

CHAN 10197(2)



→ David Parry



Jonathan Dove **Flight**



Jonathan Dove

Lebrecht Music Collection

Jonathan Dove (b. 1959)

Flight

An opera in three acts

Libretto by April De Angelis

live recording

Refugee.....Christopher Robson *countertenor*
ControllerClaron McFadden *soprano*
BillRichard Coxon *tenor*
TinaMary Plazas *soprano*
Older WomanNuala Willis *mezzo-soprano*
Stewardess.....Ann Taylor *mezzo-soprano*
Steward.....Garry Magee *baritone*
Minskman.....Steven Page *bass-baritone*
MinskwomanAnne Mason *mezzo-soprano*
Immigration OfficerRichard Van Allan *bass-baritone*

**Glyndebourne Festival Opera
London Philharmonic Orchestra
David Parry**

COMPACT DISC ONE

Act I

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[1] 'Look! Up there' <i>Refugee, Controller</i>	4:25	p. 64
[2] 'Darling!' <i>Bill, Tina, Refugee</i>	2:49	p. 64
[3] 'Excuse me. Have you any English money?' <i>Refugee, Bill, Tina</i>	1:10	p. 65
[4] 'Welcome travellers. Thank you for travelling Tri-Star' <i>Controller</i>	0:55	p. 66
[5] 'Do I look conspicuous?' <i>Older Woman, Refugee, Controller</i>	2:27	p. 66
[6] 'Welcome. We're always smiling as you can see' <i>Steward, Stewardess, Refugee, Older Woman</i>	3:02	p. 66
[7] 'Down you go. Scurry down' <i>Controller</i>	3:04	p. 67
[8] 'That's us.' 'Is that us?' <i>Minskman, Minskwoman, Controller, Older Woman</i>	3:49	p. 68
[9] 'No! I don't seem able to go' <i>Minskwoman, Minskman, Controller, Refugee</i>	3:28	p. 69
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[11] 'What have I just done? Why couldn't I go?' <i>Minskwoman</i>	1:14	p. 71
[12] 'Excuse me. Have you a hat or a scarf?' <i>Refugee, Older Woman, Stewardess, Steward, Tina, Bill, Controller</i>	3:07	p. 71

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[13] 'Look who's coming!' <i>Controller, Refugee, Minskwoman, Bill, Tina, Older Woman, Steward, Stewardess</i>	3:05	p. 72
[14] 'Gone.' 'Time to be gone' <i>Refugee, Tina, Controller, Bill, Minskwoman, Older Woman, Steward, Stewardess</i>	4:02	p. 73
[15] 'Disgusting.' 'Record lusting' <i>Controller, Bill, Tina, Older Woman, Minskwoman</i>	3:20	p. 74
[16] 'Due to circumstances beyond our control' <i>Controller, Refugee</i>	1:47	p. 74

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[19] 'I know. We could do the business with our trolleys' <i>Stewardess, Older Woman, Minskwoman, Steward, Tina, Bill</i>	1:44	p. 77
[20] Orchestral interlude	1:10	p. 78
[21] 'Fierce night. Jagged light' <i>Controller</i>	1:34	p. 78
[22] 'I bought this suitcase in New York' <i>Minskwoman, Steward, Stewardess, Bill, Refugee, Older Woman, Tina</i>	5:36	p. 78
[23] 'The thing about people is' <i>Controller</i>	1:08	p. 79

TT 64:55

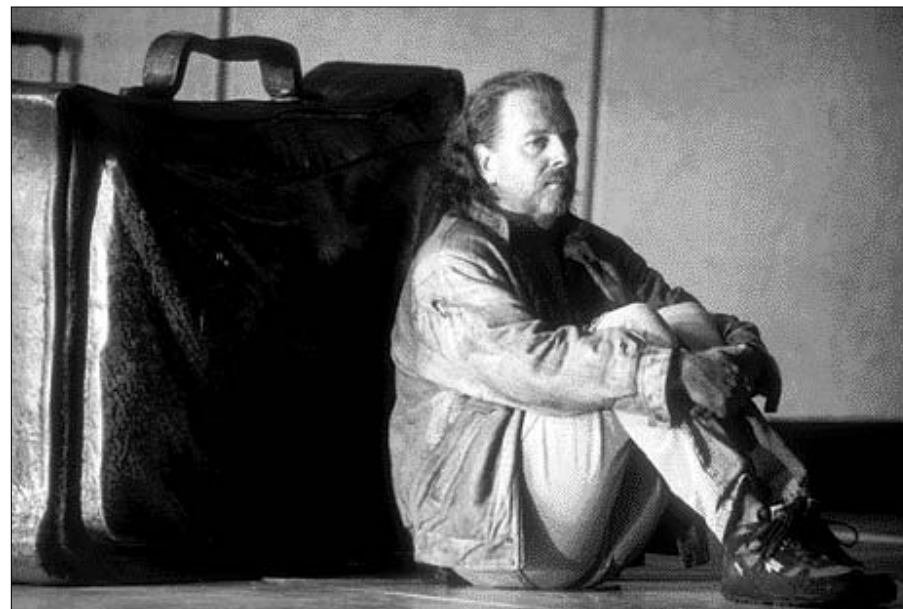
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[1] 'About this stone. Is it true?' <i>Older Woman, Refugee, Tina, Bill, Minskwoman, Steward, Stewardess, Controller</i>	5:59	p. 79
[2] 'A wish for me. I'm wishing for my brother' <i>Refugee, Bill, Steward</i>	1:33	p. 82
[3] 'Excuse me, can I trouble you for some advice?' <i>Older Woman, Tina, Minskwoman, Stewardess, Bill</i>	1:49	p. 82
[4] 'What's this for?' 'Let's see...' <i>Bill, Steward, Older Woman, Tina, Stewardess, Minskwoman</i>	1:09	p. 83
[5] 'He's lucky' <i>Women, Refugee, Older Woman, Controller, Tina, Stewardess, Minskwoman</i>	1:39	p. 83
[6] 'You have a stone?' <i>Women, Refugee</i>	1:13	p. 84
[7] 'I believed in miracles' <i>Older Woman, Minskwoman, Stewardess, Tina, Refugee, Controller, Bill, Steward</i>	3:36	p. 84
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[8] 'What a dreadful night' <i>Women, Controller</i>	1:16	p. 86
[9] 'A plane is coming!' <i>Controller, Older Woman</i>	2:08	p. 86
[10] 'I flew back immediately. I'm not angry' <i>Minskman, Minskwoman, Tina, Bill, Steward</i>	2:53	p. 86
[11] 'Oh my goodness!' <i>Bill, Tina, Steward, Stewardess</i>	4:36	p. 87

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[12] 'Oh look, he isn't moving' <i>Stewardess, Older Woman, Minskman, Steward</i>	0:42	p. 89
[13] 'Ow!' 'What is it?' <i>Minskwoman, All</i>	3:06	p. 90
[14] 'It's so small' <i>All, Minskwoman</i>	1:05	p. 90
[15] 'New, wondrous, nothing so new as you' <i>Refugee, Tina, Stewardess, Older Woman, Controller, Minskwoman, Bill, Minskman</i>	7:14	p. 90
[16] 'He's coming back! Get in the trunk!' <i>Controller, Refugee, Immigration Officer, Women, Men</i>	2:52	p. 92
[17] 'Surely you can be magnanimous on such a day as this' <i>Minskman, Minskwoman, Immigration Officer, Tina, Steward, Stewardess</i>	2:11	p. 93
[18] 'You can't fool rules' <i>Immigration Officer, Older Woman, Bill, Steward, Tina, Refugee, Controller</i>	1:40	p. 94
[19] 'Dawn, still darkness...' <i>Refugee</i>	6:13	p. 94
[20] 'But look at me now' <i>Refugee, Immigration Officer, Stewardess, Older Woman, Minskwoman, Minskman</i>	2:35	p. 94
[21] '...I can't do much for you...' <i>Immigration Officer, Older Woman, Steward, Bill, Tina, Stewardess</i>	1:11	p. 94
[22] '...Flights to Minsk and places smarter...' <i>Controller, Older Woman, Minskman, Minskwoman, Bill, Tina, Steward, Stewardess, Refugee</i>	3:04	p. 95
[23] 'A frozen man falling like a frozen star' <i>Refugee, Controller</i>	4:21	p. 95

TT 64:17



Minskwoman and Tina (Anne Mason and Mary Plazas)



Refugee (Christopher Robson)



Bill, Tina, Older Woman, Stewardess and Steward (Richard Coxon, Mary Plazas, Nuala Willis, Ann Taylor and Garry Magee)



Tina and Bill (Mary Plazas and Richard Coxon)

Dove: Flight

Successful new operas are rare birds, which is nothing new. Think of the hundreds and hundreds of new works of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries of which not much has been heard of since. Successful new comic operas are even rarer nowadays. How many have there been since Britten's *Albert Herring* (1947)? New operas that audiences actually enjoy rather than – be honest! – tolerate as a necessary penance before guiltily scurrying off to the next revival of *Le nozze di Figaro* are just as rare.

On all those counts Jonathan Dove's *Flight* counts as a rare and heart-warming success. It was commissioned by Glyndebourne, premiered by the touring wing in 1998 in a witty and spectacular production by Richard Jones, and given at the summer festival the following year. It was televised by Channel 4, and has since been successfully staged across Europe and in the USA.

The mainstream musical press has been near-universally enthusiastic, some writers almost unable to conceal their surprise that sitting through a new opera could be such a pleasurable experience. One of the most perceptive notices came from the television critic Victor Lewis-Smith, who described *Flight*

as 'a piece that made opera look like a thriving art form and not an elegant fossil. It's never easy to create accessible art without compromising integrity, but Dove and [his librettist] De Angelis have succeeded gloriously'. Now *Flight* is on CD, and not the least pleasure of this live performance is hearing so much audience laughter.

Flight did not spring from nowhere. Surely wisely, Dove, who was then nearing forty, had served an arduous apprenticeship of his own devising before embarking on his first full-length, full-scale opera. There were smaller works, including the appropriately beguiling *Siren Song* (1994) in one act for Almeida Opera, and in the same year an opera for the intimate Batignano Festival in Tuscany, *L'Augellino Belverde* (*The Little Green Bird*) (since followed by three more). Smaller still was the 'operina' *Greed* (1993), which lasted just six minutes.

More significantly, he was greatly experienced in writing community operas, three of them for Glyndebourne. In 1998 *Flight* was premiered, followed in 1999 by *Tobias and the Angel* for Almeida Opera and *The Palace in the Sky* (Hackney Empire, 2000). He had written innumerable scores of incidental music for the theatre and was to compose music for such

special occasions as the opening of both the Millennium Dome and the Millennium Bridge. (Well, at least the music worked.) Britten famously wrote that he wanted his music to be 'useful', and Dove seems to be following his example. Nothing could have been more 'useful' than his enchanting little opera for primary schools in East London, where he lives, *The Hackney Chronicles* (2001).

Perhaps most significantly of all, as a young man he had worked with City of Birmingham Touring Opera (now the Birmingham Opera Company), who commissioned reduced orchestrations of operas as diverse as *La Cenerentola*, the *Ring* (in the process reducing Wagner's four evenings to two), Janáček's *Vixen* (which has enjoyed especially wide circulation), *The Magic Flute* and *Falstaff*. Accumulating such intimate knowledge of masterworks of the past, of the sheer mechanics, the nuts and bolts of operas that last, must have been invaluable experience, quite apart from acquiring as much expertise about orchestration as could be gleaned from any number of learned treatises.

Also invaluable through his community work was writing for non-operatic audiences and non-professional performers. By the time he came to write *Flight* he had learned what works in the theatre, what doesn't work, what should work but can't and, most importantly, why. He was ready to take *Flight*.

Dove has more often than not engaged with playwrights as his librettists, David Lan, Nick Dear and, here as elsewhere, April De Angelis. *Flight* is customarily described as a comic opera, which it is, despite not being anywhere so designated. But like *Albert Herring* it is a great deal more than that. You almost feel guilty for having laughed so much when the Refugee's profoundly moving narrative hits you in the gut in the final minutes. An airport departure lounge is as valid a microcosm of the human condition as, say, the Almoviva household in *Figaro*. Airports are places of transition, of adventure, of change. At least three relationships are in a state of flux, and at least two are healed and maybe granted added depth.

Much in the libretto is nothing if not original, quite apart from the setting. This must be the first on-stage childbirth in operatic literature, and aeroplanes take off twice. Yet there is much about it that is from the mainstream of operatic tradition. The lay-out of day/night/day echoes that of *Tristan und Isolde*. Night is that dangerous time when the unpredictable may happen. Homoeroticism is nothing new in opera, though it has usually been presented in code, and while Bill does nothing so banal as to 'come out', he at least opens the door and pokes a foot outside. This is part of a startling echo of another

traditional episode of middle-act 'night' madness, the *Meistersinger* riot. Here Bill is surprising himself while the others slide into drunkenness and violence. Curtain-fall comes as something of a relief.

There is operatic magic in the form of the Refugee's stones, which you can believe in if you need to. There are two near-operatic 'gods', or figures of authority: the icy Controller and the Immigration Officer. Both fulfil the function of *deus ex machina*, the Officer turning out to be surprisingly benign (as much of a near-subversive *coup* as the concept of a 'good' policeman in Weill's *Silbersee*) and the Controller maybe contriving a Happy End in the enigmatic final moments. Nothing is pat in De Angelis's text: like all good librettists, she leaves plenty – if not everything – for the music to do. Her short, muscular lines and her canny use of rhyme and assonance form an ideal springboard for Dove to exploit his rhythmical exuberance and easy melos.

As many commentators have noted, Dove has absorbed everything that has been going on in the musical world around him. Britten, of course, all of Broadway from Rodgers to Sondheim, the Russians (he knows what an ostinato can do as well as did Shostakovich and Prokofiev), the major and minor minimalists (fill in your own names). He is not

afraid of the grandiose romantic gesture: there are big-boned tunes, lushly orchestrated. It is daring to write tunes nowadays, and he is equally daring with his big theatrical effects. The two aircraft take-offs must, apart from anything else, have been enormous fun to write, and the second one reminds us that Dove had worked on *Rheingold*.

His word-setting is surely Britten-inspired. It is so natural, so indivisible from the vocal lines, so suggestive of character, whether the simple innocence of Tina and Bill or the melancholy of the Older Woman. The accompaniment of the vocal lines fills in what the words don't say, which in large part is what opera is all about. Strings suggest the tenderness beneath the apparently banal exchanges of Tina and Bill, and – airports are as full of boring people as saloon bars – Dove's music makes potential bores interesting, if not arresting (he knows his Noël Coward, too). He can set a line in a way that will not only get a laugh, but earn it. Above all he commands extraordinary, if not unique technical skill in the way he can set two conversations at once yet ensure that the words of both are audible, or allow lines we need to hear emerge naturally from a complex ensemble. These are great gifts.

The structure of the whole work, the varied dramatic pace, the placing of arias and

ensembles, all denote a born opera composer, and one who is aware of the past. Storms are almost an operatic cliché, but they never fail, and neither Rossini nor Wagner need be ashamed of Dove's. The sheer beauty of the soprano voice in the high register is another long-standing operatic stand-by, and it would be senselessly bloody-minded to eschew it. Dove hasn't – witness his magical writing for the Controller. A patter ensemble reminds one that Dove worked on *Cenerentola* as well as *Rheingold*, and the comic possibilities of coloratura are exploited to hilarious effect in the third act.

Composers have always learned something from their predecessors, Mozart from Gluck, Verdi from Donizetti, Wagner from Weber. True originals are as rare as successful new operas. Berlioz and Janáček are the two most often cited, but that depends on, respectively, how much Spontini you know, or how much late Dvořák (or how much early Janáček for that matter). One of the most striking aspects of Dove's work, apart from his quite remarkable natural talent, is that he has not been too proud to learn from others, past and present, and it is this that makes *Flight* so absorbing, provoking and – above all – enjoyable a work.

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Synopsis

The action takes place in an airport, in the present day.

Act I

(CD 1, tracks 1 – 16)

It is dawn. The Controller sits in her tower. She is content: the airport is empty – except for the Refugee: he has nowhere else to go. People start to arrive, people for the Refugee to befriend. A married couple, Bill and Tina, are going on holiday in an attempt to rediscover romance. The Older Woman is meeting a young man whom she met in Mallorca, her fiancé; she would dearly like to remain inconspicuous, but... The Steward and Stewardess go brightly about their business – some of the time. Another married couple arrive, almost late for their flight to Minsk: they are emigrating. The Minskwoman is heavily pregnant. At the last moment she refuses to board the plane and her husband leaves without her. She is left stranded, mortified. The Refugee offers her a magic stone to comfort her.

The Immigration Officer passes through the concourse: he is always a danger to the – illegal – Refugee. The latter, warned by the Controller, manages to avoid notice, this time. The travellers are preparing to depart when the Controller announces that, because of electrical storms, all flights are indefinitely delayed.

Act II

(CD 1, tracks 17 – 23, CD 2 1 – 7)
Night has fallen and still the storm is raging. Worries beset those who are waiting. The storm has even upset the Controller's equilibrium – she leaves her tower and wanders about outside the airport. Everyone in the concourse tries fitfully to sleep, but, in pairs or alone, they secretly approach the Refugee, fascinated by his magic stone. He gives them all what they believe to be the unique stone and they make wishes. Bill is still restless and seeks out the Stewardess. In the dark he makes a mistake and finds the Steward instead: they go off to explore the control tower. The women and the Refugee decide to get drunk, and, as they become more garrulous, the women discover that each of them has 'the' stone. They vent their anger, with dire consequences for the Refugee. The consequences of Bill and the Steward's explorations are less dire but no less cataclysmic. The Controller remains outside as the storm rages yet more fiercely.

Act III

(CD 2 8 – 23)
Dawn breaks and the storm has abated. Flights are being resumed. But there are many surprises in store. The Minskman returns: he could not bear to be separated from his wife. Bill and the

Steward have a surprise for their partners. Tina has a very nasty surprise for Bill. The Refugee has a surprise for the women. The Minskwoman has a surprise for everyone. The Immigration Officer returns to discover the Refugee, but when the Refugee tells his story, even the Officer has a surprising reaction. Flights are called: people leave; under the Controller's watchful eye, the airport will return to normal... perhaps.



Christopher Robson's festival, concert and opera appearances include Edinburgh, Glyndebourne, BBC Proms, Almeida Festival, Lufthansa Festival London, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Innsbruck, Salzburg, Wien, Munich Opernfestspiele, Zürich Junifestwochen, Ravenna, Flanders, Bruges, Montpellier, Aix en Provence, Paris, English National Opera, Royal Opera Covent Garden, Scottish Opera, Opera North, Houston Grand Opera, Chicago Lyric Opera, New York City Opera, Sao Paulo Opera, Nationale Reisoper, De Vlaamse Opera, Opéra de Nancy, Berlin Kammeroper, Frankfurt State Opera, Bayerische Staatsoper, Munich, Royal Opera Copenhagen, Teatro del Liceo, Barcelona and Bolshoi Moscow.

