

NAXOS

ROSSINI

2 CDs

Torvaldo e Dorliska

Rhys-Evans • Cigna • Utzeri • Bianchini
Bellavia • Gemmabella • ARS Brunensis Chamber Choir
Czech Chamber Soloists Brno
Alessandro de Marchi



Gioachino
ROSSINI
(1792-1868)

Torvaldo e Dorliska

Dramma semiserio in Two Acts

Libretto by Cesare Sterbini

Torvaldo **Huw Rhys-Evans, Tenor**
Dorliska, his wife **Paola Cigna, Soprano**
Giorgio, castle custodian **Mauro Utzeri, Baritone**
Duca d'Ordow **Michele Bianchini, Bass**
Ormondo, henchman of the Duke ... **Giovanni Bellavia, Bass-baritone**
Carlotta, Giorgio's sister ... **Anna-Rita Gemmabella, Mezzo-soprano**

Chorus of Servants, Soldiers, Peasants and Grenadiers

ARS Brunensis Chamber Choir

Dan Kalousek, Chorus-master

Czech Chamber Soloists Brno

Leader, Ivan Matyás

Alessandro de Marchi, Conductor and Harpsichord

CD 1	73:20	4 No. 16 Seguito e stretta del finale primo: Su, Dorliska ... fate cuore <i>(Torvaldo, Dorliska, Duca, Giorgio, Coro)</i>	5:15
1 No. 1 Sinfonia	7:34		
Act I		Act II	
2 No. 2 Introduzione: È un bel dir che tutto al mondo <i>(Giorgio, Coro)</i>	5:53	5 No. 17 Introduzione: Bravi, bravi: qua venite <i>(Giorgio, Coro)</i>	2:32
3 No. 3 Cavatina: Dunque invano i perigli e la morte <i>(Duca, Giorgio, Ormondo, Coro)</i>	7:13	6 No. 18 Recitativo: Or ben: già qualche cosa <i>(Giorgio, Torvaldo)</i>	1:58
4 No. 4 Recitativo: Ormondo ... La mia gente <i>(Duca, Ormondo, Giorgio)</i>	2:08	7 No. 19 Recitativo ed aria: Odimi: ah tu di me, mio buon amico <i>(Torvaldo, Giorgio)</i>	5:47
5 No. 5 Scena e cavatina: Dove son? chi m'aita? ... Tutto è vano <i>(Dorliska)</i>	8:06	8 Nos. 20 & 21 Recitativo: No, pentirsi non giova <i>(Duca, Giorgio, Dorliska)</i>	4:04
6 No. 6 Recitativo: Ah son pure infelice! <i>(Dorliska, Carlotta, Giorgio)</i>	3:36	9 No. 21 Aria: Ferma, costante, immobile <i>(Dorliska, Duca)</i>	8:07
7 No. 7 Scena: Olà! Ella ... oh ciel! <i>(Duca, Dorliska)</i>	7:42	10 Nos. 22 & 23 Recitativo: Insensata! ... e non vede <i>(Duca, Giorgio, Dorliska, Carlotta)</i>	1:42
8 No. 8 Recitativo: Ella più non mi fugge <i>(Duca, Ormondo, Giorgio)</i>	3:20	11 No. 23 Aria: Una voce lusinghiera <i>(Carlotta)</i>	3:48
9 No. 9 Scena e cavatina: Tutto è silenzio <i>(Torvaldo)</i>	7:20	12 No. 24 Recitativo e duetto: Non so se ho fatto bene <i>(Giorgio, Duca)</i>	6:31
10 Nos.10 & 11 Recitativo: Ah ch'io non reggo ai moti <i>(Torvaldo, Giorgio, Duca)</i>	5:47	13 No. 25 Recitativo e duettino: Dunque tu vuoi ch'io parta? <i>(Dorliska, Torvaldo)</i>	2:42
11 No. 11 Terzetto: Ah qual raggio di speranza <i>(Duca, Torvaldo, Giorgio)</i>	11:19	14 No. 26 Recitativo e Sestetto: Ma via, signori miei <i>(Carlotta, Dorliska, Torvaldo, Duca, Giorgio, Ormondo, Coro)</i>	7:30
12 No. 12 Recitativo ed aria: Io non ne posso più <i>(Ormondo)</i>	3:21	15 No. 27 Recitativo: Ah di noi che sarà? <i>(Dorliska, Torvaldo, Giorgio, Ormondo, Carlotta)</i>	0:56
CD 2	67:47	16 No. 28 Scena ed aria: Cedi, cedi! Dagli ... Indietro ... T'arrendi <i>(Coro, Duca, Torvaldo, Giorgio)</i>	4:58
1 No. 13 Finale primo: Duetтино: Oh via, signora mia <i>(Carlotta, Dorliska)</i>	2:08	No. 29 Recitativo: Per bacco, seguitatelo <i>(Giorgio)</i>	
2 No. 14 Terzettino: Immota e stupida <i>(Torvaldo, Giorgio, Duca)</i>	2:40	17 No. 29 Finale secondo: Grazie al destin pietoso <i>(Dorliska, Torvaldo, Carlotta, Giorgio, Coro)</i>	3:06
3 No. 15 Quartetto: Mia signora ... a me badate <i>(Giorgio, Torvaldo, Duca, Dorliska)</i>	4:02		

Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868)

Torvaldo e Dorliska

In October 1815 Rossini made his successful debut at the Teatro San Carlo in Naples with *Elisabetta regina d'Inghilterra*. At this time there had already existed for some months an agreement with Rome, as emerges from a letter from Rossini to the librettist Angelo Anelli dated May 1815. Rossini asks Anelli, with whom he had collaborated on *L'italiana in Algeri*, for the text for a comic opera. Anelli showed himself only moderately interested and offered an old libretto to be given a new setting, which Rossini again declined. In financial respects too they came to no agreement and so Rossini fell back on the young Roman writer Cesare Sterbini, who, at this point, was not very experienced as a librettist. The collaboration, however, appears to have taken a positive course, since only a short time later he wrote the text of *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, for which Rossini gave him preference over the more experienced Jacopo Ferretti, the subsequent librettist of *La Cenerentola*. The question of when, through whom and why the decision was made to choose an *opera semiseria* instead of an *opera buffa*, can only be the subject of speculation. The plot of *Torvaldo e Dorliska* goes back originally to the French novel of 1790 *Vie et amours du chevalier de Faiblas* by Jean-Baptiste de Coudray and was at the time generally known through various operatic settings among others by Luigi Cherubini. The libretto *Lodovska* by Francesco Gonella, set in 1796 by Giovanni Simone Mayr, can be taken as the immediate forerunner of Rossini's version.

Torvaldo e Dorliska belongs to the category, stemming from France, of rescue opera, so called from the basic pattern of plot that is common to these pieces, among them Rossini's *La gazza ladra* as well as Beethoven's *Fidelio*. The principal character(s), without being guilty of any wrong, fall into mortal danger, mostly through the intrigues of a villain, and are rescued at the last moment.

The group of characters of *Fidelio* suggest some parallels with those of *Torvaldo e Dorliska*, with their common narrative content. In both operas the ideal of

married love is celebrated, in Beethoven threatened on political grounds, in Rossini through the jealousy of the Duca d'Ordow. The jailer Rocco and the castle custodian Giorgio appear ambivalent, both of them, in spite of moral reservations, are in the service of villains and are drawn into helping them in their dark plans. While Beethoven's Rocco, however, remains largely passive, Giorgio in Rossini becomes a positive hero who takes the side of the lovers against his master and whose clever actions finally bring a positive conclusion to the piece. The subsidiary characters, Giorgio's sister and helper Carlotta as well as Ormondo, the captain of the Duke's soldiers, nearly always overtaxed by his master's orders, provide for more cheerful music, without effectively changing the generally more serious than half-serious character of the opera.

Torvaldo e Dorliska had its first performance in Rome on 26th December 1815 as the opening première of the carnival season. The management of the relatively small Teatro Valle could for this occasion provide a cast of the highest quality, in the first place the two basses Filippo Galli and Ranieri Remorini in the rôles of the Duca d'Ordow and of Giorgio. Then came the tenor Domenico Donzelli and the young soprano Adelaide Sala in the two title-parts.

In spite of good singers the opera could not achieve the success that was expected in Rome from a new work of Rossini, a composer very well-known and liked there. It emerges from the criticisms of the first performance that the public found that *Torvaldo* was not cheerful enough for the opening of the carnival season. Sterbini had taken pains to write good verse, but failed to bring laughter, it said in one newspaper review. The first performance, however, was no decided failure (as is often alleged in studies of Rossini). This was prevented alone by the presence of Filippo Galli, who came from Rome, yet for the first time in his highly successful career of some fifteen years was appearing at that theatre. Rossini had a very exact idea of Galli's voice when he wrote *Torvaldo*, since he had tailor-made for

him the parts of Conte Asdrubale in *La pietra del paragone*, of Selim in *Il turco in Italia*, and of Mustafa in *L'italiana in Algeri*. Later would follow the parts of Fernando in *La gazza ladra*, the title-rôle in *Maometto II* and the rôle of Assur in *Semiramide*, making Galli the definitive Rossini bass.

