

ALSO AVAILABLE ON
SIGNUMCLASSICS



Spanish Heroines
Silvia Tro Santafé
Orquesta Sinfónica de Navarra
Julian Reynolds conductor
SIGCD152

Since her American debut in the early nineties, Silvia Tro Santafé has become one of the most sought after coloratura mezzos of her generation. On this disc we hear the proof of her operatic talents, performing some of the greatest and most passionate arias of any operatic mezzo soprano.

signum
CLASSICS



Available through most record stores and at www.signumrecords.com For more information call +44 (0) 20 8997 4000

ROSSINI MEZZO

Cavatina (Isabella e Coro, *L'Italiana in Algeri*)

1. Cruda sorte! Amor tiranno! [4.26]

Coro, Recitativo e Rondò (Isabella, *L'Italiana in Algeri*)

2. Pronti abbiamo e ferri e mani (Coro), Amici, in ogni evento ... (Isabella) [2.45]

3. Pensa alla patria, e intrepido il tuo dover adempi [6.07]

Recitativo e cavatina (Tancredi, *Tancredi*)

4. Oh patria! dolce, e ingrata patria! [5.42] 5. Di tanti palpiti, di tanti pene [2.58]

Finale secondo: Coro e Scena (Angelina, *La Cenerentola*)

6. Della fortuna istabile [3.16] 7. Nacqui all'affanno e al pianto [6.58]

Recitativo e cavatina (Malcom, *La Donna del Lago*)

8. Mura felici, ove il mio ben si aggira! [2.41] 9. Elena! oh tu! [6.47]

Aria (Malcom, *La Donna del Lago*)

10. Ah si pera: ormai la morte [4.43] 11. Douglas, Douglas (Coro) [3.15]

Recitativo e cavatina (Arsace, *Semiramide*)

12. Eccomi alfine in Babilonia ... [5.24] 13. Ah, quell giorno ognor rammento [6.02]

Total Timings [61.06]

Amaia Azcona *Soprano* (Clorinda*, Albina†) / Nerea Castellot *Mezzo-Soprano* (Tisbe*) / Vicente Abril *Tenore* (Don Ramiro*, Serano†) / Ximo Martí *Baritone* (Don Magnifico*) / Marc Solano *Baritone* (Dandini*)

SILVIA TRO SANTAFÉ MEZZO-SOPRANO • ORQUESTA SINFÓNICA DE NAVARRA
JULIAN REYNOLDS CONDUCTOR • LLUÍS VICH VOCALIS

www.signumrecords.com

ROSSINI MEZZO

If it were not for the operas of Gioachino Rossini, the repertory for the mezzo soprano would be far less interesting. Opera is often thought of as following generic lines and the basic opera plot has been described as “the tenor wants to marry the soprano and bass tries to stop them”. According to this simplistic formula, the heroine is the soprano which leaves for the mezzo such roles as the heroine’s sidekick, mother or nurse. Otherwise she is the villainess; Ortrud to Elsa, Amneris to Aida, La principessa de Bouillon to Adriana Lecrouveur. Not too much sympathy need be expended here, evil is much more interesting to play on stage - and often a lot easier. However it is true that the Romantic opera where the mezzo is both centre stage and gets her man at the end of the evening are few and far between, and nearly all the well-known examples are to be found in the works of Rossini. Many of his mezzo roles are of course trouser roles, but he also gave them the heroines parts.

By chance, during most of his career, the composer was closely associated with mezzos. Firstly, there was Marietta Marcolini, an established singer noted for her comic roles, who took the 19 year-old composer under her wing. In

gratitude, the composer wrote starring roles for her in five of his early operas, all but one of them comedies. The first was the wickedly funny *L'equivoco stravagante* premiered in Bologna in 1811. Its libretto really reverses the definition of opera quotes above. In this opera, the tenor stops the baritone from marrying the mezzo and does it by telling him that she is a castrato singer in drag. Unfortunately, this was considered so scandalous that it was taken off after only a couple of performances. Next came *Ciro in Babalonia*, not merely the exception in that it was not comic, but it was written as an opera to be performed in Lent and therefore based upon a Biblical story, the fall of Belshazzar’s Babylon by Cyrus King of Persia. This was followed the same year (1812) by *La Pietra del paragone*, in which the Marcolini role disguises herself as her twin brother, a form of drag evidently acceptable for the period. Marcolini did not appear at the first performance of Rossini’s earliest great success, *Tancredi*, but she appeared as the heroine in his next comedy, *L'Italiana in Algeri* (1813). The last Rossini premiere she took part in was *Sigismondo* (1814) a total failure at the time. The following year, Rossini was in Naples with a remarkably generous contract to write one opera a year for a payment that included a share of the profits from the opera house’s gambling tables.

