NAXOS

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV

3 CDs

The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh

Kazakov • Panfilov • Monogarova
Gubsky • Hakobyan • Naumenko
Orchestra e Coro del Teatro Lirico di Cagliari
Alexander Vedernikov

Nikolay Andreyevich

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV

(1844-1908)

The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevronya

Opera in Four Acts

Libretto by Vladimir I. Belsky

Prince Yury Vsevolodovich . . . . . Mikhail Kazakov
Hereditary prince Vsevolod Yuryevich . . . . . Vitaly Panfilov
Fevronya . . . . . Tatiana Monogarova
Grishka Kuterma . . . . . Mikhail Gubsky
Fyodor Poyarok . . . . . Gevorg Hakobyan
Page. . . . . Marika Gulordava
Two notables . . . . . Gianluca Floris, Marek Kalbus
The ballad singer . . . . . Riccardo Ferrari
The bear tamer . . . . . Stefano Consolini
A beggar. . . . . Alessandro Senes
Bedyay . . . . . Valery Gilmanov
Burunday . . . . . Alexander Naumenko
Sirin . . . . . Rosanna Savoia
Alkonost. . . . . Elena Manistina
Two men . . . . . Mirko Dettori, Victor García Sierra

Orchestra e Coro del Teatro Lirico di Cagliari

Chorus-master: Fulvio Fogliazza

Alexander Vedernikov

CD 1 — 64:07

1 Prelude – In praise of the wilderness — 3:05

Act I

2 Ah, you forest, my forest (*Fevronya*) — 3:38
3 Where are you, my dear friends (*Fevronya*) — 4:45
4 I know all the forest paths (*Fevronya, Prince Vsevolod*) — 7:36
5 Day and night we have our service (*Fevronya, Prince Vsevolod*) — 2:30
6 Dearest, how can you live life without joy (*Fevronya, Prince Vsevolod*) — 3:55
7 Hail to thee, lips of honey (*Prince Vsevolod, Fevronya*) — 3:25
8 As soon as the marksman came (*Chorus, Prince Vsevolod, Fevronya, Poyarok*) — 4:44

Act II

9 Show them, Mikhaylushka (*The bear tamer, Chorus, The ballad singer*) — 3:47
10 Ah, my foolish children! (*The ballad singer, Chorus, The bear tamer, Kuterma*) — 4:55
11 Gracious benefactors (*Chorus, Kuterma, Poyarok, Fevronya*) — 7:31
12 Do not sin, God allows a good word (*Fevronya, Kuterma, Poyarok, Chorus*) — 3:30
13 Over the bridges of guelder-tree (*Female Chorus, Bedyay, Burunday*) — 4:02
14 There will be no such beauty in the steppes (*Burunday, Bedyay, Chorus, Kuterma, Fevronya*) — 4:14
15 Stop, you godless heathens! (*Kuterma, Chorus, Bedyay, Burunday, Fevronya*) — 2:30

CD 2 — 61:12

Act III: Scene 1

1 Good fortune to you, citizens of Kitezh (*Poyarok, Chorus, Prince Vsevolod*) — 6:15
2 God still preserves Greater Kitezh (*Chorus, Poyarok, Prince Vsevolod*) — 3:32
3 Oh glory, vain wealth! (*Prince Yury*) — 4:42
4 Wondrous queen of heaven (*Chorus, Prince Yury, Page*) — 6:23
5 Wondrous queen of heaven (*Chorus, Page*) — 3:02
6 God's will be done (*Prince Yury, Prince Vsevolod, Chorus*) — 3:04
7 What are we standing about for, sisters? (*Female Chorus, Page, Prince Yury*) — 5:40
8 Entr'acte – The Battle near Kerzhenets — 4:33

Act III: Scene 2

9 Here is the oak grove (*Kuterma, Burunday, Bedyay, Chorus*) — 2:08
10 Don't worry! We shan't touch you (*Bedyay, Burunday, Chorus*) — 5:59
11 It was not hungry ravens (*Chorus, Burunday*) — 2:21
12 Ah, my dear husband, my hope! (*Fevronya, Kuterma*) — 3:45
13 No, that accursed ringing (*Kuterma, Fevronya*) — 5:43
14 Ah, folks, at liberty (*Kuterma, Chorus*) — 4:06