His large repertoire includes Orlofsky (*Die Fledermaus*), Baba the Turk (*The Rake's Progress*), many Handel roles including the title role and Tolomeo (*Giulio Cesare*), Arsamenes (*Xerxes*), Unulfo (*Rodelinda*), the title role and Andronicus (*Tamerlano*), Polinesso (*Ariodante*), Cyrus and Daniel (*Belshazzar*), Didymus (*Theodora*), Lichas (*Hercules*), David (*Saul*) and Hamor (*Jephtha*), Holofernes in Scarlatti's *La Giuditta*, the title role in the Philip Glass's *Akhnaten*, Edgar in the UK premiere of Reimann's *Lear*, Oberon (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Apollo (*Death in Venice*), the UK premiere of Maderna's *Satyricon*, Ometh in the world premiere of John Casken's *Golem*, and Angel in the world premiere of John Tavener's *Apocalypse*, as well as the Refugee in the world premiere of Jonathan Dove's *Flight*.

Christopher Robson was made a Kammersänger des Bayerischen Staatsoper in February 2003.

Claron McFadden studied voice at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. Her Glyndebourne debut was in the title role of *Lulu* and she has returned there as Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*) and as The Controller in Jonathan Dove's *Flight*. She made her debut at the Netherlands Opera as Zerbinetta (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) and has returned there on many occasions, most notably as Constance in *Les*



Dialogues des Carmélites and in Guus Jansen's *Noach*. Other roles include Clara (*Porgy and Bess*) at the Bregenz Festival, Cunégonde (*Candide*) with the BBC and Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestras, Mme. Herz (*Der Schauspieldirektor*) at the Salzburg Festival, Handel's *Rodelinda* in Karlsruhe and *Semele* in Halle. She has also appeared with The Royal Opera, at the Châtelet, and with Opera North (Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* and Tytania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*).

As well as singing many of the major oratorio works, Claron McFadden is also in demand for her interpretation of modern and contemporary music. She is closely associated with the music of Dirk Brossé and with Birtwistle's *Paul Celan Songs* which she has performed several times in London with the Nash Ensemble, and has also recorded. Other concert engagements include *Carmina Burana*, the *Lulu* suite, the coloratura roles in *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*, Shostakovich's Fourteenth Symphony, Britten's *Les Illuminations*, the world premieres of Birtwistle's *The Woman and the Hare*, and Kris Defoort's *The Woman who Walked into Doors*. Claron McFadden's many

recordings include Villa-Lobos' *Bachianas Brasileiras*, Rameau's *Les Indes galantes*, Handel's *Acis and Galatea* and *Ottone*, Benda's *Romeo und Julia* and *Aspasia* in Handel's *Alexander Balus*.



Born in Nottingham, **Richard Coxon** studied at the Royal Northern College of Music, where he was a Peter Moores scholar and won a number of prizes. He made his professional operatic debut as Flavio (*Norma*) for Scottish

Opera, subsequently spending three years with the company as Principal Tenor, his roles including Jaquino (*Fidelio*), Nemorino (*L'elisir d'amore*), Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*), Narraboth (*Salome*), Alfredo (*La traviata*) and The Sailor (*Tristan und Isolde*).

Other operatic roles have included The Painter (*Lulu*), Nick (*The Handmaid's Tale*), Brighella (*Ariadne on Naxos*) and Fenton (*Falstaff*) for English National Opera; Nemorino and Alfredo for Opera Northern Ireland; Nemorino for Opera Zuid; Squeak (*Billy Budd*), Mr By-Ends (*The Pilgrim's Progress*) and Gaston (*La traviata*) for The Royal Opera; Vanya Kudrjash (*Katya Kabanova*) for both Florida

Grand Opera and the Opéra de Montréal; Piquillo (*La Périchole*) and Edoardo (*Un giorno di regno*) at the Buxton Festival; Lieutenant Bonnet (*War and Peace*) at the Spoleto Festival and Tom Rakewell (*The Rake's Progress*) for New Israeli Opera.

Concert appearances have included *Messiah* and *St Paul* as well as engagements with BBC Concert Orchestra, the BBC Symphony Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, the City of London Sinfonia, the Hallé Orchestra, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra. Richard Coxon's recordings include *Billy Budd*, *War and Peace* and *The Pilgrim's Progress* for Chandos and *Lucifer/Satan* in Stravinsky's *The Flood*.



Mary Plazas studied at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester with Ava June and she has received major scholarships from the Peter Moores Foundation and the Countess of Munster Musical Trust. She

completed her studies at the National Opera Studio supported by the Friends of Covent Garden and The Peter Stuyvestant Award.

She made her operatic debut in 1992 with English National Opera and was a company principal from 1995 to 1998 and for the 2001/2 season. Roles for English National Opera include Fiordiligi, Dorabella, Mimi, Leila, Adina, Nannetta, Micaëla, Marzelline (*Fidelio*), Lauretta, Oscar and the title role in *The Cunning Little Vixen*; for Opera North Mimi, Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Tebaldo (*Don Carlos*) and Elisetta (*Il matrimonio segreto*); Donna Elvira (Glyndebourne Touring Opera); Anne Trulove (New Israeli Opera and Opera Factory); Echo (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) and Madame Silberklang (*Der Schauspieldirektor*) for Garsington Opera.

She sung the Duchess in *Powder Her Face* by Thomas Adès for Almeida Opera and at the Aldeburgh Festival, and also recorded the role for Channel 4 TV. She made her debut at the Bregenz Festival as Mimi and has performed there regularly since, and has performed Mum in Mark-Anthony Turnage's *Greek* with the London Sinfonietta at the Barbican Concert Hall. Recordings include Mercadante's *Emma d'Antiochia* and Pacini's *Maria Regina d'Inghilterra* for Opera Rara, *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*, and, for Chandos' Opera in English series Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*), Marguerite (*Faust*), Adina (*The Elixir of Love*), Liù (*Turandot*) and Micaëla (*Carmen*).



Nuala Willis first worked in the theatre as a designer/costumier, then as an actress (in England, Canada and America). After several years of private vocal study

she then embarked on her present career as an opera singer. Her first notable engagements were with the Opera Studio in Brussels and later with Glyndebourne Festival Opera.

She began her international freelance career with engagements in Nancy and Metz. She also appeared at the Aldeburgh Festival as Filipievna in *Eugene Onegin* (conducted by Rostropovitch) and as Hippolyta in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. She has had a busy career as a regular guest soloist at international venues including Geneva, Lisbon, Marseilles, Toronto, Dublin and for the Swedish Folksoper at the Edinburgh Festival. She has appeared with The Royal Opera (as Hippolyta, Filipievna, and Martha in *Faust*); at Glyndebourne, where she appeared in the premiere of Harrison Birtwistle's *The Second Mrs Kong* and Jonathan Dove's *Flight*, and at the Almeida Opera Festival. Her interest in contemporary music has continued with appearances in Enesco's *Oedipe* for French

Radio, in Deirdre Gribbin's *Hey Persephone!* at the Almeida and Aldeburgh Festivals, and in Param Vir's *Snatched by the Gods* and *Broken Strings* in Amsterdam and London.

In addition to her operatic work, Nuala Willis is equally at home in musical theatre of other sorts. She has appeared in Stephen Sondheim's *Sunday in the Park with George*, in the National Youth Music Theatre's Production of *Oliver!*, and as the Duchess in *The Gondoliers* for the D'Oyly Carte company.



Ann Taylor was born in Wrexham, North Wales and studied at the Royal Northern College of Music, the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and at the National Opera Studio. Since her debut for

Opera North she has sung with Welsh National Opera, Scottish Opera, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Glyndebourne Touring Opera and for La Monnaie, Opera Zuid, the Bavarian State Opera and for the New Zealand Festival. Her many roles have included the title roles of *Ariodante* and Gluck's *Orfeo*, Rosina (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Hänsel (*Hänsel und Gretel*), Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*),

Ramiro (*La finta giardiniera*), Donna Clara (Gerhard's *The Duenna*), Varvara (*Katya Kabanova*), Pippo (*The Thieving Magpie*), Hermia (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Kristina (*The Makropoulos Case*), Oreste (*La Belle Hélène*), Phoebe (*The Yeomen of the Guard*), Annus (*La clemenza di Tito*), Kate (*Owen Wingrave*). She has also created roles in three world premières: Sarah in Jonathan Dove's *Tobias and the Angel*; Judy and Grey Wolf in Michael Berkeley's *Baa Baa Black Sheep* and the Stewardess in *Flight*.

Ann Taylor has an equally successful career as a concert artist and has performed at the BBC Proms, the Edinburgh International Festival, the Cheltenham Festival, at the Barbican and the Queen Elizabeth Hall in London and the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester. Recordings include *The Duenna*, *Albert Herring*, and *Baa Baa Black Sheep*.

Garry Magee was the First-Prize-winner of the Kathleen Ferrier Award in 1995 and a Prize-winner in the 1996 International Belvedere Competition in Vienna. He is a graduate of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and of the National Opera



John Batten

Studio, and he currently studies with Robert Dean.

Roles include Pelléas (*Pelléas and Mélisande*), Harry Heegan (*The Silver Tassie*) and Dancairo (*Carmen*) for English National Opera; Prince Afron (*Le Coq d'or*) for The Royal Opera; Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) and Schaubard (*La bohème*) for Opera North; the title role in *Don Giovanni* for Welsh National Opera and Staatsoper Hannover; Pot Boy Guiscardo (*Mario and The Magician*), Daisy (*The Nightingale and the Rose*), Stinky (*East and West*) and Hermes (*Jon*) all at the Almeida Festival; Marcello (*La bohème*) for the Deutsche Oper Berlin; and Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*) and Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*) at the Teatro Municipal in Santiago

An established concert artist, Garry Magee has appeared in recital at the Wigmore Hall, and the Théâtre du Châtelet, as well as with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Mark Elder. He has sung Rachmaninov's *Spring Cantata*, *Wozzeck*, Bernstein's *West Side Story*, the Fauré Requiem, Bach's *Magnificat*, Brahms' Requiem, and *The Creation*. Recordings include the title role in *Don Giovanni*, Escamillo (*Carmen*) and Valentin (*Faust*) for Chandos' Opera in English series, Guglielmo (*Carlo di Borgogna*) for Opera Rara, and John Adams' *The Wound Dresser*.



Steven Page studied at National Opera Studio and his roles include, for English National Opera the title role in *Don Giovanni*, Tarquinius (*The Rape of Lucretia*), Albert (Massenet's *Werther*), Paolo (*Simon Boccanegra*), Valentin (*Faust*) and Count (*The Marriage of Figaro*); for Scottish Opera Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*), Marcello (*La bohème*), Chörebe (*Les Troyens*), Ford (*Falstaff*), the title role in *Don Giovanni*, and *The Marriage of Figaro*; for Opera North Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* and Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*). He made his debut with Glyndebourne Festival Opera in the newly completed opera house as Nick Shadow (*The Rake's Progress*) and has since returned to perform Birtwistle's *The Second Mrs Kong*, Leporello (*Don Giovanni*, also on video and DVD), Coyle in Britten's *Owen Wingrave*, Balstrode (*Peter Grimes*), Pizarro (*Fidelio*, televised at The Proms) and Prus (*The Makropoulos Case*).

Elsewhere, he has sung Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*) in Dublin, Olin Blitch in Carlisle Floyd's *Susanna* and Pizarro (*Fidelio*) at the Théâtre du Châtelet, and for New Israeli Opera he has sung the Le Roi (*L'Amour des trios*

oranges), Leporello (*Don Giovanni*) and Shadow (*The Rake's Progress*). In America he has sung various Gilbert and Sullivan roles as well as Prus.

Steven Page made his debut with The Royal Opera in *La Cenerentola* and appeared in the film *Tomorrow La Scala* for the BBC/Home Movies which appeared at the Cannes Film Festival.



Anne Mason was born in Lincolnshire and studied at the Royal Academy of Music and National Opera Studio. She made her operatic debut with Opera North singing Fenena (*Nabucco*) and subsequently has sung

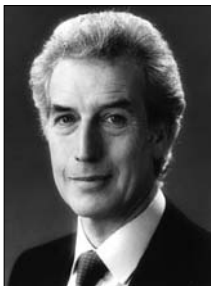
with Royal Opera House, English National Opera, Welsh National Opera, Scottish Opera, Glyndebourne, Madrid Opera, Barcelona, Netherlands Opera, Aix-en-Provence Festival, Innsbruck Early Music Festival, Dresden Semperopera, and Basle, where she sang title role in *Julius Caesar*.

Her many roles have included Second Lady (*The Magic Flute*), Emilia (*Otello*), Suzuki (*Madama Butterfly*), Annio (*La clemenza di Tito*), Annina (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Enrichetta (*I Puritani*), Theresa (*La sonnambula*), Guinevere

(*Gawain*), Adalgisa (*Norma*), Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), Penelope (*Return of Ulysses*), Orlofsky (*Die Fledermaus*), Sextus (*Julius Caesar*), and Fricka in Scottish Opera's *Ring Cycle* at the Edinburgh Festival.

She has a wide concert repertoire and has sung with the London Symphony Orchestra, Hallé Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, English Chamber Orchestra, and under conductors David Parry, Nicholas McGegan, Sir Colin Davis, Bernard Haitink, and Roger Norrington. Her recordings include Marcellina with Bernard Haitink, Donizetti's *Emilia di Liverpool* and Mayr's *Medea* for Opera Rara, Azucena (*Il trovatore*) for Chandos' Opera in English series with David Parry, and Helen (*King Priam*) on video. She also appeared in Channel 4's *Death of a Princess* by Jonathan Dove.

Richard Van Allan began his career at Glyndebourne, where he was a frequent visitor, before becoming a member of the Royal Opera House where his roles included Don Alfonso, Figaro and Leporello, Zaccaria, Don Pizarro and Colline.



Zoë Dominic

Later, as a member of English National Opera he added Boris Godunov, Baron Ochs, Claggart, Don Quichotte, the Count in *The Marriage of Figaro* and Mustafà to his repertoire. He has appeared with all the major UK companies and at the Metropolitan Opera, New York and L'Opéra Bastille in Paris, and his many recordings include one *Grammy* Award winner and two Nominations. With a career spanning nearly forty years, during fifteen years of which he was also Director of the National Opera Studio, he is now happy to appear in the less demanding supporting roles and has recently returned from the Saito Kinen Festival, Japan and from Florence after singing Hobson in *Peter Grimes* with Seiji Ozawa. In 2003 he returned to the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden for *Die Zauberflöte* and will perform Bartolo (*The Marriage of Figaro*) for the Savoy Theatre Opera Company and the Major Domo (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) with Welsh National Opera.

The **London Philharmonic Orchestra** has a long-established reputation for its versatility and artistic excellence. These traits are evident from its performances in the concert hall and opera house, its many award-winning recordings, its trail-blazing international tours and its pioneering education work. Kurt Masur has been the Orchestra's Principal Conductor since September 2000. Previous holders of

this position, since its foundation in 1932 by Sir Thomas Beecham, have included Sir Adrian Boult, Sir John Pritchard, Bernard Haitink, Sir Georg Solti, Klaus Tennstedt and Franz Welser-Möst. Since 1992 the London Philharmonic Orchestra has been Resident Symphony Orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall. It has also been Resident Symphony Orchestra at Glyndebourne Festival Opera for the past thirty-eight years.



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 Opera North and appears regularly with the Philharmonia and London Philharmonic Orchestras. In 1996 he made his debut at the Glyndebourne Festival conducting

Così fan tutte, following it in 1998 with 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, Switzerland, and 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, *Lucia di Lammermoor* at New Israeli Opera and *Don Giovanni* at Staatsoper Hannover.

His work in the recording studio includes the BBC Television production of Marschner's *Der Vampyr* and twenty-eight 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 a series of recitals of operatic arias – with Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny, John Tomlinson, Della Jones and Andrew Shore – as well as *Idomeneo*, *Carmen*, *The Thieving Magpie*, *Don*

Giovanni, *Don Pasquale*, *The Elixir of Love*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Ernani*, *Il trovatore*, *Aida*, *Faust*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *La bohème*, *Turandot*, the award-winning *Tosca* and highlights from *Der Rosenkavalier*, all in association with the Peter Moores Foundation.



A love of singing and theatre led **Jonathan Dove** naturally into the world of opera. *Flight* was the climax of an association with Glyndebourne which began in 1987 when he worked there as Assistant Chorus Master.

He subsequently composed three large-scale community operas for the company (including one for 600 performers) and a wind serenade, *Figures in the Garden*, for its Mozart bicentenary celebrations. *Flight* was first performed at Glyndebourne in 1998, and has since been performed in Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany and the USA.

The television broadcast of *Flight* led directly to his composing an opera specifically for television. *When She Died*, about the death of Princess Diana, was watched by nearly a million people in the UK alone.

Other operas include the chamber opera *Siren Song*, a church opera *Tobias and the Angel*, and four operas for Musica Nel Chiostro: *L'Augellino Belverde*, *L'Altra Euridice*, *La Dama ed il Pulitore di Damasco* and *Le Porte di Bagdad*. In 2000, Dove wrote another community opera, *The Palace in the Sky*, which was performed at the Hackney Empire, and followed it with an opera for children, *The Hackney Chronicles*.

Much of Dove's work is vocal. Song-cycles include *Five Am'rous Sighs*, *Ariel Songs*, *All You*

Who Sleep Tonight, and *Out of Winter*. He has also written two choral cycles, *The Passing of the Year* and *The Far Theatricals of Day*, and numerous anthems and carols. Instrumental music includes a string quartet and a saxophone quartet; *Stargazer*, a trombone concerto; the Mozart-inspired flute concerto, *The Magic Flute Dances*; *Moonlight Revels*, a concerto for saxophone, trumpet and strings; and *The Crocodiamond (or Rita and the Wolf)* for narrator & orchestra. He has also written music for film and theatre.



Controller (Claron McFadden)



Steward and Stewardess (Garry Magee and Ann Taylor)



Refugee and Older Woman (Christopher Robson and Nuala Willis)



Minskman and Minskwoman (Steven Page and Anne Mason)



Bill, Steward, Stewardess, Minskwoman, Immigration Officer, Tina and Refugee
(Richard Coxon, Garry Magee, Ann Taylor, Anne Mason, Richard Van Allan and Christopher Robson)



Stewardess, Steward and Refugee (Ann Taylor, Garry Magee and Christopher Robson)

Dove: Flight

Erfolgreiche neue Opern sind bekanntlich seltene Vögel. Man denke nur an die Hunderte und Aberhunderte von neuen Werken des achtzehnten und neunzehnten Jahrhunderts, von denen seither kaum noch etwas zu hören ist. Neukomponierten komischen Opern ist heutzutage sogar noch seltener Erfolg beschieden. Wieviele hat es seit Britten's *Albert Herring* (1947) überhaupt gegeben? Neue Opern, die ein Publikum wirklich genießen kann, anstatt – seien wir ehrlich – sie nur als eine Bestrafung über sich ergehen zu lassen, bevor es sich mit schlechtem Gewissen in die nächste Neuinszenierung von *Le nozze di Figaro* stiehlt, sind ähnlich selten.

Vor diesem Hintergrund hat sich Jonathan Doves *Flight* in jeder Hinsicht als ein seltener und herzerwärmender Erfolg herausgestellt. Die Oper entstand als Auftragswerk für Glyndebourne und wurde 1998 zunächst von dessen Tournee-Ensemble in einer geistreichen und Aufsehen erregenden Inszenierung von Richard Jones erstaufgeführt, bevor sie im darauffolgenden Jahr während des Sommerfestivals zu sehen war. Das Werk wurde von Channel 4 für das Fernsehen aufgezeichnet und ist inzwischen auch in Europa und den USA erfolgreich aufgeführt worden.

