

Cavalleria Rusticana

+ I Pagliacci

**Crescent Theatre BrindleyPlace
Oct 31st to Nov 4th 2006**

*The classic
'Crime of Passion'
opera double-bill
(Sung in English)*

**MD Phil Ypres-Smith
Director Rachel Skinner**

**info@midlandmusicmakers.org
www.midlandmusicmakers.org**

MMM OPERA COMPANY 60TH ANNIVERSARY PRODUCTION



Stoford Developments Limited
is proud to sponsor the Midland Music
Makers Opera Company production of
'I Pagliacci' and 'Cavalleria Rusticana'.

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OPERA COMPANY

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Future events

December 3rd 2006

1pm - 3pm Community Carols at Notcutts Garden Centre collecting for Marie Curie

4pm 'Lights to remember' ceremony at Solihull Marie Curie Hospice.

December 9th 2006

'The Spirit of Christmas' Concert

7.30pm Quinton Methodist Church
Ridgeway Avenue Halesowen

December 15th 2006

'The Spirit of Christmas' Concert

7.30pm The Bushell Hall, Solihull. Including local schoolchildren. Supporting Marie Curie

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March 17th 2007

St Alphege Church, Solihull
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March 24th 2007

St. George's Church, Edgbaston
With Marie Curie Collection

The Tales of Hoffmann

November 2007 The Crescent Theatre

With Marie Curie Collection

*For membership enquiries and to receive advance ticket notice,
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or phone 07971 673 060.*

I Pagliacci

(The Clowns)

Music and words by Ruggiero Leoncavallo English Version by Joseph Machlis

CHARACTERS

Canio	<i>head of the troupe of strolling players</i> (<i>'Pagliacci'</i> in the play)	Roger Hanke
Nedda	<i>his wife ('Columbin'e in the play)</i>	Lorraine Payne
Tonio	<i>A member of the troupe</i> (<i>'Taddeo'</i> in the play)	Clive Thursfield
Peppe	<i>A member of the troupe</i> (<i>'Harlequin'</i> in the play)	Barry Matthews
Silvio	<i>a villager, Nedda's lover</i>	Fran Ambrose
Villager	David Mellor

SYNOPSIS

The opera opens with a Prologue, in which Tonio the hunchback explains that the play you are about to see is no fantasy, but a picture of life.

Act I

It is the Feast of the Assumption and a travelling troupe of players has arrived in the village. The curtain rises to reveal the villagers excitedly greeting the players, whose leader Canio urges them to attend the performance at eleven that night. As Nedda gets down from the cart, Tonio attempts to embrace her, Canio cuffs him and he storms off. The villagers and Canio banter, and Canio warns of what he would do if his wife were to be false to him. There is a call to church, and the villagers sing the Bell Chorus, whilst Canio goes off for a drink. Nedda is left alone to muse on her own infidelity. Then she dreams of being as free as a bird. Enamoured, Tonio approaches and declares his love for her. She rejects him violently and he leaves, threatening revenge. Silvio, her lover, arrives having made sure that Canio was out of the way drinking. He tries to persuade her to run away with him after the show that evening. After some reluctance she finally agrees, but they are overheard by Tonio. He rushes to fetch Canio and they arrive in time to hear Nedda promising to run away. Canio demands that she tells him the identity of her lover. Nedda refuses and Canio is stopped from killing her by Peppe, who reminds him that they have to perform that night. All but Canio leave the stage to prepare. The act concludes with Canio's famous cry of despair – how he must make people laugh, even when his heart is breaking!

Brief pause, then Act 2

Amidst great excitement, the villagers gather for the performance of an old favourite – ‘the trusting husband deceived by the faithless wife’. Tonio, playing the part of servant ‘Taddeo’, declares his love for ‘Columbine’ (Nedda) and is rejected. Columbine and her lover, ‘Harlequin’ (Peppe), then take supper together, which is ended by the unexpected arrival of the husband, ‘Pagliaccio’ (Canio). Harlequin escapes to the same words used by Nedda that afternoon. As Canio plays his part, reality begins to take over. He again asks her the name of her lover, she laughs him off and tries to continue with the performance; the audience is amused. Canio returns to reproach his wife for her ingratitude. The spectators are deeply moved and some of them wonder if it is for real. Nedda continues to refuse and, pushed to his limit Canio seizes a knife from the table and stabs Nedda. She cries out for Silvio who runs to help, only to be killed by Canio.