Shortly after the first performance, *Torvaldo e Dorliska* was cut down to one act and played in one evening together with *L'inganno felice*. Rossini had written the latter a few years before for the Teatro San Moisè in Venice and on that occasion collaborated for the first time with Galli, who in the première took the rôle of Batone, but in later performances in other cities the part of Tarabotto, who in character can be seen as the predecessor of Giorgio in *Torvaldo. L'inganno felice* was one of Galli's favourite operas and so it may be surmised that the combination with this work had its origin in his initiative. Nor should the responsibility of the singer for the decision for an *opera semiseria* be excluded. Rossini had already in the letter to Angelo Anelli required him to design the rôle for Galli as an 'exaggerated character' and that of the second bass Remorini as the exact opposite. Already with Mustafa in *L'italiana in Algeri* he had created the caricature of a tyrant who nevertheless by no means lacked a certain virile charm. The figure of the Duca d'Ordow moves on the other hand on the border between caricature and the threatening, through which the development of the conflict with Giorgio achieves greater importance and Rossini in musical respects has more scope than with the two basses Mustafa and Taddeo in *L'italiana in Algeri*. In several numbers in *Torvaldo* the composer sets the two low voices one against the other, particularly effectively at the beginning of the piece: there he presents first a comically angry Giorgio, the counterpart of his master, who subsequently appears in person with his *cavatina*, wavering between high feelings because of supposedly successful revenge on his rival Torvaldo and sadness and anger over the escape of his vainly beloved Dorliska. The introduction runs into a brilliant *stretta*, characterized by the *parlando* music of *opera buffa*. *Si cercherà, si troverà*, in which Giorgio has a share, with the Duke, and with

Ormondo, a third bass. The Duke's second aria comes as the last solo number before the finale. Stendhal made the following comment on it: 'The tyrant sings a wonderful *agitato*; it is one of the finest arias for a bass; Lablache and Galli can scarcely miss singing it in their concerts. To console those readers who perhaps do not know this aria, I can tell them that it is none other than the famous letter-duet [between Otello and Iago] in the second act of *Otello, Non m'inganno, al mio rivale*' - nevertheless in a greatly altered form, it should be added.

In several places in the opera the expert will similarly hear music that is also found in other works by Rossini. The practice of the composer to present old themes in new guises has its own particular charm. This begins with the Overture, the second theme of which is used again in *La Cenerentola*, but there continued in a completely different way. In Torvaldo's aria in the second act there appears in the first part (*Allegro vivace*) as accompaniment the same string figure as later in the Podestà's aria in the second act of *La gazza ladra* and in the finale Rossini uses musical material from the ensemble *I voti unanimi* from *La scala di seta*, to name but a few examples. In the reviews of the first performance the terzetto *Ah! qual raggio di speranza* between Torvaldo (in disguise), the Duca d'Ordow and Giorgio from the first act was rightly mentioned with particular praise. Once more Rossini here skilfully brought together the idioms of *seria* and *buffa*. What begins as a serious duet between the rivals Ordow and Torvaldo develops into a thrilling ensemble in which the composer uses a procedure that is characteristic for him, found also, for example, in *La gazza ladra* or in *Il viaggio a Reims*: the low male voices sing in *parlando* and are thus employed almost like orchestral parts. Over this foundation sounds the *cantilena* of a higher voice, in this case that of the lamenting Torvaldo, who yet in the concluding *Allegro* links up with the buffo type music of the two basses and thus returns from the private expression of feelings to his disguise.

In other writing on Rossini *Torvaldo e Dorliska* has always been the object of negative judgement because of the self-borrowings and above all because of the

supposed faults of Sterbini's libretto in which the plot and the demands of rescue opera are seldom sufficiently taken into consideration. Stendhal characterized the opera as 'fairly mediocre *opera semiseria*' which would earn honour for an ordinary composer but made 'no particular contribution to Rossini's fame'. He rightly too brought out the strengths of the opera: the effective numbers for the two basses, Remorini and, above all, Galli, as well as the heartfelt passages for the two lovers Torvaldo and Dorliska, such as the entry aria, wavering between hope and sorrow, in the music of which, at the words *Torvaldo, dove sei?*, Stendhal perceived 'a cry of suffering', the moving despair of Dorliska at the news of the supposed death of her husband or the short duettino from the second act in which the lovers take their leave of each other.

