



Lebrecht Collection

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

## Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

### The Marriage of Figaro

*Opera buffa* in four acts

Libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte, English translation by Jeremy Sams

Count Almaviva.....	William Dazeley <i>baritone</i>
Countess Almaviva.....	Yvonne Kenny <i>soprano</i>
Susanna, her maid, betrothed to Figaro.....	Rebecca Evans <i>soprano</i>
Figaro, valet to Count Almaviva.....	Christopher Purves <i>baritone</i>
Cherubino, the Count's page.....	Diana Montague <i>mezzo-soprano</i>
Bartolo, a doctor from Seville.....	Jonathan Veira <i>bass-baritone</i>
Marcellina, Bartolo's housekeeper.....	Frances McCafferty <i>mezzo-soprano</i>
Don Basilio, music master.....	John Graham-Hall <i>tenor</i>
Don Curzio, notary.....	Stuart Kale <i>tenor</i>
Antonio, gardener, Susanna's uncle.....	Graeme Danby <i>bass</i>
Barbarina, Antonio's daughter.....	Sarah Tynan <i>soprano</i>
Girls.....	{ Yvette Bonner <i>soprano</i> Victoria Joyce <i>soprano</i>

### Geoffrey Mitchell Choir

### Philharmonia Orchestra

Gareth Hancock assistant conductor

### David Parry

COMPACT DISC ONE

	Time	Page
<b>1 Overture</b>	3:54	[p. 118]
<b>Act I (41:16)</b>		
<b>2</b> 'Fifteen, sixteen, twenty, thirty' <i>Figaro, Susanna</i>	2:44	[p. 118]
<b>3</b> 'What on earth are you measuring'	0:50	[p. 118]
<b>4</b> 'Supposing one evening the Countess'	2:35	[p. 119]
<b>5</b> 'All right, shut up and listen' <i>Susanna, Figaro</i>	1:52	[p. 119]
<b>6</b> 'Bravo, my lord and master!'	0:54	[p. 120]
<b>7</b> 'So, little master, you're dressed to go dancing' <i>Figaro</i>	2:35	[p. 121]
<b>8</b> 'But why did you wait till the day of the wedding' <i>Bartolo, Marcellina</i>	1:05	[p. 121]
<b>9</b> 'Now for vengeance, glorious vengeance!' <i>Bartolo</i>	2:59	[p. 121]
<b>10</b> 'So all is not lost'	0:47	[p. 122]
<b>11</b> 'I bow to your grace' <i>Marcellina, Susanna</i>	2:10	[p. 122]
<b>12</b> 'Good riddance, you old spinster' <i>Susanna, Cherubino</i>	2:09	[p. 123]
<b>13</b> 'I don't know what it is that I'm feeling' <i>Cherubino</i>	2:54	[p. 124]
<b>14</b> 'Now I'm done for!' <i>Cherubino, Susanna, Count, Basilio</i>	1:30	[p. 124]
<b>15</b> 'Susanna, heaven bless you!' <i>Basilio, Susanna, Count</i>	2:03	[p. 125]

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<b>16</b> 'It's outrageous! Search the castle' <i>Count, Basilio, Susanna</i>	4:20	[p. 126]
<b>17</b> 'Basilio, run and tell Figaro to come here' <i>Count, Susanna, Cherubino, Basilio</i>	1:01	[p. 128]
<b>18</b> 'Praise and adore him' <i>Chorus</i>	1:09	[p. 129]
<b>19</b> 'So what is all this nonsense?' <i>Count, Figaro, Susanna</i>	1:36	[p. 129]
<b>20</b> 'Praise and adore him' <i>Chorus</i>	1:01	[p. 130]
<b>21</b> 'God bless you!' <i>Figaro, Susanna, Basilio, Cherubino</i>	1:11	[p. 130]
<b>22</b> 'Here's and end to your life as a rover' <i>Figaro</i>	3:51	[p. 131]