CD 3 — 55:17

Act IV: Scene 1

1 Oh, I can't go on (*Fevronya, Kuterma*) — 4:35
2 Well, let's go pray if you want (*Kuterma, Fevronya*) — 4:00
3 What's happening to me? (*Kuterma, Fevronya*) — 4:35
4 Let me see: what pretty flowers (*Fevronya, Alkonost*) — 8:37
5 Is that you, radiant light of my eyes? (*Fevronya, Ghost of Prince Vsevolod*) — 4:30
6 The bridegroom has come (*Sirin, Fevronya*) — 2:38
7 He who partakes of our bread – Symphonic Prelude (*Ghost of Prince Vsevolod, Fevronya*) — 2:44

Act IV: Scene 2

8 The Lord promised those who seek (*Sirin, Alkonost, Chorus*) — 4:38
9 Radiant kingdom! (*Fevronya, Chorus, Prince Vsevolod*) — 5:01
10 I bow to you, righteous people (*Fevronya, Prince Yury, Prince Vsevolod, Sirin, Alkonost, Page, Poyarok, Chorus*) — 6:09
11 Ah, my faithful bride (*Prince Vsevolod, Fevronya, Prince Yury, Poyarok, Chorus*) — 7:51

Nikolay Andreyevich Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908)

The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevronya

Unrivalled in his day as a master of orchestral tone colour, Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov was self-critical to a fault. As a composer he practised what he preached as a teacher: only use instruments through need, and not because they seem to be a nice idea. Writing about *The Invisible City of Kitezh* in the summer of 1904, the jaundiced-sounding composer told his librettist: 'I destroyed the second tuba, and I traded *flauto alto* for the ordinary flute. These instruments … were oppressing me and did not give me peace. And I still have to compose what is missing in Act 3. Somehow I have come to dislike composing. It is obviously time to give up this occupation. Don't despair: I will finish *Kitezh*, anyhow.'

Rimsky-Korsakov and his librettist, Vladimir Belsky, had been attracted to the Kitezh legend as far back as the winter of 1898–9, but this project remained on the back burner for several years. In October 1902, however, the composer's friend Vasily Yastrebtsev wrote: 'Today, Rimsky-Korsakov confessed that he is writing an opera from the times of the Tartar rule over old Russia, that is on the subject of *The Invisible City of Kitezh*.' The following spring, Yastrebtsev further related that Rimsky-Korsakov had now revealed the general content of his new opera and added that the libretto by Belsky drew partly on the famous novels *In the Woods* and *On the Mountains* by Melnikov-Pechersky, and the legend of Saint Fevronya of Murom.

The original Kitezh story describes how the advancing Mongol horde reaches the town of Great Kitezh to find its defenceless citizens fervently praying and asking God for redemption. The army attacks, but is soon forced to retreat as countless fountains spring from the ground and submerge the town in a huge lake. In the hagiographical legend of Fevronya of Murom, we are told a moving story about a duke and a humble beekeeper's daughter, who are turned into a symbol of eternal love.

Belsky made free use of all these literary and legendary elements as he prepared the libretto for Rimsky-Korsakov's opera, which bears the unwieldy full title of *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevronya*. The result is an amalgam of folklore and Christian mystery, with a heavy dose of pantheism and patriotism thrown in. These last two factors were what saved *Kitezh* from being heavily sanitised during the Soviet era, though an overhaul of the plot was proposed by the Symbolist-poet-turned-Bolshevik-revolutionary, Sergey Gorodetsky, who particularly disliked Prince Yury's piety. He had already made significant alterations to the libretto of Glinka's *Life for the Tsar*.

The miracle that saves Kitezh from the horde is clearly effected by the Christian God (church bells ring spontaneously), but this is offset by many pantheistic elements. For instance, in Act 1 Fevronya is asked if she goes to church. Her reply – that God is everywhere, and that the forest is like a vast church where the Eucharist is continuously celebrated – is but one example of theological sidestepping in this opera, which treats Christianity as a fascinating aspect of folklore, albeit an important one. Rimsky-Korsakov was, after all, a man who rejected theology. He believed that experimental investigation and observation are the only sources of substantial knowledge. It seems likely, therefore, that he overrode any overtly Christian elements that Belsky might initially have proposed.