Martina Grempler

English version by Keith Anderson

Synopsis

CD 1

Act I

[1] No. 1 Sinfonia

[2] **No. 2 Introduction:** The scene is a wood near the castle of the Duke of Ordow. On one side is seen the castle wall, with a door. The custodian of the castle, Giorgio, seems to be on guard, every now and then looking towards the wood. He suffers under the capricious tyranny of his master, the Duke: if he looks at you, you turn cold; if he speaks to you, you are terrified; if he touches you, heaven help you; if he laughs - worst of all. A storm seems to be brewing. He is joined by the Duke's servants, from the wood, who have found nothing. He had been summoned in the night to search, it later transpires, for Torvaldo and Dorliska, and had heard the assault on Torvaldo. The Duke has attacked Dorliska and her husband Torvaldo on their wedding-

day with the aim of taking Dorliska for himself. In the struggle Torvaldo was wounded and, in the belief that he was dead, left lying in the wood. Dorliska, however, was able to escape, as later transpires.

[3] **No. 3 Cavatina:** The Duke enters in some agitation, the dangers he has undergone and his attempted abduction of Dorliska in vain. Giorgio addresses him, and Ormondo and the servants try to calm his fury.

[4] **No. 4 Recitative:** Angrily the Duke tells Ormondo to renew his search, revealing the situation. Torvaldo's apparent death and Dorliska's escape. He himself will take part in the renewed search. He orders Giorgio not to divulge what he supposes he has overheard, before rushing out. Giorgio, with his habitual complaints against his master, unlocks the castle door and goes in.

[5] **No. 5 Scena and Cavatina:** Dorliska comes out of the wood, agitated and afraid, approaching the castle door, thinking to find help there. She knocks at the door, but there is no answer. She tries again, lamenting the absence of her husband Torvaldo.

[6] **No. 6 Recitative:** As Dorliska is about to knock again, Giorgio's sister Carlotta suddenly comes out. Dorliska seeks her help, explaining how she has been separated from her husband, who may now be dead. Carlotta welcomes her. Giorgio, meanwhile, in a room in the castle, has been reflecting on events, and Carlotta brings Dorliska to him, explaining how she had been the victim of an attack in the woods at night. Dorliska tells him that she does not know whether her husband is now dead or alive. Born in Poland, she was married the day before, only for her husband to be attacked by his rival, who had a hundred times sought her hand. Giorgio realises that the attacker was the Duke of Ordow and reveals to Dorliska that she is now in his castle. Giorgio and his sister try to calm Dorliska's obvious distress.

[7] **No. 7 Scena:** The Duke suddenly appears and recognises Dorliska, at first amazed and then delighted. He orders Giorgio and Carlotta away, exclaiming on his

good fortune. He tries to reassure Dorliska, who is terrified, and tries to leave. The Duke tells her that the door is locked and that her husband, whom she hopes to find, is far away - among the dead. Dorliska lets out a cry, calls for help, and then turns on the Duke, preferring to join her husband in death. She goes out, followed by the Duke.

[3] No. 8 Recitative: Returning, the Duke shuts the door, vowing that Dorliska shall not escape him. He calls out for Carlotta and Giorgio. Ormondo, the Duke's henchman, comes in and is told that the girl has been found. He tells him to cover up all traces of the events of the previous night in the wood and to bury the body. Ormondo unhappily obeys. The Duke calls again for Giorgio and tells him that the woman he has seen is the one he loves, but that she hates him because, the night before, he killed her husband; now he needs Giorgio's help, a service in which he must remain blind and dumb; Dorliska must be watched over by Carlotta and he must try to console her and bring her round. As the Duke goes out, Giorgio resolves to write at once for help from the Governor.

[9] No. 9 Scena and Cavatina: Outside the castle Torvaldo approaches, recognising it as the castle of his enemy, where his unfortunate wife must have taken refuge. Having survived the attack against him, he lives now to help her against the wicked tyrant.

[10] No. 10 Recitative: Torvaldo exchanges clothes with a passing peasant, planning to save Dorliska. Giorgio appears, having sent his message, and Torvaldo introduces himself as a woodcutter from a neighbouring village, bringing a letter to a certain lady who has come to the castle. Giorgio tells him that the only lady there is his sister, at which Torvaldo, in agitation, bursts out in anguish at the loss of his Dorliska, his wife. Giorgio tells him that, while his master is a villain, he himself is a man of honour, amazed now to realise that this is Torvaldo, alive not dead. Wounded by the Duke and left for dead, he had been helped by a shepherd and had planned to gain entry to the castle with the letter.

