Opera.

En concert, Peter Sidhom s'est produit dans toutes les grandes salles de concert

d'Angleterre. Il a travaillé avec de nombreux chefs d'orchestre tels que Richard Armstrong, David Atherton, Martyn Brabbins, James Conlon, Paul Daniel, Andrew Davis, Christoph von Dohnányi, Mark Elder, Bernard Haitink, Richard Hickox, Oliver Knussen, Sir Charles Mackerras, Antonio Pappano, Carlo Rizzi et Edo de Waart. Parmi ses enregistrements, on citera *La traviata*, *Rigoletto*, le rôle de Pascoe dans *The Wreckers* d'Ethel Smyth, et *Carmina Burana*.

Mark Le Brocq a été boursier en chant choral au St. Catharine College de Cambridge où il a étudié la littérature anglaise. Il a obtenu une bourse d'entrée à la Royal Academy of Music de Londres pour y étudier avec Kenneth Bowen, puis a poursuivi sa formation au National Opera Studio de Londres.

Il a été "Company Principal" à l'English National Opera où il a incarné de nombreux rôles, notamment Tamino (*The Magic Flute*), Paris (*King Priam*), le Comte Almaviva (*The Barber of Seville*), Narraboth (*Salome*), Don Ottavio, Monostatos, Rodriguez (dans *Don Quixote* de Massenet), Odoardo (*Ariodante*), le Docteur Maxwell (*The Silver Tassie*), et Siward (*A Better Place*). Il s'est également produit à l'Opera Northern Ireland,

au Garsington Opera et au Festival d'Aix-en-Provence.

Mark Le Brocq s'est produit en récital et dans des oratorios aux USA, en France, en Allemagne, en Espagne, au Proche-Orient, et dans toutes les grandes salles de Londres. Il a chanté avec le Gabrieli Consort sous la direction de Paul McCreesh dans des festivals à travers l'Europe. En concert, il s'est produit dans des œuvres telles que le *Requiem* de Mozart et celui de Verdi, la *Messe* en ut et la *Fantaisie Chorale* de Beethoven, le *Messie* et *La resurrezzione*. Parmi ses enregistrements, on citera *Il trovatore* pour Chandos et la Peter Moores Foundation, *Samson, Judas Maccabaeus*, *Hail Bright Cecilia* de Purcell, *Utrecht Te Deum* de Haendel et *I Was Glad* de Boyce.

Peter Wedd a étudié à la Guildhall School of Music and Drama de Londres avec William McAlpine, et au National Opera Studio où il a bénéficié du soutien de la Peter Moores Foundation. Il a chanté des rôles tels que Cascada (*Die lustige Witwe*) au Royal Opera de Covent Garden, Federico (*L'Arlésiana*) et Pluto (*Orphée aux enfers*) avec l'Opera Holland Park, et Don José (*Carmen*) au Welsh National Opera. Pendant la saison 1999/2000, il a été ténor principal au Royal Opera de Covent Garden.

Le vaste répertoire de concert de Peter Wedd s'étend du *Messie* de Haendel et du *Magnificat* de Pergolèse à la *Messe glagolitique* de Janáček et la *Sérénade* pour ténor, cor et cordes de Britten. Peter Wedd figure dans l'enregistrement d'*Ernani* de Verdi réalisé par Chandos et la Peter Moores Foundation.

Simon Bailey est diplômé du Royal Northern College of Music de Manchester, où il a bénéficié d'une bourse de la Peter Moores Foundation, et du Clare College de Cambridge où il a été boursier en chant choral. Après avoir obtenu ses diplômes, Simon Bailey fut immédiatement accepté par l'Académie du Teatro alla Scala de Milan.

A l'Académie de La Scala, il a chanté des rôles tels que Schaunard (*La bohème*), Jailer (*Dialogues des Carmélites*), le Premier Ouvrier (*Wozzeck*), Lakai (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Hobson (*Peter Grimes*), et a travaillé avec James Conlon, Riccardo Muti, Jeffrey Tate et Giuseppe Sinopoli. Il a également chanté des rôles dans *Turandot* et dans *Un giorno di regno* de Verdi.

Simon Bailey a récemment fait ses débuts dans la création mondiale de *Tat'jan* de Coghi mis en scène par Peter Stein à La Scala, et a chanté sa première production importante de *Nozze di Figaro* à l'Opéra de Rouen. Il se

produira prochainement dans plusieurs rôles à l'Opéra de Franckfort, notamment dans celui de Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*) et Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*).

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

Le **New London Children's Choir** a été fondé en 1991 par son directeur musical Ronald Corp dans le but de permettre à des enfants de

chanter tous les genres de musique, et ainsi leur faire découvrir les exigences et les joies du chant. Depuis, le Chœur s'est produit dans toutes les grandes salles de concert de Londres, il a travaillé avec les plus importants chefs et orchestres symphoniques de Grande-Bretagne, et a collaboré avec des théâtres lyriques en Grande-Bretagne et à l'étranger. Il a réalisé de très nombreux enregistrements et s'est produit fréquemment à la radio et dans de nombreux festivals importants.

La vaste discographie du New London Children's Choir compte entre autres *Casse-Noisette* de Tchaïkovski, les *Chants de la forêt* de Chostakovitch, *Ivan le Terrible* de Prokofiev, *Bethlehem* de Rutland Boughton, *Hugh the Drover* de Vaughan Williams, la Troisième Symphonie de Mahler, *Les Planètes* de Holst, *St Nicolas* et *A Midsummer Night's Dream* de Britten. Il a également enregistré pour le cinéma et assuré la création de plus de trente partitions contemporaines.

Depuis ses excellents débuts en 1945, lorsqu'il fut fondé par Walter Legge essentiellement pour jouer dans des enregistrements, le **Philharmonia Orchestra** n'a cessé d'attirer certains des plus grands chefs d'orchestre du XXe siècle. Certains furent associés de près à

l'Orchestre: Otto Klemperer (son tout premier chef principal), Lorin Maazel, Riccardo Muti, Giuseppe Sinopoli, Carlo Maria Giulini, Sir Andrew Davis, Vladimir Ashkenazy et Esa-Pekka Salonen. Sous la direction de leur chef principal actuel, Christoph von Dohnanyi, et celle de Leonard Slatkin, souvent invité à prendre sa relève, l'Orchestre s'est fermement installé au cœur de la vie musicale britannique, non seulement à Londres puisqu'il est orchestre en résidence au Royal Festival Hall, mais aussi en province où il se produit régulièrement.

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

L'Orchestre fait souvent des tournées internationales; aucun autre orchestre symphonique dans le monde ne possède une discographie aussi importante, avec plus de mille disques à son actif. Notons entre autres plusieurs disques d'airs d'opéra pour Opera

Rara ainsi que onze intégrales d'opéras (*Ugo, conte di Parigi*, *Ne m'oubliez pas*, *Emilia di Liverpool*, *L'assedio di Calais*, *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* et *Maria de Rudenz* de Donizetti, *Dinorah* de Meyerbeer, *Medea in Corinto* de Mayr, *Orazi e Curiazi* de Mercadante, *Maria, regina d'Inghilterra* de Pacini et *Otello* de Rossini). L'Orchestre a fait de nombreux disques pour Chandos, en particulier, dans la série Opera in English financée par la Peter Moores Foundation, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Faust*, *La bohème*, cette version primée de *Tosca* et huit récitals solistes d'airs d'opéra (avec Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny, Andrew Shore, et deux avec John Tomlinson.)

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 neuf enregistrements d'airs d'opéra (avec Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny, John Tomlinson, Andrew Shore et Della Jones) de même que *Lucia of Lammermoor*, *Aida*, *Don Giovanni*, *Ernani*, *Faust*, *Don Pasquale*, *The Elixir of Love*, *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.

Turandot – Il vecchio e il nuovo

“Un’opera veramente nuova per Puccini”: questo fu il commento di Andrea Della Corte, critico del quotidiano di Torino *La Stampa*, riguardo alla prima di *Turandot*, allestita nel 1926 al Teatro La Scala di Milano; un commento subito ripetuto nei circoli musicali di tutto il mondo, e soprattutto in Gran Bretagna, dove la fama (o la notorietà, come era spesso il caso) del suo compositore si basava su *La bohème*, *Tosca* e *Madama Butterfly*. In effetti Puccini aveva sempre mostrato una certa preoccupazione riguardo alle novità, come era già successo a Verdi; da qui la sua abituale sollecitudine a trattare un’ampia varietà di soggetti per poi abbandonarli quando si rendeva conto della propria incapacità nell’adattarli al suo modo di interpretare le cose. Quella di *Turandot* fu una gestazione particolarmente lunga e tormentata, tanto da spingere Puccini ad abbandonare più volte l’intero progetto e, come confidò alla sua amica inglese Sybil Seligman, persino ad adattare le musiche già scritte ad una nuova trama, ideata da Giovacchino Forzano (autore di *Suor Angelica* e *Gianni Schicchi*) servendosi di una simile ambientazione cinese. Le

difficoltà incontrate da Puccini peggiorarono anche a causa delle pretese letterarie dei suoi due librettisti, Renato Simoni e Giuseppe Adami, entrambi commediografi di minore importanza e nient’affatto pronti ad adattarsi alle convenzioni operistiche di Piave o Ghislanzoni, i loro predecessori del diciannovesimo secolo. Fu Simoni a suggerire per primo l’idea della “fiaba” di Gozzi in occasione di un incontro con Puccini a Milano all’inizio del 1920; e in seguito consegnò al compositore una copia dell’adattamento di Schiller, nella traduzione di Andrea Maffei. Puccini rispose immediatamente, dicendo che sarebbe stato meglio attenersi a quel particolare soggetto perché, tutto sommato, secondo lui *Turandot* era la più umana e normale tra le opere teatrali di Gozzi. Si decise per *Turandot*, quindi, passando attraverso l’interpretazione della mente moderna, quella dello stesso Simoni, quella di Adami e, concluse Puccini, la sua. I poeti prepararono subito uno schema che lo soddisfe a grandi linee, ma che era destinato a subire profonde alterazioni nei quattro anni seguenti. Di particolare interesse è una lettera inviata da

Puccini a Simoni nell’agosto 1920, in cui gli chiedeva se aveva avuto tempo di pensare all’introduzione della nuova giovane, pregandolo di renderla in maniera eccellente. Di conseguenza, sembrerebbe che la schiava Liù, inserita al posto dell’astuta principessa Adelma di Gozzi, fu probabilmente un’idea dello stesso Puccini. E sarebbe certamente tipica di un compositore che trent’anni prima aveva insistito sulla necessità di una “figura luminosa” in cui il pubblico potesse ritrovarsi.

La crescita e la graduale trasformazione dell’opera può essere tracciata brevemente. In origine l’Atto Primo comprendeva due scene, la seconda delle quali terminava con la risoluzione degli enigmi. L’Atto Secondo trattava la ricerca disperata dell’identità di Calaf, i doni a lui offerti per corromperlo dai ministri di Turandot e le torture di Liù; l’Atto Terzo si chiudeva con la resa finale della principessa. Nel settembre 1921 Puccini richiese che gli ultimi due atti venissero trasformati in uno, ma fortunatamente non insistette a lungo. Entro il Nuovo Anno si era arrivati all’attuale ripartizione, in cui l’Atto Primo terminava con l’ensemble in cui Timur, Liù e i ministri cercano invano di dissuadere il principe dall’intraprendere la sfida. Marzo

1922 vide l’aggiunta della scena di apertura dell’Atto Secondo, concepita come una sorta di intermezzo (“una chitarrara”, come la definì Puccini), e a cui fece seguito in agosto l’inserimento di “In questa reggia” (Within this Palace) di Turandot, sebbene questa non sarebbe stata composta fino all’aprile del 1923. Nel frattempo Puccini aveva preso la decisione risolutiva di far morire Liù durante le torture (nello schema originale le era stato dato un breve duetto con Turandot all’inizio dell’Atto Terzo). Ciò creò un problema la cui soluzione avrebbe eluso l’autore fino alla fine. La conversione in un essere umano dolce e amorevole da parte di una Furia glaciale e vendicativa, che ha appena assistito al sacrificio personale di una vittima innocente senza battere ciglio, è un compito che avrebbe spaventato il più grande genio musicale. Nel corso dei due anni seguenti Puccini non si stancò mai di chiedere un testo adeguato per il suo duetto finale; e c’è chi crede persino che, se solo i suoi librettisti lo avessero consegnato in tempo, Puccini avrebbe completato l’opera nel modo in cui voleva. Ma questo mi sembra poco probabile. Parafrasando il Marco Antonio di Shakespeare, il suo cuore era lì, nella bara, con Liù.