From the outset, librettist and composer had quite different views about handling the dramatic nature of the plot. Belsky had in mind a static work, full of imagery and detailed examination of the states of mind of the leading characters, which would be explored along Wagnerian lines. Rimsky-Korsakov, however, did not have any great affection for Wagner, despite the oft-repeated remark that *Kitezh* is a Russian *Parsifal* (the miracle music, for example, does contain echoes of the Good Friday music in *Parsifal*). He had to work hard to ensure that his conception of a more 'realistic' opera would prevail and that no 'liturgical' longueurs would hold back the action. Each time he suggested a change to the scenario he would end his request with a diplomatic plea. One example appears in a letter to Belsky written in May 1904: 'Will you permit this, my strict, cruel librettist?' Part of the difficulty for the two men lay in the title itself. After all, the word 'legend' has etymological connotations with reading, which is an activity that is contemplative rather than dramatic. Furthermore, Belsky wished to inject period flavour by having some characters speak in old-fashioned Russian, replete with archaic colloquialisms, while others would speak in Old Church Slavonic. Rimsky-Korsakov was far from happy, for he had no intention of writing an old-fashioned opera. On the contrary, he wished to produce a modern work fit for the early twentieth century: 'I do not think *Kitezh* will be a backward-looking opera, but one that is contemporary and even fairly advanced.'

Unlike most Russian operas, *Kitezh* is through-composed and strongly symphonic at times. As a consequence, individual vocal numbers cannot be readily extracted and performed as free-standing pieces. Singers and orchestral musicians alike are all treated as part of Rimsky-Korsakov's tone-painting. A masterly example occurs with the repeated tolling of bells from the vanished city. This idea was fixed in the composer's mind from early on, for in the summer of 1903 he told Belsky that 'the opera will end with a *piano tremolo* F major chord on the bells. It will be necessary to try this out in advance with the bells of the Maryinsky Theatre.' Such is the orchestra's rôle in highlighting the events on stage that it has even been described as 'the real main character' of the opera. It is interesting to note that while Rimsky-Korsakov was adding the finishing touches to *Kitezh* in the summer of 1905, he was again working on his *Principles of Orchestration*, which he had first started writing about thirty years earlier. In their own very different ways, both Stravinsky and Rachmaninov were influenced by the ideas contained in this manual.

Act 1 of *Kitezh* was performed at Rimsky-Korsakov's home in November 1906. The piano reduction of the orchestral score was played by the composer's pupil and son-in-law Maximilian Steinberg, who, in 1912, would complete his late teacher's *Principles of Orchestration*. The first staged production of the whole opera took place at the Maryinsky Theatre in St Petersburg on 20th February 1907 (new style). The occasion was a great success. Nevertheless, critics and audience were nonplussed by the opera's unfamiliar blend of mysticism and realism. Even the producer was troubled by Rimsky-Korsakov's decision to employ a dramatic soprano to portray the 'light, ethereal, disembodied' figure of Fevronya. Following the Moscow première in March 1908, audiences continued to be perplexed by what they perceived as 'clashes' between idealism and realism. Yet it has been argued that such an apparent confusion of incompatible elements was, to some degree, a reflection of current events. Rimsky-Korsakov was profoundly disillusioned by the unsuccessful 1905 revolution. Initially describing himself as 'bright red', he supported the rioting students and was suspended from his teaching post. Former friends and colleagues, such as César Cui and Mily Balakirev, now denounced him for his offensive solidarity with 'vandals and hooligans'.

Kitezh was soon eclipsed in popularity by Rimsky-Korsakov's next and final opera, *The Golden Cockerel*, but it eventually made its way westwards. In 1926 Albert Coates (who was born in St Petersburg) conducted it in London at a performance that was broadcast by the BBC from Covent Garden.

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Synopsis

CD 1

Prelude
In Praise of the Wilderness
Orchestral 'hymn' depicting the scenery of the forest.

Act I
Kerzhensky Forest, near the town of Little Kitezh, by the Volga
The dense forest is home to Fevronya, a dreamy and poetical daughter of nature, who lives in total harmony with the birds and wild animals, and knows all the mysteries of the forest. One day she meets a young prince who has been hunting and has lost his way. He is Vsevolod, son of Prince Yury of Kitezh, and he falls for her beauty, though he fears there must be some black magic behind someone who is so supernaturally beautiful. Nevertheless, he is captivated by her spirituality and love of nature. They sing a love duet, during which he places a ring on her finger and asks her to be his wife and go with him to Great Kitezh. They are interrupted by the distant sounds of Vsevolod's hunting party. He bids her farewell and goes to find the party, while she discovers the name and rank of her betrothed.