The first of these was *Elisabetta, Regina d'Inghilterra*, written for Isabella Colbran, then at the peak of her fame and the darling of the Neapolitan audience. History dictates that Elisabetta was not to get her man, but Colbran fared rather better, she later married her composer (at the time of the opera she was involved with the Impresario who had given Rossini his contract). It is sometimes said that Colbran was a soprano - at the time the terms were not classified quite as strictly as they are now - but it seems clear that she was a mezzo with a high extension to the voice. What is now sometimes called rather unattractively with its medical suggestion, a *mezzosoprano acuto*. The parts he wrote Colbran lie noticeably higher than those he wrote for Marcolini.

Rossini wrote leading roles for Colbran in eight further operas, all for Naples. These include Desdemona in *Otello*, the title-roles in *Armida* and *Zelmira* and Elena in *La Donna del Lago*. They left Naples and married in 1822 but her voice was showing signs of strain and he wrote only one further opera for his wife, *Semiramide* (1823). They later separated, but Rossini took care of her until her death permitted him to re-marry and he always loyally maintained that she was one of the greatest interpreters of his music.

There is a further reason why Rossini is particularly kind to the mezzo. He usually followed the baroque tradition of casting the male lead in a serious opera as a mezzo trouser role. The tenor as hero was a development of romantic opera - a norm that was established as Rossini's serious operas were fading from the repertory. This expectation had to be broken before they could be re-established on opera stages in the last forty years.

The music for three of the characters in this recital are not just trouser roles, but they are also all three the heroes of their operas, though in the case of the rather undashing Malcolm in *La donna del Lago* he is only this by virtue of the fact that the heroine loves him and they are united at the end. These trouser roles are always written lower than their heroines, which is one reason why the higher roles are now often considered to be soprano territory.

1. **Cavatina**
(Isabella e Coro, *L'Italiana in Algeri*)

Rossini's first success was his first opera for major opera house, the unjustly neglected *La pietra del paragone*. Its neglect may partly be ascribed to the fact that his next opera, *Tancredi* was a sensational success. It was perhaps

fortunate that his next commission was a comedy, especially as it was also premiered in Venice a mere three months later. Very different from the gentler more sentimental *La pietra del paragone*, with *L'Italiana* what we think of as Rossini comedy was born. It was perhaps the greatest gift he gave to La Marcolini, for the heroine dominates the madcap plot in which she single-handedly foils the marriage plans of Mustafa, fends off the unwanted attentions of Taddeo and rescues her lover Lindoro and the whole Italian party from the clutches of the Algerians. In her first aria, her initial dismay at being taken prisoner turns to laconic acceptance of her plight and determination to use her feminine wiles to her best advantage.

2-3. **Coro, Recitativo e Rondò**
(Isabella, *L'Italiana in Algeri*)

The first act of *L'Italiana* is so perfect that the second can seem an anti-climax. All rests on the shoulders of the Isabella to carry the second act through. She decides she needs the help of the men who were captured with her and who are now far too resigned to their fate as Mustapha's slaves for her liking. She attempts in this second act aria to inspire this feeble bunch by appealing to their sense of patriotism.

4-5. **Recitativo e cavatina**
(Tancredi, *Tancredi*)

The success of *Tancredi* inspired a sort of hysteria. Stendhal considered it to be Rossini's masterpiece, but that was because he considered it to be the composer's most Italian opera (in comparison with *Zelmira* which he thought to be his most Teutonic). Both operas are based upon French models, which probably encouraged Stendhal in his sweeping judgments. In the case of *Tancredi*, it is a play by Voltaire. However, because it was written for Venice, it had to be provided with a happy ending as that was the Venetian tradition - the same tradition required a happy ending to be rewritten for the Neapolitan *Otello*. Rossini however insisted that the librettist supplied an alternative tragic conclusion that was first performed shortly after in Ferrara.