END

(20 MINUTE INTERVAL)

MAIN INTERVAL: Refreshments will be served in the foyer during the main interval. The Promenade Bar will be open before and after the performance and during the interval. Patrons requiring drinks during the interval and particularly at the end of the performance are urged to order them in advance. Smoking is not permitted in the auditorium. Neither is the use of cameras and tape recorders. First aid facilities are provided by St John's Ambulance which gives its services voluntarily. In accordance with the requirement of the licensing justices: a) The public may leave at the end of the performance by all exits and entrances other than those used as queue waiting rooms and the doors of all such exits and entrances shall at all times be open. b) All gangways, passages, and staircases shall be kept entirely free from chairs or other obstruction. c) Persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any of the intersecting gangways. If standing be permitted at the rear of the seating, sufficient space shall be left for persons to pass easily to and fro.

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Cavalleria Rusticana

(Rustic Chivalry)

Music by Pietro Mascagni Libretto by G Targoni-Tozzetti & G. Menasci

After a story by Giovanni Verga English version by Joseph Machlis

By arrangement with Warner/Chappell Music Limited, administered by Boosey & Hawkes.

CHARACTERS

Santuzza	<i>a peasant girl, in love with Turiddu</i> Kym Sheargold
Lucia	<i>mother of Turiddu</i> Pat Nixon
Turiddu	<i>a soldier</i> Mark Ellse
Alfio	<i>a village teamster</i> John Kiefert
Lola	<i>wife of Alfio</i> Claire Stoneman

SYNOPSIS

The action takes place on Easter Day in a Sicilian village. Turiddu, a village lad, has promised himself to Lola, but is called up to serve a year in the army. When he returns, Lola has married Alfio, a carter. He turns to Santuzza and they become passionate lovers. Tiring of this, Turiddu turns back to Lola and is pursuing a secret affair with her.

The opera opens with Turiddu serenading Lola. As day breaks villagers sing of the delights of Spring, and a distressed Santuzza asks Lucia about the whereabouts of her son, Turiddu. Lucia is concerned about her demeanour. A confident Alfio arrives, singing joyfully about his life and beautiful wife. He asks Lucia about the arrival of the wine she expected. When she says that Turiddu has gone to collect it he points out that he saw him that morning, near his home. The choir prepare for Easter Mass, as the villagers process to church singing the Resurrection Hymn. Because of her affair with Turiddu, Santuzza is disgraced and excluded from the holy ceremony, so sings her own solitary mass. When the two women are alone, Santuzza tells Lucia of her love for Turiddu and how he has left her to pursue Lola.

A disturbed Lucia enters church. Turiddu arrives and Santuzza begs him to honour his obligations. Lola appears, demonstrating her power over Turiddu, and enters the church. Santuzza continues to implore Turiddu to return to her. He feels he has to escape, so runs into church. Feeling cruelly treated, Santuzza sings of revenge and when Alfio returns, Santuzza tells him of his wife's unfaithfulness.

Alfio leaves, distraught. As the service comes to an end villagers gather for a drink with Mama Lucia. When Alfio returns, Turiddu pours him a drink, which is refused scornfully. When it is clear that trouble is brewing the women withdraw with Lola. The two men are left alone. Turiddu admits his guilt, and the two men agree to settle the affair behind the orchard. Turiddu asks his mother to take care of Santuzza should anything happen to him and walks out telling her that he is going to clear his head. Santuzza rushes in. Shouting is heard and villagers cry out that Turiddu has been shot dead.

END

~ CHORUS LADIES ~

Gwyneth Bowdler, Pat Bullock, Margaret Clewett, Pam Davies, Sheila Giles,
Molly Haynes, Hannah Jones, Valerie Matthews, Jessica Mayhew, Lorraine Payne,
Karen Perrey, Helen Rourke, Stella Rourke, Emma Skinner, Janet Stanley,
Anne Willetts, Dee White, Marrian Yates.

~ CHORUS GENTLEMEN ~

David Gold, Roger Hanke, Barry Matthews, Willem Meijs, David Mellor, Steve Miller,
Tim Morris, Malcolm Oakes, John Reading, Richard Rothwell.