Die etablierte Musikpresse nahm das Stück fast ausnahmslos mit Enthusiasmus auf, wobei einige Kritiker kaum ihre Überraschung darüber verbergen konnten, daß es soviel Spaß machen kann, sich eine neue Oper von Anfang bis Ende anzuhören. Eine der aufschlußreichsten Beobachtungen stammt von dem Fernsehkritiker Victor Lewis-Smith; er beschrieb *Flight* als "ein Werk, das die Gattung der Oper wie eine blühende Kunstform erscheinen läßt und nicht wie ein elegantes Fossil. Es ist nie leicht, zugängliche Kunst zu schaffen, ohne seine Integrität zu kompromittieren, aber Dove und [seine Librettistin] De Angelis ist dies mit großem Erfolg gelungen." Jetzt liegt *Flight* auf CD vor, und ein nicht unwesentlicher Teil des Vergnügens beim Anhören dieser Live-Aufnahme besteht darin, sovieler Publikums-lacher zu hören.

Flight ist keineswegs aus dem Nichts heraus entstanden. Dove, der zum Zeitpunkt der Komposition bereits auf die vierzig zugeht, hatte klugerweise eine gründliche selbstverordnete Lehre durchlaufen, bevor er sich an seine erste ausgewachsene großbesetzte Oper machte. Zunächst schrieb er kleinere Werke, darunter den angemessen betörenden *Siren Song* (1994) in einem Akt für

die Almeida Opera sowie im gleichen Jahr die Oper *L'Augellino Belverde* für das intime Batignano-Festival in der Toskana (inzwischen folgten noch drei weitere Werke). Deutlich geringeren Umfang hatte die "Operina" *Greed* (1993), die nur sechs Minuten dauert.

Noch wichtiger war, daß er große Erfahrung im Schreiben von Community-Opern besaß, von denen er drei für Glyndebourne verfaßt hatte. 1998 war *Flight* erstaufgeführt, 1999 entstand *Tobias and the Angel* für Almeida Opera, gefolgt von *The Palace in the Sky* (Hackney Empire, 2000). Für das Theater hatte er unzählige Zwischenaktmusiken geschrieben, und wurde Musik für solch besondere Anlässe wie die Einweihung des Millennium Dome und der Millennium Bridge schreiben. (Nun, damit funktionierte zumindest die Musik.) Von Britten stammt der berühmte Ausspruch, er wolle, daß seine Musik "nützlich" sei, und Dove scheint diesem Beispiel zu folgen. Und nichts könnte "nützlicher" sein als seine bezaubernde kleine Oper für Grundschulen im Londoner Osten, wo er zu Hause ist, *The Hackney Chronicles* (2001).

Am wichtigsten ist aber wohl, daß Dove als junger Mann für die City of Birmingham Touring Opera (die heutige Birmingham Opera Company) gearbeitet hatte, die Orchesterreduktionen von so unterschiedlichen Opern wie *La Cenerentola*, dem *Ring* (wobei

Wagners vier Abende auf zwei verkürzt wurden) Janáček's *Vixen* (die besonders weite Verbreitung fand), der *Zauberflöte* und *Falstaff* in Auftrag gab. Die Gelegenheit, von Meisterwerken der Vergangenheit solch detaillierte Kenntnisse zu gewinnen, die grundlegenden Mechanismen, alle Tricks und Kniffe von dauerhaft erfolgreichen Opern zu erlernen, muß eine unschätzbare Erfahrung gewesen sein – ganz abgesehen davon, daß er eine ebenso große Expertise in der Technik der Orchestrierung gewann wie er durch das Studium unzähliger gelehrter Schriften erreicht hätte.

Eine weitere unschätzbare Erfahrung seiner Arbeit an Community-Opern war das Komponieren für ein anderes als das typische Opernpublikum und für Laiendarsteller. Als er sich daran machte, *Flight* zu schreiben, hatte er gelernt, was im Theater funktioniert und was nicht, was funktionieren sollte, es aber nicht tut, und – das ist das wichtigste – warum. Er war bereit zum Flug.

Für die Mehrzahl seiner Libretti hat Dove sich an Dramatiker gewandt – an David Lan, Nick Dear und, hier wie anderswo, an April De Angelis. *Flight* wird gewöhnlich als komische Oper beschrieben, und darum handelt es sich auch, selbst wenn das Werk an keiner Stelle so bezeichnet ist. Doch – genau wie *Albert Herring* – ist es eigentlich viel mehr als das.

Man fühlt sich fast schuldig, so viel gelacht zu haben, wenn einen in den letzten Minuten die tiefst anrührende Geschichte des Flüchtlings trifft. Die Abflughalle eines Flughafens ist ein ebenso allgemeingültiger Mikrokosmos des menschlichen Daseins wie etwa der Haushalt des Grafen Almaviva in *Figaro*. Flughäfen sind Orte des Übergangs, des Abenteuers, der Veränderung. Wenigstens drei der geschilderten Beziehungen befinden sich im Wandel, und wenigstens zwei von diesen werden versöhnlich gelöst und vielleicht noch vertieft.

Das Libretto ist in vieler Hinsicht ausgesprochen originell, nicht zuletzt in der Wahl des Handlungsorts. Sicherlich ist dies in der gesamten Opernliteratur die erste Geburt auf der Bühne, zudem erleben wir zwei Flugzeugstarts. Vieles jedoch entspricht auch der gängigen Operntradition. Die Abfolge von Tag-Nacht-Tag erinnert an den Zeitplan von *Tristan und Isolde*. Die Nacht steht für jene gefährliche Zeit, in der das Unvorhersehbare geschehen kann. Homoerotik in der Oper ist nichts Neues, allerdings wurde sie gewöhnlich verschlüsselt dargestellt, und auch Bill tut nichts so Offensichtliches wie sich "outen", aber immerhin öffnet er die Tür und streckt einen Fuß heraus. Dies reflektiert in überraschender Weise eine andere traditionelle Binnenaktepisode nächtlichen Wahnsinns, den

Aufstand in *Die Meistersinger*. Hier ist Bill von sich selbst überrascht, während die anderen in Trunkenheit und Gewalt abgleiten. Man empfindet den Fall des Vorhangs fast als eine Erleichterung.

Die Form der Steine des Flüchtlings ist voll opernhafter Magie, an die man glauben kann, wenn man will. Es gibt zwei fast opernhafte "Götter" oder Autoritätsfiguren – die eiskalte Fluglotsin und der Einwanderungsbeamte. Beide haben die Funktion eines *deus ex machina*, wobei der Beamte sich als überraschend gutmütig herausstellt (dabei handelt es sich ebenso um einen nahezu subversiven Coup wie bei dem Konzept eines "guten" Polizisten in Weills *Silbersee*) und die Lotsin in den rätselhaften Schlußmomenten ein Happy End zu bewerkstelligen scheint. Nichts in De Angelis' Text ist eindeutig – wie alle guten Librettisten überläßt sie vieles, wenn nicht gar alles, der Musik. Ihre kurzen, kraftvollen Zeilen und ihr geschickter Umgang mit Reim und Assonanz bilden eine ideale Plattform, auf der Dove seine überschäumende Rhythmik und sein gefälliges Melos ausloten kann.

Wie schon viele Kritiker bemerkt haben, hat Dove alles absorbiert, was um ihn herum in der musikalischen Welt passiert. Britten natürlich, den ganzen Broadway von Rodgers bis Sondheim, die Russen (was man mit einem

Ostinato anfangen kann, weiß er so gut wie Schostakowitsch und Prokofjew), die wichtigeren und weniger wichtigen Minimalisten (Namen bitte selbst ergänzen). Er hat keine Scheu vor der grandiosen romantischen Geste – es gibt großangelegte Melodien mit üppiger Orchestrierung. Melodien zu komponieren ist heutzutage ein Wagnis, und ebenso gewagt sind seine großen theatralischen Effekte. Es muß, nebenbei bemerkt, riesigen Spaß gemacht haben, die beiden Flugzeugstarts zu schreiben, und der zweite erinnert uns daran, daß Dove *Rheingold* bearbeitet hat.

Seine Textvertonung ist eindeutig von Britten inspiriert. Sie ist ausgesprochen natürlich, untrennbar mit den Gesangspartien verbunden und den Charakteren auf den Leib geschrieben, sei es die simple Unschuld von Tina und Bill oder die Melancholie der Alten Frau. Die Begleitung der Vokalpartien ergänzt, was die Worte auslassen, und darum geht es in Opern ja überhaupt. Die Streicher vermitteln die Zärtlichkeit hinter den vordergründig banalen Dialogen von Tina und Bill, und wenn man bedenkt, daß Flughäfen genauso voller langweiliger Leute stecken wie Hotelbars, hat Doves Musik die Aufgabe, potentielle Langweiler interessant, wenn nicht gar aufregend zu machen (auch seinen Noël Coward kannte er). Er kann eine Textzeile in

einer Weise vertonen, die einen Lacher nicht nur bekommt sondern sogar verdient. Vor allem aber zeigt er außerordentliche, wenn nicht gar einzigartige technische Fähigkeiten in der Art, wie er zwei gleichzeitig ablaufende Gespräche in Musik setzen und dabei die Hörbarkeit der einzelnen Wörter gewährleisten kann oder wie er es bewerkstelligt, daß Zeilen, die wir unbedingt hören müssen, sich in natürlicher Weise aus einem komplexen Ensemble herauslösen. Das ist eine große Begabung.

Der Aufbau des Werks, das wechselnde dramatische Tempo, die Plazierung von Arien und Ensembles – all dies zeugt von einem geborenen Opernkomponisten, der sich der Vergangenheit durchaus bewußt ist. Stürme sind fast schon ein Opernklischee, verfehlen jedoch nie ihre Wirkung, und weder Rossini noch Wagner hätten sich Doves Stürmschämen müssen. Die reine Schönheit der Sopranstimme in der hohen Lage ist ein weiteres altgedientes Hilfsmittel der Oper und es wäre sinn- und herzlos, auf sie zu verzichten. Dove jedenfalls hat dies nicht getan, wie seine wunderbaren Partien für die Fluglotsin zeigen. Ein Plapper-Ensemble erinnert daran, daß Dove *La Cenerentola* und *Das Rheingold* bearbeitete, und im dritten Akt werden die komischen Möglichkeiten der Koloratur mit großer Wirkung eingesetzt.

Schon immer haben Komponisten von ihren Vorgängern gelernt, Mozart von Gluck, Verdi von Donizetti, Wagner von Weber. Wahre Originale sind so selten wie erfolgreiche neue Opern. Berlioz und Janáček werden in diesem Zusammenhang am häufigsten genannt, aber das hängt davon ab, wieviel Spontini man kennt oder wieviel späten Dvorák (beziehungsweise wieviel frühen Janáček). Einer der auffälligsten Aspekte von Doves Schaffen neben seiner erstaunlichen natürlichen Begabung ist der Umstand, daß er nie zu stolz war, von anderen zu lernen (weder in der Vergangenheit noch in der Gegenwart), und dies macht *Flight* zu einem so faszinierenden, provozierenden und vor allem unterhaltsamen Werk.

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Übersetzung: Stephanie Wollny

Handlung

Die Handlung spielt in der Gegenwart in einem Flughafen.

1. Akt

(CD 1, Band 1 – 16)

Morgendämmerung. Die Fluglotsin sitzt in ihrem Tower. Sie ist zufrieden: Der Flughafen ist leer, bis auf den Flüchtling; er hat sonst keine Bleibe. Leute beginnen anzukommen – Leute, mit denen sich der Flüchtling anfreunden könnte. Ein

Ehepaar, Bill und Tina, fährt in den Urlaub, um so zu versuchen, die Liebe wiederzuentdecken. Die Ältere Frau trifft sich mit einem jungen Mann, den sie auf Mallorca kennengelernt hat, und mit dem sie verlobt ist; sie möchte am liebsten unauffällig bleiben, aber ... Der Steward und die Stewardess machen sich heiter an ihre Arbeit – zumindest manchmal. Ein weiteres Ehepaar kommt an, fast zu spät für ihren Flug nach Minsk; sie wandern aus. Die Frau ist hochschwanger. In letzter Minute weigert sie sich, an Bord zu gehen, und ihr Mann geht ohne sie. Sie bleibt ihrem Schicksal überlassen und beschämt zurück. Der Flüchtling bietet ihr zum Trost einen magischen Stein an.

Der Einwanderungsbeamte geht durch die Eingangshalle: Für den – illegalen – Flüchtling bedeutet er eine ständige Gefahr. Diesem gelingt es diesmal keine Aufmerksamkeit auf sich zu ziehen, da er von der Fluglotsin gewarnt wurde. Die Reisenden bereiten sich auf den Abflug vor, als die Fluglotsin mitteilt, daß alle Flüge wegen Gewitter bis auf weiteres verschoben werden.

2. Akt

(CD 1, Band 17 – 23, und CD 2, Band 1 – 7)

Die Nacht ist eingebrochen, und der Sturm tobt immer noch. Die Wartenden werden von Sorgen geplagt. Der Sturm hat selbst die

Fluglotsin aus dem Gleichgewicht gebracht. Sie verläßt den Tower und geht außerhalb des Flughafens spazieren. Alle in der Eingangshalle versuchen – wenn auch unruhig – zu schlafen, aber heimlich nähern sie sich, entweder in Paaren oder allein, dem Flüchtling, fasziniert von seinem magischen Stein. Er gibt ihnen allen, was sie für den einmaligen Stein halten, und sie wünschen sich etwas. Bill ist immer noch unruhig und will die Stewardess ausfindig machen. Im Dunkeln irrt er sich und stößt stattdessen auf den Steward: Sie gehen los, um den Kontrolltower zu erkunden. Die Frauen und der Flüchtling beschließen sich zu betrinken, und während sie gesprächiger werden, stellen die Frauen fest, daß jede von ihnen "den" Stein hat. Sie lassen ihrem Ärger freien Lauf, mit schlimmen Folgen für den Flüchtling. Die Folgen der Erkundungen von Bill und dem Steward sind weniger schlimm aber genauso verheerend. Die Fluglotsin bleibt draußen, während der Sturm noch heftiger tobt.

3. Akt

(CD 2, Band 8 – 23)

Der Morgen dämmt, und der Sturm hat sich gelegt. Flüge werden wiederaufgenommen. Aber es stehen viele Überraschungen bevor. Der Mann auf dem Weg nach Minsk kehrt zurück: Er konnte es nicht aushalten, von seiner Frau getrennt zu sein. Bill und der Steward

haben eine Überraschung für ihre Partner. Tina hat eine böse Überraschung für Bill. Der Flüchtling hat eine Überraschung für die Frauen. Die Frau auf dem Weg nach Minsk hat eine Überraschung für alle. Der Einwanderungsbeamte kommt zurück und entdeckt den Flüchtling, aber als der Flüchtling seine Geschichte erzählt, zeigt selbst der Beamte eine überraschende Reaktion. Flüge werden aufgerufen; Leute gehen; unter dem wachsamen Auge der Fluglotsin wird der Flughafen zur Normalität zurückkehren ... vielleicht.

Übersetzung: Bettina Reinke-Welsh

Christopher Robson ist im Rahmen zahlreicher Musikfestspiele, Konzerte und Operninszenierungen aufgetreten: Edinburgh, Glyndebourne, BBC Proms, Almeida Festival, Lufthansa Festival London, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Innsbruck, Salzburg, Wien, Münchner Opernfestspiele, Junifestwochen Zürich, Ravenna, Flandern, Brügge, Montpellier, Aix-en-Provence, Paris, English National Opera, Royal Opera Covent Garden, Scottish Opera, Opera North, Houston Grand Opera, Chicago Lyric Opera, New York City Opera, Sao Paulo Opera, Nationale Reisoper, De Vlaamse Opera, Opéra de Nancy, Berliner Kammeroper, Staatsoper Frankfurt, Bayerische Staatsoper,

Den Kongelige Opera Kopenhagen, Teatro del Liceo Barcelona und Bolschoi-Theater Moskau.

Sein umfangreiches Repertoire umfasst Orlofsky (*Die Fledermaus*), Baba the Turk (*The Rake's Progress*), viele Händel-Partien wie die Titelrolle und Tolomeo (*Giulio Cesare*), Arsamenes (*Xerxes*), Unulfo (*Rodelinda*), die Titelrolle und Andronicus (*Tamerlano*), Polinesso (*Ariodante*), Cyrus und Daniel (*Belshazzar*), Didymus (*Theodora*), Lichas (*Hercules*), David (*Saul*) und Hamor (*Jephtha*), Holofernes in Scarlatti's *La Giuditta*, die Titelrolle in *Akhnaten* von Philip Glass, Edgar in der britischen Erstaufführung von Reimanns *Lear*, Oberon (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Apollo (*Death in Venice*), die britische Erstaufführung von Madernas *Satyricon*, Ometh in der Welturaufführung von John Caskens *Golem* und Angel in der Welturaufführung von John Verners *Apocalypse* sowie Refugee in der Welturaufführung von Jonathan Doves *Flight*.

Seit Februar 2003 ist Christopher Robson Kammersänger an der Bayerischen Staatsoper.

Claron McFadden studierte Gesang an der Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. Seit ihrem Glyndebourne-Debüt in der Titelrolle von *Lulu* hat sie dort auch Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*) und The Controller in Jonathan Doves *Flight* gesungen. Ihr Debüt an De Nederlandse Opera gab sie als Zerbinetta

(*Ariadne auf Naxos*), und bei vielen weiteren Gelegenheiten hat man sie dort u.a. als Constance in *Les Dialogues des Carmélites* sowie in Guus Jansens *Noach* erlebt. Weitere Rollen waren Clara (*Porgy and Bess*) bei den Bregenzer Festspielen, Cunégonde (*Candide*) mit den BBC und Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestras, Madame Herz (*Der Schauspiel-direktor*) bei den Salzburger Festspielen, Händels *Rodelinda* in Karlsruhe und *Semele* in Halle. Außerdem ist sie an der Royal Opera Covent Garden, am Châtelet Théâtre in Paris und mit der Opera North (Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* und Tytania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*) aufgetreten.

Claron McFadden singt nicht nur viele der großen Oratorien, sondern ist auch als Interpretin moderner Musik gefragt. Ihr Name verbindet sich eng mit der Musik von Dirk Brossé und Birtwistles *Paul Celan Songs*, die sie verschiedentlich mit dem Nash Ensemble in London dargeboten und auch aufgenommen hat. Weitere Konzertverpflichtungen waren *Carmina Burana*, die *Lulu*-Sinfonie, die Koloraturpartien in *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*, die 14. Sinfonie von Schostakowitsch und Britrens *Les Illuminations* sowie die Welturaufführungen von Birtwistles *The Woman and the Hare* und Kris Defoorts *The Woman who Walked into Doors*. Die umfangreiche Diskographie Claron McFaddens umfasst die

Bachianas Brasileiras von Villa-Lobos, Rameaus *Les Indes galantes*, Händels *Acis and Galatea* und *Ottone*, Bendas *Romeo and Julia* sowie Aspasia in Händels *Alexander Balus*.

Der in Nottingham geborene Tenor **Richard Coxon** studierte am Royal Northern College of Music als Peter-Moores-Stipendiat, und wurde in dieser Zeit mit zahlreichen Preisen ausgezeichnet. An der Scottish Opera, wo er sein professionelles Operndebüt als Flavio (*Norma*) gab, sang er dann über drei Jahre hinweg als erster Tenor auch Rollen wie Jaquino (*Fidelio*), Nemorino (*L'elisir d'amore*), Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*), Narraboth (*Salome*), Alfredo (*La traviata*) und Seemann (*Tristan und Isolde*).