Tancredi is a trouser role and in his first aria, he reflects on his (illegal and dangerous) return from exile to his native Syracuse and his hopes to see his love, Amenaide. The popularity of this aria throughout the nineteenth century is attested by the fact that Wagner parodies it in *Die Meistersinger*.

6-7. **Finale secondo: Coro e Scena**
(Angelina, *La Cenerentola*)

Originally, this aria formed the conclusion to *Il Barbiere*, where it was sung by the Count. It is so much better suited to its new home that it is rarely heard in the original position; I think for three main reasons. Firstly, *Il Barbiere* is closer to the rapid pace of farce, while most of *Cenerentola* is slower and more gentle (it is a surprisingly long opera considering it is supposed to have been written in less than three weeks), and a lengthy aria suits it better. Secondly, the Count is not solely at the heart of the opera, it is also most definitely about Rosina, so an aria sung by one of them leaves the other politely smiling fixedly for longer than most divas care to. *Cenerentola* on the other hand is about the protagonist, any Prince would do really, and so this is not a problem. Lastly, it is about the journey from scullery to throne, and the aria forms a fitting image of royalty. She delivers and you will sit and listen.]

8-9. **Recitativo e cavatina**
(Malcom, *La Donna del Lago*)

For one who was once a high priest of Romanticism, the works of Sir Walter Scott mostly gather dust on bookshelves. For the first half of his literary career

he wrote poems and only turned to novels around 1814, and it is upon a poem that *La Donna del Lago*, which appeared in 1819, is based. It cannot claim to be the first Scott-inspired opera; the earliest, which is based upon the same poem as Rossini's opera, seems to be *The Knight of Snowdown* (Henry Bishop and others) in 1811. His popularity as a source may be gauged by *Guy Mannering* (partly by Mozart's pupil Thomas Attwood) which appeared in 1816 only a year later than the novel. It is often claimed that Rossini here for the first time abandoned his neo-Classical stance for the charms of Romanticism, but curiously the events of *Elisabetta* closely mirror those of Sir Walter Scott's *Kenilworth*. The only problem was that it was not yet written. There was clearly something in the air.

The plot concerns events in the life of King James V of Scotland, mostly disguised, for reasons best known to himself, as Uberto. He falls in love with Elena who not only loves Malcolm but is forced by her father, Douglas, to become betrothed to Rodrigo. The opera is blessed with a relatively happy ending - no one seems to mind about the death of poor Rodrigo - when the King forgives everybody and Elena is allowed to marry her Malcolm. In his first aria, he has determined to join the King's enemies and comes to find

Douglas to tell him, but alone he thinks of his fond memories of Elena.

10-11. **Aria**
(Malcom, *La Donna del Lago*)

Malcolm, on the latter side, is taking a hopefully well-earned rest from the battle that is raging between the King's men and the opposing Highlanders. He is told that Rodrigo has been killed and Elena has gone to the Palace to seek her father. He determines to follow her and to attempt to rescue her even if it costs him his life. Swashbuckling sentiments, but the ensuing happy end has more to do with the King's clemency than anything Malcolm does.

12-13. **Recitativo e cavatina**
(Arsace, *Semiramide*)

Rossini's final opera for Italy was written for Venice, perhaps that is why *Semiramide* deliberately eschews the experimentation of his Neapolitan operas and returns to his greatest Venetian success, *Tancredi*. Both are adaptations by Gaetano Rossi of tragedies by Voltaire. Rossini was able to get away with the original ending in Venice because though it ends with the death of the title-role, she is an anti-heroine who had murdered her husband

and usurped the throne of Babylon. Her son, Arsace, who had escaped his mother's murderous rampage is able to take the throne and restore the status quo. Appropriately to a drama that calls for spectacular costumes and effects, the score is the most sumptuous of all of Rossini's Italian operas.

Eccomi alfine in Babilonia is Arsace's "presentation" aria. He has returned from the military campaign summoned by a secret message from Semiramide. Mystified by this, he also thinks of his love for the Princess Azema. He is not aware that she has summoned him because, not recognising him, she has fallen in love with him. An Oedipal conundrum only resolved when he accidentally kills her.