Giorgio has a plan to save her, to Torvaldo's delight. The Duke comes out, calling for Giorgio, who takes the letter from Torvaldo and hands it to the Duke. Torvaldo explains how an unknown gentleman, mortally wounded, had given him the letter for his wife, from whom he had been separated in the wood. The Duke takes and reads the letter, in which Torvaldo bids his wife farewell, assuring her that the bearer can tell her of his last hours; he pardons his killer and tells her to pardon him and resign herself to her lot.

[11] No. 11 Terzetto: The Duke sees hope in all this, with Torvaldo and Giorgio finding equal hope in their deception. They both assure the Duke that Torvaldo is dead, continuing to express their own thoughts, as the Duke allows the letter to be given to Dorliska. Giorgio, however, sees the bird in the snare. They go into the castle.

[12] No. 12 Recitative and Aria: Ormondo approaches, from the country, tired out after his fruitless search for Torvaldo's body. Matters are not good, he realises, quoting various proverbs in support of his feelings.

CD 2

[1] No. 13 Finale to Act One: Duetto: In the castle Carlotta tries to calm Dorliska, with little success, as the latter throws herself down on a chair, in despair.

[2] No. 14 Finale to Act One: Terzettino: Torvaldo, Giorgio and the Duke enter, silently observing Dorliska, the Duke with hope, the other two in pity. The Duke approaches her, assuring her of his love. She will not listen to him, and Torvaldo can hardly restrain himself. After a short pause the Duke signals to Torvaldo and Giorgio to approach her, which they do, Torvaldo in some trepidation.

[3] No. 15 Finale to Act One: Quartetto: Eventually Giorgio, in an attempt to rouse Dorliska from her misery, shouts in her ear, telling her to read the letter from her husband. Dorliska rises up, looking at Giorgio,

but not at Torvaldo. She takes the letter, and faints, to which all react in their own way.

4] No. 16 Continuation and Stretta of the Finale:

Torvaldo urges her to be brave for soon her troubles will be at an end. At the sound of his voice she looks up, exclaiming in recognition. Torvaldo tells her to be silent, but the Duke has noticed her reaction, and puts his hand on his sword, furious as he realises that this is Torvaldo. Ormondo enters, with the Duke's men, and the Duke orders them to take Torvaldo prisoner. The latter draws a sword, hidden under his cloak. Dorliska holds the Duke back and Giorgio does the same with Torvaldo, both the combatants now incensed. Giorgio disarms Torvaldo, and Dorliska remonstrates with the Duke, while Carlotta expresses her terror. Torvaldo, however, is now no threat.

Act II

5] No. 17 Introduction: Giorgio, with a lantern in his hand, followed by some of the Duke's men, enters the castle dungeon, where they can talk freely. He tells them that they must rescue the two victims of the Duke and take their own revenge on the villain. The men agree. This time the Duke will not escape.

6] No. 18 Recitative: Giorgio seeks out Torvaldo, assuring him that he can speak freely, that all present are on his side; Dorliska has been told of everything. Sixty grenadiers are on their way and will be there by nightfall; at their arrival the sign will be given, the bells will be rung and the castle gates thrown open for the peasants and soldiers. Torvaldo wants to know what will happen if the Duke tries to kill him, but Giorgio assures him that he will not let the dungeon keys out of his hands and tells him not to worry about Dorliska.

7] No. 19 Recitative and Aria: Torvaldo asks Giorgio to assure Dorliska of his love, as the latter tries to break away, telling him not to be afraid. Giorgio and the men leave.

8] Nos. 20 & 21 Recitative: Elsewhere in the castle the Duke thinks that he will have his way; he has gold, which can do everything. Others may call him a tyrant, a villain, but he is the example of one happy in his misdeeds. He calls to Giorgio to bring Dorliska to him and to make sure the prison stays shut, threatening him; how could he have believed Torvaldo dead and then not recognised him! Giorgio excuses himself, as he had never seen Torvaldo before, and the man was so ingratiating. He brings Dorliska in, accompanied by Carlotta, and the Duke dismisses the two of them. The Duke tells Dorliska that her marriage can be dissolved and if she will be his, he will spare Torvaldo; if not, he dies. Dorliska reproaches the Duke for his cruelty, swearing hatred.