In verità, la giovane innocente che muore per amore è giustamente considerata il legame di *Turandot* con le opere precedenti di Puccini. Ma non si tratta certamente dell'unico, tanto meno a livello musicale. Dimostrando una maggiore sensibilità di Della Corte, Giulio Cesare Paribene de *L'Ambrosiano* commentò che *Turandot* testimonia l'intera vita del suo autore nella sua musica, nel senso che riassume tutte le fasi evolutive di un compositore che, pur rimanendo sempre fedele ai propri principi, fece tesoro anche di tutte le scoperte, in fatto di forma ed espressione, relative ai tormenti dell'epoca moderna. In altre parole Puccini, come già Verdi, e a differenza dei suoi colleghi della "giovane scuola", possedeva il segreto del rinnovamento interiore attraverso l'assimilazione nel suo linguaggio personale di elementi tratti dall'avant-garde del suo tempo. Ciò che viene sottolineato meno di frequente è la velocità con cui quel linguaggio fu istituito. Melodie semplici, diatoniche, accompagnate da armonie insolitamente ricche e varie possono essere riscontrate fin dal 1884 nel giovanile *Le villi*. Anche qui si può notare la propensione verso ciò che potrebbe essere definita una "morbida dissonanza", in cui viene evitato lo scontro tra semitoni – non utilizzato come effetto speciale ma

semplicemente come parte di un chiaro discorso musicale. Ciò metterà a sua disposizione a tempo debito una gamma di armonie pentatoniche (per esempio, i tasti neri) che gli sarà molto utile per i colori giapponesi di *Madama Butterfly* e la *chinoiserie* di *Turandot*, per entrambe le quali Puccini si servì di melodie folk autentiche. Alla fine il suo vocabolario si allargherà fino a includere le dissonanze molto più intense della sua ultima opera; ma le loro radici possono essere generalmente fatte risalire a molto tempo prima.

Una delle combinazioni armoniche più audaci di *Turandot* appartiene al momento in cui i fantasmi dei pretendenti uccisi della principessa appaiono come ombre sui bastioni, cercando disperatamente di cogliere un'altra visione della loro amata. Qui la tonalità è quasi sospesa, e con essa qualsiasi senso di movimento. Ma un simile passaggio, concepito in maniera più semplice, può essere trovato nel coro fuori scena dei festaioli stanchi, aggiunti da Puccini alla revisione del suo *Edgar* realizzata nel 1905 – lo stesso anno di *Madama Butterfly*. Nella versione originale della stessa opera (1889) Puccini dapprima rivela quella sua propensione per una successione di accordi paralleli, spesso non

collegati, destinata a rimanere con lui nel corso di tutta la sua carriera; con il passare del tempo, questi accordi diventeranno più elaborati, in parte sotto l'influenza di compositori come Debussy e Stravinsky. Un altro metodo da lui preferito, e anticipato allo stesso modo in *Edgar*, è il persistente alternarsi di due accordi come modo per serrare la tensione drammatica. Un esempio eccellente è il finale del Primo Atto della *Tosca*, nel momento in cui Scarpa rivela le sue crudeli intenzioni sullo sfondo di un *Te Deum* della congregazione. In nessun altro momento questo espediente è più potentemente utilizzato che nell'ensemble che conclude il primo atto di *Turandot*, nel punto in cui comunica alla perfezione lo scambio emotivo tra Calaf e gli spettatori. In *Manon Lescaut*, *La bohème* e *La rondine* Puccini lancia la sua scena d'apertura con due temi contrastanti: il primo vivace e fortemente accentuato, il secondo fluido da un punto di vista lirico. *Turandot* inizia pressoché nello stesso modo; ma qui non solo le due idee vengono ampliate internamente: la distanza armonica che le separa viene aumentata in maniera incommensurabile. Il gesto orchestrale iniziale, seguito dal proclama del Mandarino, appartiene all'era del dopoguerra, mentre la

melodia che dirige la nostra attenzione verso Liù e Timur ritorna al Puccini del 1890, con la sua linea in discesa e ogni frase che termina con quel segno caratteristico dello stile del compositore, noto già in *Le villi*, ovvero la quinta decrescente. Eppure entrambe le idee risultano giustapposte senza il benché minimo senso di incongruenza. Nulla, nella partitura, illustra più succintamente la capacità di Puccini di cogliere il meglio dei due mondi, il vecchio e il nuovo. E tra tutti gli audaci modernismi del suo canto del cigno, dimostrò di non aver perso neppure la sua capacità di estrarre dal cappello una melodia dal fascino popolare e duraturo, come nel caso di "Nessun dorma" (None shall sleep now).

È vero che tali momenti diventano sempre più rari dopo *Madama Butterfly*. Ma se la crescente complessità dello stile di Puccini avrebbe finito con l'allontanare i meno colti, lo rese molto più rispettato tra i pionieri musicali della sua epoca. Dopo aver ascoltato una performance de *La fanciulla del West*, Anton Webern scrisse al suo maestro Arnold Schoenberg, "Questa è una partitura con un suono assolutamente originale. Magnifico! Nessuna traccia di kitsch! E parlo da fonte diretta. Devo dire di averla apprezzata

moltissimo.” Ma stava predicando ai convertiti. Per Schoenberg Puccini era semplicemente “un grande” – un omaggio nient’affatto modesto da parte dell’inventore del sistema delle dodici note!

Rimane da menzionare un’ulteriore caratteristica dello stile dell’ultimo periodo di Puccini. Iniziando con *Manon Lescaut*, aveva organizzato i suoi atti attraverso l’interazione basilare di motivi ricorrenti, spesso con riferimenti meno specifici di quelli di Wagner, da lui così tanto ammirato. Nelle opere che seguirono *La fanciulla* questi motivi persistono; ma c’è una crescente tendenza, che si nota soprattutto in *Il tabarro*, a includerli in enormi blocchi di materiale contrapposto, tendenza che raggiunge il suo apice in *Turandot*. Casi simili si cercherebbero invano nelle opere di Verdi o di Rossini. Per trovare qualcosa di anche lontanamente simile, occorre tornare alle opere di Monteverdi. Con la sua ultima opera per il palcoscenico, quindi, si può dire che Puccini abbia messo il proprio sigillo non solo su quarant’anni di carriera, ma anche su una tradizione italiana che risale a tre secoli prima.

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Sinossi

COMPACT DISC ONE

Atto primo

Le mura della grande Città Violetta: la Città Imperiale. Gli enormi bastioni racchiudono in un semicerchio quasi tutto il palcoscenico.

[1] La folla ascolta un editto secondo cui la principessa Turandot sposerà solo il principe che riuscirà a risolvere tre enigmi da lei proposti. Coloro che si sottoporranò alla prova ma falliranno verranno giustiziati. La folla invoca il boia e attende l’esecuzione dell’ultima vittima di Turandot, il Principe di Persia, che sarà giustiziato al sorgere della luna.

Timur, re dei Tartari in esilio, si trova tra la folla. Suo figlio Calaf, anche lui costretto all’esilio, lo riconosce dopo anni di lontananza [2] – [3] e viene a sapere che Timur deve la sua vita alla schiava Liù, che lo accompagna. A Pechino i due sono del tutto sconosciuti.

[4] – [5] Pu-Tin-Pao conduce il Principe di Persia verso il luogo dell’esecuzione. La folla ora chiama a gran voce Turandot affinché conceda la grazia, ma lei rifiuta. [6] Calaf è talmente sopraffatto dalla visione della principessa da voler tentare la fortuna con gli enigmi.

[7] I tre ministri imperiali Ping, Pang e Pong cercano di fermarlo. [8] – [9] Le ancelle di Turandot chiedono che si faccia silenzio, ma i fantasmi dei pretendenti uccisi esortano Calaf alla sfida. Nulla, neppure la vista di Pu-Tin-Pao che torna con la testa recisa del Principe di Persia, [10] – [12] o le preghiere di Liù, riescono a dissuaderlo. Calaf colpisce il gong che dà inizio alla sua sfida.

Atto Secondo

Scena Prima

[13] Ping, Pang e Pong discutono riguardo ai preparativi di ciò che si risolverà in un matrimonio o in un funerale. Ricordano i principi morti per Turandot [14] – [15] ed esprimono tutta la loro nostalgia per i luoghi di campagna in cui potrebbero andare a vivere se l’editto non li costringesse ad eseguire i loro lugubri doveri. Le trombe annunciano l’inizio della prova di Calaf.

Scena Seconda

[16] La Corte è riunita per assistere alla prova degli enigmi dell’ultimo pretendente di Turandot. [17] – [18] Suo padre, l’Imperatore, prega invano il Principe Straniero affinché rinunci alla sfida. [19] Turandot dà inizio alla

ceremonia raccontando che la sua antenata, la principessa Lo-u-Ling, subì violenza e fu assassinata dagli invasori tartari. Ora è sua intenzione vendicarne la memoria. [20] Poi avverte Calaf che, sebbene gli enigmi siano tre, la morte è una. Calaf risponde che una è la vita.

[21] Turandot propone il primo enigma: cosa si leva in volo ogni notte, invocato da tutto il mondo, e con l’aura sparisce per rinascere nel cuore? La risposta di Calaf è quella giusta: la speranza. Il secondo enigma è il seguente: cosa si muove come una fiamma senza esserlo, e si raffredda nella notte, eppure avvampa se si sogna la vittoria? Turandot è furiosa quando Calaf lo risolve dandole la risposta giusta: il sangue. Poi gli propone il terzo enigma: cosa ti infiamma, bianco eppure scuro, ti pone in schiavitù se ti vuole libero, ma nel farti prigioniero ti fa re? E Calaf risponde: Turandot.

[22] L’Imperatore sollecita la figlia a rispettare il suo voto solenne di sposare il pretendente che avrebbe risolto i suoi enigmi. [23] Trionfante, Calaf le offre un’ultima possibilità: se la principessa scoprirà il suo nome prima dell’alba, sarà pronto a morire. L’Imperatore prega per il successo del principe.

COMPACT DISC TWO

Atto Terzo

Scena Prima

[1] – [2] Quella notte, nei giardini del palazzo, Calaf ode gli araldi imperiali che perlustrano la città alla ricerca di qualcuno che sia in grado di rivelare la sua identità. All'alba, sa di aver vinto.

[3] Ping, Pang e Pong gli offrono donne, ricchezze e gloria se lascerà in pace la principessa. E minacciano di torturarlo quando le guardie arrivano trascinando Timur e Liù. [4] Chiamano Turandot, che osserva la schiava mentre offre se stessa in sacrificio per proteggere il vecchio, eppure rifiuta di cedere sotto tortura. [5] Quando le viene chiesto cosa sia a darle una tale forza, Liù risponde: l'amore. Turandot si commuove per un attimo ma poi ordina ai ministri di strapparle il segreto. [6] Liù si suicida. [7] Timur maledice coloro che hanno causato la sua morte.

[8] Calaf ora confronta Turandot, le strappa il velo e la bacia. [9] Lei si sente umiliata e crede di aver perso; Calaf dichiara che ciò è solo l'inizio del loro amore. [10] Turandot lo supplica di andarsene con il suo segreto e Calaf risponde che non c'è più alcun mistero – il suo nome è Calaf, figlio di Timur. Turandot

è elettrizzata dal fatto che il principe è in suo potere.

Scena Seconda

[11] Dinanzi al popolo Turandot dichiara di conoscere l'identità dello sconosciuto: il suo nome è Amore.

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Traduzione: Emily Stefania Coscione

Jane Eaglen ha una reputazione formidabile nel mondo della lirica di oggi. Nata a Lincoln, ha studiato presso il Royal Northern College of Music, con una borsa di studio della Peter Moores Foundation, e poi è entrata all'English National Opera. Ha riscosso un successo straordinario nei ruoli molto diversi di Norma e Brünnhilde, con il suo straordinario soprano drammatico si è conquistata spettacolari recensioni in tutto il mondo. La sua interpretazione del ruolo di Brünnhilde (*Siegfried*) per la Lyric Opera di Chicago e la successiva partecipazione al ciclo completo del *Ring* nello stesso teatro, con Riccardo Muti alla Scala di Milano, a San Francisco e a Vienna hanno riscosso unanimi consensi da parte della critica. Sempre nel ruolo di Brünnhilde, la cantante era apparsa in

precedenza all'Opera Pacific e alla Scottish Opera. Il suo successo nelle vesti di Norma per la Scottish Opera (in un allestimento finanziato con l'appoggio della Peter Moores Foundation) si è ripetuto al Festival di Ravenna con Muti, all'Opera di Seattle e di Los Angeles, all'Opéra Bastille di Parigi e alla Scottish Opera.

Altre interpretazioni memorabili comprendono Isolde a Seattle, riproposta di recente alla Metropolitan Opera e alla Lyric Opera di Chicago con spettacolare successo; l'esordio nel ruolo di Gioconda per la Lyric Opera di Chicago; Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*) alla Metropolitan Opera, interpretata in precedenza all'Opera di Vienna e a Los Angeles, Monaco e Bologna; il ruolo di protagonista nella *Turandot* al Covent Garden, alla Metropolitan Opera con Luciano Pavarotti, a Vienna, Madrid, Seattle, Bologna e all'Opéra Bastille di Parigi; Amelia (*Un ballo in maschera*) a Bologna e all'Opéra Bastille; il ruolo di protagonista in *Tosca* per English National Opera, al Teatro Colón di Buenos Aires e in concerto con la Cleveland Symphony Orchestra; il ruolo di protagonista in *Ariadne auf Naxos* per English National Opera.

Jane Eaglen si trova altrettanto a proprio agio nelle sale da concerto. Ha interpretato il

Requiem di Verdi con Simon Rattle e la City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra; l'Ottava sinfonia di Mahler con Klaus Tennstedt; il III atto di *Götterdämmerung* con Bernard Haitink e la Boston Symphony Orchestra; *Nabucco* a Ravenna con Riccardo Muti; i *Gurrelieder* con Claudio Abbado ai festival di Salisburgo e di Edimburgo; *Norma* in concerto al Tivoli Festival di Copenaghen e al Carnegie Hall; *Vier letzte Lieder* di Strass con Daniel Barenboim e la Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

La discografia di Jane Eaglen comprende una registrazione di arie di Wagner e Bellini, una di arie di Strauss e Mozart, l'Ottava sinfonia di Mahler, la Nona sinfonia di Beethoven, la Messa di Bruckner, *Norma*, *Medea in Corinto* per Opera Rara e, per Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation una registrazione premiata di *Tosca*, e *Aida*. La sua voce compare anche nella colonna sonora di *Ragione e sentimento*, adattamento cinematografico del romanzo di Jane Austen.