© Tim Coleman

TEXTS

1. **Cavatina**

(Isabella e Coro, *L'Italiana in Algeri*)

[Isabella]

Cruda sorte! Amor tiranno!
Questo è il premio di mia fé:
Non v'è orror, terror, né affanno
Pari a quel ch'io provo in me.
Per te solo, o mio Lindoro,
Io mi trovo in tal periglio.
Da chi spero, oh Dio, consiglio?
Chi conforto mi darà?

[Chorus]

È un boccon per Mustafà.

[Isabella]

Qua ci vuol disinvoltura:
Non più smanie, né paura:
Di coraggio è tempo adesso
Or chi sono si vedrà.

Già so per pratica
Qual sia l'effetto
D'un sguardo languido,
D'un sospiretto...
So a domar gli uomini

Come si fa.
Sian dolci o ruvidi,
Sian flemma o foco,
Son tutti simili
A' presso a poco...
Tutti la chiedono,
Tutti la bramano,
Da vaga femmina
Felicità.

2-3. **Coro, Recitativo e Rondò**

(Isabella, *L'Italiana in Algeri*)

[Chorus]

Pronti abbiamo e ferri e mani
Per fuggir con voi di qua,
Quanto vaglian gl'Italiani
Al cimento si vedrà.

[Isabella]

Amici, in ogni evento
M'affido a voi. Ma già fra poco io spero,
Senza rischio e contesa,
Di trarre a fin la meditata impresa.
Perché ridi, Taddeo? Può darsi ancora
Ch'io mi rida di te.

(a Lindoro)

Tu impallidisci,

Schiavo gentil? Ah! Se pietà ti desta
Il mio periglio, il mio tenero amor,
Se parlano al tuo core
Patria, dovere e onore, dagli altri apprendi
A mostrarti Italiano; e alle vicende
Della volubil sorte
Una donna t'insegni ad esser forte.
Pensa alla patria, e intrepido
Il tuo dover adempi:
Vedi per tutta Italia
Rinascere gli esempi
D'ardir e di valor.

(a Taddeo)

Sciocco! Tu ridi ancora?
Vanne, mi fai dispetto.

(a Lindoro)

Caro, ti parli in petto
Amore, dovere, onor.
Amici in ogni evento...

[Chorus]

Andiam. Di noi ti fida.

[Isabella]

Vicino è già il momento...

[Chorus]

Dove ti par ci guida.

[Isabella]

Se poi va male il gioco...

[Chorus]

L'ardir trionferà.

[Isabella]

Qual piacer! Fra pochi istanti
Rivedrem le patrie arene.
(Nel periglio del mio bene
Coraggiosa amor mi fa.)

[Chorus]

Quanto vaglian gl'Italiani
Al cimento si vedrà.

4-5. **Recitativo e cavatina**

(Tancredi, *Tancredi*)

Oh patria! dolce, e ingrata patria!
Alfine a te ritorno!
Io ti saluto, o cara terra degli avi miei: ti bacio.
È questo per me giorno sereno:
Comincia il cor a respirarmi in seno.
Amenaide! o mio pensier soave,
Solo de' miei sospir,
De' voti miei celeste oggetto,
Io venni affin: io voglio,
Sfidando il mio destino, qualunque sia,
Meritarti, o perir, anima mia.

Tu che accendi questo core,
Tu che desti il valor mio,
Alma gloria, dolce amore,
Secondate il bel desio,
Cada un empio traditore,
Coronate la mia fé.

Di tanti palpiti, di tante pene,
Da te mio bene, spero mercé.
Mi rivedrai... ti rivedrò...
Ne' tuoi bei rai, mi pascerò.
Deliri, sospiri...
Accenti, contenti!...
Sarà felice, il cor mel dice,
Il mio destino vicino a te.

Mi rivedrai... ti rivedrò...
Ne' tuoi bei rai, mi pascerò.

6-7. **Finale secondo: Coro e Scena**
(Angelina, *La Cenerentola*)

Cenerentola
Clorinda
Tisbe
Dandini
Don Magnifico
Don Ramiro
Chorus

[Chorus]
Della Fortuna istabile
La revolubil ruota
Mentre ne giungi al vertice
Per te s'arresta immota:
Cadde l'orgoglio in polvere,
Trionfa la bontà.