9] No. 21 Aria: Dorliska confirms her undying hatred, calling on heaven to help her in her resolve. The Duke tries to reason with her, but she continues, promising death rather than submission, before retiring to her own rooms.

10] Nos. 22 & 23: The Duke thinks her resistance vain. He summons Giorgio telling him to tell Ormondo to come to him in his rooms and not to let the prison keys out of his hands. Giorgio shows him the keys, at his belt, as the Duke, threatening him again, leaves. He is joined by Dorliska and Carlotta. Dorliska depends on him for his help, but Giorgio assures her that Torvaldo is safely locked up. She begs for a moment with her husband, and Giorgio lets Carlotta have the keys to the dungeon.

11] No. 23 Aria: Carlotta feels hope in her heart. She tells Giorgio that they will soon be back, and tries to comfort Dorliska, barely restraining her own tears.

12] No. 24 Recitative and Duet: Giorgio wonders if he is doing the right thing; all is now ready for his attempt against his master. The Duke has entered, unseen by Giorgio. He has no doubt of his final triumph, while Giorgio tries to steal away. Before he can go, the Duke demands the prison keys, and Giorgio pretends to look

for them; perhaps they are in his room or in a cupboard. The Duke prevents him leaving, menacing him with death. Giorgio begs for mercy and eventually admits that his sister has the keys, and the Duke drags him off, threatening every kind of punishment.

13 No. 25 Recitative and Duettino: Dorliska is with Torvaldo in the dungeon, unwilling to leave him, while he is anxious for her safety.

14 No. 26 Recitative and Sestetto: Carlotta urges Dorliska away, fearing the Duke and watching anxiously for danger. Torvaldo tells Dorliska that all will be resolved by sunset. Carlotta calls out, seeing the Duke approaching. He bursts in, dragging Giorgio with him. He is followed by Ormondo and armed men. He accuses them of treachery, all worthy of death. Dorliska seeks to take the blame, followed by Torvaldo, while Giorgio and his sister beg the Duke's mercy. As Torvaldo confronts the Duke, the bell is heard. Giorgio declares that their friends have arrived. The Duke draws his sword to attack Giorgio, but Ormondo rushes in, with his armed men, telling the Duke that he must defend himself: the peasants have risen, threatening to kill the Duke, the servants have opened the doors and a hundred soldiers have entered the castle. The Duke seizes the keys from Carlotta and gives them to

Ormondo, rushing out with Ormondo and his men.

15 No. 27 Recitative: Dorliska wonders what will happen to them, comforted by her husband. They are rejoined by Ormondo, who kneels before Torvaldo, giving him the keys and his sabre and seeking assurance of his own safety, which Torvaldo promises. He signals to Giorgio to look after Dorliska, and goes out. Ormondo tells them that the Duke is trying to defend himself in the passage leading to the prison. The voices of the peasants are heard.

16 No. 28 Scena and Aria: The Duke enters, defending himself against Torvaldo and a number of peasants and soldiers who are pursuing him. Torvaldo disarms the Duke, ordering him to be bound, while the crowd call for death for the cruel tyrant. The Duke is in despair, with none to help him: Giorgio has betrayed him and Torvaldo is victorious, his own fate worse than death. He is taken out by the soldiers.

17 No. 29 Finale of the Second Act: Dorliska and Torvaldo, Giorgio and Carlotta, join in rejoicing at the outcome.

Keith Anderson

Huw Rhys-Evans

The Welsh tenor Huw Rhys-Evans was discovered as a Rossini singer by Alberto Zedda, under whom he has appeared at the Pesaro Accademia Rossiniana, in Paris, Strasbourg, and at Rossini in Wildbad as Belfiore in *Il viaggio a Reims*. He won critical praise for his performance in Wildbad in the title-rôle of *Le Comte Ory* under Brad Cohen, under whom he also appeared as Goffredo/Carlo in Rossini's *Armida*. In Britain he has sung Almaviva, Idreno in *Semiramide* and Pilade in *Ermione* with the Chelsea Opera Group. He was trained at the Royal Academy of Music in London, thereafter undertaking a number of guest engagements in France. He is well-known for his interpretation of the Evangelist, a part in which he made his Carnegie Hall début.