TT 45:14

COMPACT DISC TWO

<b>Act II (46:21)</b>		
<b>1</b> 'Hear my prayer, humbly I beg you' <i>Countess</i>	3:40	[p. 131]
<b>2</b> 'Come here, dear Susanna, and finish your story' <i>Countess, Susanna, Figaro</i>	3:06	[p. 131]
<b>3</b> 'How it grieves me, Susanna' <i>Countess, Susanna, Cherubino</i>	1:22	[p. 133]
<b>4</b> 'Tell me what love is' <i>Cherubino</i>	2:41	[p. 134]
<b>5</b> 'Bravo, your voice is lovely!' <i>Countess, Susanna, Cherubino</i>	1:08	[p. 134]

	Time	Page
6 'Kneel down and let me look at you' <i>Susanna</i>	2:54	[p. 135]
7 'Enough of this nonsense!' <i>Countess, Susanna, Cherubino, Count</i>	3:00	[p. 135]
8 'What does this mean?' <i>Count, Countess</i>	1:25	[p. 137]
9 'Come out of there, Susanna!' <i>Count, Countess, Susanna</i>	3:00	[p. 138]
10 'So you're proposing not to open it?' <i>Count, Countess</i>	1:00	[p. 139]
11 'Don't worry, Cherubino' <i>Susanna, Cherubino</i>	1:02	[p. 140]
12 'Look at the little devil!' <i>Susanna</i>	0:21	[p. 141]
13 'Everything as I left it' <i>Count, Countess</i>	1:24	[p. 141]
14 'Out you come, you vile seducer' <i>Count, Countess</i>	2:54	[p. 141]
15 'You called, sir?' <i>Susanna, Count, Countess</i>	1:21	[p. 143]
16 'I cannot believe it' <i>Countess, Susanna, Count</i>	3:31	[p. 143]
17 'The wedding procession is ready and waiting' <i>Figaro, Count, Susanna, Countess</i>	3:13	[p. 145]
18 'Oh, my lord! My lord!' <i>Antonio, Count, Countess, Susanna, Figaro</i>	5:34	[p. 147]
19 'Noble lord, we come for justice' <i>Marcellina, Basilio, Bartolo, Count, Countess, Figaro, Susanna</i>	3:41	[p. 151]

TT 46:21

COMPACT DISC THREE

	Time	Page
<b>Act III (40:29)</b>		
1 'This is very perplexing!' <i>Count</i>	0:58	[p. 152]
2 'Don't be afraid!' <i>Countess, Count, Susanna</i>	1:40	[p. 152]
3 'How could you be so cruel'	2:29	[p. 153]
4 'But I don't understand' <i>Count, Susanna</i>	0:39	[p. 154]
5 'Hey, Susanna, how's it going?' <i>Figaro, Susanna</i>	0:10	[p. 154]
6 '“You've won the case already”'	1:28	[p. 154]
7 'Must I be made to suffer' <i>Count</i>	3:11	[p. 155]
8 'Come on, come on, Cherubino' <i>Barbarina, Cherubino</i>	0:43	[p. 155]
9 'And Susanna's not here'	1:53	[p. 155]
10 'I remember his love so tender' <i>Countess</i>	4:32	[p. 156]
11 'The case is decided' <i>Curzio, Marcellina, Figaro, Count, Bartolo</i>	2:04	[p. 156]
12 'Darling boy, let me embrace you' <i>Marcellina, Figaro, Bartolo, Curzio, Count, Susanna</i>	4:49	[p. 157]
13 'This is our little baby' <i>Marcellina, Bartolo, Susanna, Figaro</i>	1:18	[p. 160]
14 'I must warn you, my lord' <i>Antonio, Count</i>	0:29	[p. 160]