[Don Ramiro]
(*scuotendo Cenerentola*)
Sposa...

[Cenerentola]
(*stupita per la gioia*)
Signor perdona
La tenera incertezza
Che mi confonde ancor.
Poc'anzi, il sai,
Fra la cenere immonda...
Ed or sul Trono un serto mi circonda.

[Don Magnifico]
(*corre in ginocchio*)
Altezza... a voi si prostro...

[Cenerentola]
Né m'udirò mai chiamar la figlia vostra?

[Don Ramiro]
(*accennando le sorelle*)
Quelle orgogliose...

[Cenerentola]
Ah Prence,
Io cado a' vostri piè. Le antiche ingiurie
Mi svanir dalla mente.
Sul Trono io salgo, e voglio
Starvi maggior del Trono,
E sarà mia vendetta il lor perdono.

Nacqui all'affanno e al pianto.
Soffri tacendo il core;
Ma per soave incanto
Dell'età mia nel fiore,
Come un baleno rapido
La sorte mia cangiò.

(*a Don Magnifico, e sorelle*)
No no, tergete il ciglio.
Perché tremar, perché?
A questo sen volate;
Figlia, Sorella, Amica,
Tutto trovate in me.

[Chorus]
M'intenerisce, e m'agita:
E'un Nume agli occhi miei.

[Cenerentola]
Padre... sposo... amico... oh istante!

[Chorus]
Degna del Tron tu sei,
Ma è poco un Trono a te.

[Cenerentola]
Non più mesta accanto al fuoco
Starò sola a gorgheggiar.
Ah fu un lampo, un sogno, un gioco
Il mio lungo palpitare.

[Chorus]
Tutto cangia a poco a poco,
Cessa alfin di sospirar.

8-9. **Recitativo e cavatina**
(Malcom, *La Donna del Lago*)

Mura felici, ove il mio ben si aggira!
Dopo più lune io vi rivveggo:
Ah! Voi più al guardo mio non siete,
Come lo foste un dì, ridenti, e liete!
Qui nacque, fra voi crebbe
L'innocente mio ardor:
Quanto soave fra voi scorrea mia vita
Al fianco di colei,
Che rispondea pietosa a' voti miei!

Nemico nembo or vi rattrista,
e agghiaccia il povero mio cor!
Mano crudele a voi toglie, a me invola...
oh rio martorò!
La vostra abitatrice, il mio tesoro.

Elena! oh tu, che chiamo!
Deh vola a me un istante!
Tornami a dir': lo t'amo!
Serbami la tua fé!
E allor, di te sicuro,
Anima mia! lo giuro,
Ti toglierò al più forte,
O morirò per te.
Grata a me fia la morte,
S'Elena mia non è.

Oh quante lagrime, finor versai
Lungi languendo, da' tuoi bei rai!
Ogni altro oggetto, è a me funesto,
Tutto è imperfetto, tutto detesto;
Di luce il Cielo, no più non brilla,
Più non sfavilla, astro per me.
Cara! tu sola, mi dai la calma,
Tu rendi all'alma grata mercé!

10-11. **Aria**
(Malcom, *La Donna del Lago*)

[Malcolm]
Ah si pera, ah si pera: ormai la morte
Fia sollievo a' mali miei,
Se s'invola a me colei,
Che mi rese in vita ognor.
Ah! Mio tesoro! lo ti perdei!
Dolce speme del mio cor!

[Chorus]
Douglas! Douglas! Ti salva!

[Albina, Serano]
Quai voci!

[Malcolm]
E chi si avanza?

[Chorus]
Douglas dov'è?

[Malcolm]
Che avvenne?

[Chorus]
Ah più non v'è speranza...
Cadde Rodrigo estinto...

[Albina, Serano]
Avverso Ciel!

[Chorus]
Ha vinto di Scozia il Re...

[Malcolm]
Che sento!

[Chorus]
Ne insegue, E dà spavento
Già l'oste vincitrice... Sì, sì

[Malcolm]
Che sento! Oh me infelice!
Elena! Amici! Oh Dio!
Fato crudele, e rio!
Fia pago il tuo furor!
Ah! chi provò del mio
Più barbaro dolor!

[Chorus]
Fato crudele e rio! Fia pago il tuo furor.