~ YOUNG PEOPLE and EXTRAS ~

Tony Clewett, Connor Doyle, Nathan Hood, Hannah Jones, Anthony Mayhew,
Georgina Mayhew, Isabelle Mayhew

~ ORCHESTRA ~

Oliver Boukley (Double Bass), Alison Brierley (Bassoon), Shona Brownlea (2nd Horn),
Sara Croxen (1st Trumpet), Heleen Fitzpatrick (2nd Violin), Emma Hillyer (1st Flute),
Jenny Humphreys (Viola), Sara Kimber (1st Horn), Andrew Lancaster (Trombone),
Steve Lee (2nd Trumpet), Ian McCarthy (1st Cello), Jenny Melville (Oboe), **Liz Melville**
(**1st Violin and Leader**), Becky Ogden (2nd Flute), Tonia Price (1st Clarinet),
Gary Price (2nd Clarinet), Keith Price (Percussion), Ian Room (Keyboard-harp),
Tony Smith (1st Violin), Huw Thomas (Timpamum), Gillian Whiting (2nd Cello).

Midland Music Makers Opera began 1946, although we had existed as a choir since 1939.
Our president, Arthur Street, was first Musical Director - also directing simultaneously!
It is down to his dedication that we became so well-respected. We became known for
taking on challenging and little-known pieces. And many an operatic career – such as that
of Covent Garden's Dame Gillian Knight – have begun with MMM.

'CAV and PAG' are well-loved operas. We first performed these as a double-bill in 1975.
'CAV' was then paired with 'Il Tabarro' in 1983, followed by 'Gianni Schicchi' in 1993;
'PAG' was paired with 'Sister Angelica' (the third part of Puccini's Triptych with 'Schicchi'
and 'Tabarro') in 1987; and with 'Aunt Caroline's Will' (Roussell) in 1998.

FRAN AMBROSE (Silvio)

Fran Ambrose started his singing career at the age of 8 as a cathedral chorister in Ely, finishing as Head Chorister in his final year. Whilst studying biochemistry at UCL he was a choral scholar at St Martin-in-the-Fields church on Trafalgar Square and a member of the UCL Opera company performing the role of *Jarno* in 'Mignon' by Ambrose Thomas. After leaving London for Cambridge he sang in Girton College Choir where he met his wife Anna. Now living in Lichfield, Fran is one of the Lay Vicars Choral in Lichfield Cathedral, a job which he combines with working as a database developer for a Cambridge based company, Opportunity Links. He enjoyed playing the role of *Don Alfonso* in a Voicebox production of 'Cosi fan tutte', and last year played the title rôle in MMM's 'Eugene Onegin'.

MARK ELLSE (Turridu)

Mark Ellse held a choral scholarship at Jesus College, Cambridge at the same time as reading for his physics degree. Moving to London broadened his experience as a professional tenor, with oratorio his speciality. His repertoire ranges from Beethoven's 9th to Verdi's Requiem to smaller scale works such as Britten's 'St Nicholas'. He has made radio and television broadcasts, including a Christmas day special with Kiri te Kanawa. Recently turning to opera, his repertoire includes the title roles in 'Idomeneo', 'Peter Grimes', 'Tales of Hoffmann', *Percy* in Donizetti's 'Anna Bolena', *Don Jose* in 'Carmen', *Ferrando* in 'Cosi fan tutte' and as *The Witch* in Humperdinck's 'Hansel & Gretel' for Voicebox. As a physics teacher he is author and editor of numerous text books. For the last ten years he has been Principal of Chase Academy in Cannock.

ROGER HANKE (Canio)

Roger's first stage rôle was *Luiz*, at 16, in Gilbert & Sullivan's 'Gondoliers'. He still has a strong interest in the Savoy Operas and has performed most of the major tenor roles and 'patter' parts. At University, Roger sang in a motet choir and developed an interest in early music. After qualifying as a dentist he studied singing at the Birmingham Conservatoire. Roger has undertaken many principal oratorio parts, sung *Acis* in Handel's 'Acis and Galatea', and the title role in Carissimi's 'Jephthe'. Recent productions include *Gerald* in 'Me & My Girl', *The Defendant* in 'Trial By Jury', *The Pirate King* in 'Pirates of Penzance', *Nicely-Nicely Johnson* in 'Guys & Dolls', *Koko* in 'The Mikado', *Alfred* in 'Die Fledermaus', *Nanki-Poo* in The Mikado and last year he played *Monsieur Triquet* in MMM's 'Eugene Onegin'.