Nato in Galles da padre irlandese, **Dennis O'Neill** è uno dei principali tenori del mondo ed è specializzato nel repertorio verdiano. Ha al suo attivo una lunga collaborazione con la Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, dove ha interpretato numerosi ruoli, tra cui Rodolfo

(*La Bohème*), il Duca (*Rigoletto*), Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*), Edgardo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Macduff (*Macbeth*), Gustavo (*Un ballo in maschera*), Foresto (*Attila*), Otello, Don Carlos, Radamès (*Aida*), Aroldo (in concerto), Carlo (*Giovanna d'Arco*) e Jacopo (*I due Foscari*).

Per la Metropolitan Opera ha indossato le vesti di Alfredo (*La traviata*), Radamès (*Aida*), Turiddu (*Cavalleria rusticana*) e Canio (*Pagliacci*). Altri impegni in Nordamerica lo hanno visto alla Lyric Opera di Chicago, a San Francisco, San Diego, all'opera di Vancouver e in concerto con le orchestre sinfoniche di Philadelphia, Cleveland, Montreal e Ottawa, oltre che al Festival di Cincinnati. Frequentemente ospite dell'Opera di Monaco, ha esordito qui in *Un ballo in maschera* e ha interpretato successivamente un nuovo allestimento del *Trovatore*, oltre a *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Tosca*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Aida* e il ruolo di protagonista in *Otello*. Inoltre è comparso nei teatri lirici di Vienna, Berlino, Bonn, Colonia, Amburgo, Monaco, Nizza, Zurigo, Parigi, Oslo, Bruxelles, Barcellona, Lisbona, Oviedo, all'Arena di Verona e a Torino, oltre che all'English National Opera. Ha uno stretto rapporto di collaborazione con la Welsh National Opera.

Dennis O'Neill svolge inoltre una ricca attività concertistica e si è esibito in tutta Europa. Le sue serie televisive per la BBC hanno riscosso enorme successo e sono state seguite da un originale televisivo su Caruso. Le registrazioni per Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation comprendono *Aida*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *Tosca*, *La bohème*, *Il trovatore* e un disco di Grandi arie operistiche. Nel 2000 Dennis O'Neill è stato insignito della carica di CBE.

Nicolai Gedda è uno dei più grandi artisti del nostro tempo ed è apprezzato per la sua padronanza di un repertorio che abbraccia quasi tutti gli stili e le epoche nel campo dell'opera, dell'oratorio, dell'operetta, del *lied* e delle composizioni per orchestra.

Nato a Stoccolma da padre russo e madre svedese, ha esordito come professionista alla Royal Opera di Stoccolma nel 1952 con *Le Postillon de Longjumeau*. Tra il pubblico si trovava Herbert von Karajan, che lo ingaggiò immediatamente per la registrazione della Messa in si minore di Bach. Nel 1953 Nicolai Gedda esordiva alla Scala di Milano, nel 1954 all'Opéra di Parigi e nel 1957 con il Metropolitan (nel ruolo di protagonista del *Faust* di Gounod). Ha esordito con la Royal

Opera nel 1965 (con il duca di Mantova nel *Rigoletto* di Verdi) e vi ha fatto ritorno per cantare Benvenuto Cellini, Alfredo, Gustavo III in *Un ballo in maschera*, Nemorino e Lenski. Ha creato ruoli di protagonista in *Vanessa* di Barber e *The Last Savage* di Menotti al Metropolitan.

I suoi trionfi operistici vanno dalle opere di Haydn e Mozart a Stravinskij, Orff, Barber e Menotti, mentre in recital viene considerato uno straordinario interprete di *lieder*. Inoltre è uno dei tenori con la discografia più ricca del mondo. Il 2002 segna il cinquantesimo anniversario della sua prima registrazione e oggi l'artista ha al suo attivo 200 titoli discografici, comprendenti versioni integrali delle opere *The Abduction from the Seraglio* (per Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation), *Guillaume Tell*, *La Bohème*, *Faust*, *Werther*, *Manon*, *Così fan tutte* e *Benvenuto Cellini*.

Mary Plazas ha studiato con Ava June presso il Royal Northern College of Music, dove ha ricevuto il sostegno della Peter Moores Foundation e del Countess of Munster Musical Trust. Il suo debutto operistico è avvenuto nel 1992 con la English National Opera nella parte della Voce del Paradiso (*Don Carlos*), ed attualmente ne è tra gli artisti

principali. I suoi ruoli più importanti comprendono Mimì, Leila, Adina, Nannetta, Micaëla, Marzelline (*Fidelio*), Lauretta, Oscar, Dorabella e il ruolo di protagonista in *The Cunning Little Vixen* (English National Opera); Mimì, Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Tebaldo (*Don Carlos*) ed Elisetta (*Il matrimonio segreto*) per la Opera North; Donna Elvira (Glyndebourne Touring Opera); Anne Trulove (New Israeli Opera e Opera Factory); ed Echo (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) e Madame Silberklang (*Der Schauspieldirektor*) per la Garsington Opera.

Nel 1996 ha debuttato in occasione dei BBC Promenade Concerts con la Royal Opera nel ruolo di Voce del Paradiso, e nel 1997 si è esibita con la Royal Opera di Covent Garden e la Metropolitan Opera di New York in *Palestrina* di Pfitzner. Ha creato il ruolo di Tina in *Flight* di Jonathan Dove per la Glyndebourne Touring Opera, esibendosi poi nello stesso ruolo anche con la Glyndebourne Festival Opera. Ha cantato nel ruolo della Duchessa in *Powder her Face* di Thomas Adès, per l'Almeida Opera e all'Aldeburgh Festival, e ha interpretato il ruolo anche per la rete televisiva britannica Channel 4. Nell'estate 2001 ha debuttato presso il Bregenz Festival nella parte di Mimì, ritornando con lo stesso ruolo anche nel 2002.

Mary Plazas si è esibita in numerosi recital e concerti, tra cui recital da solista presso la Wigmore Hall e la Purcell Room di Londra, e il Karajan Centre di Vienna. Si è esibita anche in occasione dei festival di Cheltenham, Aldeburgh e Chester. Le sue esibizioni concertistiche includono *Creation* di Haydn, *A Child of our Time* di Tippett, Sinfonia no 8 di Mahler, *Requiem* di Mozart, *German Requiem* di Brahms, Sinfonia no 14 di Shostakovich, Sinfonia no 9 di Beethoven e *The Promised Land* di Saint-Saëns.

Le sue incisioni comprendono *Emma d'Antiochia* di Mercadante e *Maria Regina d'Inghilterra* di Pacini (entrambe per Opera Rara), *Dido and Aeneas* per Chandos, *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*, e, per la Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation, Marguerite in *Faust*, Adina, Zerlina e Micaela.

Clive Bayley ha studiato presso il Royal Northern College of Music, valendosi di una borsa della Peter Moores Foundation, e ora si esibisce regolarmente con le principali compagnie operistiche in un repertorio che spazia da Monteverdi a Verdi, Puccini, Berg, Britten e Birtwistle. Ha debuttato con la Royal Opera, Covent Garden, in occasione della prima di *Gawain* di Harrison Birtwistle e in

seguito si è esibito nella parte di Colline in *La bohème*, Hans Foltz in *Die Meistersinger* e Castro in *La fanciulla del West*. Ha avuto considerevole successo con l'Opera North nella *Jerusalem* di Verdi, e nei ruoli di Sparafucile (*Rigoletto*), il Monaco (*Don Carlos*), Raleigh (*Gloriana*), l'Arbitro in *Playing Away* di Benedict Mason, Ferrando (*Il trovatore*), Arkel (*Pelléas and Mélisande*), Wurm (*Luisa Miller*), il Medico (*Wozzeck*) e nel ruolo di protagonista in *Le nozze di Figaro*; con l'Opera Factory in *Don Giovanni*; con la English National Opera in *Billy Budd*, *Wozzeck*, nel ruolo di Cadmus (*Semele*), nei quattro Villani in *The Tales of Hoffmann*, Ferrando (*Il trovatore*), Collatinus (*The Rape of Lucretia*), e Pistol in *Falstaff*. All'estero Clive Bayley si è esibito con la Netherlands Opera, la Seattle Opera, a Lisbona e a Losanna. Altre performance includono la parte del Pescatore in *The Royal Palace* di Kurt Weill, in occasione dei concerti della BBC Promenade, ed esibizioni al Festival di Glyndebourne e con la Touring Opera.

Le sue incisioni per la Chandos comprendono *Troilus and Cressida*, *Billy Budd*, e, per la Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation, *Falstaff*, *Madam Butterfly*, *Don Giovanni*, estratti da *Boris Godunov*, *Don Pasquale* e *Il trovatore*.

Peter Sidhom è nato in Egitto da madre maltese-italiana e padre egiziano, e si è trasferito in Inghilterra all'età di dieci anni. Dopo aver studiato Lingue Moderne presso la London University, ha studiato canto con Hervey Alan e Josephine Veasey.

Peter Sidhom si è esibito nei principali teatri operistici del mondo, tra cui la Royal Opera House di Covent Garden (*Schaunard* in *La bohème*, Monterone in *Rigoletto*, Capulet in *Roméo et Juliette*, Paolo in *Simon Boccanegra*, Donner in *Das Rheingold*); l'Opéra Bastille di Parigi; La Monnaie di Bruxelles (*Il tabarro*, *Gianni Schicchi*); il Teatro Comunale di Firenze (*Der Zwerg*); la San Francisco Opera (*The Ring*); il Festival di Glyndebourne (*Simon Boccanegra*); il Théâtre du Capitole di Tolosa (*La bohème* e *Lohengrin*); il Staatstheater di Stoccarda (*Tosca*), il Teatro Real di Madrid (*Der Rosenkavalier*); il Teatro La Fenice di Venezia (*Billy Budd*). Si è esibito in ruoli da protagonista presso la Welsh National Opera, l'English National Opera, l'Opera North e la Scottish Opera.

Perfettamente a suo agio anche in concerto, Peter Sidhom si è esibito in tutti i principali auditori britannici. Ha collaborato con numerosi direttori d'orchestra, tra cui Richard Armstrong, David Atherton, Martyn Brabbins,

James Conlon, Paul Daniel, Andrew Davis, Christoph von Dohnányi, Mark Elder, Bernard Haitink, Richard Hickox, Oliver Knussen, Sir Charles Mackerras, Antonio Pappano, Carlo Rizzi ed Edo de Waart. Le sue incisioni comprendono *La traviata* e *Rigoletto*, il ruolo di Pascoe in *The Wreckers* di Ethel Smyth, e *Carmina Burana*.

Mark Le Brocq è stato borsista nel coro del St. Catharine's College di Cambridge, dove ha studiato Letteratura Inglese. Ha vinto una borsa di studio per accesso alla Royal Academy of Music, dove ha studiato con Kenneth Bowen, e in seguito ha continuato i suoi studi presso il National Opera Studio.

È stato tra le voci principali della English National Opera, con ruoli come Tamino (*The Magic Flute*), Paris (*King Priam*), Conte Almaviva (*The Barber of Seville*), Narraboth (*Salome*), Don Ottavio, Monostatos, Rodriguez (*Don Quixote* di Massenet), Odoardo (*Ariodante*), Doctor Maxwell in *The Silver Tassie*, e Siward in *A Better Place*. Altre esibizioni hanno incluso ruoli per la Opera Northern Ireland, la Garsington Opera e il Festival di Aix-en Provence.

Mark Le Brocq si è esibito come solista in recital e oratori negli USA, in Francia,

Germania, Spagna e nei paesi del Medio Oriente, così come nei principali teatri di Londra. È apparso con il Gabrieli Consort/Paul McCreesh nei festival di tutta Europa. I suoi impegni concertistici hanno incluso i *Requiem* di Mozart e di Verdi, *Missa in C* e *Choral Fantasia*, *Messiah* e *La resurrezione* di Beethoven. Le sue incisioni comprendono *Il trovatore* per la Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation, *Samson*, *Judas Maccabaeus*, *Hail Bright Cecilia* di Purcell, *Utrecht Te Deum* di Handel e *I Was Glad* di Boyce.

Peter Wedd ha studiato presso la Guildhall School of Music and Drama con William McAlpine e presso il National Opera Studio, dove ha ricevuto sostegno finanziario dalla Peter Moores Foundation. I suoi impegni operistici hanno incluso *Cascada* (*Die lustige Witwe*) per la Royal Opera di Covent Garden, *Federico* (*L'Arlesiana*) e *Pluto* (*Orphée aux enfers*) per la Opera Holland Park, e *Don José* (*Carmen*) per la Welsh National Opera. Nella stagione 1999/2000 è diventato tenore principale presso la Royal Opera di Covent Garden.

Il vasto repertorio concertistico di Peter Wedd spazia da *Messiah* e *Magnificat* di Pergolesi al *Glagolitic Mass* e *Serenade for Tenor*,

Horn and Strings di Britten. Ha partecipato all'incisione dell'*Ernani* di Verdi realizzata dalla Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation.

Simon Bailey si è laureato presso il Royal Northern College of Music (valendosi di una borsa della Peter Moores Foundation) e il Clare College, Cambridge, in qualità di borsista per il coro. Terminati gli studi, Simon è stato immediatamente accettato dall'Accademia del Teatro La Scala di Milano.