Weitere Opernrollen waren Maler (*Lulu*), Nick (*The Handmaid's Tale*), Brighella (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) und Fenton (*Falstaff*) an der English National Opera, Nemorino und Alfredo an der Opera Northern Ireland, Nemorino an der Opera Zuid, Squeak (*Billy Budd*), Mr. By-Ends (*The Pilgrim's Progress*) und Gaston (*La traviata*) an der Royal Opera Covent Garden, Kudrjás (*Katja Kabanowa*) an der Florida Grand Opera und der Opéra de Montréal, Piquillo (*La Périchole*) und Edoardo (*Un giorno di regno*) beim Buxton Festival, Leutnant Bonnet (*Krieg und Frieden*) bei den Festspielen von Spoleto und Tom Rakewell (*The Rake's Progress*) an der New Israeli Opera.

Richard Coxon hat konzertant in *Messiah* und *St. Paul* gesungen und ist mit dem BBC Concert Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, der City of London Sinfonia, dem Hallé Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra und Scottish Chamber Orchestra aufgetreten. Zu seinen Schallplattenaufnahmen gehören *Billy Budd*, *War and Peace* und *The Pilgrim's Progress* für Chandos sowie Lucifer/Satan in Strawinskys *The Flood*.

Mary Plazas studierte am Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester bei Ava June und erhielt begehrte Stipendien von der Peter Moores Foundation und dem Countess of Munster Musical Trust. Am National Opera Studio beendete sie ihre Studien, unterstützt durch die Friends of Covent Garden und The Peter Stuyvestant Award.

Sie gab ihr Operndebüt 1992 an der English National Opera und gehörte von 1995 bis 1998 und in der Spielzeit 2001/2 dem Ensemble als Hauptsängerin an. An der English National Opera sang sie Fiordiligi, Dorabella, Mimì, Leila, Adina, Nannetta, Micaëla, Marzeline (*Fidelio*), Lauretta, Oscar und die Titelrolle in *The Cunning Little Vixen*. Weitere Rollen waren 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); Echo (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) und Madame Silberklang (*Der Schauspieldirektor*) an der Garsington Opera.

Als Duchess trat sie in *Powder Her Face* von Thomas Adès beim Almeida Opera Festival und beim Aldeburgh Festival auf – eine Rolle, die sie auch in einer Fernsehaufnahme für den Sender Channel 4 verkörperte. Bei den Bregenzer Festspielen ist sie seit ihrem Debüt als Mimi regelmäßig aufgetreten, und mit der London Sinfonietta hat man sie als Mum in Mark-Anthony Turnages *Greek* in der Barbican Concert Hall erlebt. Zu ihren Schallplatten-aufnahmen gehören Mercadantes *Emma d'Antiochia* und Pacinis *Maria Regina d'Inghilterra* für Opera Rara, *L'Enfant et les sortilèges* sowie für die Chandos-Serie 'Opera in English' Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*), Marguerite (*Faust*), Adina (*The Elixir of Love*), Liù (*Turandot*) und Micaëla (*Carmen*).

Nuala Willis kam zunächst über den Bühnenbild- und Kostümentwurf zur Schauspielkunst (in England, Kanada und den USA), bevor sie nach mehrjährigem privaten Gesangsunterricht ihre jetzige Karriere als Opernsängerin antrat. Ihre ersten wichtigen Stationen waren das Opernstudio Brüssel und die Glyndebourne Festival Opera.

Es folgten Verpflichtungen nach Nancy und

Metz. Außerdem trat sie beim Aldeburgh Festival als Filipjewna in *Eugen Onegin* (unter der Leitung von Rostropovitch) und als Hippolyta in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* auf. Auftritte als Gastsolistin führen sie inzwischen regelmäßig nach Genf, Lissabon, Marseilles, Toronto und Dublin sowie mit der Folkoperan Stockholm zum Edinburgh Festival. Sie hat an der Royal Opera Covent Garden (als Hippolyta, Filipjewna und Martha in *Faust*), in Glyndebourne (Uraufführungen von Birtwistles *The Second Mrs. Kong* und Jonathan Doves *Flight*) und beim Almeida Opera Festival gesungen. Ihr anhaltendes Interesse an der modernen Musik bekundete sie in Enescos *Oedipe* für den französischen Rundfunk, in Deirdre Gribbins *Hey Persephone!* bei den Almeida und Aldeburgh Festivals und in Param Vires *Snatched by the Gods* und *Broken Strings* in Amsterdam und London.

Neben ihrer Opernarbeit widmet sich Nuala Willis auch anderen Formen des Musiktheaters. So ist sie in Stephen Sondheims *Sunday in the Park with George*, in einer Inszenierung des National Youth Music Theatre von *Oliver!* und als Duchess in *The Gondoliers* mit der D'Oyly Carte Opera Company aufgetreten.

Ann Taylor wurde im nordwalisischen Wrexham geboren und studierte am Royal Northern College of Music, an der Guildhall School of Music and Drama und am National Opera

Studio. Seit ihrem Debüt an der Opera North hat sie für die Welsh National Opera, Scottish Opera, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Glyndebourne Touring Opera, La Monnaie, Opera Zuid, Bayrische Staatsoper und beim New Zealand Festival gesungen. Zu ihren zahlreichen Aufgaben gehörten die Titelrollen von *Ariadante* und Glucks *Orfeo*, Rosina (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Hänsel (*Hänsel und Gretel*), Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), Ramiro (*La finta giardiniera*), Donna Clara (*La Dueña*), Varvara (*Katja Kabanowa*), Pippo (*Die diebische Elster*), Hermia (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Kristina (*Die Sache Makropulos*), Oreste (*La Belle Hélène*), Phoebe (*The Yeomen of the Guard*), Annius (*La clemenza di Tito*) und Kate (*Owen Wingrave*). Sie hat Rollen in drei Welturaufführungen geschaffen: Sarah in Jonathan Doves *Tobias and the Angel*; Judy und Grey Wolf in Michael Berkeley's *Baa Baa Black Sheep* und Stewardess in *Flight*.

Auch als Konzertkünstlerin ist Ann Taylor hochof erfolgreich, u.a. mit Auftritten bei den BBC Proms, beim Edinburgh International Festival und Cheltenham Festival, im Barbican und der Queen Elizabeth Hall London sowie in der Bridgewater Hall Manchester. Zu ihren Schallplattenaufnahmen zählen Gerhards *La Dueña* sowie *Albert Herring* und *Baa Baa Black Sheep*.

Garry Magee wurde 1995 mit dem 1. Preis der Kathleen Ferrier Awards ausgezeichnet und gehörte im Jahr darauf zu den Preisträgern beim Internationalen Belvedere-Wettbewerb in Wien. Er hat die Guildhall School of Music and Drama und das National Opera Studio besucht und setzt zur Zeit seine Studien bei Robert Dean fort.

Zu seinen vielen Rollen gehören Pelléas (*Pelléas and Mélisande*), Harry Heegan (*The Silver Tassie*) und Dancairo (*Carmen*) an der English National Opera, Zarewitsch Afron (*Der goldene Hahn*) an der Royal Opera Covent Garden, Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) und Schaubard (*La bohème*) an der Opera North, die Titelrolle in *Don Giovanni* an der Welsh National Opera und der Staatsoper Hannover, Pot Boy Guiscardo (*Mario and the Magician*), Daisy (*The Nightingale and the Rose*), Stinky (*East and West*) und Hermes (*Ion*) beim Almeida Festival, Marcello (*La bohème*) an der Deutschen Oper Berlin sowie Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*) und Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*) am Teatro Municipal in Santiago

Als vielgefragter Konzertkünstler ist Garry Magee in der Wigmore Hall London und am Théâtre du Châtelet Musical in Paris sowie mit dem City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra und dem London Philharmonic Orchestra unter der Leitung von Mark Elder aufgetreten. Er hat Rachmaninows *Kantate Der Frühling, Wozzeck*,

Bernsteins *West Side Story*, die Requiems von Fauré und Brahms, Bachs *Magnificat* und Haydns *Die Schöpfung* gesungen. Seine Diskographie umfasst die Titelrolle in *Don Giovanni*, Escamillo (*Carmen*) und Valentin (*Faust*) für die Chandos-Serie 'Opera in English', Guglielmo (*Carlo di Borgogna*) für Opera Rara sowie *The Wound Dresser* von John Adams.

Steven Page studierte am National Opera Studio. Zu seinen Rollen gehörten die Titelrolle in *Don Giovanni*, Tarquinius in *The Rape of Lucretia*, Albert (Massenets *Werther*), Paolo (*Simone Boccanegra*), Valentin (*Faust*) und Graf Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*) an der English National Opera; Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*), Marcello (*La bohème*), Chorebe (*Les Troyens*), Ford (*Falstaff*) sowie die Titelrollen in *Don Giovanni* und *Le nozze di Figaro* an der Scottish Opera; Sondheims *Sweeney Todd* und Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*) an der Opera North. Er debütierte an der Glyndebourne Festival Opera im neuerbauten Haus als Nick Shadow (*The Rake's Progress*) und hat dort seitdem auch in Birtwistles *The Second Mrs. Kong*, Leporello (*Don Giovanni*, auch Video- und DVD-Aufnahme), Coyle in Brittens *Owen Wingrave*, Balstrode (*Peter Grimes*), Pizarro (*Fidelio*, Fernsehübertragung von den Proms) und Prus (*Die Sache Makropulos*) gesungen.

Weitere Rollen waren Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*) in Dublin, Olin Blitch in Carlisle Floyds *Susanna* und Pizarro (*Fidelio*) am Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris sowie Le Roi (*L'Amour des trois oranges*), Leporello (*Don Giovanni*) und Shadow (*The Rake's Progress*) an der New Israeli Opera. In Amerika ist er in diversen Gilbert & Sullivan-Rollen sowie als Prus aufgetreten.

An der Royal Opera Covent Garden debütierte er in *La Cenerentola*, und für BBC/Home Movies wirkte er an dem in Cannes aufgeführten Film *Tomorrow La Scala* mit.

Anne Mason wurde in Lincolnshire geboren und studierte an der Royal Academy of Music und am National Opera Studio. Nach ihrem Operndebüt an der Opera North als Fenena (*Nabucco*) sang sie an der Royal Opera Covent Garden, English National Opera, Welsh National Opera und Scottish Opera, in Glyndebourne, Madrid, Barcelona und Amsterdam, bei den Festspielen von Aix-en-Provence, den Innsbrucker Festwochen der Alten Musik, an der Semperoper Dresden und in Basel, wo sie in der Titelrolle von *Julius Caesar* auftrat.

Zu ihren vielen Rollen gehören Zweite Dame (*Die Zauberflöte*), Emilia (*Otello*), Suzuki (*Madama Butterfly*), Annio (*La clemenza di Tito*), Annina (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Enrichetta (*I Puritani*), Teresa (*La sonnambula*), Guinevere

(*Gawain*), Adalgisa (*Norma*), Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), Penelope (*Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*), Orlofsky (*Die Fledermaus*), Sextus (*Julius Caesar*), und Fricka im Ring-Zyklus der Scottish Opera beim Edinburgh Festival.

Anne Mason verfügt über ein breitgefächertes Konzertrepertoire. Sie ist mit dem London Symphony Orchestra, Hallé Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, English Chamber Orchestra und unter der Leitung von Dirigenten wie David Parry, Nicholas McGegan, Sir Colin Davis, Bernard Haitink und Roger Norrington aufgetreten. Ihre Diskographie umfasst Marcellina mit Bernard Haitink, Donizettis *Emilia di Liverpool* und Mayrs *Medea* für Opera Rara, Azucena (*Il trovatore*) für die Chandos-Serie 'Opera in English' mit David Parry sowie Helen in einer Videoaufnahme von *King Priam*. Außerdem hat sie an einer Fernsehinszenierung von Jonathan Doves *Death of a Princess* für Channel 4 mitgewirkt.

Richard Van Allan begann seine Karriere in Glyndebourne, wo er regelmäßig gastierte, bevor er der Royal Opera Covent Garden beitrug und dann Rollen wie Don Alfonso, Figaro und Leporello, Zaccaria, Don Pizarro und Colline verkörperte. Als Mitglied der English National Opera erweiterte er später sein Repertoire um Boris Godunow, Baron

Ochs, Claggart, Don Quichotte, Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*) und Mustafà. Er ist mit allen namhaften britischen Opernensembles sowie an der Metropolitan Opera New York und der Opéra national de Paris-Bastille aufgetreten, und zu seinen vielen Schallplattenaufnahmen zählen ein *Grammy*-Preisträger und zwei Nominierungen. Nach fast vierzig Jahren auf der Bühne, zugleich auch fünfzehn Jahren als Direktor des National Opera Studio, begnügt er sich jetzt gerne mit weniger anstrengenden Nebenrollen. Kürzlich sang er unter der Leitung von Seiji Ozawa beim Saito Kinen Festival in Japan und in Florenz die Rollen von Hobson in *Peter Grimes*. 2003 kehrte er in der *Zauberflöte* an die Royal Opera Covent Garden zurück, und er wird die Rollen von Bartolo (*Le nozze di Figaro*) für die kürzlich gegründete Savoy Theatre Opera Company und des Haushofmeisters (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) an der Welsh National Opera übernehmen.

Das **London Philharmonic Orchestra** ist seit langem als vielseitiges und künstlerisch herausragendes Orchester fest etabliert. Bezeugt wird dies durch Konzert- und Operaufführungen, vielfach preisgekrönte Schallplattenaufnahmen, bahnbrechende internationale Gastspielreisen und wegbereitende pädagogische Arbeit. Chefdirigent des Orchesters ist seit September

2000 Kurt Masur. Er steht in einer langen Tradition, die seit der Gründung des Orchesters durch Sir Thomas Beecham im Jahre 1932 durch Sir Adrian Boult, Sir John Pritchard, Bernard Haitink, Sir Georg Solti, Klaus Tennstedt und Franz Welser-Möst aufgebaut wurde. Seit 1992 ist das London Philharmonic Orchestra das Gastsinfonieorchester der Royal Festival Hall und bereits seit achtunddreißig Jahren das Gastsinfonieorchester an der Glyndebourne Festival Opera.

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 und der Opera North dirigiert und tritt regelmäßig mit dem Philharmonia Orchestra und dem London Philharmonic 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 Uraufführung von *Peter Grimes* dirigiert, und 1996 die erste spanische Inszenierung von *The Rake's Progress*. Er ist in Deutschland, der Schweiz und den Niederlanden aufgetreten, bei den Festspielen in Pesaro, beim Hong Kong International Festival, in Japan anlässlich einer *Carmen*-Tournée und in Mexiko mit dem UNAM Symphony Orchestra. Zu den Neuproduktionen, die er in letzter Zeit dirigiert hat, zählen *Fidelio* beim New Zealand Festival, *Lucia di Lammermoor* an der New Israeli Opera und *Don Giovanni* an der Staatsoper Hannover.

Seine Tätigkeit im Aufnahmestudio umfaßt die Produktion von Marschners *Der Vampyr* fürs BBC-Fernsehen und achtundzwanzig vollständige Opernaufzeichnungen unter der Schirmherrschaft der Peter Moores Foundation. Darunter befinden sich zahlreiche Aufnahmen der Reihe Opera Rara, die mehrere Preise gewonnen haben, beispielsweise den belgischen Prix Cecilia für Donizettis *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra*. Für Chandos hat er die Aufzeichnung einer Serie von Programmen mit Opernarien geleitet (mit Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny, John Tomlinson, Della Jones und Andrew Shore), außerdem *Idomeneo*, *Carmen*, *The Thieving Magpie*, *Don Giovanni*, *Don*

Pasquale, *The Elixir of Love*, *Lucia of Lammermoor*, *Ernani*, *Il trovatore*, *Aida*, *Faust*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *La bohème*, *Turandot*, die preisgekrönte *Tosca* und Highlights aus dem *Rosenkavalier*, jeweils in Zusammenarbeit mit der Peter Moores Foundation.

Seine Liebe zu Gesang und Theater hat **Jonathan Dove** wie selbstverständlich zur Welt der Oper geführt. *Flight* war der strahlende Höhepunkt seiner Verbindung mit Glyndebourne, die 1987 mit seiner Anstellung als Assistent der Chorleitung begann. In der Folge komponierte er für das Ensemble drei groß angelegte Community-Opern (darunter eine für 600 Mitwirkende) sowie die Bläserserenade *Figures in the Garden* für die Feiern zu Mozarts 200. Todestag. *Flight* erklang zuerst 1998 in Glyndebourne und wurde seither in Belgien, den Niederlanden, Deutschland und der USA aufgeführt.

Die Fernsehproduktion von *Flight* veranlaßte Dove, eine Oper eigens für das Fernsehen zu komponieren – *When She Died* handelt vom Tod Prinzessin Dianas und hatte allein in Großbritannien mehr als eine Million Zuschauer.

Sein Schaffen für die Bühne umfaßt darüberhinaus die Kammeroper *Siren Song*, die Kirchenoper *Tobias and the Angel* sowie vier Opern für Musica Nel Chostro: *L'Augellino Belverde*, *L'Altra Euridice*, *La Dama ed il Pulitore di Damasco* und *Le Porte di Bagdad*. Im Jahr 2000 schrieb Dove eine weitere Community-Oper, *The Palace in the Sky*, die am Hackney Empire aufgeführt wurde, gefolgt von der Kinderoper *The Hackney Chronicles*.

Ein großer Teil von Doves Schaffen gehört der Vokalmusik an. Zu seinen Liederzyklen zählen *Five Am'rous Sighs*, *Ariel Songs*, *All You Who Sleep Tonight* und *Out of Winter*. Außerdem hat er die beiden Chorzyklen *The Passing of the Year* und *The Far Theatricals of Day* sowie zahlreiche Anthems und Carols komponiert. Sein Instrumentalschaffen umfaßt ein Streichquartett und ein Saxophonquartett, das Posaunenkonzert *Stargazer*, das von Mozart inspirierte Flötenkonzert *The Magic Flute Dances*, das Konzert *Moonlight Revels* für Saxophon, Trompete und Streicher sowie *The Crocodiamond* (oder *Rita and the Wolf*) für Erzähler & Orchester. Außerdem hat Dove Musik für Film und Theater geschrieben.



Bill, Tina, Steward and Older Woman (Richard Coxon, Mary Plazas, Garry Magee and Nuala Willis)



Stage photograph

Dove: Flight

Un nouvel opéra à succès, tout le monde le sait, est une chose rare. Il suffit de penser aux centaines d'œuvres nouvelles des XVIIIe et XIXe siècles qui depuis sont tombées dans l'oubli. De nos jours, les nouveaux opéras comiques à succès sont encore bien plus rares. Combien y en a-t-il eu depuis l'*Albert Herring* (1947) de Britten? Quant aux nouveaux opéras que le public apprécie vraiment plus qu'il ne les tolère par pénitence – soyons honnêtes – avant de se précipiter, l'air coupable, à la dernière reprise en date des *Nozze di Figaro*, ils sont tout aussi rarissimes.

A tous ces égards, *Flight* de Jonathan Dove est un succès aussi rare que revigorant. Cet opéra fut commandé par Glyndebourne, créé par le Glyndebourne Touring Opera en 1998 dans une mise en scène spectaculaire et pleine d'esprit de Richard Jones, puis monté dans le cadre du Festival estival de Glyndebourne l'année suivante. Il fut retransmis à la télévision par Channel 4 et depuis a connu le succès en Europe et aux Etats-Unis.