12-13. **Recitativo e cavatina**
(Arsace, *Semiramide*)

Eccomi alfine in Babilonia. È questo
Di Belo il tempio. - Qual silenzio augusto
Più venerando ancor rende il soggiorno

Della divinità! - Quale nel seno
A me, guerrier, nutrito
Fra l'Orror delle pugne, ora si desta,
Del Nume formidabile all'aspetto,
Insolito terror, sacro rispetto!
E da me questo Nume
Che può voler? Morendo il genitore
Qui m'inviò: segreto
Cenno di Semiramide mi chiama
Rapido alla sua reggia... ed anelante
Ad Azema, al suo ben l'ardente core
Qui volava sull'ali dell'amore.
Ah! quel giorno ognor rammento
Di mia gloria e di contento,
Che fra' barbari potei
Vita e onore a lei serbar.
L'involava in queste braccia
Al suo vile rapitore;
Io sentia contro il mio core
Il suo core palpar.
Schiuse il ciglio, mi guardò...
Mi sorrise... sospirò...
Oh! come da quel dì
Tutto per me cangiò!
Quel guardo mi rapì,
Quest'anima avvampò:
Il Ciel per me s'aprì,
Amore m'animò...
D'Azema e di quel dì
Scordarmi io mai saprò.

BIOGRAPHIES

SILVIA TRO SANTAFÉ

Silvia Tro Santafé was born in Valencia and studied at the Conservatorio “Joaquin Rodrigo” with Ana Luisa Chova, later studying with Carlo Bergonzi, Walter Berry, Gerard Souzay, Félix Lavilla, Magda Olivero, Monserrat Caballé and Renata Scottò. After her professional debut in La Scala di Seta at the Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro in 1992 she won a place at the Julliard School in New York and was awarded first prize in the Opera Index Competition.

At the beginning of her operatic career, she was in great demand for Baroque roles and in particular she made a name for singing Handel, with roles in *Alcina*, *Giulio Cesare*, and *Rinaldo* which she performed in such houses as the Opera de Paris, Champs-Elysee and major festivals throughout Europe including Innsbruck and Salzburg. Soon however, she developed a reputation not just as a great Rossini Singer but also as a wonderful commedienne. Since then she has been regularly invited to sing Rossini's *Rosina*, *Cenerentola* and *L'Italiana* (Isabella) in such houses as Vienna,



© Michela Alessia Marcato / Massimo di Pietro

Zurich, Berlin, Munich, Barcelona, Toulouse, Amsterdam and Bologna. In Italy, Silvia has also appeared in Bologna (*Barbiere* and *Giulio Cesare*), Rome (*Contes d'Hoffman*), Venice (*Finta Semplice*) Bari (Gluck's *Orfeo*) and Naples (Scarlatti's *La Vergine dei Dolori*).

Her United States debut was at the Santa Fe Opera Festival where she sang Cherubino (*Le Nozze*) and she will return again to the States to open the Washington Opera Season in 2009 singing Rosina. Among the many conductors she has worked with are baroque specialists Marc Minkowski, Christophe Rousset, René Jacobs, Harry Bicket and William Christie. She has also collaborated with artists such as Jesús López Cobos, Frübeck de Burgos, Lorin Maazel, Charles Dutoit, Michel Plasson, Nello Santi, Adam Fischer, Neville Marriner, Alberto Zedda, singing a great variety of opera and concert repertoire.

Among the highlights of recent seasons have been *Alcina* at the Chatelet, the title roles in *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*, *Ariodante* and *Cenerentola* in the Liceu Barcelona, *Il Barbiere* at the Staatsoper in Vienna, Luxembourg and Amsterdam and *Rinaldo*, *Barbiere*, and *L'Italiana* with the Staatstoper Berlin. Her recent debut, singing Adalgisa to Edita

Gruberova's *Norma* in Hamburg and Berlin, was a great public and critical success and she has been invited to join Edita Gruberova again for performances of *Lucrezia Borgia*. Recent work has also included a return to Vienna for *L'Italiana*, a new Massenet *Don Quichotte* in Brussels, singing Dulcinée, and *L'Italiana* at the Teatro Real Madrid. Future plans also include performances of the role of Giovanna Seymore in *Anna Bolena* opposite Mariella Devia.