Paola Cigna Castellano

The soprano Paola Cigna Castellano was trained at the Cherubini Conservatorio in Florence, thereafter winning a number of important competitions, including the Tito Schipa in Lecce, the Leyla Gençer in Istanbul, and the Francisco Viñas in Barcelona. In 1996 she made her début at the Opéra-comique under Jean-Claude Malgloire. Since then her rôles have included those of Lucia, Gilda, Zerlina, Barbarina, Adalgisa, Norina and Oscar in many Italian theatres. She made her début at La Scala, Milan, under Giuseppe Sinopoli in 1999 in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. For two seasons she sang at Innsbruck, where her rôles included that of Corinna in *Il viaggio a Reims*. Her recordings include performance as Lisette in *La rondine*, as Norina and in Cavalli's *L'Eligiabalo*.

Mauro Utzeri

The baritone Mauro Utzeri studied at the Conservatorio Santa Cecilia in his native city of Rome and with Renato Federighi. His prizes and awards include the Mozart Prize in the Francisco Viñas Competition in Barcelona and the William Walton Prize for a rôle in Rossini's *La Cenerentola*, with triumph also at the Toti del Monte Competition in Treviso. He made his début as Giorgio in Paisiello's *Nina pazza per amore* at the Cantiere of Montepulciano. He has since appeared in all the major Italian houses, including La Scala, Milan, San Carlo in Naples, and in Rome. He has sung at the Schwetzingen Festival under Gelmetti and has made several appearances at the Pesaro Rossini Opera Festival, among other rôles as Taddeo, Filiberto and Riccardo. He has worked with conductors including Maag, Carignani, Campanella, Accardo, Gelmetti, Tate, Jacobs and Gatti, and with directors such as Ferruccio Soleri, Luca Ronconi, Pier Luigi Pizzi, Trisha Brown and Roberto di Simone. His recordings include *Il barbiere di Siviglia* under Gelmetti.

Michele Bianchini

Michele Bianchini studied with Nino Carta, among others, and attended courses with Paola Molinari and Hisako Tanaka in Italy and with Armen Boyagian in New York. He has won praise for his vocal versatility as a bass and his histrionic ability. With rôles such as Don Alfonso, Sarastro, Alidoro, Selim in *Il turco in Italia*, the King in *Aida*, Basilio in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Leporello, and Ferrando in *Il trovatore* he has appeared in opera-houses in Rome, Bilbao, Athens, Bologna, as well as in Korea, the United States, New Zealand and Australia. He has collaborated with conductors such as Barbacini, Ferro, Gatti, Rovaris and Claudio Abbado, appearing in Madrid in Boito's *Mefistofele*. Rôles he has undertaken in Germany include that of Nabucco, and, in Schwerin, of the Doctor in *Wozzeck*.

Giovanni Bellavia

The bass-baritone Giovanni Bellavia studied with the tenor R. Lo Cicero and the soprano E. Smith. After success in international competitions he made his début in 1998 in Antonio Scontrino's opera *Gringoire* at the Teatro Politeama Garibaldi in Palermo. He has appeared in operas by Henze, Cimarosa and Kurt Weill and won great success as Sharpless in Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, and as Leporello in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. In addition to frequent engagements at the Palermo Teatro Massimo and the Malta Teatro Manuel he has also made guest appearances at the Michigan Opera Theatre and the Venice Teatro La Fera, among others.

Anna Rita Gemmabella

The mezzo-soprano Anna Rita Gemmabella was born in Salerno and studied with Elisabetta Fusco at the Conservatorio San Pietro a Majella in Naples, completing her vocal training there with distinction in 1995. She furthered her formation with master-classes and as a pupil of Marco Boemi and Antonietta Stella. She has been a finalist and prize-winner in a number of national and international competitions, including the Naples Caruso-De Lucia in 1996, the 1997 Palermo Reggio Calabria, the 1998 Vissi d'Arte Competition at Eboli, and the 1999 G. Di Stefano Competition at Trapani. She has appeared as a guest artist at a number of Italian opera houses and in recitals with José Cura, Maria Dragoni, Edita Gruberova and Carlo Bergonzi. In Salerno, Lecce and Genoa she has sung *Cenerentola*, in Naples and at the Maggio Musicale *Tancredi*, in Palermo *Romeo* and in Lecce and Wildbad/Strasbourg *Il viaggio a Reims*, with appearances in Naples in *Il turco in Italia* and in Rome in *Le nozze di Figaro*. In 2001 she made her début as Carlotta in Johann Simon Mayr's *Verter* at Rossini in Wildbad and as Aspasia in *La pietra del paragone*, followed in 2002 by the rôle of Calbo in *Maometto secondo*, which she also sang at La Fenice in Venice. The two Rossini operas have been recorded by Naxos.