JOHN KIEFERT (Alfio)

John studied full time at The Birmingham School of Music, and after leaving college sang professionally for about two years. He has sung in oratorio, recital & opera throughout the UK and in France as an amateur and semi-professional, continuing his studies with his long standing coach Stuart Smith. John now has over thirty operatic roles in his repertoire by composers from Monteverdi through to Britten & most recently sang *Germont* in 'La Traviata' and *Frank* in 'Die Fledermaus' for Royal Sutton Opera, *Aeneas* in 'Dido & Aeneas' for Warwickshire Singers and the baritone part in 'Carmina Burana' in the Godiva Festival in Coventry.

BARRY MATTHEWS (Peppe)

Barry was born in Bristol but is now proud to admit to 38 years in Birmingham, and has been in each of the last 26 years of MMM shows and concerts, rowing in the galley called 'the Tenor chorus' (leave you to pronounce "rowing"). He has performed a variety of bits and pieces, plus admin duties as Chairman, Treasurer, Production Manager, sometimes simultaneously.

DAVID MELLOR (Villager)

David's operatic career began with Royal Sutton Opera in 1981. He has sung in every MMM production since 1985. Solo roles include *Betto* in 'Gianni Schicchi', *Micha* and *Krusina* in 'The Bartered Bride', *Balthazar* in 'Amahl', *Zuane* in 'La Gioconda', *Jobard* in 'Aunt Caroline's Will' and *Mr. Gobineau* in 'The Medium'. Roles for RSO include *Zuniga* in 'Carmen', the *High Priest of Baal* in 'Nabucco', *Simone* in 'Gianni Schicchi', *Monterone* in 'Rigoletto', the *Marquis of Calatrava* in 'The Force of Destiny', *Zaretsky* in 'Eugene Onegin', the *Mandarin* in 'Turandot' and the *Imperial Commissioner* in 'Madam Butterfly'. He sang in three productions of 'La Traviata' within eighteen months; as Dr. Grenvil for English Touring Opera Summer School and MMM, and as the *Marquis D'Obigny* for RSO. Most recently he played *Publius* in 'La Clemenza Di Tito' and *Zaretsky* in Eugene Onegin.

PAT NIXON (Lucia)

Pat has been a member of MMM for many years. Her first leading role with the Society was *Messenger of Peace* in Wagner's 'Rienzi'. Following that, Pat performed numerous leading soprano roles, including the *Fairy Queen* in 'Die Feen', Wagner's second opera. She has found every role extremely rewarding, but most memorable were the title role in 'Aida', *Lady M* in the Scottish Play and, of course, the title role in 'Turandot'. In recent years, Pat has sung the chilling role of *Baba (Madame Flora)* in MMM's 'The Medium'. Her most recent role was *Filipyevna* in 'Eugene Onegin'. She has also produced operas for MMM and other local societies, and is currently an Assessor for the English Speaking Board. Pat also teaches singing.

LORRAINE PAYNE (Nedda)

Lorraine began vocal training in 1991, being introduced to Opera in 1992. Since then she has appeared for Midland Music Makers as *Marguerite* in 'Faust', *Nedda* in 'I Pagliacci', *Marenka* in 'The Bartered Bride', *Adina* in 'L'Elisir d'Amore', *Monica* in 'The Medium' and *Servilia* in 'La Clemenza Di Tito'. For Consensus Opera Lorraine was *Cherubino* in 'The Marriage of Figaro'. She is also a regular concert and oratorio soloist. Since 1999 Lorraine has been privately coached by Birmingham Conservatoire tutor, Margaret Field.

KYM SHEARGOLD (Santuzza)

Kym Sheargold was born in Birmingham and studied at Birmingham Conservatoire, gaining a Masters Degree in Music Performance. She has appeared in many operas as a professional and semi-professional singer, including 'Don Giovanni', 'Macbeth', 'Tales of Hoffmann' and 'Carmen'. Kym is also a recital singer, specialising in twentieth-century music, and has premiered a number of contemporary works. She has sung on radio and TV. For Music Makers she has performed the roles of *The Planitiff* in 'Trial by Jury', *Mrs Gobineau* in 'The Medium' and *Vitellia* in 'La Clemenza Di Tito'. Last year Kym sang the role of *Fiordiligi* in Mozart's 'Cosi Fan Tutte' for Voicebox Theatre Company and *Tatyana* in the MMM production of 'Eugene Onegin'. Currently she studies with international performer Nicholas Clapton.