Presso La Scala Simon si è esibito in vari ruoli, compreso Schaunard (*La bohème*), il Carceriere (*Dialogues des Carmélites*), Primo Apprendista (*Wozzeck*), Lakai (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) e Hobson (*Peter Grimes*), oltre a collaborare con James Conlon, Riccardo Muti, Jeffrey Tate e il defunto Giuseppe Sinopoli. Si è esibito anche nella *Turandot* e in *Un giorno di regno* di Verdi.

Recentemente Simon Bailey ha debuttato nella prima mondiale della *Tatjana* di Coghi, diretta da Peter Stein a La Scala, e si è esibito nel suo primo importante allestimento di *Le nozze di Figaro* per l'Opéra de Rouen. Presto apparirà in una serie di ruoli per la Oper Frankfurt, che includeranno Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*) e Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*).

La carriera di cantante di Geoffrey Mitchell racchiude un repertorio notevole che spazia dalla musica antica a quella contemporanea e che l'ha portato in Scandinavia, Germania, nella ex Cecoslovacchia, in Canada e Australasia. L'esperienza di direzione degli inizi con la BBC lo ha condotto ad un maggiore coinvolgimento con i suoi stessi cantanti e inoltre alla creazione del **Geoffrey Mitchell Choir**. Le prime registrazioni sono sfociate nel coinvolgimento a lungo termine del Coro con Opera Rara, per la quale ha inciso più di trenta registrazioni. Il Coro gode di una fama sempre maggiore con ulteriore lavoro dalla BBC e da case discografiche internazionali. Per la Chandos il Geoffrey Mitchell Choir ha partecipato a numerose registrazioni nelle applaudite serie di Opera in English con il patrocinio della Peter Moores Foundation.

Il **New London Children's Choir** è stato fondato dal suo Direttore Musicale Ronald Corp nel 1991 con lo scopo di permettere ai bambini di conoscere gli elementi di sfida e divertimento insiti nel canto e nell'esibizione per quanto riguarda tutti i tipi di musica. Da allora il Coro si è esibito nei principali auditori di Londra; ha cantato con le orchestre sinfoniche e i direttori più importanti del

Regno Unito; ha collaborato con varie compagnie operistiche in Gran Bretagna e all'estero; ha partecipato a numerose incisioni e trasmissioni radio-televisive, ed è stato invitato dai festival più prestigiosi.

La vasta discografia del New London Children's Choir include incisioni dello *Schiaccianoci* di Chaikovsky, *Song of the Forests* di Shostakovich, *Ivan the Terrible* di Prokofiev, *Bethlehem* di Rutland Boughton e *Hugh the Drover* di Vaughan Williams, Sinfonia no 3 di Mahler, *The Planets* di Holst, e *St Nicolas* e *A Midsummer Night's Dream* di Britten. Ha inciso anche per il cinema e ha presentato in anteprima oltre trenta opere nuove.

Dai buoni auspici degli inizi nel 1945, quando fu creata da Walter Legge principalmente come orchestra di registrazione, la **Philharmonia Orchestra** ha continuato ad attirare alcuni fra i direttori più importanti del ventesimo secolo. Hanno collaborato più frequentemente con l'Orchestra Otto Klemperer (primo Direttore Principale), Lorin Maazel, Riccardo Muti, Giuseppe Sinopoli, Carlo Maria Giulini, Sir Andrew Davis, Vladimir Ashkenazy e Esa-Pekka Salonen. Attualmente diretta dal Direttore Principale Christoph von Dohnanyi e con

Leonard Slatkin in qualità di Direttore Ospite Principale, l'Orchestra ha consolidato la sua posizione centrale nella vita musicale britannica, non solo a Londra dove è Orchestra Residente al Royal Festival Hall, ma anche nella società in senso più ampio attraverso soggiorni sul territorio.

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

L'Orchestra si reca frequentemente all'estero in tournée ed è l'orchestra sinfonica più registrata al mondo con ben più di 1000 incisioni all'attivo. Tra queste vi sono, per Opera Rara, parecchi dischi di arie d'opera nonché undici opere complete (*Ugo, conte di Parigi*, *Ne m'oubliez pas*, *Emilia di Liverpool*, *L'assedio di Calais*, *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* e *Maria de Rudenz* di Donizetti, *Dinorah* di Meyerbeer, *Medea in Corinto* di Mayr, *Orazi e Curiazi* di Mercadante, *Maria, regina*

d'Inghilterra di Pacini e l'*Otello* di Rossini). L'Orchestra ha registrato numerosi dischi per la Chandos, tra cui, nelle serie di Opera in English con il patrocinio della Peter Moores Foundation, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Faust*, *La bohème*, *Tosca* vincitrice di un premio e otto album con recital da solista di arie d'opera (con Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny, Andrew Shore et due con John Tomlinson).

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 nove registrazioni di arie d'opera (con Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny, John Tomlinson, Andrew Shore e Della Jones), nonché *Lucia of Lammermoor*, *Aida*, *Don Giovanni*, *Ernani*, *Faust*, *Don Pasquale*, *The Elixir of Love*, *La Bohème*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *Tosca* (vincitrice di un premio) e brani scelti da *Der Rosenkavalier*, tutte in collaborazione con la Peter Moores Foundation.

Peter Moores, Nicolai Gedda and Brian Couzens during recording sessions



Mary Plazas and Jane Eaglen during recording sessions





Nicolai Gedda during
recording sessions



Mary Plazas during
recording sessions

COMPACT DISC ONE

Act I

The walls of the great Violet City: the City of the Celestial Empire. The stage is almost entirely enclosed by a semi-circle of massive bastions. On the right the curve is interrupted by a high covered portico sculptured all over with monsters, unicorns, phoenix, with pillars rising from the backs of huge tortoises.

At the foot of the portico, a heavy bronze gong is suspended from two arches.

On the bastions have been erected poles bearing the heads of victims. On the left and in the background three gigantic gates open from the walls. The curtain rises on a glorious sunset. In the distance, bathed in golden light, Peking is seen.

The square is thronged with a picturesque Chinese crowd, motionless and listening to the words of a Mandarin. From the heights of the bastions, flanked by Tartar guards in black and red, he reads a tragic decree.

Mandarin

¹ People of proud Peking!

The law is this:

Turandot the pure will marry the man who, born of royal lineage, solves the three riddles she will let him hear.

But if he cannot answer all the riddles, then his fine head will at once be chopped off!

The Crowd

Ah! Ah!

Mandarin

Because the Prince of Persia has not been favoured by fortune, the law says after moonrise the axe must slice his head off!

(The Mandarin withdraws and the crowd breaks up into increasing tumult.)

The Crowd

Kill him! Yes, kill him!

Someone call the executioner!

Quickly, quickly! Kill him!

Give him torture! Kill him! Kill him!

Quickly! Quickly!

If you are sleeping, we shall wake you up!

Pu-Tin-Pao, Pu-Tin-Pao!

To the palace, the palace!

(The crowd rushes towards the Palace. The guards push back the crowd. Many are knocked down in the clash. A confused din of frightened people. Shrieks, protests, pleadings)

Guards

Get back, you vermin!

Get back, you vermin!

The Crowd

Oh, for God's sake! Don't be so cruel!

O mother, help me! Ah! Spare my children!

Liù (in despair)

My poor master has fallen!

The Crowd

For God's sake! Aren't you human?

Oh, do not molest us!

Liù (looking round imploringly)

Who will help me,

help me lift up my master here?

My poor master has fallen...

Be kind, be kind!

The Unknown Prince (runs up, recognises his father and cries out)

Father! My father!

The Guards

Get back there!

The Unknown Prince

O father, yes, I have found you!

The Crowd

For God's sake!

Liù

Is it you here?

The Unknown Prince

Look at me!

You're not dreaming.

The Crowd

Why beat us so cruelly?

Why beat us so cruelly? Alas! Be kind!

The Unknown Prince

Father! Please listen! Father! I'm here!

Our grief is sanctified...

if God so full of mercy brings us joy as great as this!

(The crowd moves muttering and protesting. The guards push the people back and disperse them.)

Timur

Are you living, son, truly?

The Unknown Prince

Quiet!

He who robbed you of your kingdom

has set out to pursue us!

There's no refuge for either of us, father!

Timur

I imagined, my dearest son,
that you had perished!

The Unknown Prince

I've missed you, father...

and now I kiss your saintly hands!

Timur

O son, at last I've found you!

The Crowd

Let us watch the beheading!

Kill him! Kill him! Kill him! Kill him!

(Twelve executioner's assistants come out two by two. A certain space between the couples.)

Timur

² When all was lost and I was forced to flee from my throne and my kingdom,
I heard someone beside me softly saying:
'Come with me, and I will guide you!'
It was Liù!

The Unknown Prince

Blessings upon her!

Timur

Whenever I was downcast,
she dried my tears and cheered me,
even begged alms for me!

The Unknown Prince

Liù... Who are you?

Liù

Just a slave girl... nothing more, sir, just a slave
girl...

The Crowd (*outside*)

Speed up the grinder!

The Unknown Prince

And why did you choose to share such
anguish?

The Crowd (*entering*)

Speed up the grinder! Speed up the grinder!

Liù

Just because... in the palace,
you smiled on me!

The Crowd

- [3] Sharpen the axe, sharpen the axe.
Sharpen! Sharpen! Sharpen! Sharpen!

*(A group of executioner's assistants enter, preceded
by those bearing the whetstone for sharpening the
big sword.)*

The Executioner's Assistants (*savagely*)

Fiery spitting, bloody spurting,
make it sharper!
Turn the grinder!
Sharp'ning, turning, grinding, oiling, never
ceasing, always busy, thanks to Princess
Turandot!

The Crowd

Never slack'ning...
thanks to Princess Turandot!
Tender lovers, hurry forward!
O tender lovers, hurry forward!

The Executioner's Assistants

With our hooks and knives and scalpels.

The Crowd

We're waiting for you!
We are ready to adorn your pretty body!
He who strikes the gong will see
Princess Turandot appear!

The Executioner's Assistants

Yes, the Princess will appear,
pale and icy, white as crystal,
cold and cruel as a scalpel,
lovely Princess Turandot!

The Crowd

Yes the Princess will appear,
pale and icy, white as crystal,
cold and cruel as a scalpel,
lovely Princess Turandot!

Tender lovers come hurry forward!

At the crash of the gong
heads will go crashing!
What can you gain
without fortune as a lover?
Three enigmas none can solve,
so death must follow!

All

Fiery spitting, bloody spurting,
make it sharper, turn the grinder,
sharp'ning, turning! Grinding, oiling!
Never ceasing, never slack'ning
thanks to Princess Turandot!
Kill him! Kill him! Kill him! Kill him!
Ah!

*(While the assistants go off to carry the sharpened
sword to the executioner, the crowd watches the sky,
which has gradually darkened.)*

The Crowd

- [4] Is the moon never rising?
Will no face appear?
Lighten the shadows!
Quickly! Hasten! Wake up!
O gleam of horror!
O bodiless!
Hasten! Wake up!
Lighten the shadows!
Head with no body!
O bloodless! Bloodless and bodiless!
O silent lover!
Devoted lover of graveyards!

How they long for you, devoted lover, brooding
over graveyards!

O gleam of horror!
See over there a glimmer!
Come out quickly, wake up!
Head with no body, wake up!
Hasten!
Head with no body, come out!
Show yourself, resplendent radiance!
O, will no face appear?
Bloodless, pale and bodiless!
Hasten, devoted lover of graveyards!
Come, come out, wake up!
Devoted lover of graveyards!
See over there a glimmer across the heavens,
deathly radiance shining! Pu-Tin-Pao!
The moon is high now!
Pu-Tin-Pao! Pu-Tin-Pao!

Children (*outside, coming nearer*)

High in the hills of the East,
storks sang songs of the spring;
but in April no flow'rs bloomed,
and the snow refused to thaw.
All across the land from desert to sea,
hear how a thousand voices sigh:
Princess, won't you come down to me!
Then the flow'rs will smile,
ev'rything will shine! Ah!

*(The golden hue of the background has changed to
silver. The procession, leading the young Prince of
Persia to the scaffold, appears.)*

(At the sight of the victim advancing so pale and dreamy, the ferocity of the crowd is turned to pity.)

The Crowd

- [5] How young to die!
Spare him! Spare him!
How determined his footsteps! Spare him!
And how gentle his expression!
In his eyes, exaltation! Be kind!
In his eyes rapture gleaming! Be kind!
Oh, have pity!
Oh, spare his life! Princess, spare him!
Be kind and spare his life! Be kind!
Mighty Princess, spare him!
Save him! Be kind to him!

The Unknown Prince

Oh, have pity!
Let me see you, for I would curse your cruelty!
O Princess, I would curse your cruelty!

The Crowd

Be kind! Be kind!
Cruel Princess! Cruel Princess!
Be kind to him!
Oh spare his life!
(The crowd has turned towards the portico, where Turandot is to appear. Illuminated by the moon's rays and like a vision, Turandot appears. The crowd falls on its faces and only the young Prince of Persia, the huge executioner and the Unknown Prince remain standing.)

Be kind! Be kind! Be kind! Be kind, and spare his life, oh spare him, cruel Princess!

The Unknown Prince *(dazzled at the sight of Turandot)*

Most divine of all beauties, O dream of glory!
O rapture! Glorious wonder! O most divine of beauties!
O marvel, O joyous wonder, O vision of rapture,
O dream of glory!