Silvia has an extensive concert and recital repertoire. Her recording for Globe of Spanish songs was given a top rating by Diapason Magazine. Other recordings include *La Verbena de la Paloma* with Placida Domingo, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* on Kikko Classics, *Serse* (Amastre) with William Christie for Virgin and Scarlatti's *Griselda* for Harmonia Mundi with René Jacobs. Her recent CD of Spanish Heroines for the Signum Label has been highly acclaimed since its appearance in 2008.

JULIAN REYNOLDS

Conductor Julian Reynolds enjoys a highly successful international career both in opera and in concert repertoire. Highlights of recent seasons have included engagements at the Netherlands Opera for *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and *Norma*,

(available on DVD on Opus Arte) in Sankt Gallen for *Tosca*, *Norma*, and *Hänsel und Gretel*, at the Grand Théâtre de la Ville in Luxembourg with *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, and acclaimed performances of Puccini's *Il trittico* in Modena, Ferrara, and Piacenza. He made his debut at Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Bruxelles with *Elisabetta Regina d'Inghilterra*. This will be followed by *Lucia de Lammermoor* and *Ermione*. *Madame Butterfly* at the Torre del Lago and *Don Giovanni* in Riga.

In 1986, Julian Reynolds was appointed Assistant Music Director at the Netherlands Opera in Amsterdam, conducting *Bluebeard's Castle*, *Mitridate*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, *L'italiana in Algeri*, *Luisa Miller*, and *L'elisir d'amore*, among others. During his tenure at the Netherlands Opera, he worked with other opera companies in the country, most notably in productions of *Madama Butterfly* and *The Cunning Little Vixen* for Opera Zuid.

Julian Reynolds made his German debut with *Otello* at the Staatstheater Stuttgart, followed by a new production of *Luisa Miller* with the Staatstheater Mainz. He has been a regular guest conductor with the Kirov Opera in the Maryinsky Theatre St. Petersburg, making his debut with the company conducting *La traviata*, and went on to



lead a new production of Verdi's *Don Carlos*, followed by *Samson et Dalila*, and the Kirov's first ever production of *Le nozze di Figaro*.

He made his North American debut at the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto with *L'italiana in Algeri*. In the same season, he made his Wexford Opera Festival debut with Weinberger's

Svanda dudák, the recording of which is available on Naxos. He has led *Carmen* at both the Teatro Regio di Parma and at the Arena di Verona, and *Adelina* at the Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro, and made his debut on the Sankt Gallen podium with *La Cenerentola* and *Otello*, and conducted *Lucrezia Borgia* at the Festivales de Musica de Castillon.

Exciting new plans include a return to La Monnaie, Brussels for *Nabucco* and *Lucrezia Borgia*, *Linda de Chamoni* in Oviedo and a concert tour of Europe and Japan with Barbara Frittoli.

Julian Reynolds has been a guest conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Australian Chamber Orchestra, Auckland Philharmonia, Dutch Radio Philharmonic, Netherlands Philharmonic, Netherlands Chamber Orchestra, Melbourne International Festival, Teatro di San Carlo in Naples, and the orchestra of the Deutsche Oper am Rhein, where he led his own orchestration of *Lieder* by Alma Mahler. He has recorded these with soprano Charlotte Margiono on the Globe label.

A regularly requested recital accompanist, Julian Reynolds has worked extensively with Dmitri

Hvorostovsky, Susan Graham, and Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, both in recital and as conductor.

His recordings include CDs of Rossini Overtures, Ravel's *Ma Mère l'Oye*, Saint-Saens' *Le Carnaval des animaux* and several Rossini rarities, for Globe Records. As a pianist he has recorded the complete works for piano and violin of Beethoven, Schubert and Schumann with violinist Johannes Leertouwer.

ORQUESTA SINFÓNICA DE NAVARRA (NAVARRA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA)

The Orquesta Sinfónica de Navarra was founded by Pablo Sarasate in 1879, which makes it the oldest orchestral ensemble currently active in Spain. Since 1997, its Principal Conductor has been Maestro Ernesto Martínez Izquierdo.