Act II
The market place of Little Kitezh, on the left bank of the Volga
The local populace is rejoicing because the wedding procession of Princess Fevronya is expected to pass by. The wealthy townsfolk think Prince Yury is marrying beneath his rank, and they bribe a cynical local drunkard Grishka Kuterma (who will stop at nothing for a bit of cash) to insult Fevronya. The procession approaches, and Grishka interferes as best he can, but is driven away. The innocent Fevronya reminds everyone of their duty to be kind to all men, even those like Grishka. The merrymaking comes to an abrupt halt as Little Kitezh is surrounded by an army of invading Tartars, who destroy everything. They carry off Fevronya and also capture Grishka, who is forced to lead the Tartars to Great Kitezh, which is fabled for its great wealth.

CD 2

Act III: Scene 1
Cathedral Square in Great Kitezh
Hearing of the invasion, the people of Great Kitezh gather in the main square. Prince Vsevolod's huntsman, Fyodor Poyarok, whom the Tartars have blinded, tells them of the atrocities committed at Little Kitezh. He warns the citizens that it is said to be Fevronya herself who is guiding their enemies. Faced with the terrible prospect of murder, pillage, rape and destruction, the townspeople implore God's help. While Prince Yury prays, his son, Prince Vsevolod, calls on the citizens to prepare for battle. Then a miracle occurs: the church bells start to toll of their own accord, a golden mist rises over the lake, and the city becomes invisible to the enemy.

Symphonic Interlude
The Battle of Kerzhenets
Following a fierce battle, the Tartars defeat Vsevolod's army, and the prince bleeds to death from forty wounds.

Act III: Scene 2
Shore of Lake Yar opposite Great Kitezh, at night
After trekking through the wilderness, Grishka brings the Tartars almost to Great Kitezh, but because the mist hides the city on the other side of the lake, the Tartars accuse him of treachery and tie him to a tree, intending to kill him in the morning if it becomes clear that he has led them astray. Meanwhile they share out their loot. Two of the Tartar chieftains, Burunday and Bedyay, quarrel over Fevronya. Bedyay is slain, but Burunday is too drunk to profit from his victory. Before repairing to bed for the night, the drunken Tartars sing a dismal song about ravens flocking to carnage. Burunday unsuccessfully tries to lure Fevronya to him, and then accuses her of coldness. Fevronya laments the death of Vsevolod, her betrothed. Grishka, tormented by fear and remorse, begs Fevronya to cover his ears because he is haunted by the tolling bells of Kitezh, which remind him of his guilt. He confesses that he wrongly accused Fevronya of betraying the country. She is alarmed by the possibility that Grishka might be the Antichrist, but he pleads he is nothing other than a boozy good-for-nothing, who has been let down by life. The fault is not his, he says, but God's. Fevronya reproves him for complaining in such a manner. She releases him, however, believing that kindness will heal his soul. He is briefly beside himself with joy, but then he becomes deranged and determines to drown himself in the lake. He stops at the shore, however, because although the city remains invisible, its reflection can be seen in the water, and the bells ring out ever louder. He loses all remaining reason and escapes deep into the forest, taking Fevronya with him. The Tartars are also stricken with fear by the sight. They, too, take flight.

Act IV: Scene 1
Kerzhenets Forest, at night
Grishka continues to rail insanely at himself and Fevronya. She prays for his soul, begging God to spare him even the tiniest bit of love, but she also urges Grishka to show a little humility. Tortured by a mixture of demonic visions and his own guilt, Grishka rushes off into the forest. Fevronya is now alone in the kind of forest setting she knows so well. She sings of its verdant charms, and the forest is transformed into a supernaturally beautiful place. She hears the voice of Alkonost, a bird of paradise, who tells Fevronya to prepare to be a servant of God, for death comes to everyone she sings to. The ghost of Vsevolod appears. They sing together knowing that they will never be parted. The voice of Sirin, another bird of paradise, is heard. She says that everyone she sings to will enjoy eternal life.

Symphonic Interlude
(with voices of Sirin and Alkonost)
Walk to the invisible city
Fevronya and Vsevolod walk towards the invisible city of Great Kitezh. Sirin and Alkonost promise everlasting life and heavenly bliss in a new kingdom.