White Priests of the Procession

O great Koungtzè!
May the soul of the departing
rise up high to you!

(The procession has passed out along the walls. In the dim light of the deserted square, only the Unknown Prince, Timur and Liù remain. The father approaches his son anxiously and tries to rouse him from his abstraction.)

Timur

- [6] Son, are you mad?

The Unknown Prince

That perfume! Can you not sense her sweet perfume,
that fills the air?

Timur

You're crazy!

The Unknown Prince

Most divine of all beauties, dream of glory!
I'm suff'ring, father, suff'ring!

Timur

No! No! Hold on to me!
Liù, make him hear you!
It's so dangerous here!
Keep his hand in your own hand, safe from danger!

Liù

My lord, let's flee this torture!

Timur

Take refuge far away!

The Unknown Prince

No, father, I must stay here!

Timur

Take refuge far away!

The Unknown Prince

I'm suff'ring, father, suff'ring!

Timur

It is dangerous here!

The Unknown Prince

No, father, I must stay!
Turandot! Turandot! Turandot!

The Prince of Persia *(as in final invocation)*

Turandot!

The Crowd *(sharp cry)*

Ah!

Timur

Must you perish like this!

The Unknown Prince

No, father, through her beauty I shall triumph!

Timur *(holding him back)*

Must you perish like this?

The Unknown Prince

I shall triumph, through her beauty I shall triumph!

(He is about to throw himself on the gong; the three grotesque Ministers (masks) bar his way. They surround the Unknown Prince and hold him back.)

The Ministers

- [7] What do you want? Who are you?
You'd better stop at once!
Away now! Off! The gate is meant for those
who go to be butchered!
Madman, away now!

Ping

Here they choke you!

Pong and Pang

Flagellate you!

Ping

And spike you!

Pong and Pang

And skin you!

Ping

And slice you and chop your head off!

Pong and Pang

Away!

Ping

You'd better quickly run away,
get back to where you came from,
and find a wall to bang your head on
if you must, but not here,
no, not here!

Pong and Pang

Away! Get back to where you came from!
What do you want?
Away! Away!

The Ministers

No, not here!
Madman, away, away!

The Unknown Prince (*trying to break through*)
No, no, you cannot stop me!

Pong

The cemet'ries are totally
occupied here!

Pang

No shortage of home-grown lunatics!

Ping

We do not want any foreign imports!

Pong and Pang

Escape, or else prepare for your own funeral!

The Unknown Prince

Don't try to hold me back!

Pong and Pang

Just for a Princess, all this!
Pah!

Pong

What is she?

Pang

Just a female
who's born with a crown on her head!

Pong

And frills around her shoulders!

Ping

But if you strip her naked...

Pong

You'll find...

Pang

She's only raw flesh...

The Ministers

That can't be eaten!
Ha, ha, ha!

The Unknown Prince (*violently*)

No, no, you cannot stop me. Get back, I say!

Ping (*with calm and dignity*)

Give up all women! Or take at least a hundred,
for even the matchless Princess
Turandot has nothing more than one face
and two arms and two legs!
Very, very pretty, yes, yes, lovely,
but always the same ones!

Suppose you had a hundred
wives to play with, you'd have two hundred arms,
and fleshy bosoms...

Pong and Pang

...fleshy bosoms...

Ping

...keeping a hundred beds warm...

Ping, Pong and Pang

...a hundred beds warm!
(*They burst out laughing.*)
Ha, ha, ha!
(*still holding the Prince back*)
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

The Unknown Prince (*violently*)

Don't try to hold me back!

The Ministers

Madman, away, away!

(*A group of handmaidens leans over the balustrade
of the Imperial loggia and with raised hands
reprimands the disturbance.*)

Handmaidens

⁸ Why so much noise?
Why all this shouting?
Be silent! Be silent!
Be quiet for the hour of sweetest slumber!
Sleep is descending on her eyelids, on Turandot.
How the scent of her perfume fills the air!

Ping (*crossly, to the maidens*)

Go away, tittle-tattling women!
(*The maidens withdraw.*)

The Ministers

Go away!
Watch for the gong!

The Unknown Prince

How the scent of her perfume fills the air!

Pang

Look at him, Pong!

Pong

Look at him, Ping!

Ping

Look at him, Pang!

Pang

Catatonic!

Pong

Quite demented!

Ping

Hallucinated!

Timur

He does not hear them, alas!

The Ministers

Come! Let all of us try!

(*The Ministers surround the Prince in grotesque
attitudes.*)

Pang

[9] Nights without a gleam of starlight...

Pong

Chimneys shut off from the daylight...

Ping

...are more lucid than the riddles of Turandot!

Pang

Bronze and iron, flint and granite...

Pong

...or your head, you stubborn blockhead...

Ping

...are not half as hard as the riddles of Turandot!

Pang

So be off now and good riddance!

Pong

Cross the mountains, swim the rivers!

Ping

But keep far away from the riddles of Turandot!

(The shadows of those who died for Turandot flit to and fro on the ramparts.)

Shadows *(offstage, mysteriously, as though from far away, with drawling sound and hands curved round the mouth)*

Hurry and call her!

She will appear then,

she who brings dreams to her buried lovers.

Let us all hear her, hear her voice speaking!

I love her! I love her! I love her!

The Unknown Prince *(strenuously resisting)*

No! No! It's I who love her!

The Ministers

Love her? You're joking! Her?

Turandot? Ha, ha, ha!

Pong

Silly boy, you're demented!

Pang

Turandot's non-existent!

Ping

The abyss that will claim you
is all that's existent!

Pong and Pang

Turandot's non-existent, non-existent!

Ping

Turandot! Just like you,
like you and all other idiots!

And us as well!

Man! The Ego! God!

Even Emp'ors! Pu-Tin-Pao!

Pang

You will kill yourself like all the idiots who loved
her, you will kill yourself!

Pong

Just like you and all other idiots,
nothing real except the Tao!

The Unknown Prince *(shaking off the ministers)*

No, I'll be the victor!

And she will love me!

(He is about to dart up to the gong, when the executioner appears on the top of the rampart, holding up the Prince of Persia's severed head.)

The Ministers

Stupid! That is what love brings!

The deathly moon will be the one who'll kiss you!

Timur *(entreating him in despair)*

O son, do you want me to carry alone the
unbearable weight of my tortured old age
through the whole world?

Oh help me! Can no human voice make
your inhuman heart show some feeling?

Liù *(approaching the Unknown Prince and tearfully beseeching him)*

[10] I beg you, hear me, Ah, my lord, I beg you!

Liù can bear no more!

Her heart will break alas, alas!

How far I've wandered,

your name always within my soul,

your name always upon my lips!

But if tomorrow

your fate should be decided,

we shall die on the lonely road of exile!

He will no longer have a son,

I'll lack the shadow of a smile!

Liù can bear no more! Don't be harsh!

(She falls to the ground, sobbing and spent.)

The Unknown Prince *(approaching Liù, much moved)*

[11] Don't cry for me, Liù!

If once so long ago

my smile entranced you,

then in return, now, gentle as you are, Liù,

please hear me: your master

may be after tomorrow all alone in the wide
world...

Please do not leave him, stay with him come
what may!

Liù

We shall die on the lonely road of exile!

Timur

We shall die!

The Unknown Prince

Make the road for him sweeter by your kindness!

This then, this then, by the love in your heart,
your resolute devotion, this I ask you!

Please do not fail me,
who now can smile no more!

Timur *(desperately)*

[12] Ah! How can you ignore us?

Liù

Break away from this sorcery!

(The Ministers, who had retired, draw near again.)

The Ministers

To live is such a blessing!

Timur

Have you no thought for me?

Liù

Will you not pity Liù?

The Ministers

To live is such a blessing!

Timur

Have you no thought, no heart, no love for me?

I cannot be parted from you!

Be kind! Be kind!

I kneel here before you, imploring!

Have you no heart?

Don't condemn me to die here!

The Unknown Prince

No, I'm the one asking for love!

I no longer hear you!

I still see her beauty before me!

I see her! She calls me! She is there!

He asks you pardon

whose smile shall never, shall never shine again!

Liù

Have mercy, my lord! Will you not pity Liù?

Have mercy, lord, be kind to Liù!

The Ministers

Why throw your life away?

Grab hold of him! Take him away!

Grab hold of that lunatic madman.

Take him away! Come, take him away, that madman!

Grab hold of that crazy fanatic!

You're raving mad! To live is a blessing!

Ping

Let us try once more to drag the madman off!

The Ministers

Try to drag him off! Try to drag him off!

The Unknown Prince

Leave hold of me! I've suffered too deeply!

I seek greater glory, it waits over there!

Timur

You spurn the poor heart of a father,

a heart vainly grieving, a heart vainly bleeding

for you!

The Ministers

The face that you see's an illusion!

The light that is shining is fatal!

(A light is thrown on the gong.)

The Unknown Prince

No one human can hold me or stop me!

Remorseless fate has called me!

I'm all in a fever, I am all a-quiver!

All my senses are driving me insane!

Timur

No man has succeeded, no, no one!

The heads of the suitors have all been cut off!

Liù

Have mercy! Be kind to us!

As if he'd not quite enough suffering,

but now, lord, we're doomed altogether with you!

The Ministers

You're looking at death and destruction!

...It's a ghastly delusion!

The risk you are running is frightful!

Your head will be chopped off!

How gloomy the shade of the axe-man,

how darkly, how bleakly it looms!

The Crowd *(within)*

We've dug a yawning grave for you

who risk your life for love!

And gloomy darkness shrouds, alas,

your horrible cruel fate!

Liù

We must flee now, dear master!

Timur

I kneel here before you!

Don't condemn me to die here!

The Ministers

You're heading straight for disaster!

Do not risk your one and only life!

(shouting)

The Unknown Prince

Ev'ry strand of my being with one voice

is screaming! Turandot!

All

Destruction!

The Unknown Prince

Turandot!

All

Destruction!

The Unknown Prince

Turandot!

(The Unknown Prince sounds the gong three times.)

The Ministers

We shall have to give up!

It's useless to go on

in any language, Sanskrit, Chinese, who knows

what!

At the crash of the gong, heads will go crashing!

Ha, ha, ha, ha!

The Crowd

We have dug a grave for you

who risk your life for love!

(The Prince has remained in ecstasy at the foot of the gong. Timur and Liù cling to each other in despair.)

Act II

Scene 1

A Pavilion, formed by a huge curtain curiously decorated with fantastic and symbolical Chinese figures. The scene is laid on the first floor and has three entrances: one in the centre and two at the sides.

Ping peeps through the middle opening: looks right and left and calls his companions. They enter, followed by three servants, one of whom carries a red lantern, one a green and one a yellow. These

they repair symmetrically in the middle of the stage on a low table surrounded by three stools. The servants then withdraw to the back where they remain squatting.

Ping

¹³ Hallo Pang! Hallo Pong!
(*mysteriously*)

Because the dreadful gong
is rousing the palace and stirring up the town,
be ready for ev'ry outcome:
a wedding if the stranger answers rightly,
but if he loses, another jolly funeral.

Pong (*gaily*)

Why don't I do the wedding!

Pang

And I the funeral!

Pong

The red festive lanterns for weddings!

Pang

The white sombre lanterns for funerals!

Pong

The incense and offerings...

Pang

The incense and offerings...

Pong

The sanctity of gold paper money...

Pang

Of sugar, tea-leaves and nutmegs!

Pong

A canopy of scarlet for the bridegroom!

Pang

And for the corpse a fine spacious coffin!

Pong

With priests who can sing so well...

Pang

And priests who can groan so well...

Pong and Pang

And ev'ry other damned thing
demanded by the ritual...
ev'ry tiny little detail!

Ping (*raising his arms on high*)

O China, O China,
how out of sorts and disturbed and uneasy,
you were so happy sleeping,
bloated with seven millions years of
peacefulness!

The Ministers

Life was bound and determined
by the world's oldest rules and regulations,
till the birth of... the birth of...
the birth of Turandot...

Ping

And ever since then all our celebrations
are reduced to identical amusements:

Pong

Three strokes on the gong...

Pang

...and then three riddles.

Ping

...and the chopping...

Pong

...of a head off!

Ping

...of a head off!

(All three sit down next to the little table on which the servants have laid the scrolls and, as they enumerate, they search through the scrolls.)

Pang

The year of the rat there were six.

Pong

The year of the dog there were eight.

The Ministers

And now in the current year of the tiger,
the terrible tiger,
(They count on their fingers.)
we have had so far thirteen...

We have had thirteen, including this latest!

It's so boring! So annoying!

Look at what we have become now!

Executionary servants!

Just servants of the axeman!

Ping (*His face clears up and he gazes into the distance with a homesick expression.*)

¹⁴ I've a house in fair Honan

by a lake serene and blue,
all encircled with bamboo.

But I'm here, the best years of my life all wasted,
wearing out my heart and brain on sacred
scripture...

Pang and Pong (*deeply impressed*)

...on sacred scripture.

Ping (*confirming*)

... on sacred scripture.

And I long to see that view...

Pang and Pong

...to see that view!

Ping

...of my lake serene and blue...

Pang and Pong

...serene and blue...

Pong

All encircled with bamboo!

Pong

I have forests close to Tsiang,
there are none more beautiful.
How I miss their cooling shade!

Pang

I've a garden close to Kiù
which I left when I came here,
and which I'll see no more.

Ping

How I long to see that view
of my lake serene and blue!
All encircled with bamboo!
But I'm here wearing out heart and brain
on sacred scripture!