L'œuvre a reçu un accueil enthousiaste de la grande majorité des critiques musicaux conventionnels, certains s'avouant même surpris d'avoir pris un tel plaisir à la représentation d'un nouvel opéra. Le critique

de télévision Victor Lewis-Smith en fit une analyse particulièrement pénétrante, qualifiant *Flight* d'œuvre "donnant de l'opéra l'image d'un art florissant plutôt que celle d'un fossile élégant. Il n'est jamais facile de créer une œuvre d'art qui soit accessible sans compromettre l'intégrité, mais Dove et [son librettiste] De Angelis y réussissent merveilleusement bien". *Flight* est maintenant disponible sur CD, et l'un des grands plaisirs de cet enregistrement public est d'entendre le public rire si souvent.

Flight n'est pas une œuvre sans genèse. Dove, qui approchait alors la quarantaine, avait eu la grande sagesse de suivre un apprentissage laborieux de son invention avant de se lancer dans son premier opéra d'envergure. Il y eut des œuvres plus courtes, dont *Siren Song* (1994), une pièce en un acte, captivante à souhait, composée pour l'Almeida Opera, et la même année un opéra pour le petit Festival de Batignano en Toscane, *L'Augellino Belverde* (que trois autres ont suivi depuis). Il y eut aussi l'"operina" *Greed* (1993), une pièce encore plus courte puisqu'elle ne dure que six minutes.

Ce qui est encore plus significatif, c'est qu'il avait une grande expérience en matière

d'opéras communautaires, puisqu'il en avait écrit trois pour Glyndebourne. En 1998 il y eut *Flight*, suivi en 1999 par *Tobias and the Angel* pour l'Almeida Opera et *The Palace in the Sky* (Hackney Empire, 2000). Il avait à son actif d'innombrables partitions pour le théâtre et il composerait de la musique pour des événements comme l'inauguration du Millennium Dome et du Millennium Bridge. (La musique, elle au moins, fut un succès!) Tout le monde sait que Britten voulait que sa musique soit "utile", et Dove semble suivre son exemple. Car quoi de plus "utile" que le charmant petit opéra *The Hackney Chronicles* (2001) qu'il composa pour les écoles primaires de l'est de Londres, où lui-même a élu domicile.

Mais le fait sans doute le plus révélateur est que, jeune homme, il avait travaillé avec le City of Birmingham Touring Opera (connu aujourd'hui sous le nom de Birmingham Opera Company), qui lui commanda des réductions orchestrales d'opéras aussi divers que *La Cenerentola*, l'*Anneau* (réduisant ainsi les quatre soirées de Wagner à deux), *La Petite Renarde rusée* de Janáček (une réduction largement diffusée), *La Flûte enchantée* et *Falstaff*. Il en vint à connaître en profondeur les grands chefs-d'œuvre du passé, la mécanique et les rouages des opéras qui durent, certainement une expérience

inestimable, et il développa par ailleurs une aussi grande compétence en matière d'orchestration que s'il avait lu de nombreux traités spécialisés.

En travaillant pour la communauté, il apprit à écrire pour un public non spécialiste d'opéra et pour des interprètes non professionnels. Lorsqu'il se lança dans la composition de *Flight*, il savait déjà ce qui marche au théâtre, ce qui ne marche pas, ce qui devrait marcher mais ne marche pas, et, surtout, pourquoi. Il était prêt pour son "Envol".

Dove a le plus souvent collaboré avec des dramaturges pour librettistes, comme David Lan, Nick Dear, et, ici entre autres, April De Angelis. *Flight* est habituellement qualifié d'opéra comique, à juste titre d'ailleurs, bien qu'il ne soit jamais désigné ainsi. Mais tout comme *Albert Herring*, c'est bien plus que cela. On se sent presque coupable d'avoir tant ri quand le Réfugié nous saisit aux tripes avec son récit si émouvant dans les dernières minutes. La salle d'embarquement d'un aéroport est un microcosme de la condition humaine au même titre, par exemple, que les occupants de la maison Almaviva dans *Figaro*. Les aéroports sont des lieux de passage, d'aventure, de changement. Au moins trois relations fluctuent continuellement, deux au moins sont apaisées et gagnent peut-être même en profondeur.

Le livret est particulièrement original, sans tenir compte du décor. Il s'agit certainement du premier accouchement sur scène dans l'histoire de l'opéra, et à deux reprises des avions décollent. Et pourtant de nombreux éléments viennent tout droit de l'opéra traditionnel. Le schéma jour/nuit/jour fait écho à celui de *Tristan und Isolde*. La nuit, c'est cette phase dangereuse où l'imprévisible se produit. L'érotisme homosexuel n'est pas nouveau à l'opéra, bien qu'il ait en général été encodé, et si Bill n'affirme pas publiquement son homosexualité, au moins ouvre-t-il la porte pour mettre un pied dehors. Ceci fait partie d'un écho surprenant à un autre épisode traditionnel de folie nocturne en plein milieu d'un acte, à savoir la mêlée générale dans *Die Meistersinger*. Ici, Bill se surprend lui-même tandis que les autres sombrent dans l'ivresse et la violence. Quel soulagement lorsque le rideau tombe.

L'élément magique caractéristique de l'opéra est représenté par les cailloux du Réfugié, auxquels on peut croire si on le veut. Il y a deux "dieux" ou représentants de l'autorité quasiment opératiques: la Contrôleuse glacial et le Officier de l'immigration. Tous deux servent de *deus ex machina*, l'Officier s'avérant étonnamment affable (coup de théâtre quasiment subversif au même titre que le concept du "bon" policier dans *Silbersee* de

Weill) tandis que la Contrôleuse réussit semblait-il à tramer une Fin Heureuse dans les derniers moments pleins de mystère. Rien n'est inflexible dans le texte de De Angelis: comme tout bon librettiste, elle laisse un large rôle – sinon l'unique rôle – à la musique. Ses phrases courtes et musclées et son recours astucieux aux rimes et à l'assonance forment un tremplin idéal pour Dove, son exubérance rythmique et son aisance mélodique.

Comme bien des commentateurs l'ont fait remarquer, Dove s'est imprégné de tout ce qui s'est passé dans le monde musical autour de lui. Britten, bien sûr, Broadway de Rodgers à Sondheim, les Russes (il connaît aussi bien que Chostakovitch ou Prokofiev le pouvoir d'un ostinato), les minimalistes de premier et de second plan (je vous laisse le soin de les nommer). Il n'a pas peur des grands gestes romantiques: il écrit des airs bien charpentés, abondamment orchestrés. Il faut de l'audace pour écrire des airs de nos jours, et cette audace, on la retrouve dans ses effets scéniques. Les deux décollages ont dû être très drôles à écrire, et le second nous rappelle que Dove avait travaillé à *Das Rheingold*.

Sa mise en musique d'un texte doit certainement beaucoup à Britten. Elle est si naturelle, vraiment inséparable des lignes vocales, elle évoque si bien la nature des personnages, qu'il s'agisse de l'innocence

simple de Tina et Bill ou de la nostalgie de la Dame plus âgée. L'accompagnement des lignes vocales se charge d'exprimer ce que le texte ne dit pas: n'est-ce pas là la raison d'être de l'opéra? Les cordes évoquent la tendresse qui se cache sous les échanges de mots en apparence si banals entre Tina et Bill, et la musique de Dove rend les raseurs en puissance – les aéroports regorgent autant que les salles de bar de gens ennuyeux – intéressants, sinon surprenants (et il connaît bien le monde de Noël Coward). Sa mise en musique de telle ou telle phrase déclenche le rire, un rire amplement mérité. Mais surtout, il révèle une maîtrise technique extraordinaire, sinon unique, dans sa façon de développer deux conversations simultanément sans nuire à la clarté du texte, ou de permettre aux phrases clés pour l'auditeur d'émerger naturellement d'un ensemble complexe. Un grand talent.

Qu'il s'agisse de la structure de l'œuvre entière, des variations de tempo dans l'action, de la disposition des arias et des morceaux d'ensemble, tout indique que Dove est un compositeur d'opéra-né, conscient du passé. Les tempêtes sont presque un cliché opératique, mais elles marchent à tous les coups, et ni Rossini ni Wagner n'auraient honte de celles de Dove. La beauté si pure de la voix de soprano dans le registre aigu est un

autre procédé qui a fait ses preuves à l'opéra, et il faudrait être désespérément buté pour ne pas y recourir. Ce qui n'est pas le cas de Dove, pour preuve les pages pleines de magie qu'il écrit pour la Contrôleuse. Les bavardages pour ensemble nous rappellent que Dove a travaillé sur *La Cenerentola* ainsi que sur *Rheingold*, et les possibilités comiques de la colorature sont exploitées au maximum, avec des résultats hilarants au troisième acte.

De tous temps, les compositeurs ont appris quelque chose de leurs prédécesseurs, Mozart de Gluck, Verdi de Donizetti, Wagner de Weber. L'originalité véritable est aussi rare qu'un nouvel opéra à succès. Berlioz et Janáček sont les deux noms les plus souvent cités, mais tout dépend de votre connaissance de Spontini dans le cas de Berlioz ou du Dvořák de la dernière époque (ou d'ailleurs du Janáček des débuts) dans le cas de anáček. L'un des aspects les plus frappants de Dove, à part son talent naturel tout à fait extraordinaire, c'est qu'il n'a jamais hésité à apprendre des autres, de ses prédécesseurs comme de ses contemporains, et c'est pourquoi *Flight* est une œuvre si captivante, si stimulante et – surtout – si divertissante.

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Traduction: Nicole Valencia

Argument

L'action a lieu dans un aéroport, de nos jours.

Acte I

(CD 1, page [1] – [16])

L'aube se lève. La Contrôleuse de la navigation aérienne est assise dans sa tour. Elle est satisfaite: il n'y a personne dans l'aéroport – à l'exception du Réfugié: il n'a nulle part ailleurs où aller. Quelques personnes arrivent, des personnes auxquelles le Réfugié viendra en aide. Un couple, Bill et Tina, part en voyage pour tenter de redécouvrir la féerie de l'amour. Une Dame plus âgée retrouve un jeune monsieur qu'elle a rencontré à Majorque, son fiancé; elle aimerait beaucoup passer inaperçue, mais... Le Steward et la Stewardesse s'affairent gaiement – par moments. Un autre couple arrive, presque en retard pour le vol de Minsk: ils émigrent. La Femme du vol de Minsk est visiblement enceinte. Au dernier moment, elle refuse de monter à bord de l'avion et son mari part sans elle. Elle reste en plan, mortifiée. Le Réfugié lui offre une pierre magique pour la reconforter.

L'Officier de l'immigration traverse la foule: sa présence est un danger permanent pour le Réfugié – illégal. Ce dernier, averti par la Contrôleuse, parvient à ne pas se faire remarquer, cette fois. Les voyageurs se

préparent à partir quand la Contrôleuse annonce qu'en raison des orages, tous les départs sont postposés.

Acte II

(CD 1, page [17] – [23], et CD 2, page [1] – [7])

La nuit est tombée et l'orage gronde encore. L'inquiétude règne parmi les passagers qui attendent. L'orage a même perturbé la Contrôleuse – elle quitte sa tour et erre à l'extérieur de l'aéroport. Les passagers essayent de fermer l'œil de temps à autre, mais, seul ou à deux, ils s'approchent subrepticement du Réfugié, fascinés par sa pierre magique. Ce dernier leur donne ce que chacun pensent être une pierre unique et ils font des vœux. Bill est nerveux et cherche la Stewardesse. Dans l'obscurité, il se fourvoie et tombe sur le Steward: ils s'en vont explorer la tour de contrôle. Les femmes et le Réfugié décident de se souler; devenues plus volubiles, les femmes découvrent que chacune d'entre elles possèdent "la" pierre. Elles donnent libre cours à leur fureur, avec de terribles conséquences pour le Réfugié. Les conséquences des explorations de Bill et du Steward sont moins terribles, mais non moins cataclysmiques. La Contrôleuse reste à l'extérieur tandis que l'orage se fait de plus en plus violent.

Acte III

(CD 2, page [8] – [23])

Le jour se lève et l'orage s'est calmé. Les vols reprennent. Mais il y a de nombreuses surprises dans l'air. L'Homme du vol de Minsk réapparaît: il ne pouvait supporter l'idée d'être séparé de son épouse. Bill et le Steward ont une surprise pour leurs partenaires. Tina a une très mauvaise surprise pour Bill. Le Réfugié a une surprise pour les femmes. La Femme du vol de Minsk a une surprise pour tout le monde. L'Officier de l'immigration réapparaît et découvre le Réfugié, mais lorsque ce dernier raconte son histoire, même l'Officier a une réaction surprenante. Les vols sont annoncés: les passagers partent; sous l'œil vigilant de la Contrôleuse, l'aéroport retournera à la normale... peut-être.

Traduction: Nicole Valencia

Christopher Robson se produit dans des festivals, à l'opéra et en concert dans des lieux tels que Édimbourg, Glyndebourne, les BBC Proms, l'Almeida Festival, le Lufthansa Festival de Londres, au Concertgebouw d'Amsterdam, à Innsbruck, Salzburg, Vienne, au Munich Opernfestspiele, dans le cadre de la Zürich Junifestwochen, à Ravenne, en Flandre, à Bruges, Montpellier, Aix-en-Provence, Paris, à l'English National Opera, au Royal Opera de

Covent Garden, au Scottish Opera, à l'Opera North, au Houston Grand Opera, Chicago Lyric Opera, New York City Opera, Sao Paulo Opera, Nationale Reisoper, De Vlaamse Opera, à l'Opéra de Nancy, au Berlin Kammeroper, à l'Opéra d'Etat de Francfort, au Bayerische Staatsoper, à Munich, à l'Opéra royal de Copenhague, au Teatro del Liceo, à Barcelone et au Théâtre du Bolshoi à Moscou.

Son vaste répertoire inclut Orlofsky (*Die Fledermaus*), Baba the Turk (*The Rake's Progress*), de nombreux opéras de Haendel, notamment le rôle titre et Tolomeo (*Giulio Cesare*), Arsamenes (*Xerxes*), Unulfo (*Rodelinda*), le rôle titre et Andronicus (*Tamerlano*), Polinesso (*Ariodante*), Cyrus et Daniel (*Belshazzar*), Didymus (*Theodora*), Lichas (*Hercules*), David (*Saul*) et Hamor (*Jephtha*), Holofernes dans *La Giuditta* de Scarlatti, le rôle titre dans *Akhnaten* de Philip Glass, Edgar dans la création anglaise de *Lear* de Reimann, Oberon (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Apollo (*Death in Venice*), la création anglaise de *Satyricon* de Bruno Maderna, Ometh dans la création mondiale de *Golem* de John Casken, Angel dans la création mondiale de *Apocalypse* de John Tavener, et Refugee dans la création mondiale de *Flight* de Jonathan Dove.

Christopher Robson a été nommé Kammersänger au Bayerisches Staatsoper en février 2003.

Claron McFadden a étudié le chant à l'Eastman School of Music de Rochester, New York. Après avoir fait ses débuts à Glyndebourne dans le rôle titre de *Lulu*, elle y chanta le rôle de Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*) et celui de The Controller dans *Flight* de Jonathan Dove. Elle fit ses débuts à l'Opéra des Pays-Bas dans le rôle de Zerbinetta (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) et parmi ses nombreuses prestations dans ce théâtre, on citera en particulier Constance dans *Les Dialogues des Carmélites* et dans *Noach* de Guus Jansen. Parmi les autres rôles de son répertoire figurent Clara (*Porgy and Bess*) au Festival de Bregenz, Cunégonde (*Candide*) avec le BBC Philharmonic Orchestra et le Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Mme. Herz (*Der Schauspieldirektor*) au Festival de Salzbourg, *Rodelinda* de Haendel à Karlsruhe et *Semele* à Halle. Elle s'est également produite à Londres au Royal Opera de Covent Garden, à Paris au Théâtre du Châtelet, et à l'Opera North (Donna Elvira dans *Don Giovanni* et Tytania dans *A Midsummer Night's Dream*).

Outre la plupart des grands oratorios du répertoire, Claron McFadden chante de nombreuses œuvres modernes et contemporaines. Elle est étroitement associée avec la musique de Dirk Boss et avec les *Paul Celan Songs* de Birtwistle qu'elle a interprétées plusieurs fois à Londres avec le Nash Ensemble

et qu'elle a enregistrées. Elle s'est produite dans *Carmina Burana*, dans la Suite extraite de *Lulu*, dans les rôles coloratures de *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*, dans la Quatorzième Symphonie de Chostakovitch et dans *Les Illuminations* de Britten. Elle a assuré la création mondiale de *The Woman and the Hare* de Birtwistle et de *The Woman who Walked into Doors* de Kris Defoort. La vaste discographie de Claron McFadden inclut les *Bachianas Brasileiras* de Villa-Lobos, *Les Indes galantes* de Rameau, *Acis et Galatea*, *Ottone*, *Romeo und Julia* de Benda, et *Aspasia* dans *Alexander Balus* de Haendel.

Né à Nottingham, **Richard Coxon** a étudié au Royal Northern College of Music de Manchester grâce à une bourse de Peter Moores, et il obtint plusieurs prix. Après avoir fait ses débuts professionnels dans le rôle de Flavio (*Norma*) au Scottish Opera, il y fut pendant trois ans Principal Tenor, chantant des rôles tels que Jaquino (*Fidelio*), Nemorino (*L'elisir d'amore*), Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*), Narraboth (*Salome*), Alfredo (*La traviata*) et le Matelot (*Tristan und Isolde*).

Richard Coxon a également incarné le Peintre (*Lulu*), Nick (*The Handmaid's Tale*), Brighella (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) et Fenton (*Falstaff*) à l'English National Opera; Nemorino et Alfredo à l'Opera North d'Irlande; Nemorino

au Zuid Opera; Squeak (*Billy Budd*), Mr By-Ends (*The Pilgrim's Progress*) et Gaston (*La traviata*) au Royal Opera de Covent Garden; Vanya Kudrjash (*Katya Kabanova*) au Florida Grand Opera et à l'Opéra de Montréal; Piquillo (*La Périchole*) et Edoardo (*Un giorno di regno*) au Buxton Festival; le Lieutenant Bonnet (*Guerre et Paix*) au Festival de Spolète et Tom Rakewell (*The Rake's Progress*) au New Israeli Opera.

En concert, Richard Coxon a chanté dans le *Messie* et dans *St Paul* de Haendel, et avec le BBC Concert Orchestra, le BBC Symphony Orchestra, le BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, le City of London Sinfonia, le Hallé Orchestra, le Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra et le Scottish Chamber Orchestra. La discographie de Richard Coxon inclut *Billy Budd*, *War and Peace* et *The Pilgrim's Progress* pour Chandos, et Lucifer/Satan dans *The Flood* de Stravinski.

Mary Plazas a étudié au Royal Northern College of Music de Manchester avec Ava June, et a bénéficié de bourses importantes de la Peter Moores Foundation et du Countess of Munster Musical Trust. Elle a terminé ses études au National Opera Studio grâce au soutien des Friends of Covent Garden et d'un Peter Stuyvestant Award.

Après avoir fait ses débuts à l'English

National Opera en 1992, Mary Plazas a été Company Principal de 1995 à 1998, et pendant la saison 2001/2002, incarnant de nombreux rôles tels que Fiordiligi, Dorabella, Mimì, Leila, Adina, Nanetta, Micaëla, Marzelline (*Fidelio*), Lauretta, Oscar et le rôle titre dans *The Cunning Little Vixen*. Elle a chanté Mimì, Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Tebaldo (*Don Carlos*) et Elisetta (*Il matrimonio segreto*) à l'Opera North; Donna Elvira avec le Glyndebourne Touring Opera; Anne Trulove au New Israeli Opera et à l'Opera Factory; Écho (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) et Madame Silberklang (*Der Schauspieldirektor*) au Garsington Opera.