Act IV: Scene 2
Great Kitezh
Great Kitezh appears, having wondrously risen again in all its opulent magnificence, transformed into paradise. Sirin and Alkonost protect all the inhabitants who were slaughtered by the Tartars. These people pay homage to Fevronya and Vsevolod, and they complete the singing of the wedding hymn that was interrupted when the Tartars first appeared in Act 1. Only one thing disturbs Fevronya in her heavenly joy, and that is the fate of Grishka. She asks Poyarok, Prince Vsevolod's huntsman, to write a note to Grishka telling him of the miracle and wishing him God's blessing.

Mikhail Kazakov

Born in Dmitrovgrad, Ulyanovsk region, Mikhail Kazakov completed his studies at the Kazan Conservatory in 2001. While still a second-year student, he took part in a performance of Giuseppe Verdi's *Requiem* at the Tartar Theatre of Opera and Ballet. In 2001 he joined the Bolshoy Theatre Opera Company as soloist, singing leading Russian and Italian rôles. He has won a number of prizes, with appearances in Vienna, Dresden, Paris and America.

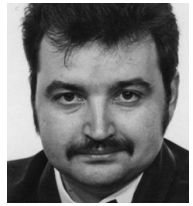
Vitaly Panfilov

Born in Novgorod. Vitaly Panfilov completed his studies at the St Petersburg Conservatory in 1999. In 2003 he made his Bolshoy Theatre début as Tom Rakewell in Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*. Other rôles with the Bolshoy include Eric (*Der fliegende Holländer*), the Simpleton in *Boris Godunov* and the Prince in Prokofiev's *The Love for Three Oranges*.

Tatiana Monogarova

Tatiana Monogarova was born in Moscow and studied at the Russian Academy of Arts. She made her international début in Sergei Slonimsky's opera *The Master and Margarita* with the Forum Theatre, Moscow, on tour in Germany under Mikhail Jurowski, and then as Xenia in *Boris Godunov* at La Fenice, Venice in 1995. Her career has brought appearances at leading theatres throughout Europe and the Americas, and with the Bolshoy, in particular her signature rôle of Tatyana in *Eugene Onegin*.

Mikhail Gubsky



Mikhail Gubsky was born in Magnitogorsk, Russia and graduated from Samara Technical University in 1993 and Samara Academia of Arts in 1997. From 1994 he was a soloist of the Samara Opera Theatre, and from 1997 a soloist of Moscow's *Novaya Opera* Company. Since 2001 he has also been appearing at the Bolshoy Theatre, with rôles ranging from Lensky in *Eugene Onegin* to the Captain in *Wozzeck*. Engagements abroad have taken him to America and Canada and to venues throughout Europe. Since 2007 he has been artistic director of the Samara Theatre of Opera and Ballet.

Gevorg Hakobyan

Born in 1981 at Metsamor in Armenia, Gevorg Hakobyan completed his studies at the Yerevan Conservatory in 2004 under the guidance of Sergey Danielyan. In 2000 he won the Isahakian National Singing Competition and from 2003 was a soloist with the Yerevan Theatre, where he sang in Rachmaninov's *Aleko*, Chukhajian's *Arshak II* and Tchaikovsky's *Iolanta*. In 2007 he sang in oratorio and opera in London at St John's, Smith Square, and in 2006 he received a prize from the President of the Armenian Republic. Further awards include first prize and gold medal in the Pavel Lisitsian International Competition.

Marika Gulordava

Born in Georgia, Marika Gulordava studied at the Conservatory of Tbilisi, where she received her diploma in 2008. She has performed in many concerts in Tbilisi and has also participated in various competitions, including the National Georgian Competition of Young Musicians, where she won First Place, the XIII Tchaikovsky International Music Competition, winning Third Place and the special prize for the best interpretation of Tchaikovsky, the People's Award, and the Rostropovich Scholarship. In 2007 she won first prize at the Montserrat Caballé International Competition. Between 2009 and 2011 she attended the La Scala Academy of Lyric Opera.