Pang and Pong

And me!
...on sacred scripture!

Pong

How I long to be in Tsiang...

Ping

How I long to see that view...

Pang

How I long to be in Kiù...

Ping

...of my lake serene and blue...

Pong

Tsiang...

Pang

Kiù...

Ping

Honan... All encircled with bamboo!

Pong

How I long to be in Tsiang!

Pang

How I long to be in Kiù!

*(They remain motionless, in ecstasy, then rise, with
a sweeping gesture of despair.)*

The Ministers

O China! So full of wild and crazy lovers!

Pong and Pang

We've seen so many
hopeful Princes face the trial!

Ping

So many!

Pang

So many!

Ping

So many hopeful
Princes face the trial!

Pang

So many lovers!

Pong

So many!

Ping

O China, so full of wild and crazy lovers!

^[15] Do you remember when the Royal Prince of
Samarkand came?

Rashly he stood the trial
and Turandot with gracious
pleasure chopped his head off!

Voices Within

Fiery spitting,
bloody spurting,

make it sharper,
grinding, oiling,
sharp'ning, turning,
make it sharper,
turn the grinder!

Pong

And the jewel-laden Prince who came from India,
the one who wore the little bell-like earrings?
He asked for love, but she chopped his head off!

Pang

The one from Burma!

Pong

The Prince of the Kirghisi!
All butchered! All slaughtered!

Pong and Pang

All butchered! All slaughtered!

Ping

The Tartar with his bow of seven cubits,
arrayed in priceless ermine!

Voices Within

Fiery spitting,
bloody spurting,
make it sharper!
Thanks to Princess Turandot,
never ceasing, never slack'ning!

Pong

All butchered!

Pang

All slaughtered!

Ping

They were all destroyed!

Pang

Destroy them!

Pong

All slaughtered!

Ping

Destroy them!

The Ministers

All dead and slaughtered!
Farewell to love throughout all China!
Abandon hope, all you lovers!
Our divine race is done for!

*(Pong and Pang sit. Ping remains standing, to
make his invocation more effective.)*

Ping (like an invocation)

O tigress! Tigress!

The Ministers

O mighty Queen who marshals the heavens!
Grant that soon we see that night long awaited,
the supreme night of surrender!

Ping

Let *me* make sure the bridal bed is perfect!

Pong (with a descriptive gesture)

And please let *me* plump up her downy pillows!

Pang (as though scattering perfume)

And let *me* fill her bridal room with perfume!

Ping

I'll lead the couple in, and hold the lantern!

The Ministers

And then we three in the garden will sing a song...

Pong

We shall sing songs of love until the morning...

Ping

Like this:

(Ping is standing on his stool, the other two are seated at his feet and turning towards an imaginary balcony.)

The Ministers

China is free of the madness of women
who reject all the pleasures of love!
She who once was so icy and frigid
now is flaming with raging desire!
Turandot, you are ruler of China
from Tse-Kiang to the mighty Yangtze!

Ping

But your bedroom, so gorgeously furnished,
now has a master who rules over you!

The Ministers

How his kisses have made you submissive,
how their aroma has softened your heart!
Glory, glory to secret fulfilments,
making nuptials a marvel of joy!

Pong

To the silky and soft yellow bedspread,
silent witness of kisses and sighs!

The Ministers

In the garden hear how the golden
campanulas are whisp'ring their love...
How they tinkle with amorous rapture...

Ping

Ev'ry petal is gleaming with dew!

The Ministers

Glory and joy to her fine naked body,
tasting mysteries not known before!
Glory to capture and passion victorious,
bringing China to peace evermore!

(But from within, the growing clamour in the Palace recalls the three Ministers to the sad reality. Ping, jumping down from his stool exclaims:)

Ping

We were dreaming! See the palace, how it
swarms with
servants and lanterns and soldiers assembling!
The booming of the drum
in the temple calls them!
The clattering of thousands of slippers,
can't you hear it?

Pong

The blaring trumpets!
Peace? You're joking!

Pang

The trial is now beginning!

The Ministers *(They go off comically.)*

Let's go now and relish the latest execution!

Scene 2

The big square in front of the Palace. In the centre is an enormous marble staircase, which ends at the top under a triple arch. The staircase has three big landings.

Numerous servants place variously coloured lanterns everywhere. The crowd gradually fills the square.

(Mandarins arrive dressed in ceremonial garments of blue and gold. The eight wise men pass, very tall and pompous. They are old, very much alike, huge and massive. They move slowly and simultaneously. Each one carries three sealed silken scrolls, which contain the answers to Turandot's enigmas.)

The Crowd

[16] With the three enigmas ready,
eight wise men advance now gravely,
heavy with the enigmas' mystery...
(Incense begins to rise from the tripods at the top of the staircase. The three Ministers appear through the incense; they are now dressed in ceremonial coats of yellow.)

Look at Ping!

Look at Pong!

Look at Pang!

(The white and yellow standards of the Emperor pass through the clouds of incense. The standards of war pass. The incense slowly disperses. At the head of the staircase, seated on a big ivory throne, is the Emperor Altoum. He is very old, quite white, venerable, sacred, like a god appearing through the clouds.)

Glory to our Emp'ror! Oh may you live forever!
(The crowd falls prostrate in an attitude of deep respect. The square is bathed in a rosy light. The Unknown Prince stands at the foot of the staircase. Timur and Liù are on the left among the crowd, but visible to the audience.)

Glory and praise!

The Emperor *(with the weary voice of a very old man)*

[17] I am the pris'ner of a ghastly promise:
honour obliges me to keep it.
This holy sceptre I carry grows far too bloody!
Too much blood spilled!
Prince, go away!

The Unknown Prince *(resolutely)*

Offspring of heaven, I ask
to face the fateful trial!

The Emperor *(almost beseeching him)*

Can't you let me expire without
another cruel young death weighing down my
aged conscience?

The Unknown Prince *(still more insistently)*

Offspring of heaven! I ask
to face the fateful trial!

The Emperor

Do not seek yet again to fill with pain
and grief this palace and empire!

The Unknown Prince (*with increasing strength*)

Offspring of heaven! I ask
to face the fateful trial!

The Emperor (*with anger, but majestically*)

O stranger, drunk with a death wish! So be it!
Prepare to meet your fate!

*(The crowd rises from its knees. A gay procession of
women scatters flowers on the big staircase.)*

The Crowd

Glory to our Emperor!
Oh may you live forever!

(The Mandarin steps forth with the decree.)

The Mandarin (*among the general silence,
proclaims:*)

- [18] People of proud Peking!
The law is this. Turandot the pure
will marry the man, who born of royal lineage,
solves the three riddles she will let him hear.
But if he cannot answer all the riddles,
then his fine head will at once be chopped off!

Children (*offstage but audible*)

Thousands of voices sigh
across the land from desert to sea:
Princess won't you come to me!
All the world will shine!

Turandot (*She takes up her place at the foot of the
throne. Beautiful, impassive as a golden image, she
gives the Prince a cold glance and says solemnly:*)

- [19] Within this Palace a story lives forever.
A cry of anguish rang out years ago,
cry of anguish that travelled through the ages,
cries that darkened and froze my inmost soul!
Gentle Princess Lo-u-Ling,
pure, serene and so gentle, she who reigned here
in seclusion, so peaceful and in silence,
meeting firmly and proudly ev'ry vile and
insolent onslaught, you are alive in me!

The Crowd

It happened when the King of Tartar
taunted China with his seven flags!

Turandot (*evoking distant memories*)

Who can forget the horror and the terror,
who not hear still the roar and clash of conflict?
Her reign was over! Her reign was over!
And Lo-u-Ling, noble princess, was abducted
and by a man like you, just like you, O stranger,
till in a night of horror,
her fresh enchanting voice was cruelly stifled!

The Crowd

Through century after century
in her vast tomb she slumbered!

Turandot

- [20] O Princes who in caravans of splendour
travel far from your own domains
to come here, you come to try your fortune,

I will avenge on you, I will avenge that Princess
her cry of death and torture, her cry, her savage
murder!

(resolutely)

I would rather die!

I shall never, never yield!

Her horrid murder lingers
deep in my heart and soul!

No, no! I would rather die!

Ah, it lives now in me,

the glory and pureness of Lo-u-Ling!

(menacingly to the Prince)

O stranger, do not challenge your fortune!

Three enigmas must be solved or death will
follow!

The Unknown Prince

No! No! Three enigmas I shall solve, and life will
follow!

The Crowd

Come, let the royal stranger
now face the dang'rous trial,
O Turandot! Turandot!

*(The trumpets sound. Silence. Turandot proclaims
the first enigma.)*

Turandot

- [21] O stranger, now listen! 'Through the sombre
darkness
flies like a ghost a luminous shadow.
Soaring with wings extended
over infinite sorrows of mankind!

All the world invokes it,
and all the world implores it!
But the ghost always flies away at sunrise
and is born within the heart,
reborn with every nightfall
but dead with ev'ry morning!

The Unknown Prince

Yes! Reborn! Reborn as exultation
with wings to lift me high:
Turandot, it is Hope.

The Sages (*they open the first scroll rhythmically*)
(It is Hope!)

Turandot (*angrily*)

Yes, it is.
Hope that will delude you always.
(She nervously comes halfway down the staircase.)
'Blazing just like a fire, yet it is not fire!
Sometimes hot as a fever! A fever
fierce and remorseless!
Inertia soon reduces it to languor!
And the moment you lose your life, it freezes!
But dreams of conquest quickly set it flaming!
It can speak with a voice that makes you tremble.
Its colour glows like the setting of the sun!'

The Emperor

Do not give up, O stranger!

The Crowd

Your life's in danger! Your life's in danger!
Answer!

Do not give up, O stranger!
Answer! Answer!

Liù (*beseechingly*)
Answer for love's sake!

The Unknown Prince
Yes, mighty Princess!
For when you gaze upon me
burning yet running cold within me,
it's blood!

The Sages (*opening the second scroll*)
(It's blood!)

The Crowd
Have courage, stranger, you will solve the
enigmas!

Turandot (*pointing out the crowd to the guards*)
Give those wretches a beating.
(*Turandot comes to the bottom of the staircase
and leans towards the Prince, who falls on his
knees.*)
'Freezing ice that will burn you
yet from your fire
grow ever colder. Clear to see, yet so gloomy!
And when it sets you free it still enslaves you!
When you're captive it hails you as a King!
(*The Prince scarcely breathes. Turandot bends over
him, as over a prey, and sneers.*)
Can't you answer! So pale with helpless terror!
For you know you will fail now! Can't you answer?
The frost that sets you flaming, can't you say?

The Unknown Prince (*bounding to his feet, exclaims*)
Ah! With my vict'ry you now belong to me!
For my fire will thaw you: Turandot!

The Sages (*opening the scroll*)
Turandot! Turandot! Turandot!

The Crowd
Turandot! Turandot!
Glory, glory to the victor!
At your triumph, let life shine
with the smile of love!
May our mighty Emp'r or be ruler for ten
thousand years,
be the light and King of the whole world!

Turandot (*Filled with anguish she mounts the
stairs again, close to the Emperor's throne.*)

[22] **Emp'r or and father! Son of Heaven!**
No, do not give your daughter
to a stranger!

The Emperor (*solemnly*)
An oath once made is sacred!

Turandot (*rebelliously*)
No, don't say so! Your daughter is sacred!
You cannot give me to him just like a slave-girl
to die in shame and sorrow!
Do not dare look at me!
You who laugh at my honour,
do not dare look at me!
I won't be yours!
No, no, I won't be yours!
I shall not, I shall not!

The Emperor (*still more solemnly*)
An oath once made is sacred!

The Crowd
An oath once made is sacred!

Turandot (*with increasing fury*)
I'll not surrender. Ah, never!

The Crowd
The Prince has won the trial!
He put his life in danger!

Turandot
I shall not be yours!

The Crowd
And you're the prize for winning!
He put his life in danger!
An oath once made is sacred!

Turandot (*to the Prince, rebelling with all her
might*)
D'you want me in your arms unwilling,
in your arms, unloving?

The Unknown Prince
No, no, O defiant Princess!
I want you all ablaze
with love!

The Crowd
You are daring!
You are noble!
You are daring!
You are mighty!

The Unknown Prince

[23] Three enigmas that you asked me, I solved them
correctly!
Now I shall ask you to answer only one:
you must tell me my name! You do not know it.
If you can tell it before the morning,
you can have my life at dawn!

(*Turandot bows her head in assent.*)

The Emperor
I pray to Heaven that, with the sunrise,
I shall call you my son!

(*The Court rises. Banners are waved. The Prince
mounts the stairs while the Imperial hymn is sung
once more.*)

The Crowd
We fall down before your feet,
Light and Ruler of the whole world!
Knowing you to be
supremely good and wise,
humbly at your feet
we present our love!
May you live for ten thousand years!
Glory to our Emp'r or! Oh, may you live for ever!
Supreme descendant of Hien-Wang,
now we cry:
Glory to our Emp'r or! Oh, may you live for
ever!
Higher, higher raise the banners!
Glory and praise! Glory and praise!

COMPACT DISC TWO

Act III

Scene 1

The Palace garden, vast and undulating; between the bushes are bronze divinities, lightly illuminated from below by the reflex of the glow from the incense-burners.

On the right five steps lead to a Pavilion, closed by a richly-embroidered curtain. This Pavilion forms an ante-chamber to one of the wings of the Palace on the side of Turandot's chambers.

It is night. From very far are heard the voices of the Heralds proclaiming the Royal edict all over the city. Other voices, from near and far, re-echo the order.