Mary Plazas a incarné la Duchesse dans *Powder Her Face* de Thomas Adès à l'Almeida Opera et au Festival d'Aldeburgh, et a enregistré ce rôle pour Chanel 4 Television. Elle a fait ses débuts à Bregenz dans le rôle de Mimì, et depuis se produit régulièrement dans ce festival. Elle a chanté Mum dans *Greek* de Mark-Anthony Turnage avec le London Sinfonietta au Barbican Concert Hall de Londres. Sa discographie inclut *Emma d'Antiochia* de Mercadante et *Maria Regina d'Inghilterra* pour Opera Rara, *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*, et pour la série "Opera in English" de Chandos, Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*), Marguerite (*Faust*), Adina (*The Elixir of Love*), Liù (*Turandot*) et Micaëla (*Carmen*).

Nuala Willis commença par travailler dans le milieu du théâtre comme designer/costumière, puis comme actrice (en Angleterre, au Canada et en Amérique). Après avoir étudié le chant en privé pendant plusieurs années, elle s'engagea dans sa carrière actuelle de chanteuse d'opéra. Ses premiers engagements importants furent avec l'Opera Studio à Bruxelles puis au Festival de Glyndebourne.

Nuala Willis commença sa carrière internationale indépendante à Nancy et à Metz. Elle s'est également produite au Festival d'Aldeburgh dans le rôle de Filipievna (*Eugene Oneguine*) sous la direction de Mstislav Rostropovitch, et dans celui d'Hippolyta (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*). Elle a poursuivi une importante carrière de soliste internationale à Genève, Lisbonne, Marseilles, Toronto, Dublin et avec le Folksoper suédois au Festival d'Édimbourg. Elle s'est produite au Royal Opera de Covent Garden (incarnant Hippolyta, Filipievna, et Martha dans *Faust*); à Glyndebourne dans la création mondiale de *The Second Mrs Kong* de Harrison Birtwistle et de *Flight* de Jonathan Dove, ainsi qu'à l'Almeida Opera Festival. Parmi les autres œuvres contemporaines qu'elle a chantées figurent *Oedipe* de Georges Enesco pour Radio-France, *Hey Persephone!* de Deirdre Gribbin aux festivals d'Almeida et d'Édimbourg, dans *Snatched by the Gods* de Param Vir, et

dans *Broken Strings* à Amsterdam et à Londres.

Parallèlement à sa carrière lyrique, Nuala Willis est également à l'aise dans d'autres styles de théâtre, et s'est produite dans *Sunday in the Park with George* de Stephen Sondheim, dans la production du National Youth Music Theatre de *Oliver!*, et dans le rôle de la Duchesse dans *The Gondoliers* pour la D'Oyly Carte Company.

Née à Wrexham dans le nord du Pays de Galles, **Ann Taylor** a étudié au Royal Northern College of Music de Manchester, à la Guildhall School of Music and Drama de Londres et au National Opera Studio. Depuis ses débuts à l'Opera North, elle a chanté au Welsh National Opera, au Scottish Opera, au Festival de Glyndebourne, avec le Glyndebourne Touring Opera, au Théâtre de la Monnaie de Bruxelles, au Zuid Opera, à l'Opéra d'État de Bavière et au New Zealand Festival. Son vaste répertoire inclut les rôles titres dans *Ariodante* et dans l'*Orfeo* de Gluck, *Rosina (Il barbiere di Siviglia)*, *Hänsel (Hänsel und Gretel)*, *Cherubino (Le nozze di Figaro)*, *Dorabella (Cosi fan tutte)*, *Ramiro (La finta giardiniera)*, *Donna Clara (The Duenna)*, *Varvara (Katya Kabanova)*, *Pippo (La Pie voleuse)*, *Hermia (A Midsummer Night's Dream)*, *Kristina (L'Affaire Makropoulos)*, *Oreste (La Belle Hélène)*, *Phoebe (The Yeomen of the*

Guard), *Annius (La clemenza di Tito)*, *Kate (Owen Wingrave)*. Elle a par ailleurs créé des rôles dans trois premières mondiales: Sarah dans *Tobias and the Angel* de Jonathan Dove, Judy et Grey Wolf dans *Baa Baa Black Sheep* de Michael Berkeley, et la Stewardess dans *Flight* de Jonathan Dove.

Ann Taylor poursuit également une brillante carrière en concert, se produisant dans le cadre des BBC Proms de Londres, au Festival international d'Édimbourg, au Cheltenham Festival, au Barbican Centre et au Queen Elizabeth Hall de Londres, et au Bridgewater Hall de Manchester. Sa discographie inclut *The Duenna* de Gerhard, *Albert Herring* de Britten et *Baa Baa Black Sheep* de Berkeley.

Garry Magee a remporté le premier prix du Kathleen Ferrier Award 1995 et le premier prix du Concours international du Belvédère de Vienne 1996. Diplômé de la Guildhall School of Music and Drama et du National Opera Studio, il étudie actuellement auprès de Robert Dean.

Il a chanté les rôles de Pelléas (*Pelléas and Mélisande*), Harry Heegan (*The Silver Tassie*), et Dancairo (*Carmen*) à l'English National Opera; le Prince Afron (*Le Coq d'or*) au Royal Opera de Covent Garden; *Guglielmo (Cosi fan tutte)* et Schaubard (*La bohème*) à l'Opera North; le rôle titre dans *Don Giovanni* au Welsh National

Opera et au Staatsoper de Hanovre; Pot Boy Guiscardo (*Mario and The Magician*), Daisy (*The Nightingale and the Rose*), Stinky (*East and West*) et Hermes (*Ion*) à l'Almeida Festival; Marcello (*La bohème*) au Deutsche Oper de Berlin; Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*) et Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*) au Teatro Municipal de Santiago.

Garry Magee poursuit également une brillante carrière en concert, et s'est produit au Wigmore Hall de Londres, au Théâtre du Châtelet à Paris, avec le City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, et avec le London Philharmonic Orchestra sous la direction de Mark Elder. Il a chanté dans la *Cantate de printemps* de Rachmaninov, *Wozzeck* d'Alban Berg, *West Side Story* de Leonard Bernstein, le *Requiem* de Fauré, le *Magnificat* de Bach, dans *Ein deutsches Requiem* de Brahms et dans *Die Schöpfung* de Haydn. Sa discographie inclut le rôle titre dans *Don Giovanni*, Escamillo (*Carmen*) et Valentin (*Faust*) pour la série "Opera in English" de Chandos, *Guglielmo (Carlo di Borgogna)* pour Opera Rara, et *The Wound Dresser* de John Adams.

Stephen Page a fait ses études à l'Opera Studio. À l'English National Opera, son répertoire inclut le rôle titre dans *Don Giovanni*, *Tarquinius (The Rape of Lucretia)*, *Albert* dans *Werther* de Massenet, *Paolo (Simon*

Boccanegra), Valentin (*Faust*) et le Comte (*The Marriage of Figaro*). Au Scottish Opera, il a incarné Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*), Marcello (*La bohème*), Chorèbe (*Les Troyens*), le rôle titre dans *Don Giovanni*, et dans *Le nozze di Figaro*. À l'Opera North, il a chanté dans *Sweeney Todd* de Stephen Sondheim et dans le rôle de Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*). Il a fait ses débuts au Festival de Glyndebourne dans la salle d'opéra nouvellement terminée dans le rôle de Nick Shadow (*The Rake's Progress*), et depuis s'y est produit dans *The Second Mrs Kong* de Harrison Birtwistle, Leporello (*Don Giovanni*, également sur vidéo et DVD), Coyle dans *Owen Wingrave* de Britten, Balstrode (*Peter Grimes*), Pizzaro (*Fidelio*, télévisé aux Proms de Londres), et Prus (*L'Affaire Makropoulos*).

Stephen Page s'est également produit à Dublin dans le rôle de Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*), Olin Blitch dans *Susanna* de Carlisle Floyd et dans Pizzaro (*Fidelio*) au Théâtre du Châtelet à Paris. Au New Israeli Opera, il a chanté le Roi (*L'Amour des trois oranges*), Leporello (*Don Giovanni*) et Shadow (*The Rake's Progress*). En Amérique, il s'est produit dans plusieurs rôles d'opéras de Gilbert et Sullivan, et dans celui de Prus (*L'Affaire Makropoulos*).

Stephen Page a fait ses débuts au Royal Opera de Covent Garden dans *La Cenerentola*,

et figure dans le film *Tomorrow La Scala* réalisé pour BBC/Home Movies, et projeté au Festival de Cannes.

Née dans le Lincolnshire, **Anne Mason** a étudié à la Royal Academy of Music de Londres et au National Opera Studio. Elle a fait ses débuts à l'Opera North dans le rôle de Fenena (*Nabucco*), puis s'est produite au Royal Opera de Covent Garden, à l'English National Opera, au Welsh National Opera, au Scottish Opera, à Glyndebourne, à l'Opéra de Madrid, à Barcelone, à l'Opéra des Pays-Bas, au Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, au Festival de musique ancienne d'Innsbruck, au Semperopera de Dresde, et à Bâle où elle a chanté le rôle titre dans *Julius Caesar*.

Parmi les nombreux rôles de son répertoire, on citera la Deuxième Dame (*Die Zauberflöte*), Emilia (*Otello*), Suzuki (*Madama Butterfly*), Annio (*La clemenza di Tito*), Annina (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Enrichetta (*I Puritani*), Theresa (*La sonnambula*), Guinevere (*Gawain*), Adalgisa (*Norma*), Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), Penelope (*Il ritorno d'Ulisse*), Orlofsky (*Die Fledermaus*), Sextus (*Julius Caesar*), et le rôle de Fricka dans le cycle du *Ring* du Scottish Opera donné au Festival d'Édimbourg.

Anne Mason possède un vaste répertoire de concert, et a chanté avec le London Symphony Orchestra, le Hallé Orchestra, le London

Philharmonic Orchestra, le Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, l'English Chamber Orchestra, sous la direction de chefs tels que David Parry, Nicholas McGegan, Sir Collin Davis, Bernard Haitink et Roger Norrington. Sa discographie inclut le rôle de Marzellina sous la direction de Bernard Haitink, *Emilia di Liverpool* de Donizetti et *Medea* de Mayr pour Opera Rara, Azucena (*Il trovatore*) sous la direction de David Parry dans la série "Opera in English" de Chandos, et Helen dans l'enregistrement vidéo de *King Priam*. Elle s'est également produite dans *Death of a Princess* de Jonathan Dove pour Channel 4 Television.

Richard Van Allan commença sa carrière à Glyndebourne où il chanta fréquemment avant de devenir membre du Royal Opera de Covent Garden où ses rôles incluent Don Alfonso, Figaro et Leporello, Zaccaria, Don Pizarro et Colline. Il devint plus tard membre de l'English National Opera, et ajouta à son répertoire Boris Goudonov, le Baron Ochs, Claggart, Don Quichotte, le Comte (*Le nozze di Figaro*) et Mustafà. Il s'est produit avec toutes les grandes compagnies lyriques de Grande-Bretagne, ainsi qu'au Metropolitan Opera de New York et à l'Opéra-Bastille à Paris. Ses nombreux enregistrements comptent un *Grammy Award* et deux Nominations. Après avoir mené une carrière pendant près de quarante ans, dont

quinze en tant que directeur du National Opera Studio, Richard Van Allan se produit maintenant dans des rôles moins astreignants. Il s'est récemment rendu au Japon au Festival Saito Kinen et au Festival de Florence après avoir chanté le rôle de Hobson (*Peter Grimes*) sous la direction de Seiji Ozawa. Il est revenu au Royal Opera de Covent Garden en 2003 pour *Die Zauberflöte*, et interprétera prochainement le rôle de Bartolo (*Le nozze di Figaro*) avec la Savoy Theatre Opera Company et celui du Major Domo (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) au Welsh National Opera.

Le **London Philharmonic Orchestra** est depuis longtemps réputé pour la multiplicité de ses talents et son excellence en matière artistique. Ces qualités se manifestent dans la salle de concert comme sur la scène lyrique, dans ses nombreux enregistrements primés, ses tournées internationales innovatrices et son travail d'avant-garde dans le domaine éducatif. Kurt Masur est chef principal de l'Orchestre depuis septembre 2000. Parmi ses prédécesseurs, depuis la fondation de l'Orchestre en 1932 par Sir Thomas Beecham, notons Sir Adrian Boult, Sir John Pritchard, Bernard Haitink, Sir Georg Solti, Klaus Tennstedt et Franz Welsch-Möst. Depuis 1992, le London Philharmonic Orchestra est orchestre symphonique en résidence au Royal Festival Hall. Il est également orchestre

symphonique en résidence au Glyndebourne Festival Opera depuis trente-huit ans.

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 de l'Opera North et collabore régulièrement avec la Philharmonia Orchestra et le London Philharmonic 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 Suisse, 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, *Lucia di Lammermoor* avec le New Israeli Opera et *Don Giovanni* à l'Opéra d'état de Hannover.

En studio, il a participé entre autres à la production de la BBC Television de *Der Vampyr* de Marschner, dirigeant aussi vingt-huit 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, David Parry a dirigé une série d'enregistrements d'airs d'opéra (avec Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny, John Tomlinson, Della Jones et Andrew Shore) de même que *Don Giovanni*, *Don Pasquale*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Ernani*, *Il trovatore*, *Aida*, *Faust*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *La bohème*, *Turandot*, l'enregistrement primé de *Tosca* et des extraits de *Der Rosenkavalier*, tous ces enregistrements étant réalisés en collaboration avec la Peter Moores Foundation.

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 di 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 la Opera North e appare regolarmente con la Philharmonia Orchestra e la London Philharmonic 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, Svizzera, 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, *Lucia di Lammermoor* alla New Israeli Opera e *Don Giovanni* alla Staatsoper di Hannover.

Il suo lavoro in studio di registrazione comprende la produzione della BBC di

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

C'est son amour du chant et du théâtre qui, bien naturellement, attire **Jonathan Dove** vers le monde de l'opéra. *Flight* fut le couronnement de son association avec Glyndebourne qui débute en 1987 lorsqu'il fut nommé chef de chœur assistant. Il composa ensuite trois opéras communautaires d'envergure pour la compagnie de Glyndebourne (dont une œuvre pour 600 interprètes) et une sérénade pour vents, *Figures in the Garden*, pour ses célébrations du bicentenaire de Mozart. *Flight*

fut créé à Glyndebourne en 1998 et depuis a été monté en Belgique, aux Pays-Bas, en Allemagne et aux Etats-Unis.

Suite à la retransmission de *Flight* à la télévision, Dove composa un opéra spécifiquement pour le petit écran. *When She Died*, dont le sujet est la mort de la princesse Diana, fut suivi par près d'un million de téléspectateurs rien qu'au Royaume-Uni.

Parmi ses autres opéras, notons un opéra de chambre, *Siren Song*, un opéra d'église, *Tobias and the Angel* et quatre opéras pour Musica Nel Chiostro: *L'Augellino Belverde*, *L'altra Euridice*, *La dama ed il pulitore di Damasco* et *Le Porte di Bagdad*. En 2000, Dove écrivit un autre opéra communautaire, *The Palace in the Sky*, qui fut monté au théâtre The Empire à Hackney (Londres), avant de

composer un opéra pour enfants, *The Hackney Chronicles*.

Dove compose avant tout pour la voix. On lui doit plusieurs cycles de mélodies dont *Five Am'rous Sighs*, *Ariel Songs*, *All You Who Sleep Tonight* et *Out of Winter*. Il a également écrit deux cycles pour chœur, *The Passing of the Year* et *The Far Theatricals of Day*, ainsi que de nombreux hymnes et chants de Noël. Parmi ses œuvres instrumentales, notons un quatuor à cordes et un quatuor pour saxophones; *Stargazer*, un concerto pour trombone; un concerto pour flûte inspiré par Mozart, *The Magic Flute Dances*; *Moonlight Revels*, un concerto pour saxophone, trompette et cordes; et *The Crocodiamond* (ou *Rita and the Wolf*) pour récitant et orchestre. Il a également composé pour le cinéma et le théâtre.



Older Woman, Tina, Bill, Minskwoman, Steward, Stewardess and Refugee with Controller in tower (Nuala Willis, Mary Plazas, Richard Coxon, Anne Mason, Garry Magee, Ann Taylor, Christopher Robson and Claron McFadden)

COMPACT DISC ONE

Act I

Dawn. An Airport. At a high window sits the Controller. She surveys the scene and makes announcements from her vantage point. Below her, using his coat as a blanket, is the Refugee.

Refugee

1 Look! Up there.
(He indicates the Controller.)
 Most beautiful. Encased in glass.
 First class.
 Enchantress.
 Sending planes up in the sky.
 And then they fly!

Controller

This is the best time.
 No people.
 Just the thrum of air rushing along pipes.
 Just the blue half light.

Refugee

No people... No people...
 People might come today.
 People who'll help me find a way in.
 They might know someone who knows someone
 Who knows something, something good for me.
 So I can stay and begin my new life.

Controller

Who needs people?

Refugee

I need people.

Controller

People scurry.

Refugee

They're happy and they've got money!

Controller

Talking about nothing and rushing, rushing.

Refugee

...Rushing. Excitement, happy chatter.
 They throw away chocolate, not just the wrapper.

Controller

Goodbye, hello, as if they had somewhere
 tremendous to go!

Refugee

They have somewhere tremendous to go!

Controller

I have the sky,
 Blue and filled with white planes.
 Pure, clean,
 Immaculate machines.

Refugee

Just machines...

(Enter a holidaying couple, Tina and Bill. They carry much luggage, including a souvenir donkey from a previous holiday.)

Bill

2 Darling!

Tina

Darling!

Both

Are you happy?
 Perfectly!
 We're here in plenty of time.

Tina

And we've our lucky donkey for luck!

Bill

We don't need luck!

Both

Kiss me!

Refugee *(Mocking)*

Kiss me!

Both

We'll feel the way we did before, on holiday.

Bill

Our holiday will be fantastic.

Tina

My costume is just shells and elastic.

Bill

Double fantastic!

Tina

We'll walk on the beach and do things together.

Bill

Like swimming.

Tina

And walking.

Bill

And drinking together.

Tina

And maybe even talking to each other.

Bill

We'll feel the way we did before, on holiday.

Both

We won't argue.

Tina

And you won't snore.

Bill

I don't snore.

Tina

You'll lose a few pounds.

Bill

And you'll lose a few pounds.

Tina

Do you think I need to lose a few pounds?

Both

We'll feel the way we did before.
 Like one person.
 The whole world disappeared except you...
 What if we don't feel the way we did before?

Refugee

3 Excuse me. Have you any English money?

Bill

Why's that?

Refugee

Lost my ticket.
 Mislaid my luggage.
 Most unfortunate.
 And of course I need to eat.
 I can tell on holiday
 You'll feel the way you did before.

Both

Really?

Refugee

Sure.

Bill and Tina

We'll feel the way we used to feel on holiday.

Refugee

You'll feel the way you used to feel on holiday.

Tina

Here's 50p.

Refugee

Merci. *(To Controller)* See!

Bill and Tina

Now just leave us alone.

(Bill and Tina turn their backs on the Refugee. Controller laughs at Refugee's rebuff.)

Controller

- 4 Welcome travellers. Thank you for flying Tri-Star. Breakfast is served in the cereal bar. Past the sock shop, not too far. Luggage left alone, unloaded, Will be immediately exploded.

(Bill and Tina hurry back to their luggage. Enter Older Woman. She wants to be incognito because she is not travelling, but meeting someone she suspects may not turn up. She is awkward, and wears dark glasses.)