Gianluca Floris

Born in Cagliari, Gianluca Floris began his vocal studies there in 1998. In 1992 was a finalist in the Luciano Pavarotti International Voice Competition in Philadelphia. He has taken lyric tenor rôles in operas including Rossini's *Ermione e Otello*, Verdi's *La traviata, Nabucco, Macbeth, Rigoletto* and Puccini's *Tosca, La bohème* and *Madama Butterfly*, as well as numerous character rôles, including Bardolfo and Dr Cajus in *Falstaff* and Don Basilio in *Le nozze di Figaro*. He also has an extensive concert repertoire.

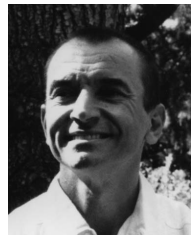
Marek Kalbus

German bass-baritone Marek Kalbus studied at the Hanns Eisler academy of Music Berlin. After he became a prizewinner at the International Belvedere Competition Vienna, 2004, his international career began with Wagner's *Parsifal* at the Teatro Carlo Felice Genoa and the Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin. Since then Marek Kalbus has sung regularly in principal opera houses and concert halls throughout the world, including the Opéra Comique, Paris, Teatro Carlo Felice, Genoa, Teatro Dal Verme, Milan, Teatro Massimo, Palermo, Teatro Municipal, Santiago, Chile, Teatro Lirico, Cagliari, Théâtre du Capitole, Toulouse, Konzerthaus, Berlin and Berlin Philharmonic, Rudolfinum Prague and the Grand Theatre Hong Kong.

Riccardo Ferrari

Born in Carpi, Riccardo Ferrari started his vocal studies at the Conservatorio di Parma, continuing with Gina Cigna, Aldo Protti, and Samuel Ramey. He has sung numerous leading bass rôles during a very successful career that has taken him to major opera-houses throughout Italy and the rest of Europe, to Japan and to the United States. Operas in his repertoire include *Rigoletto, Don Carlo*, *Turandot, Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *La forza del destino*, *Semiramide*, *Carmen*, *Nabucco*, *Norma*, *Aida*, *Roméo et Juliette*, *Guillaume Tell*, *Moïse et Pharaon*, *Faust* and *Macbeth*.

Stefano Consolini



Stefano Consolini graduated at the vocational training course of the Teatro Comunale di Bologna. His very successful career has brought performances in opera-houses throughout Italy in a repertoire ranging from Rossini to Lehár.

Alessandro Senes

Born at Sassari, Alessandro Senes studied with the soprano Maria Mastino and at the Conservatory there under Marcello Crisman, going on to courses with Giusy Salis de Bortoli and with the baritone Angelo Romero and with Gianluca Belfiori. In 1992 he joined the Corale Canepa, appearing at the Sassari Teatro Marialisa De Carolis, and in tours abroad, both as a chorus-member and as a soloist. His rôles have included the Customs Officer in *La bohème,* the Imperial Commissioner in *Madama Butterfly*, and similar parts in *Otello, Rigoletto, Il trovatore*, *Don Pasquale*, and *Andrea Chénier*.

Valery Gilmanov

Photo: Larisa Pedenchuk

A Novosibirsk State Conservatoire graduate, Valery Gilmanov was, from 1994, a soloist with the Novosibirsk State Theatre of Opera and Ballet. In 2000 he joined the Moscow New Opera Company and in 2002 became a soloist with the Bolshoy Theatre. Winner of various international and national prizes, he has appeared in Portugal, Spain, Thailand, and Italy. He sang the part of Boris Timofeyevich in Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* in Spain, Italy, France, Germany and the Argentine in 2000 as part of the Rostropovich world project.

Alexander Naumenko

Photo: Damir Yusupov

After study at the Moscow State Conservatory Alexander Baumenko continued at the Bolshoy, joining the company finally in 1991, after a period that brought study with Hans Hotter and with Norman Shetler. In 1984 he won the Glinka Singing Competition and in 1985 first prize and the Elly Ameling award (for the performance of chamber works) at the International Singing Competition in 's-Hertogenbosch. His Bolshoy operatic rôles include Dr Bartolo in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Leporello in *Don Giovanni* and Bartolo in *Il nozze di Figaro*, Ferrando in *Il trovatore*, Banquo in *Macbeth,* Pistola in *Falstaff* and the Father Guardian in *La forza del destino*.