Reclining on the steps of the Pavilion, in the silence of the night, the Unknown Prince listens to the Heralds, as if he were living in another world.

Heralds

- [1] The Princess Turandot commands that this night none shall sleep throughout the City!

Distant Voices (*plaintively*)

None shall sleep now!
None shall sleep now!

Heralds (*further off*)

Before the morning his name must be discovered, and for concealment death will be the sentence!

Distant Voices

Death is the sentence! Death is the sentence!

Heralds (*still further off*)

Sleep is banished tonight throughout the city!

Distant Voices (*further off*)

None shall sleep now!
None shall sleep now!

The Unknown Prince

- [2] None shall sleep now!...

In your cold room, O Princess,
you, still awake and restless,
gaze at the starlight
that throbs with love and yearning!
But locked within me lies my name,
its myst'ry none shall ever learn!
No, no, till with my kisses on your lips
I'll speak my name when morning shines!
Yes, with a kiss the silence will be broken
and you'll be mine!

Women's Voices (*behind the scenes, rather distant*)

No one shall know the Prince's name,
and we, alas, are doomed to die...

The Unknown Prince

Dissolve, O darkness!
Fade away, O starlight!
Let the night be ended,
that I may win her love!

(The three Ministers emerge from the bushes followed by a small crowd of figures, dim in the darkness of the night and gradually increasing in number.)

Ping

You who gaze at the starlight, lower your eyes
and pay attention!

Pong

You have the pow'r to save us from destruction!

Pang

You have the power!

Ping

You heard the order!
The streets of the city, in ev'ry doorway,
death ra-ta-tats with the question: 'His name,
please?'

The Ministers

'His name, please?' or else we are done for!

The Unknown Prince

What d'you want me to say?

Ping

Just tell us now.
What do you want?

Pong

What are you seeking?

Ping

Is it love you are lacking?

Pang

What do you want?

Ping

What are you seeking?

- [3] These girls should please you!
(He pushes a group of alluringly beautiful and semi-nude maidens towards the Prince.)
See them! They're gorgeous!
Without their veils they're even better!

Pong and Pang

Flesh that you can cling to...

Ping

Ev'ry kind of delightful
sensation freely offered!

The Maidens (*surrounding the Prince*)

Ah, ah! Ah, ah!

The Unknown Prince (*resisting*)

No! No!

Pong and Pang

What then?

The Ministers

Possessions?
All of these treasures are yours!
All yours! All yours!

(At a sign, baskets, chests and bags filled with gold and precious stones are brought in.)

Ping

Darkness of night is banished...

Pong

Flaming azure!

Ping

...by the flashing of jewels!

Pang

Glittering em'ralds!

Pong

And these brilliant diamonds.

Pang

The fiery red of rubies glowing!

Ping

They are pieces of starlight!

Pong and Pang

Flaming azure!

Ping

Take them! Finders are keepers!

The Unknown Prince

No! I don't want your riches! No!

The Ministers

Would you like glory? We can arrange it all!

Pong and Pang

We'll help you journey with the stars
to fabulous unimagined Empires!

The Crowd

So get moving! So get moving!

Flee at once, go far away!

Flee at once, go far away,
so that we may all be saved!

The Unknown Prince (*raising his arms in invocation*)

Morning, hasten! Release me from this nightmare!

Ping (*more and more threatening and desperate*)

O stranger, you don't know,
to what torment the Princess will condemn us,
you don't know!

Pong and Pang

You don't know the ghastly tortures
that China may make us suffer
if you remain and keep your name still a secret!

The Ministers and Crowd

The Princess never pardons!

We shall be finished!

We'll suffer horrible torture!

We'll suffer painful torture!

The scalding irons!

Crucifixion!

The burning, biting, pinching pincers!

Extinction little by little!

Don't cruelly condemn us!

No, do not make us die!

The Unknown Prince (*absolutely firm*)

You cannot now dissuade me!

You cannot now prevent me!

To hell with China, give me Turandot!

The Crowd (*fiercely threatening the Prince with daggers*)

Not a chance! No, not a chance!

You will die before us! We're going to kill you!

You will die before us and be blasted to hell!

What's your name, your name, come, answer,
give us your answer!

The Guards (*behind the scenes, shouting*)

Here is the answer, the name is here!

(*A group of soldiers drags in old Timur and Liù, exhausted.*)

The Unknown Prince (*rushing forward crying out:*)

They do not know it, they cannot know the
answer!

Ping

Yes, the girl and the old man
who were talking last evening with you!

The Unknown Prince

Let go of them!

Ping

They'll tell us what your name is!

(*to the guards*)

Where were they when you found them?

The Guards

They were loitering there, close to the palace!

The Ministers and Crowd

Noble Princess! Royal Princess!

(*Turandot appears – they all fall prostrate on the ground... only Ping advances with great humility and says:*)

Ping

Pure and heavenly Princess! The secret name of
the stranger,
within these silent mouths it is hidden.
We have the instruments to prise them open,
and by extraction of their teeth get the answer!

Turandot (*haughty and ironical*)

4 How pale you look, O stranger!

The Unknown Prince

It's you in your terror
veiling my face with morning's feeble pallor!
They do not know me, not at all!

Turandot (*challenging him*)

You're lying!

Old man, we're waiting!

I want to hear your answer!

(*They seize Timur again.*)

His name is?

Liù (*stepping quickly up to Turandot*)

The name you want is known by me alone!

The Crowd

The nightmare's over, now we shall not die!

The Unknown Prince

You cannot know it, slave girl!

Liù

I know his secret...

and it thrills me to keep it

within my heart

where no one else can find it!

The Crowd

Let the girl be bound and tortured,
till she answers, till you've killed her!

The Unknown Prince (*standing in front of Liù to protect her, threateningly*)

You shall pay for what you do to her!
You shall answer for her torment!

Turandot (*violently to the guards*)
Take hold of him!

(*A guard shackles the Unknown Prince's feet and holds the rope-ends, while two other soldiers seize hold of his arms. Turandot resumes her aloof attitude.*)

Liù

They shall not make me speak!

(*Liù is held down kneeling on the ground.*)

Ping

Who is he?

Liù

No!

Ping

Who is he?

Liù

I humbly beg your forgiveness, but I cannot say!

(*A soldier twists her wrist.*)

Ah!

Timur

Why are you crying?

The Unknown Prince

Let go of her!

Liù

No... no... I'll cry no more! They have not hurt me!

No, no one has touched me.

(*to the soldiers*)

Twist harder... only bind my mouth,
I beg you, lest he should hear me!

(*weakening*)

I can bear no more!

The Crowd

Answer! Tell his secret!

Turandot

Let her go now!

Answer!

Liù

No. I'd rather die!

Turandot

What can it be that gives your heart such
courage?

Liù

Mighty Princess, for I love him!

Turandot

You love him?

Liù (*raising her eyes full of tenderness*)

[5] Yes, I love him so deeply, with secret feelings
so deep and strong that these dark tortures bring

great joy to my heart, because it is for him
my pain is given...

And by my silence I shall give him even more...

Your love too, great Princess, I shall give him, by
losing all I have,

by giving up the hopeless dream I cherished!

(*to the guards*)

So shackle me and torture me!

Torment me endlessly!

Punish me!

Ah! As an ultimate offer of my love.

Turandot (*violently*)

Tear out this woman's secret!

Ping

Go summon Pu-Tin-Pao!

The Unknown Prince (*struggling violently*)

No, devil take you!

The Crowd (*yelling*)

Destroy her! Destroy her! Destroy her!

Ping

Intensify the torture!

The Crowd (*savagely*)

Lay on the torture!

Yes, destroy her!

Answer!

Lay on the torture!

(*The executioner appears.*)

Liù (*desperately*)

I cannot bear it!

I can suffer no more!

Release me, I implore you!

(*trying to break through the crowd that surrounds her*)

Release me, I implore you!

The Crowd

Answer! Answer!

Liù

Yes, mighty Princess, I shall speak!

[6] You who with ice are shrouded,
will soon by fire be melted:

love for him will claim you too!

Love for him will conquer you!

Now that the day is dawning,

I shall close my eyes for ever...

so that he yet may win you,

while I shall see his face no more!

(*In a flash, she snatches a dagger from a soldier and stabs herself. She looks around with agonised eyes – looks at the Prince with intense tenderness, staggers towards him and falls dead at his feet.*)

The Crowd (*yelling*)

Ah! Answer! Answer! Who is he? Who is he?

The Unknown Prince

Ah! Life surrendered, dead and finished,

O my poor little Liù!...

(*There is a long terrified silence.*)

Timur (*totters up and kneels down by her*)

7 Liù!... Liù!...

Wake up! It is the hour
when all should be waking!
Bright morning... little dove...
Open your eyes my dearest!

Ping (*goes up to Timur*)

Come along, get up! She's dead now!

Timur (*with a cry*)

Ah! Disastrous horror! We are all of us guilty!
Liù's wounded spirit will demand revenge!

(*With religious solemnity the little corpse is carried away, in the midst of the deep respect of the crowd.*)

The Crowd

Innocent phantom, do not bring us to evil!
Agonised spirit, forgive us!

Timur

Liù, so good! Liù, so gentle!
(*taking the dead girl's little hand in his*)
Ah! Let us walk together even further...
like this, your hand and my hand held together!
I know where you've gone.
And I shall follow you:
we shall rest beside each other
in the endless night that knows no morning!

Ping

Never have I been witness
to a death so mysteriously impressive!

Pong (*with profound compassion*)

What is this painful feeling, within my ageing
heart, that so disturbs me?

Pang

How that young girl, by dying,
places on my old heart a heavy burden!

(*The sad procession moves away.*)

The Crowd

Liù, so good, forgive us, forgive us!
Liù, so good! Liù, so gentle! Softly sleep!
Liù! Gracious spirit!

(*They have now all departed. The Prince and Turandot remain alone, facing each other. The Princess, rigid as a statue under her ample veil, remains motionless.*)

The Unknown Prince (*with sombre impetuosity*)

8 Deathly Princess, so heartless!
Icy Princess, so monstrous!
Leave your tragic remoteness!
Come, descend from your heaven!
Do not keep yourself hidden!
Lift your veil and be human!
See what Liù has surrendered:
purest blood shed for you!

(*He rushes towards her and tears off her veil.*)

Turandot (*authoritatively*)

Stranger, you are too daring!
I am no earthly creature...

I am the daughter of heaven...
pure and unfettered.
You've torn through my icy cover,
but still my soul is on high!

The Unknown Prince

Though your soul may be skyborn,
here beside me dwells your body!
With my smouldering fingers
I shall fondle the gleaming
golden hem of your garment...
and my quivering kisses
I shall press on your mouth!

Turandot

Do not defile me!

The Unknown Prince

Ah! To feel you living!

Turandot

Don't touch me!

The Unknown Prince

To feel you living!

Turandot

Do not defile me!

The Unknown Prince

There's no ice in your body!

Turandot

No! I shall not be yours!

The Unknown Prince

You shall be mine!

Turandot

The shame of Lo-u-Ling shall
never re-occur! Ah! No!

The Unknown Prince

You shall be mine!

Turandot

Do not defile me, stranger!
This is an outrage!

The Unknown Prince

No! A kiss from you will grant eternal life!

Turandot

An outrage!

(*In saying these words, strong in the conviction of his right and of his love, he takes Turandot in his arms and kisses her passionately. Turandot offers no resistance against so much impetuosity, her voice fails her, she has no more strength or will.*)

Turandot (*with accents of supplication, almost childlike, she murmurs:*)

9 What have you done? Destroyed me!

The Unknown Prince

My flower!

O my flower of the morning!
My flower, how I breathe you!
As fragrant as a lily
you tremble as I hold you!
You are melting
and fainting now with
sweetness, white and tender
in your silvery garment!

Turandot

How have you conquered?

The Unknown Prince

Weeping?

Turandot

It's morning! It's morning! It's morning!
But my sun is setting!

Distant Voices

Morning, light and living!
All is perfect!
All is holy!
In your weeping
such sweet gladness!

The Unknown Prince

It's morning! It's morning!
And love wakes with the sunlight.

Turandot

Would that none could see me...
All my glory is ended!

The Unknown Prince (*with impetuous fervour*)

No! It is beginning!

Turandot

I am disgraced!

The Unknown Prince

O miracle! Now your glory is shining
in the enchantment of your first kiss,
of your first tears.

Turandot (*transformed – exaltedly*)

Of my first tears.
Ah!

- [10] I never wept before O stranger,
yet when I saw you,
for the first time I felt
a sudden premonition
that you might so
torment me.
I have seen many men die
for me!
And I despised them:
only you I feared!
You had the light of heroes
in your eyes, shining light!
You had the light of triumph
when you dared to approach me...
And for that light I reviled you,
and that light made me love you.
I was torn and divided
by my conflicting passions:
crush you or be at your mercy?
But I was crushed... Ah!
Crushed, but not when you solved the riddles,
(*in veiled tones*)
but by this passion which has come from you!

The Unknown Prince

You're mine now, mine now!

Turandot

Stranger, all that you wanted
you have achieved! Do not seek

a greater victory!

Leave now, O stranger,
with your name unknown!

The Unknown Prince

I have no secret! No, no more! Be mine now!
You who tremble if I touch you,
you who quiver when I kiss you,
can kill me if you wish,
for together my life and name I give you:
I am Calaf, son of King Timur!

Turandot

Now I know you! Now I know you!

Calaf

All my glory lies in your arms!

Turandot

Listen! Trumpets are sounding!