Older Woman

- 5 Do I look conspicuous?
I mean strange?
Should I have worn a less flamboyant range?
Is it obvious that I may be deranged?

I'll just sit here quietly and try to disappear
Into the general atmosphere.
If anyone asks me where I'm going,
I'll speak French and pretend I'm foreign.

Refugee

Excuse me, I haven't eaten today. Have you any food?

Older Woman

Fromage! Café! Veuve Clicquot!

Refugee

I can tell
Today is a lucky day for you.

Older Woman

Is that true?

Controller

Staff, report to main concourse
To check things running smoothly of course.

(The Steward and Stewardess arrive to aid the distressed passenger. The Refugee indicates the Older Woman who is immediately flanked.)

Steward and Stewardess

- 6 Welcome.
We're always smiling as you can see.

Refugee

They're always smiling.

Steward and Stewardess

In uniform we represent the company.
Anything we can do to give assistance to you we will do.
Travelling far?

Older Woman

Mon Dieu!

Steward and Stewardess

Have a nice day, don't be sad.

Older Woman

Fromage! Café! Veuve Clicquot!

Steward and Stewardess

Looks like she's petrified to go. Scared of flying?
Don't be.

We're very friendly, super sane,
Re-assuring on the plane.
We know where the blankets live.
We can sooth an upset kid
And serve coffee without spilling it!

Older Woman

Bonbons! Chanell Jacques Chiracl

Steward and Stewardess

I think she's having an attack.

Older Woman

I'm not having an attack.

Steward and Stewardess

Let us escort you to your plane.
(They attempt to escort her.)

Older Woman

I'm not going anywhere.
I'm waiting for my fiancé.
He works in a bar in Majorca.

Steward and Stewardess

I say.
Pardon us.
But congratulations anyway.

Stewardess

My smile's about to crack.

Steward

Run your hand down my back.

Stewardess

Oh God.

Steward

Oh God.

Stewardess

You feel it too?

Steward

I always do.

Both

It's torture being close to you.

Refugee

I know a little place. Downstairs, level two.

Steward

I'm off to Guadeloupe.

Stewardess

Estoril.

Steward

We've seventeen minutes left to kill.

Stewardess

Seventeen minutes will have to do.

Refugee

Not that far, level two.

Controller

- 7 Down you go. Scurry down, for sweaty embraces
in sordid places.

Ruled by animal natures.
 And people come from every corner,
 Come scrabbling here from every corner,
 Heading for somewhere warmer.
 Their grubby dreams of love and romance.
 If you can't get it here
 What makes you think you can get it in France?
 I'd like to put a spoke in.
 Put a spanner in.
 Put a stop to that sort of thing.
(Announcement)
 Stewards return to departures please:
 Another plane about to leave.
*(The Stewards come back on, hastily re-arranging
 their clothes and looking fed up.)*
 Everyone passes through.
 Everyone's in transit.
 But you sit there and stare.
 You're not going anywhere.
 I like that, staring at me
 Transfixed, unchanging.
 I like him to stare at me and adore.
 That's enough for me.
 Flight 470 about to go.

*(On rush a final couple. The woman is pregnant.
 They carry a lot of boxes.)*

Minskman

⁸ That's us.

Minskwoman

Is that us?
 Wait!
 Passports.

(Minskman produces the passports.)
 Passports.

Minskman
 Come on now.

Minskwoman
 Tickets?

(Minskman produces the tickets.)

Minskman
 Tickets. Everything's in order. Let's board her.

Minskwoman
 No.

Minskman
 No?

Controller
 Flight 470 about to go.

Minskwoman
 Keys.

Minskman
 Keys?

(Minskwoman holds up keys.)

Minskwoman
 I forgot to leave these.

Minskman
 We won't be needing these. Forget the keys,
 darling please.

(He takes the keys.)

Controller
 Passengers for flight 470 ought to know it's
 about to go. Your last call.

Minskman
 Ready?

Minskwoman
 Ready.

Minskman
 Quickly, quickly.

Minskwoman
 Wait.

Minskman
 What is it now?

Minskwoman
 I don't know.

Minskman
 Everything's going to be fine.
 The future is shining.
 We're off to a new beginning.
 Our new life in Minsk is beckoning.

Others
 Fabulous! Adventurous!

Minskwoman
 He's in the diplomatic service.

Minskman
 Promotion.
 A new life for me
 And you and the baby,
 A vast expanding panoply of opportunity
 For you and the baby
 And me.
 And everything's going to be fine.
 The future is shining.
 I brief the staff at nine a.m. tomorrow.

A prompt start, important for discipline.
 I'll shake hands with them all.
 They'll see I'm a commanding soul,
 Friendly, not cold but not over-involved,
 And never late, never late.
 We must get that plane.

Minskwoman
 It's very flat in Minsk.

Minskman
 We've a lovely flat in Minsk.

Minskwoman
 It's very grey in Minsk.

Minskman
 A whole new life in Minsk.

Older Woman
 I wish they'd go to Minsk!

Controller
 The very last call of all.

Minskwoman
⁹ No!
 I don't seem able to go.

Minskman
 Don't be silly.

Minskwoman
 I can't explain. You get the plane.

Minskman
 What?

Minskwoman
 Quickly, Go!

Minskman

No!

Minskwoman

Go! Go! Go! I just need time.

Minskman

But...

Minskwoman

Go! Go!

Minskman

This is madness.

Minskwoman

Yes, I know. Now go!

Go!

(He runs off.)

Controller and Refugee

Ah!... Sending planes up in the sky.

All

Look!... The plane is moving now.

Its wheels are turning now.

It's shaking and roaring now.

Faster and faster.

It tilts its nose up to the sky.

Madness! Can it really fly?

And now it's aiming at the sun.

It's climbing higher, higher

And it's gone.

Controller

Flight 470 gone now.

Minskwoman

¹⁰ What have I done?

I can't believe what I've just done.

Geoffrey, I'm a disgrace to diplomacy.

Steward and Stewardess

Madam, madam, are you okay?

In that case we'll just slip away...

Bill

Do you mind...

Tina

If we say...

Both

It seems to us...

Tina

To indicate a lack of...

Bill

Something.

Both

You have to work hard at things.

Tina

Like sticking together.

Bill

Like love.

Tina

It doesn't float down from above.

Bill

It seems to us...

Tina

We read a special book, you see.

Bill

Our book is possibly the key.

Tina

It's rules that you stick to like religion.

Older Woman

I stuck to my ex-husband like religion.

Bill

For example...

Bill and Tina

Don't interrupt. As I was saying...

Older Woman

I should have just stuck to religion.

Both

We always call each other names.

Older Woman

We always called each other names.

Bastard! Earwig! Moron! Rotten sod!

Bill and Tina

Sweetheart. Peardrop. Sugar cube. Dewdrop.

Minskwoman

¹¹ What have I just done?

Why couldn't I go?

What's holding me here?

Is it fear of who I will be?

Raising a family in a cold country.

I'm floating in between,

Peering into an abyss.

What way out? What way?

I can't stay here

Stuck in this place.

Backwards or forwards? What way?

(The Refugee is focused on the Minskwoman, watching her.)

Refugee

¹² Excuse me. Have you a hat or a scarf?

I'm cold at night. I can tell

Everything will be all right.

Concentrate on something small.

Find a crack in the wall.

Watch it hard.

Find something tiny like a stone.

This is a special stone.

Older Woman

Is it?

Stewardess

Can't be.

Older Woman

Can't be.

Steward

Can it be? How can it be?

Tina

So is it magic then?

Bill and Steward

There's no such thing.

Refugee

You have to believe in it

And hold it hard in your hand.

All

Magic!

Superstition.

Primitive.

Obscure.

There's no such thing.

Controller

I hate to see him talking to them.
They won't do him any good.

¹³ Look who's coming!

The Immigration Officer, the Immigration Officer.

Refugee

Help me! Hide me!
Where shall I go? Where shall I go?

Controller

Don't ask me. Ask your friends.

(The Refugee tries to hide. Refugee goes to Minskwoman.)

Minskwoman

What is this funny stone?
(She hands him back the stone.)

Refugee

Could I slip behind your cases?

Bill and Tina

These are our new cases!

Refugee

Could I pretend to be your fiancé?

Older Woman

Thanks a lot but not today.

Refugee

Do us a favour.

Steward and Stewardess

More than our job's worth mate!

Refugee

He'll send me away. He won't let me stay.
He'll lock me up! I want to stay.

All

We can't help you.

Refugee

There must be something you can do!

Minskwoman

Who are you?

Refugee *(To Bill and Tina)*

Help me. I'm alone.

Bill and Tina

Isn't there someone you could phone?

Refugee *(to Older Woman)*

Take me under your wing.

Older Woman

I've never heard of such a thing.

Refugee *(to Steward and Stewardess)*

Customers don't want to see a fight.

Steward and Stewardess

They might!

All

What can we do?
Our cases are packed.
Our tickets are booked.
Although we sympathise with your condition,
We're on a holiday, not a mission.
They're calling our flight.
We really can't stay.
Although we sympathise with your dilemma,
We need to get our hand luggage together.
Our seats await us.
You mustn't engage us.

*(The Immigration Officer crosses the stage.
He doesn't see the Refugee. The Steward and
Stewardess slip away, unnoticed.)*

Refugee

¹⁴ Gone.

Tina

Time to be gone.

Controller

People, people. What did I say?
Messy and selfish all the way!

Refugee

Don't talk to me.

Controller

You made your bed. Now lie on it.

Refugee

You didn't help me.
You left me.
The spell is broken... It's broken. It's broken.

Bill and Tina

This way. For our holiday.
Our holiday...

Controller

It's time for you to fly away, to go away.

Minskwoman

I'll stay here and by and by
I'll find it in me
To get on a plane
And fly to Minsk.

Older Woman

I met my fiancé on holiday. My fiancé!

What am I saying?
He'll never come.
I'm fifty-two and he's young.
Why did I come?
I should go home.

Controller and Refugee

Soon their journeys will start.
It's time to fly. It's time to soar.

Others

Soon our journeys will start.
It's time to fly. It's time to soar.

Older Woman

If only he would come.
It would be sublime.
I'd be reeling.
It would be like flying.
What am I saying?
I'd be reeling,
A sublime feeling.

Minskwoman

Dear God, please make me board the plane.

All

Soon our journeys will start.
It's time to fly. It's time to soar.

Refugee

I want my chance.
I want my new life.

Steward and Stewardess

Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah!

(The Steward and Stewardess are revealed.)

Controller

¹⁵ Disgusting.

Bill and Tina

Record lusting.

Older Woman

How does she do that with her arm?

Minskwoman

To think that sort of thing is done in uniform!

Controller

Such bad form.

Bill

Isn't it warm?

Tina

But then again, it may just be the holiday spirit.

Bill

That's true.

All

It's beginning. Our turn soon.

Our holiday's beginning.

Lotions and donkeys

And shells and elastic

And kiddies with buckets

And tans fantastic.

Snorkels and sunburn

And towels that are sandy

And novels that make you feel awfully randy.

T-shirts and tombs,

Discos, falafels,

Beers and bikinis,

Foreigners, camels,

Pina coladas and olives and feta

And things are just getting better and better.

Waves and horizons,

The stretch of the day.

We always want to be on holiday.

(A flash of lightning. Everything darkens.)

Controller

¹⁶ Due to circumstances beyond our control

We regret to say that flights will experience some delay.

For how long we can't say.

Electrical storms are coming our way.

Please wait patiently till skies clear.

All

Storms! Oh dear.

Refugee

Now just like me you're stuck here. Just like me.

Act II

Night has fallen. The travellers have camped in the airport. The Refugee sits apart.

Controller

¹⁷ The storm is getting worse.

Others

The storm is getting worse.

Controller

More delays.

Others

More delays.

Controller

Who knows how long you may have to stay?

Others

...Who knows how long we may have to stay?

Controller

Driving rain, crazy wind.

No planes.

Try to remain sane.

Steward

¹⁸ It's quiet.

Stewardess

Wonderfully quiet.

Both

There's time to luxuriate in.

(Some distance from the Steward and Stewardess, Bill is unsuccessfully trying to sleep. Tina is reading their book on relationships.)

Bill

What an uncomfortable seat.

Tina

Oh no.

Bill

What is it?

Tina

Page 72!

Bill

Oh.

Tina

Beware of time on your hands.

Niggles can grow enormous.

We've got the luxury of hours.

Bill

Shhh. Tina. Try to sleep.

(Older Woman is showing a postcard to Minskwoman.)

Older Woman

This is the seafront at Cabrera.

Doesn't it look nice there?

Minskwoman

Lovely.

Steward

No ripping off clothes.

Stewardess

Or clutching.

Tina

Careless words can create traumas!

Bill

Try to sleep.

Tina

Small things blow up enormous.

We've got the luxury of hours.

Bill

I'm trying to sleep.

Stewardess

No scurrying.

No panic.

Tina

Don't sidetrack me.

You're the one whose scared to be

The lover that he'd like to be.

Bill

I'm not scared.

Tina

You wouldn't try pairs.

(Older Woman reads the postcard to Minskwoman.)

Older Woman

Hello Sandra. That's me.

The weather here is sunny.

I have new shoes.

Tina

Page 103. Give your sex life variety.

Steward

We can sit in the darkness...

Bill

Are you saying you're bored with me?

Steward

...And be romantic.

Tina

Page 103!

Stewardess

Romantic!

(Tina hands Bill the book and turns away.)

Older Woman

This is a nice bit.

Remember the night

We walked along the beach.

It was good.

Steward

You've got very nice hair.

Stewardess

I like your shirt.

You've got identical eyes.

Steward

You've got thighs.

Bill

It says on page 104

Don't feel obliged to perform

Anything you have not done before.

Tina

What a bore.

Steward

No hurrying, no panic, no stifled cries.

Stewardess

No thirsting or bursting or stupid lies.

Steward

We can just be in this great big wonderful open
space of time...

Stewardess

Like being in a great big green field.

Older Woman

Did I say the sea was blue?

In the bar there's lots to do.

Yes, the bar is very busy.

P.S. See you Wednesday.

Stewardess

Oh look!

Steward

What!

Stewardess

You've got hairy ears.

I never noticed before

But I like it.

Older Woman

Wednesday. Which Wednesday?

Tina

You're so predictable.

Bill

I'm not predictable.

Tina

I knew you'd say that.

Bill

You didn't.

Tina

And that!

Bill

Liar!

Tina!... I'm not predictable.

Older Woman

He said he would be coming, he promised me.

My fiancé.

Only I haven't heard from him for weeks.

I'll be there Wednesday. It's absurd.

Holiday romance at fifty-two.

Wait till it happens to you.

Steward

Can't we go somewhere cramped?

Stewardess

That's silly.

Steward

Somewhere we can clutch

And want too much.

Stewardess

That's silly.

Steward

Somewhere we have to be quick.

Somewhere we might be found.

Stewardess

That's sick.

Steward

We must get out of this great big green field.

Stewardess

That's silly.

¹⁹ I know.

We could do the business with our trolleys.

Come on.

(They fetch the trolley of duty-free etc. Stewardess goes over to Older Woman and Minskwoman who are sitting together.)

Whisky? Gin?

Older Woman

Just the thing.

Stewardess

When's it due?

Minskwoman

June 22.

Older Women

Lovely.

Minskwoman

Is it?

Stewardess

What'll you call it?

Minskwoman

Haven't thought about it.

Older Woman

Soon you'll have to.

Minskwoman

I don't want to.

Steward (to Tina)

Flannel?

Tina

Is it hot?

Steward

Steaming.

Tina

How appealing.

Bill

What is he saying?

Tina

Flannel.

Bill

Is that all?

Tina

That's very charming.

Thank you.

Steward

Simon.

Tina

Simon.

Bill

What are you saying?

Tina

Nothing at all.

He's very tall.

Steward (to Bill)

Flannel, sir?

Bill

No thank you.

Steward

Enjoy it, madam.

Tina

Yes, I will.

Bill

You looked at him!

Tina

Nice and hot.

[20] *(The Controller has left the tower. Out on a balcony she sings into the storm.)*

Controller

[21] Fierce night.

Jagged light.

Pining wind.

Pinning us to the ground.

No clean flight.

Dirty, demon night.

(Everyone else except the Minskwoman has settled down to sleep.)

Minskwoman

[22] I bought this suitcase in New York.

A trip with Geoffrey just for laughs.

I filled it full of delicious things,

Frivolous things,

Things for me.

A cashmere jersey in camel,

A Gucci dress, bright blue,

And some beautiful shoes,

And now...

(Minskwoman searches frantically through her bag.

Pulls out baby clothes.)

Matinée coat, bootees.

A woolly squirrel with stripes.

Nappies and nipple cream.

Powdered milk and Vaseline.

Rusks and cotton wool...

What's happening?

Tired woman, drained of life.

No more chances for life's advances.

Tired woman.

Little child straining at me,

Pulling me down, reducing me,

Disappearing me

With its claims, its cries:

Dry my eyes!

Drained of life.

Chained for life.

What's happening?

Whose bag is this?

It's mine!

Travellers (in their sleep)

Steward and Stewardess

Must get out of this big green field...

Bill

Page 383...

Refugee

Like a dark cloud...

Older Woman

He will come won't he? My fiancé?

Tina

Predictability...

Controller

[23] The thing about people is

At least when they come

You know that soon they'll be gone.

Usually. Not now. They're here.

Once I had you for company.

You watched me.

I liked that.

Being alone but with you there.

But then you thought you could do better.

I hope you suffer!

(The Older Woman gets up and goes to the Refugee secretly.)

COMPACT DISC TWO

Older Woman

[1] About this stone. Is it true?

Refugee

Up to you.

Older Woman

I believe in miracles, I do.

Refugee

Here.

Older Woman

I need a miracle. I'm fifty-two.

Refugee

Take it. It's for you.

Older Woman

What now?

Refugee

Make a wish.

But I'll need something in return.

Will you help me when I need it?

Older Woman

Yes. I've made a wish.

Refugee

I can guess.

Older Woman

Can you guess?

Refugee

Hold it hard in your hand.

Older Woman

Wednesday. Let him come for sure.

No dead Wednesdays any more.

Refugee

He'll come for sure.

(Older Woman goes back, hugging her stone.

Shortly afterwards Bill and Tina arrive.)

Tina

Let me hold the stone.

Just to see.

No harm in that.

Bill

And me.

It's nonsense, naturally.

Refugee

Before you try,

A promise.

Both

Anything.

Refugee

You'll help me when I ask you next.

Both

Yes, yes.

(Tina takes the stone.)

Refugee

Hold it hard in your hand.

Tina

I wish that Bill would be adventurous like he used
to be.

Bill

It's not my fault:

I work in a vault.

My routine is deadening and...

Tina

Not now, Bill.

Bill

I wish it too.

Tina

Yes, we do.

Bill

I'll hold it.

Tina

No, me.

(They go back. The Minskwoman approaches.)

Minskwoman

I can't sleep.

Let me hold your stone.

Can't do any harm.

Refugee

And hold it hard in your hand.

Minskwoman

I want to be free

Like I used to be.

No ties.

Lots of parties

And a future

Stretching on all sides.

Doesn't work. I'm still the same as before.

Refugee

Nothing at all?

Minskwoman

Oh, I'm feeling something strange.

Refugee

Strange?

Minskwoman

It's suddenly clear to me.

Here I am, half way between here

And anywhere I want to be.

Jerusalem... Bombay... Brussels... Santa Fe...

Anywhere I want to stay.