Rosanna Savoia

Photo: Claudio Morelli

Born in Aversa, Rosanna Savoia began studying voice at the Conservatory Pietro Majella in Naples and later specialised with R. Gazzani and E. Lombardini Smith. She has participated in seminars and master-classes held by Leyla Gençer, Raina Kabaivanska, Paolo Montarsolo, Judith Resnik, Renata Scotto and Alberto Zedda (Accademia Rossiniana). As a finalist in important international competitions, she won the Toti dal Monte in 1996 and received the Critics' Award at the Giuseppe di Stefano. Her career has brought appearances in major opera-houses throughout Italy, including La Scala in Milan and the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, and abroad in a wide repertoire.

Elena Manistina

Photo c/o Askonas Holt

Russian mezzo-soprano Elena Manistina was born in Saratov and trained there and at the Tchaikovsky State Conservatory in Moscow. She was winner of first prize in the 2002 Operalia Competition. She made her début as Marfa in Mussorgsky's *Khovanshchina* in Saratov, a rôle she has repeated many times. Other rôles have included Ulrica (*Un ballo in maschera*), Azucena (*Il trovatore*), Amneris (*Aida*) and, at Covent Garden, Sosostris *(A Midsummer Marriage*) and Marina (*Boris Godunov*), with appearances in the London Promenade Concerts in works by Stravinsky. Her career has brought engagements throughout Europe and in the United States at major opera-houses.

Mirko Dettori

Born in 1975, Mirko Dettori studied at the Palestrina Conservatory in Cagliari under Elisabetta Scano, and had further training with Giusy Devinu. He has appeared in various concert engagements and took the tenor solo part in the *Christmas Oratorio* of Camille Saint-Saëns in Cagliari. He has also appeared on various occasions with Elisabetta Scano and Angelo Romero.

Victor García Sierra

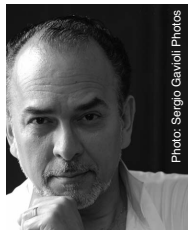
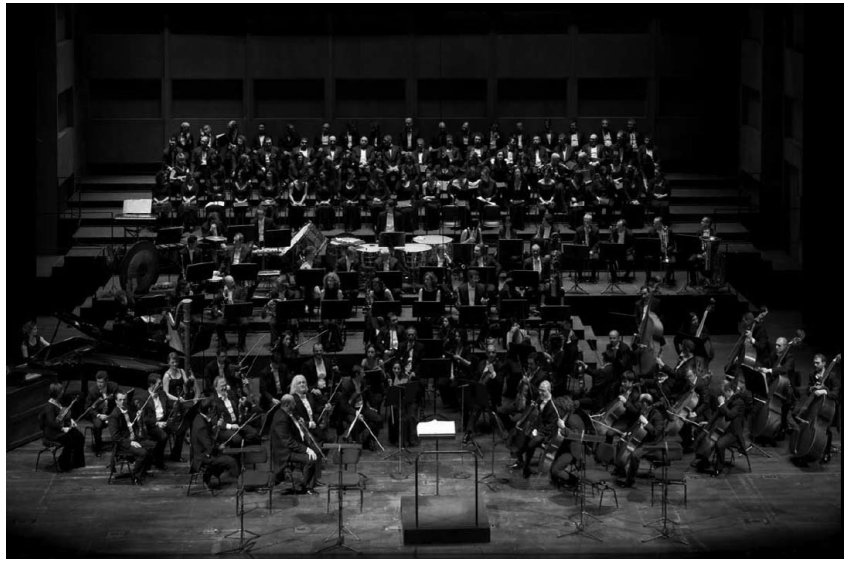


Photo: Sergio Gaviol Photos

Victor García Sierra has sung with José Cura, Marcelo Alvares, Leo Nucci, Sherril Milnes, Renato Bruson, Katia Ricciarelli, Mariella Devia, Giacomo Aragal, and Eva Marton. He has appeared in *La traviata* under Zubin Mehta in Paris and otherwise worked with dirctors and conductors of the highest distinction. He has appeared regularly at the Arena in Verona since 2004.