Nowadays the Orquesta Sinfónica de Navarra is regarded as one of Spain's best orchestras, collaborating regularly with internationally renowned soloists and conductors and frequently invited to perform in celebrated national and international venues and festivals. In 2007-08, the Orchestra visited Bilbao, Warsaw, Dortmund, and Paris. During the past two seasons, the OSN has been invited three times to the prestigious

Theatre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, accompanying soloists such as Daniella Barcelona, Juan Diego Flórez and Roberto Alagna. The OSN returned to Paris for the new production of *Cyrano de Bergerac*, featuring Plácido Domingo in the title role, at the Theatre du Châtelet in Paris where they also performed a critically lauded symphonic concert. The OSN will return to Châtelet during the next season with Villa-Lobos's *Magdalena*. In its role as cultural ambassador of Navarra, the orchestra also toured China recently, performing the music of its founder, Pablo Sarasate, in 7 concerts across 5 cities.

The Orchestra is also one of the most popular in Spain, selling more than 2,700 season tickets annually in Pamplona. It is the resident orchestra of the Gayarre singing competition and the Sarasate violin competition and collaborates frequently in opera and zarzuela performances in Pamplona, Spain and abroad.

The Orquesta Sinfónica de Navarra has also undertaken a remarkable educational role, with concerts at schools and a series of popular concerts including soundtracks, live music to accompany silent films and collaborations with internationally renowned jazz stars.

Its most recent recordings include the CD *Heroínas españolas* (Spanish Heroines) with mezzo-soprano Silvia Tro Santafé, the CD-book *El violín de Sarasate* and the first steps of a new complete recording of Sarasate's works for Naxos, which will be concluded in November 2009.

The Orquesta Sinfónica de Navarra receives financial support from the Government of Navarra and the City of Pamplona, and it is sponsored by private companies such as NH Hoteles, Diario de Navarra, Caja Navarra and Gas Natural Navarra.

LLUÍS VICH VOCALIS

The chorus Lluís Vich Vocalis of Valencia (also known as *Cor de Cambra Lluís Vich*) is a 10- to 12-voice male chamber choir chiefly specialising in the performance of vocal music from the Renaissance and Early Baroque periods.

Its members also perform with other noted early-music groups, such as *Capella Reial de Catalunya*, *Hesperion XX*, *Capella de Ministrers* and "*Musica Ficta*".

Since its first appearance in 1985 the group has concentrated on performing lesser-known repertory, in particular music composed in

Valencia. The group has taken part in the most important music festivals in Valencia, performed throughout Spain and France, and has also toured in Taiwan.

The group has made several recordings of early Valencian polyphony, Composers of the Cathedral of Valencia and the *Misteri d'Elx*. The choir's recordings also include: *L'Esperit de la Contrareforma*, a CD devoted to works written according to the musical instructions laid down by the Council of Trent; *Paribus Vocibus*, a recording of works by Victoria, and; *Ad Honorem Virginis*, their most recent recording, which was awarded a prize by the magazine "Compact CD".

Recently the group has recorded a TV programme with pieces of *Misteri* and music by Ginés Pérez, and alongside the Capella de Ministrers they have performed in the Olivier Messiaen Hall in Paris for Radio France.

Prior experience of the music of Rossini includes a stage production of *L'italiana* in Algeri in Castillon de la Plana.

The work of the choir is supported by the University of Valencia.

Recorded at the Auditorio de Baranain, Pamplona, Spain on 26 - 28 January 2009

Producer - Anna Barry
Engineers - Mike Hatch & Mike Cox
Editor - Matt Howell

Cover Image - © Michela Alessia Marcato / Massimo di Pietro
Design and Artwork - Woven Design www.wovendesign.co.uk

© 2009 The copyright in this recording is owned by Signum Records Ltd.
© 2009 The copyright in this CD booklet, notes and design is owned by Signum Records Ltd.

Any unauthorised broadcasting, public performance, copying or re-recording of Signum Compact Discs constitutes an infringement of copyright and will render the infringer liable to an action by law. Licences for public performances or broadcasting may be obtained from Phonographic Performance Ltd. All rights reserved. No part of this booklet may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission from Signum Records Ltd.

SignumClassics, Signum Records Ltd., Suite 14, 21 Wadsworth Road, Perivale, Middx UB6 7JD, UK +44 (0) 20 8997 4000 E-mail: info@signumrecords.com

www.signumrecords.com