*(She wanders off. The Steward and Stewardess
come and eagerly take the stone.)*

Steward and Stewardess

We wish to fly, fly away.

Sick of the ground.

It's so confining,

Undermining.

We want things as they were before,

To be in the sky,

To fly.

Controller

I hope you suffer.

Refugee

And hold it hard in your hand.

Now you've wished.

Now you owe me.

*(Steward and Stewardess go back. In their sleep
the travellers murmur.)*

Tina

We'll feel the way we did before: adventurous...

Bill

We'll feel the way we did before, for sure...

Steward and Stewardess

We want things as they were...

Minskwoman

A future... Anywhere I want to be...

Older Woman

He'll come, for sure...

Refugee (to Controller)

Do you want to try?

Controller

No.

Refugee

² A wish for me.

I'm wishing for my brother:
He's on his way.
Come today!

(Bill starts up.)

Bill

My name is Bill. I'm not predictable.

(He goes over to where he believes the Stewardess is sleeping but in fact finds the Steward.)

Bill

You seem a nice kind of girl.
Willing to be of assistance, you said.
Perhaps you and me?...

Steward

What's that, sir?

Bill

Oh my God!

Steward

Not to worry, sir.

Bill

I thought you were her!

Steward

Does it matter, sir?
Let's take a walk, sir.

Bill

Why not?

Steward

Out of this field, sir.

Bill

My name is Bill. I'm not predictable.

(Thunder. The Older Woman wakes Tina, Minskwoman, Stewardess.)

Older Woman

³ Excuse me, can I trouble you for some advice?

You see my fiancé is coming for me...

Silly word fiancé...

Still he's coming anyway...

Tomorrow, I mean today...

He's twenty-two... isn't it a scandal?...

Now, should I wear the shoe or the sandal?

Tina

The sandal.

Minskwoman

How do you know he's coming for sure?

Older Woman

I... just do.

I've no perfume...

Stewardess

You can borrow my Dior.

Older Woman

I've only been married twice before.

Tina

Your hair definitely up.

Older Woman

Let's get drunk.

All

Let's get drunk.

Older Woman

It's turned into a perfect night.

Tina

You just need to accessorize.

Stewardess

Something blue about the eyes.

Minskwoman

For a look of permanent surprise.

(Bill and the Steward have made their way up to the control tower.)

Bill

We're so high up here.

I'm so high.

Do you come here often?

Both

We're so high up here.

Bill

⁴ What's this for?

Steward

Let's see...

(Back on the ground)

Older Woman

What do you think?

Lipstick red or pink.

Tina

Pink.

Stewardess

No, red.

Older Woman

Do you think?

Minskwoman

Red... no, pink.

Older Woman

Let's have a drink!

Other Women

A drink, a drink.

Older Woman

Let's get stinking!

Other Women

Stinking!

Tina

Life's not as bad as we've been thinking.

All the Women

It's magic.

Older Woman

To magic!

All the Women

To our refugee.

(They toast the Refugee.)

⁵ He's lucky.

(They offer him a drink. He takes it.)

Refugee

Happy now?

Women

Much better.

Older Woman

Hits the spot. Salut.

Others

Cheers!

Refugee

My lovely friends.
You're my new friends.

Controller

Friends!

Tina

Isn't he sweet.

Stewardess and Minskwoman

He can't be getting enough to eat.

Refugee

My head feels funny.

Women

...Drinking on an empty tummy.

Refugee

...I'm so glad you're happy.
You see before I was angry because you wouldn't
help me.

Women

Yes, that was mean of us.

Refugee

Angry and bitter.

Women

We didn't mean it.

Refugee

You all had somewhere to go and I didn't.

Women

We know.

Older Woman

A toast to my stone.
No more waking at night alone.
No more suppers just for one.
Thank you stone.

Others

6 You have a stone?

All the Women

We've all got stones!

Refugee

We don't need stones!

(The Women advance on the Refugee.)

Women

Traitor!
Prince of Darkness!
Worm!

Refugee

Now we're friends.
You're friends with me.

Women

Hopes in ruins now.

Refugee

Friends with me.

Women

A dark future now!

(The women work themselves up into a rage.)

Older Woman

7 I believed in miracles. He'll come for sure.
Sure!

Minskwoman

Anywhere I wanted to be...
Anywhere I wanted to stay...
Jerusalem... Brussels... Sante Fe...

Stewardess

To be in the sky, to fly.
Sick of the ground.
It's undermining, so confining...

Tina

We'll feel the way we did before,
On holiday.
For sure!

Refugee

Now you're friends with me...

Women

Traitor!... Dark future!... You've ruined
everything.... Why did you ever come?
Traitor!

Controller

...Ha ha ha ha!
Up in the control tower the men are getting
carried away.

Bill

Adventurous, like I used to be!

Bill and Steward

We're so high up here.
The storm builds. The women rage.

Tina

Adventurous...
What a load of rubbish!

Stewardess

Sick of the ground!
It's undermining.
It's so confining.
You promised we could fly.

Minskwoman

Anywhere I wanted to be...
Anywhere I wanted to stay...
Why did I believe you?

Older Woman

Miracles!
I believed in miracles.
I believed a lie.

All the Women

Hopes in ruins.
You've ruined everything.
Why did you ever come?

Controller

Ha ha ha ha!

Controller and all the Women

Fierce night!
Jagged light!
Pining wind.
Pinning us to the ground.

*(They throw stones at the Refugee. He does not
move. The women go closer.)*

Stewardess

He's not moving.

Older Woman

What have we done?

Tina

Quickly. Put him in that trunk.

(They pile him into a trunk. Mounting excitement of men in control tower.)

Bill and Steward

We're so high.

Act III

The storm has gone. The Dawn. The women sit on the trunk.

Women

⁸ What a dreadful night.

What have we done?

What can be done?

The best thing to do is just carry on,

To get away as soon as we can.

Controller

Dawn, daylight.

The air is clear.

The airways are clear.

⁹ A plane is coming!

A plane is landing!

Older Woman

Will he come? In spite of everything?

He hasn't come.

(Minskman enters.)

Minskman

¹⁰ I flew back immediately. I'm not angry.

There must be something I can do to persuade you.

Minskwoman

You don't understand.

Minskman

I understand perfectly.

Minskwoman

Listen to me...

Minskman

I missed you.

I had a feeling.

I felt a longing and it was love.

We can stay here if you like.

Minskwoman

No, no. Let's go to Minsk. I want to go!

Minskman

Darling! That's wonderful!

(They get up to leave.)

Tina

Goodbye, goodbye. We're going on holiday.

Come along.

Bill

In a minute.

Tina

Bill! Hurry up and bring the cases.

Bill

The cases.

Tina

Yes, the cases.

Bill

The cases.

(He is still holding on to his towel for dear life.)

Tina

Darling.

Bill

Yes, darling.

Tina

The cases.

(He cannot hope to pick up the cases and hold onto the towel. The Steward comes to the rescue.)

Steward

I'll get the cases.

Bill

Thank you. What marvellous service.

(Steward picks up some cases.)

Steward

Anything we can do to give assistance to you

We will do.

Tina

Bill! Pick up the cases!

(Bill drops his towel to reveal that he has no trousers.)

Bill

¹¹ Oh my goodness!

Tina

Where are your trousers?

Bill

My trousers?

Tina

And why is he wearing your trousers?

(The Steward is wearing Bill's trousers instead of his own.)

Bill

Fancy that.

Bill and Steward

How strange. Still, we can explain.

Tina and Stewardess

Explain!

Men

Well, it was very dark and clearly there was a mix up.

Women

A mix up?

Men

A... mix up. In the dark one pair of trousers is the same as another.

Women

I see.

Men

So you see.

Women

If you were sleeping here

And he was over there

Then how did they get from over there to over here?

Perhaps they walked?

Men

They didn't walk.

Women

Well then explain.

Bill

You explain.

Steward

No, you.

Bill

No, you.

Women

Explain!

Bill

He stole my trousers.

Steward

I did not.

Bill

Yes, in the night.

Steward

Oh well, alright...

Women

Fabrication beyond belief!

Bill

I think he liked the way they fell.

I think he felt he'd never seen trousers quite as fine as these...

Steward

...In all my travels to and fro...

Bill

...Across the world. And that is why...

Steward

...And that is why...

Bill

...And that is why

He had his eye on my trousers.

Women

Do you expect us to believe such a story?

(Both sing simultaneously and contradict each other.)

Steward

I liked the colour.

Bill

He liked the cut.

He liked the colour.

Steward

I liked the cut.

Women

Do you expect us to believe such a story?

Bill

Yes.

Steward

Not really.

Women

Such a cock and bull story!

Bill

Oh my God, why did I do it?

I think it was you that drove me to it.

Tina

You couldn't even drive yourself to it!

Bill

Oh my God why did I do it?

Tina

I drove you to it. Ha ha!

How could you?

I feel a rage raging through me. Ah!

Bill

Let's talk it over on holiday.

Steward

It was nothing. I couldn't sleep.

Tina

Fabrication beyond belief!

Steward

It was nothing.

Bill

It was fantastic.

Tina

What?

Bill

Better than shells and elastic.

Tina

Pig!

Bill

Sweetheart...

Tina

Shithead!

Bill

Peardrop...

Tina

Vermin!

Bill

Sugar-cube...

Tina

Excrescence!

Bill

Dew-drop...

(Tina hits Bill with her rule book. He collapses.)

Tina

Bastard!

(Pause)

Stewardess

¹² Oh look, he isn't moving.

Older Woman

Not another one.

Minskman

What's that?

Women

Nothing.

(A moaning comes from the trunk.)

Steward and Minskman

What's that?

(Moan from the trunk. The women sit back on the trunk. Minskwoman moans to cover up.)

Steward and Minskman

What is it?

Women

Nothing.

Steward and Minskman

...What is it?... What?

Minskwoman

¹³ Ow!

All

What is it?

(realising it is for real)

That is a twinge!

Minskwoman

Ow! Ow! Ow!

All

It can't possibly be happening now.

It appears to be arriving now.

Minskwoman

Ow! Ow! Ow!

Tina

What shall we do?

All

Is it?

All (including Minskwoman)

Painkillers!

Hot water!

Scissors!

Bandages!

A doctor!

A hospital please! A hospital at least!

Minskwoman

This is all a terrible mistake.

Oh my goodness!

All

Push!

Minskwoman

Order me a steak.

All

Push!

Minskwoman

A snake.

All

Push!

Minskwoman

Answer the phone! Answer the phone! Answer the phone!

(Minskwoman cries out in triumph. Everyone else gasps with astonishment. At the same moment, Bill comes to and the lid of the trunk is flung open and the Refugee stands up.)

All

¹⁴ It's so small. You can't believe how small.

And hot. And wrinkled.

We absolutely have to love it.

Minskwoman

I feel beautiful and strong... A mother!

Imagine! I'm a mother!

What a wonderful thing to be!

Refugee, later all

¹⁵ New,

Wondrous,

Nothing so new as you.

Your eyes are secrets...

Stars...

You are a world,

A perfect world.

We wish the world perfect for you,

So that it could deserve you,

Soft and curled,

Asleep in your perfect world.

Tina and Stewardess

He isn't dead.

Older Women

Thank God!

Controller (to Refugee)

It can be just like before.

We can start anew.

Minskwoman, Older Woman, Refugee

New,

Wondrous, (etc.).

(Tina approaches Bill.)

Bill

The world seems a little fuzzy.

Voices sound a little buzzy.

You remind me of somebody...

Tina

Do I?

Your pulse is stronger.

Bill

...Of a stranger.

Tina

A stranger?

Bill

A stranger who looks familiar.

Tina

Does the name Tina do anything to you?

Bill

No.

Tina

Me neither. My name is Evangelina.

I'm a single woman seeking thrills, with a ticket to Estoril.

Bill

I've a ticket for there too.

Tina

Well, well.

Bill

You seem a charming sort of girl. Well, well.

I think my name is Del.

Both

Everything seems very pleasant,

Floating in a sweet eternal present.

New,

Wondrous, (etc.)

Minskwoman

I'll compile a special list of all the things we need for Minsk.

Our baby needs security.

Minskman

Anything you say.

Minskwoman

Tissues and organic milk,

Baby jamas made of silk,

A sea weed mattress, an atlas (for when she's older),...

Minskman

Anything you say, dear.

Minskwoman

A pink and green foldaway thingy,
Some brandy and a nanny,
That's just for starters. And later on in Minsk
I'll compile something less condensed.

Minskman

She's got my nose.
What an adorable nose!

Minskwoman

Will she like us when she's older?

Minskman

Never mind, we'll have another.

Steward

I didn't mean to stray.

Stewardess

Never mind the straying.
The problem is the staying.
I can't stand the staying.

Steward

Straying is better than staying.

All

New,
Wondrous, (etc.)

*(Everyone is brought down to earth by the arrival
of the Immigration Officer.)*

Controller

¹⁶ He's coming back! Get in the trunk!

Refugee

I'm not afraid.

(Refugee doesn't move.)

Controller

...Too late!

Immigration Officer

I've been officially informed
That you are unofficially present.

Refugee

I can't go back. I'm waiting for somebody.

Officer

You've been here weeks now.

Refugee

Weeks?

Officer

Papers.

Refugee

No.

Officer

Passport? Visa?

Refugee

No. All with my brother.

Officer

Your brother?

Refugee

I can't go!... I can't go back!
My brother, he has our papers.

Officer

Come with me.

(The Refugee begins to be led off by the Officer.)

Refugee

Help me! You promised!

Women

You tricked us with your stones.

Refugee

You hit me with your stones.

Men

What's that?

Refugee

I only wanted to be friends.

Men

...Hit him?

Women

We have to help him.

Minskman

¹⁷ Surely you can be magnanimous on such a day as
this.

There's more to life than what's written on paper.

Minskwoman

This is a lucky day. Give him some money, Geoffrey.

Minskman

A small token of our appreciation.
Please Mr. Immigration
Couldn't you review the situation?

Officer

No thank you, sir. I didn't hear that, sir.

Tina

Let him hold the baby.
Such a sweet baby

Officer

No thank you lady.

Tina

Such a sweet baby.

Officer

Yes, a very nice one.
(to the Refugee)
Now come with me, son.

Others

Please Mr. Immigration, (etc.).

Steward

What if he were related to one of us?

Officer

Spurious.

Steward

He's my cousin...

Stewardess

...On our aunt's side.

Minskman

His brother's uncle...

Minskwoman

...On his left side.

Tina

By marriage.

All

His cousin's uncle's aunt's third bride on the other
side.
Please Mr. Immigration, (etc.).

Officer

¹⁸ You can't fool rules. They're inexorable.
They get you in the end.
Like your hair going grey
And love fading away.

Older Woman

Does it strike you like it strikes me?... No more
waking in the night alone.... No more suppers
just for one.

Bill

That would be the answer...

Steward

...Wouldn't it?

Tina

Get married!

Controller

You can't have him!
He's waiting for somebody.

Refugee

I'm waiting...

Controller

He's waiting for his brother.

Refugee

...For my brother.

¹⁹ Dawn, still darkness.... We are two dark shapes,
like shadows.... It's easy. So simple,
That's what we'd been told,... So simple... It's
been done before and before.... We touched
hands and then we ran... Like rats or cats....
No need for fear. They made it clear.

We paid our dollars and we ran, climbed inside
the wheels.
There's room for a man.... 'See you there'. I
shouted to thin air,... And then the plane began
to roar,... Shaking, the terrible noise it was
making,... Roaring so loud, I am shaking... And
then suddenly the cold... Are you there,
brother?... Twin?... It's so cold, it's like
dreaming.... The sky is ice,... So cold that I am
burning... I... pray and wait for a new
beginning....

²⁰ But look at me now. I'm here,... Just me...
I'm waiting for him... So far he hasn't come.

Officer

They say that day that it was seen, a certain
thing...

Like a frozen star falling, arms spread wide, falling,
pleading, a frozen man falling,
Like a frozen star.

All

A frozen man falling, like a frozen star.

Stewardess

What a story!

Older Woman

Terrible!

Minskwoman

What can we do?

Minskman

There's nothing we can do.

Officer

²¹ ...I can't do much for you... But I will do this...
You can stay here.

Do what you like.

Walk about... I... can't let you leave of course,...
But I'll turn a blind eye.
(*The Immigration Officer exits.*)

Older Woman

...There's nothing more to be done.

Steward

...Just say goodbye.

Bill

And fly.

Tina

Forget, that's for the best.

Stewardess

...Just fly.

Controller

²² ...Flights to Minsk and places smarter,... Prepare
for departure.

Older Woman

I'll have another holiday.
Perhaps I'll meet someone there
In a café or a bar.
I'm prepared
to travel far.

Minskman and Minskwoman

Minsk may be cold and boring,
But we can stay indoors.

Bill and Tina

In a hotel called 'La Blanca Plaza'
We'll blank out the world and gaze at each other.

Steward and Stewardess

We'll be passing planes in the night.
That's just right.

Controller

This is your home now.

Refugee

This is my home now.

All

Goodbye, goodbye, we're for the sky.
We're ready to fly away,
Headed somewhere dreamy.
Simplicity.
Everything's clear up there.
(*They exit.*)

Refugee

²³ A frozen man falling like a frozen star.
This is my home now.

Controller

What are you thinking?
Tell me.
Look at me!

End

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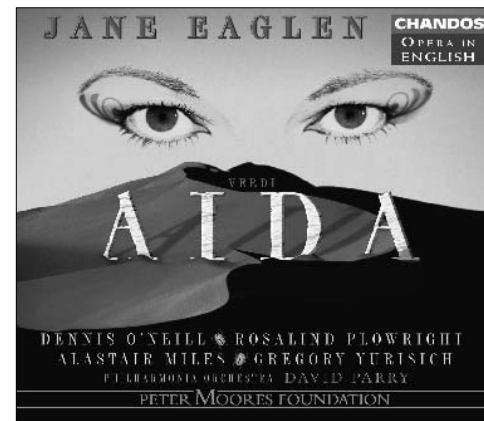


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Production credits

Director Richard Jones
Set designer Giles Cadle
Costume designer Nicky Gillibrand
Lighting designer Mimi Jordan Sherin
Movement Catherine Malone
Assistant director Geoffrey Dolton

Flight, an NVC Arts Production for Channel 4

For the Channel 4 broadcast of *Flight*, from which this recording is taken, a special effect was added to the voice of the Controller.

Production photos from the Glyndebourne production of *Flight* by Mike Hoban

Co-producers Channel 4 Television, Glyndebourne and NVC Arts

Recording venue Glyndebourne: September 1999

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DOVE: FLIGHT - Soloists/London Philharmonic Orchestra/Parry

DOVE: FLIGHT - Soloists/London Philharmonic Orchestra/Parry

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Jonathan Dove (b. 1959)

Flight

An opera in three acts

Libretto by April De Angelis

live recording of the premiere production from Glyndebourne

- RefugeeChristopher Robson *countertenor*
- ControllerClaron McFadden *soprano*
- BillRichard Coxon *tenor*
- TinaMary Plazas *soprano*
- Older WomanNuala Willis *mezzo-soprano*
- StewardessAnn Taylor *mezzo-soprano*
- StewardGarry Magee *baritone*
- MinskmanSteven Page *bass-baritone*
- MinskwomanAnne Mason *mezzo-soprano*
- Immigration OfficerRichard Van Allan *bass-baritone*

Glyndebourne Festival Opera
London Philharmonic Orchestra
David Parry

COMPACT DISC ONE
TT 64:55

COMPACT DISC TWO
TT 64:17

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