Teatro Lirico di Cagliari Orchestra



Founded in 1933 by Renato Fasano, the orchestra of the Cagliari Teatro Lirico was created to give life to the very full concert and opera programmes in the theatres of Cagliari. Over the years it has enjoyed successful working relationships with the most acclaimed Italian conductors, including Tullio Serafin, Vittorio Gui, Antonino Votto, Guido Cantelli, Franco Ferrara, Franco Capuana and Willy Ferrero, and with composers such as Ottorino Respighi, Ildebrando Pizzetti, Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari, Riccardo Zandonai and Alfredo Casella, as well as with soloists of equal distinction. From 1999 to 2005 Gérard Korsten was the Principal Conductor of the Teatro Lirico di Cagliari, and in January 2005 the orchestra was conducted with great success by Cristian Mandeal for the Italian première of *Oedipe* by George Enescu and in 2010 by Emmanuel Villaume for the Italian première of *Chérubin* by Jules Massenet. The orchestra has regularly collaborated with Lorin Maazel, and has recorded Wagner's *Die Feen*, Smetana's *Dalibor*, Strauss's *Die Ägyptische Helena*, *Goyescas* by Enrique Granados and Falla's *La vida breve*, among other works.

Teatro Lirico di Cagliari Chorus

Since the Second World War, the Teatro Lirico di Cagliari Chorus has performed over one hundred operas, and has developed a wide symphonic repertoire. Among its directors have been Bonaventura Somma, Roberto Benaglio and Giorgio Kirschner. From 1997 to January 2005 it was directed by Paolo Vero and from June 2005 to December 2007 by Andrea Faidutti. The current director of the chorus is Fulvio Fogliazza appointed in January 2008. The Chorus's willingness and ability to perform works from varying eras and styles and in the original language is always much appreciated by conductors and directors. Particular attention has been dedicated to works by twentieth-century composers such as Honegger's *Le Roi David*, Poulenc's *Stabat Mater*, Pizzetti's *Assassinio nella cattedrale* and Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*. The Chorus has collaborated with renowned directors, including Dario Fo, Beni Montresor, Lorenzo Mariani, Luca Ronconi, Hennings Brockhaus, Alberto Fassini, Denis Krief, José Carlos Plaza, Stephen Medcalf, Pier Luigi Pizzi and Graham Vick.

Alexander Vedernikov

From 2001 until 2009 Alexander Vedernikov was Music Director and Chief Conductor of the Bolshoy Theatre, where he was also responsible for developing the Bolshoy's programme of symphonic concerts, broadening the repertoire. Under his direction the orchestra of the Bolshoy toured extensively, including Athens, Hamburg and Paris in February 2008, and for a season of opera and ballet at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. He enjoys a successful international career, with appearances in concert-halls and opera-houses throughout the world, and in September 2009 took up the rôle of Chief Conductor of the Odense Orchestra in Denmark.

The Invisible City of Kitezh, completed in 1905, is a remarkable opera that fuses folklore, mysticism and realism. Its subject is the story of the advancing Mongol army's entry to Great Kitezh and the city's subsequent miraculous survival. Rejecting archaisms and the more religiously inclined suggestions of his librettist, Rimsky-Korsakov sought to create an opera that "is contemporary and even fairly advanced". It is therefore through-composed, hinting at times at Wagnerian procedure, and flooded with the composer's rich, apt and brilliant orchestral palette, fully supportive of the powerful vocal writing.

Teatro Lirico di Cagliari Fondazione

Nikolay Andreyevich

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV

(1844-1908)

DYNAMIC

The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevronya (1905)

Opera in Four Acts

Libretto by Vladimir I. Belsky

Prince Yury Vsevolodovich	Mikhail Kazakov
Hereditary prince Vsevolod Yuryevich	Vitaly Panfilov
Fevronya	Tatiana Monogarova
Grishka Kuterma	Mikhail Gubsky
Fyodor Poyarok	Gevorg Hakobyan
Page	Marika Gulordava
Two notables	Gianluca Floris, Marek Kalbus
Bedyay	Valery Gilmanov
Burunday	Alexander Naumenko

Orchestra e Coro del Teatro Lirico di Cagliari

Chorus-master: Fulvio Fogliazza

Alexander Vedernikov

CD 1	64:07	CD 2	61:12	CD 3	55:17
1 Prelude	3:05	1-8 Act III: Scene 1	37:10	1-7 Act IV: Scene 1	31:38
2-8 Act I	30:33	9-14 Act III: Scene 2	24:02	8-11 Act IV: Scene 2	23:39
9-15 Act II	30:30				

A full track and cast list can be found inside the booklet • Recorded at the Teatro Lirico di Cagliari, Sardinia, Italy, on 2nd and 4th May, 2008 • This recording is also available on Naxos DVD 2.110277-78

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