Calaf

And all my life rests now in your kiss!

Turandot

Calaf! It's time!
It's time for the trial!

Calaf

I'm not frightened!

Turandot

Ah! Calaf, prepare to face the crowd with me!

Calaf

Now you have won!

Scene 2

The outside of the Imperial Palace, all sculptured in white marble, tinted like flowers by the rosy reflection of the dawn.

On a high staircase in the centre of the scene, is the Emperor, surrounded by his court, his dignitaries, wise men and soldiers.

On both sides of the square the huge crowd forms a semi-circle.

The Crowd

- [11] Glory to our Emp'r'r! Oh, may you live for ever!

Turandot

Noble father, I now can speak the name
of the stranger!
(*looking straight at Calaf who is at the foot of the staircase*)
And his name is Love!

(*Calaf runs swiftly up the stairs and the lovers embrace, while the crowd scatters flowers and bursts into rejoicings.*)

The Crowd

Love! O love, O sun, eternal life!
The sun that lights the world is love!
In our laughter and singing and delight we shine
like the sun above!
Like the sun! Glory!

English translation by William Radice

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Peter Sidhom, Mark Le Brocq,
Peter Wedd during recording
sessions



Clive Bayley during
recording sessions



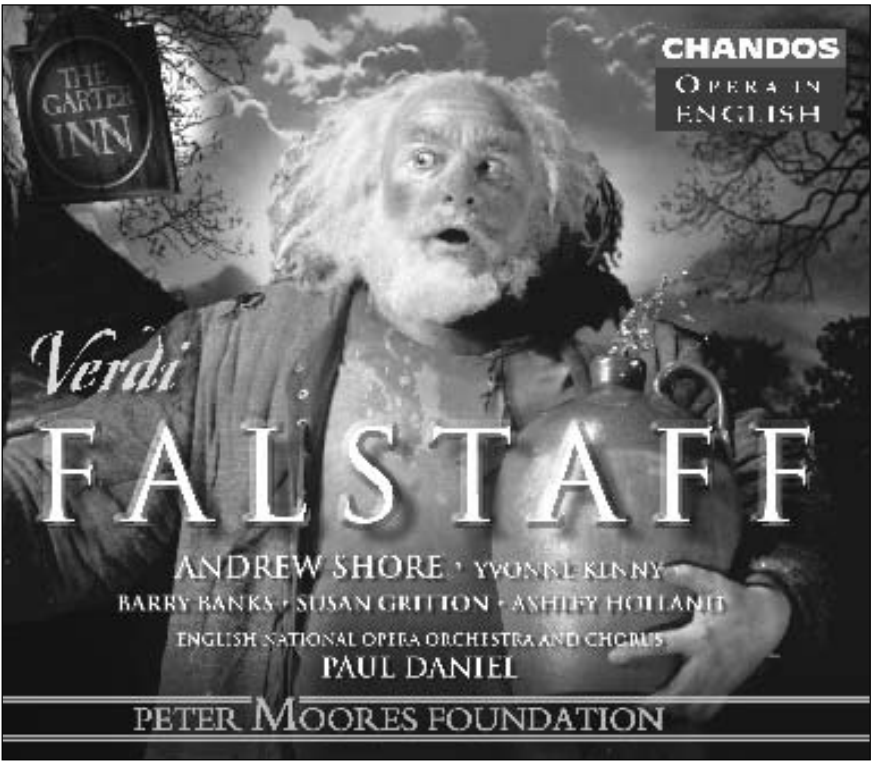
Mary Plazas and Peter Moores
during recording sessions



Simon Bailey during
recording sessions

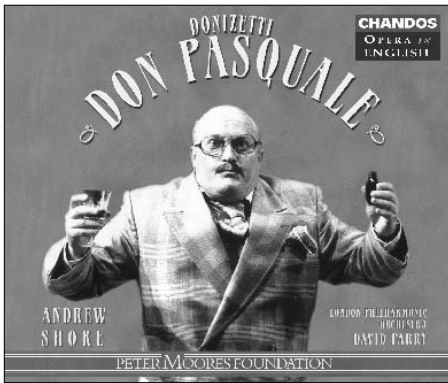


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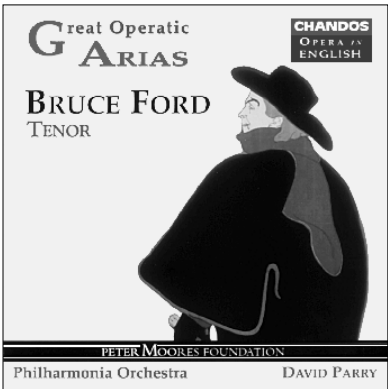


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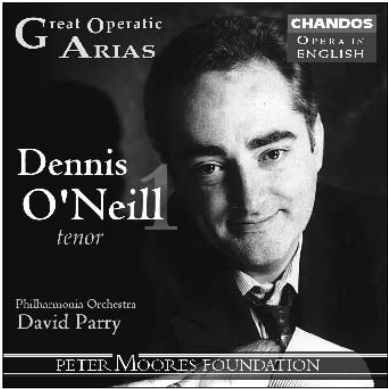


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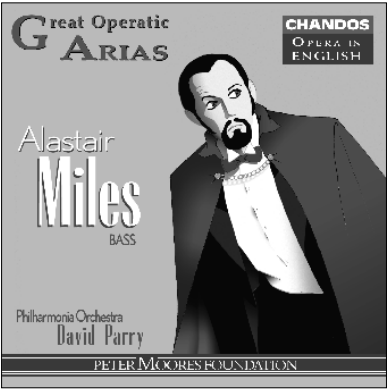
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CHAN 3013



CHAN 3010



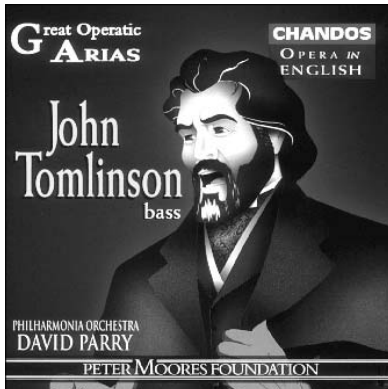
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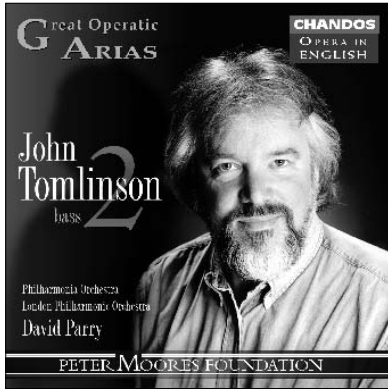
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CHAN 3044

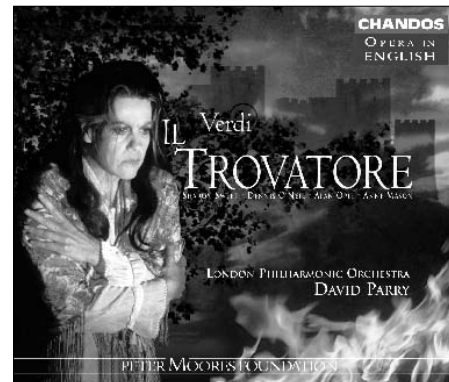


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CHAN 3023(2)



CHAN 3067

Opera in English on Chandos



CHAN 3004



CHAN 3003



CHAN 3005(2)

Opera in English on Chandos



CHAN 3007



CHAN 3014(3)



CHAN 3057(3)



CHAN 3022

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CHAN 3042(2)



CHAN 3033(2)



CHAN 3019(3)



CHAN 3029

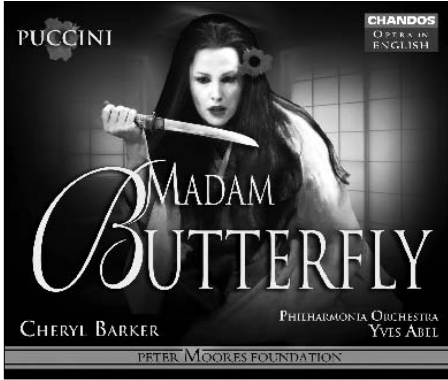
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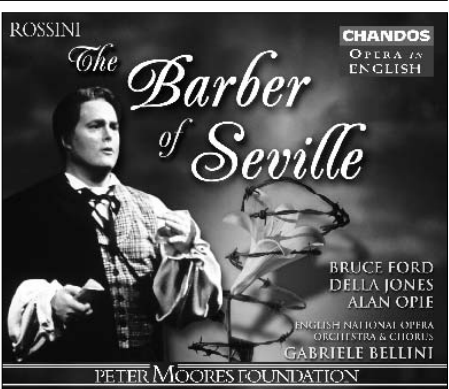


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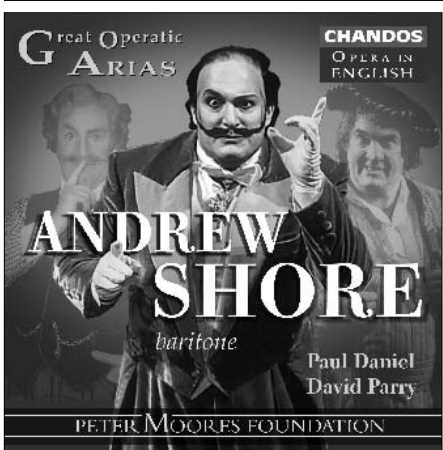


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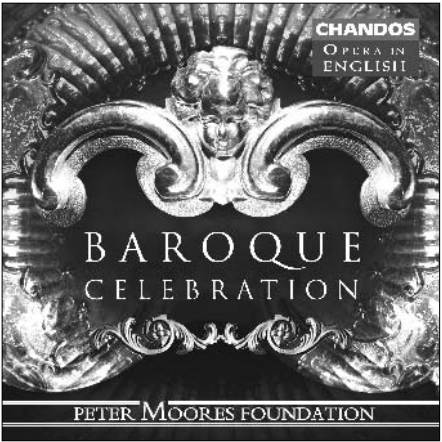


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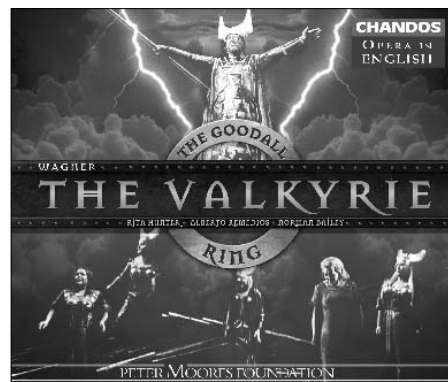


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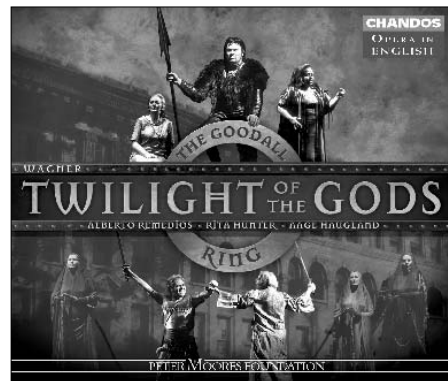
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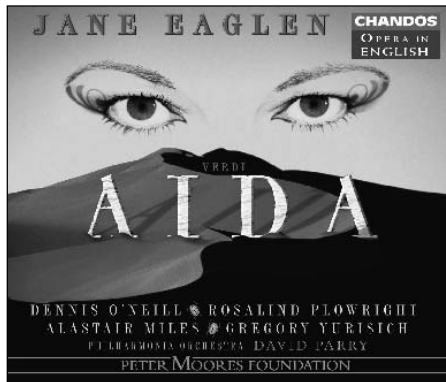
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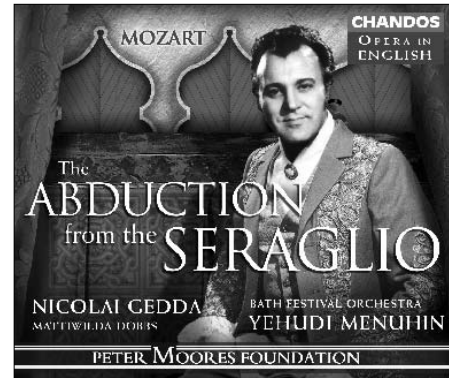
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Jane Eaglen appears courtesy of Sony Classical

Booklet photographs of The Royal Opera's production of *Turandot*, and photographs from the recording sessions by Bill Cooper

Artistic Consultant to the Peter Moores Foundation: Patric Schmid

Staging director and off-stage conductor: Charles Kilpatrick

Staging: Stuart Stratford

Vocal and language consultant: Ludmilla Andrew

Recording producer Brian Couzens

Sound engineer Ralph Couzens

Assistant engineer and editor Christopher Brooke

Operas administrator Sue Shortridge

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Giacomo Puccini (1858–1924)

Turandot

Lyric drama in three acts

Libretto by Giuseppe Adami and Renato Simoni, after Gozzi's dramatic fairy-tale

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The Emperor Altoum, her father.....	Nicolai Gedda <i>tenor</i>
Timur, the dispossessed King of Tartary.....	Clive Bayley <i>bass</i>
Calaf, his son.....	Dennis O'Neill <i>tenor</i>
Liù, a slave-girl.....	Mary Plazas <i>soprano</i>
Ping, Grand Chancellor.....	Peter Sidhom <i>baritone</i>
Pang, General Purveyor } Ministers.....	Mark Le Brocq <i>tenor</i>
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