Czech Chamber Choir ARS Brunensis

The chamber choir ARS Brunensis was found in Brno in 1979. Since then it has won success in a number of international competitions, including IFAS in Pardubice in 1998. Under the direction of the young Czech conductor Dan Kalousek it has been in demand for broadcasts and recordings, and makes regular concert appearances with orchestras such as the Chamber orchestra of the Slovak State Philharmonic and the Brno Chamber Orchestra. The repertoire of the choir ranges from music of the Renaissance and Baroque to contemporary.

Czech Chamber Soloists

The Czech Chamber Soloists, a chamber ensemble from the Brno State Philharmonic, can look back on more than thirty years of successful performance. It is now directed by Ivan Matyás, whose father was its founder and early artistic director. The ensemble has undertaken concert tours throughout Europe and in the United States and Canada, its achievement exemplified in numerous broadcasts, television appearances and recordings. Since 2000 the ensemble has served as orchestra in residence at the Rossini in Wildbad Festival, its activity there involving recordings under Alberto Zedda, Alessandro de Marchi, Gabriele Bellini and Brad Cohen.

Alessandro de Marchi

Alessandro de Marchi first studied organ and composition at the Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Rome. He made his début as a conductor in 1984 and laid the foundation of his collaboration with the Radio Symphony Orchestras of Rome and Naples. With the Accademia Montis Regalis of Turin, an early instrument ensemble, he has won considerable success with performances of operas by Haydn and Vivaldi. In 1989 he began a period as assistant to and harpsichordist with René Jacobs who, like Daniel Barenboim a year later, encouraged his career and introduced him to the leading opera houses of Europe. Since the mid-1990s he has served as guest conductor at the Staatsoper unter den Linden in Berlin, where he has conducted *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Haydn's *L'isola disabitata* and *Il matrimonio segreto*. On the invitation of the Stuttgart Staatsoper he directed *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* and Keiser's *Masaniello*, and at the Hamburg Staatsoper he conducted *Il barbiere* and *L'incoronazione di Poppea*. In Brussels he conducted at La Monnaie *Don Pasquale*, *Cenerentola* and *Don Giovanni*. He has appeared at the Montreux and Halle Handel Festivals and regularly at Rossini in Wildbad. His recording of Rossini's *La pietra del paragone* has been released on Naxos (8.660093-95).

Rossini's semi-serious opera *Torvaldo e Dorliska* belongs, like Beethoven's *Fidelio*, to the genre of 'rescue' opera. The hero and heroine of the title both succumb to the power of the villainous Duke, who has designs on the newly married Dorliska. Both are saved in the nick of time by the castle custodian Giorgio, who sends to the absent governor for soldiers to put matters to rights. Highlights include the heartfelt passages for the two lovers, such as the aria *Dove son? chi m'aita?*, in which Dorliska expresses her despair at the news of the supposed death of her husband, and the short *duettino* from Act II, when they take their leave of each other.



**Gioachino
ROSSINI**
(1792-1868)

ROSSINI
IN WILDBAD
Belcanto Opera Festival

Torvaldo e Dorliska

- Torvaldo Huw Rhys-Evans, Tenor
- Dorliska, his wife Paola Cigna, Soprano
- Giorgio, castle custodian Mauro Utzeri, Baritone
- Duca d'Ordow Michele Bianchini, Bass
- Ormondo, henchman of the Duke Giovanni Bellavia, Bass-baritone
- Carlotta, Giorgio's sister Anna-Rita Gemmabella, Mezzo-soprano

ARS Brunensis Chamber Choir

Dan Kalousek, Chorus-master

Czech Chamber Soloists Brno

Alessandro de Marchi, Conductor and Harpsichord

CD 1	73:20	CD 2	67:47
1 Sinfonia	7:34	1-4 Act I (contd.)	14:06
2-12 Act I	65:46	5-17 Act II	53:41

A full track list can be found on page 3 of the booklet

The Italian libretto may be accessed at www.naxos.com/libretti/torvaldo.htm

Recorded live on 10th, 12th and 17th July, 2003, in the Kursaal, Bad Wildbad, Germany, during the ROSSINI IN WILDBAD festival (Artistic director: Jochen Schönleber) • A co-production with SWR

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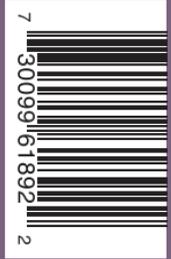
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8.660189-90

Playing Time
2:21:07



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