RACHEL SKINNER (Artistic Director)

Rachel Skinner was born in Cheshire and read music at Bristol University. She combines work as a professional singer and flautist with teaching, directing and conducting. Rachel has directed productions of Dido and Aeneas, The Magic Flute and Carmen with young singers at Clifton College and was Musical Director of Music Box, a children's opera group based in Bristol. As a singer she regularly appears as a guest artist, most recently performing Canteloube's Songs of the Auvergne, Mozart's Exultate Jubilate and Finzi's Dies Natalis. She also performs widely with choral societies and chamber choirs. Highlights include the soprano solo in a live broadcast of Duke Ellington's Sacred Concert on BBC Radio 4, a performance of Durufle's Requiem in St Martin-in-the-Fields and performances of Handel's Acis and Galatea and Brahms's Requiem at St. George's, Bristol. In 2005 she travelled to Italy, giving recitals of French song and German lieder. Her operatic roles include Liu in Turandot, Nanetta in Falstaff, Susanna and Barbarina in The Marriage of Figaro, Zerlina in Don Giovanni, Pamina in The Magic Flute, and Belinda in Dido and Aeneas. Rachel has also performed as Eliza in My Fair Lady and Aldonza in Man of La Mancha.

CLAIRE STONEMAN (Lola)

Claire Stoneman is a Birmingham-born mezzo-soprano. She studies singing with the distinguished tenor, Anthony Roden, and has also recently worked with Stephen Rose of the National Opera Studio. Claire has sung many operatic roles all over the UK, including *Dorabella*, *Dido*, *Sextus* and *Mrs Grose*, among others. Most recently she toured the south of England with Opera Anywhere in their 2006 tour of "Great Opera Moments" singing the roles of *Florence Pike*, *Minskwoman*, *Stewardess*, *Dorabella*, *Mallika* and *Mrs Nolan*. Future plans include *Mrs Kneebone* in a revival tour of Lennox Berkeley's 'A Dinner Engagement' with Opera Anywhere in spring 2007, the alto solos in Schubert's 'Mass in G Minor' and Mozart's 'Solemn Vespers' in Hertfordshire in late November along with further work with Trans-Opera.

CLIVE THURSFIELD (Tonio)

Clive began singing with the Forward Operatic Company, playing a number of rôles including *Prince Orlofsky* in 'Die Fledermaus' and *Allesando Dell Acquain* in Strauss's 'Night in Venice'. He has sung *Escamillo* in 'Carmen' with Kennet Opera, and for Royal Sutton Opera has performed many major operatic rôles, including *Wagner* in 'Faust' and *Don Carlo* in 'Force of Destiny'. For Consensus Opera he has sung rôles including *The Count* in 'The Marriage of Figaro' and *M. Aristide de Chateau-Yquem* in 'Not in Front of the Waiter'. With MMM he has played *Marco* in 'Gianni Schicchi', *Iago* in 'Otello', *Prince Galitsky* in 'Prince Igor', *Valentin* in 'Faust' and *Dr. Dulcamara* in 'L'elisir D'Amore'. Recently Clive has been singing with the Birmingham Bach Choir.

PHIL YPRES-SMITH (Musical Director)

Phil Ypres-Smith began his musical career studying organ and singing at Birmingham School of Music, where he worked closely with the vocal department as an accompanist. He was also a student at the Opera School and, in following years, was invited to return as a visiting lecturer, coach, répétiteur and Musical Director. His Musical Direction for the Opera School has included 'Don Giovanni', 'Alcina', 'Albert Herring' and many Workshop productions. Phil is an active singer with a fine Counter Tenor voice. He is also a singing teacher and vocal coach and active composer, having a number of first performances performed regionally. He has been MD for four MMM productions, the most recent being Eugene Onegin and Dido and Aeneas, Phil has sung and accompanied for radio and - over the years - has led many musical and choral groups. He is Director of Music at St. George's Church, Edgbaston and founder MD of Voicebox Productions.

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Opera
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Artistic Director Rachel Skinner

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Barry Matthews, Jessica Mayhew, Malcolm Oakes & Rachel Skinner

Stage Manager Kevin McGrath

Lighting Richard Pardoe-Williams

Costume Co-ordinator Pam Davies
Assisted by Jessica Mayhew and Dee White

Props Susan Cash

Stage Crew David Conway, Paul Taylor, Rob Taylor & other friends

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Our grateful thanks to anyone who has contributed to this production and that we may have inadvertently omitted.