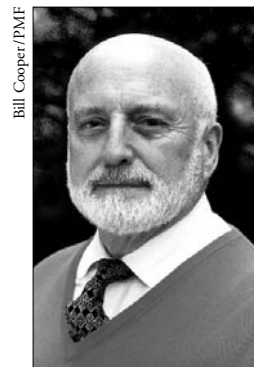
	Time	Page
[15] 'That's amazing! <i>Countess, Susanna</i>	0:41	[p. 161]
[16] '...the breezes...'	2:35	[p. 161]
[17] 'That should do the trick! <i>Susanna, Countess</i>	0:26	[p. 161]
[18] 'Gentle lady, may these presents' <i>Girls</i>	1:13	[p. 162]
[19] 'Madam, with your permission' <i>Barbarina, Countess, Susanna</i>	0:47	[p. 162]
[20] 'Hey, what did I tell you! <i>Antonio, Countess, Susanna, Count, Cherubino</i>	1:07	[p. 162]
[21] 'My lord, if you detain these lovely girls' <i>Figaro, Count, Countess, Susanna, Antonio</i>	1:13	[p. 163]
[22] 'Now I can hear them' <i>Figaro, Susanna, Count, Countess, Serving girls, Chorus</i>	1:57	[p. 164]
[23] 'As true-hearted lovers' <i>Chorus</i>	4:07	[p. 165]
 <b>Act IV (31:43)</b>		
[24] 'I have lost it, I'm so stupid' <i>Barbarina</i>	1:32	[p. 165]
[25] 'Barbarina, what's happened?' <i>Figaro, Barbarina, Marcellina</i>	1:14	[p. 166]
[26] 'Mother' <i>Figaro, Marcellina</i>	0:50	[p. 166]
[27] 'The pavilion on the right' <i>Barbarina</i>	0:41	[p. 167]

	Time	Page
[28] 'That's Barbarina! Who goes there?' <i>Figaro, Basilio, Bartolo</i>	0:36	[p. 167]
[29] 'Everything's ready; the hour of reckoning is at hand'	1:28	[p. 168]
[30] 'You foolish slaves of Cupid' <i>Figaro</i>	2:47	[p. 168]
[31] 'My lady, Marcellina says Figaro will be here' <i>Susanna, Marcellina</i>	0:18	[p. 168]
[32] 'My lady, you are trembling' <i>Susanna, Countess, Figaro</i>	0:38	[p. 168]
[33] 'At last, the moment I've longed for'	1:21	[p. 169]
[34] 'Come quickly my beloved, I implore you' <i>Susanna</i>	3:34	[p. 169]
[35] 'Treachery! Now I see how she has deceived me!' <i>Figaro, Countess, Cherubino</i>	0:36	[p. 169]
[36] 'I'll approach her, oh so softly' <i>Cherubino, Countess</i>	1:11	[p. 170]
[37] 'Here she is, my dear Susanna' <i>Count, Susanna, Figaro, Cherubino, Countess</i>	1:48	[p. 170]
[38] 'Now we're alone together' <i>Count, Countess, Figaro, Susanna</i>	2:38	[p. 171]
[39] 'Night shrouds the world in mystery' <i>Figaro, Susanna</i>	3:43	[p. 172]
[40] 'I surrender, my love' <i>Figaro, Susanna, Count</i>	1:57	[p. 173]
[41] 'Quickly, bring your weapons!' <i>Count, Figaro, Basilio, Curzio, Antonio, Bartolo, Susanna, Cherubino, Barbarina, Marcellina</i>	4:52	[p. 174]



Christopher Purves as Figaro  
with Scottish Opera

Bill Cooper



Bill Cooper/PMF

With this recording of *The Marriage of Figaro* we have been able to fill an important gap in the Opera in English catalogue. I hope that the wit and wisdom of Mozart's masterpiece, sung in English by a spirited cast, will bring fresh pleasures to all listeners – whether you are encountering *Figaro* for the first time, or re-visiting well-loved territory.

I hope it will encourage you to dip further into our Opera in English catalogue – with over thirty-five recordings (and more in the pipeline) there is plenty to explore in what is now the world's largest collection of operas recorded in English translation.

*Peter Hoopes*

August 2004

## Figaro's Marriage

Figaro should be aged about thirty, if we are to believe his inventor Caron de Beaumarchais. Mozart was also thirty in 1786, when the opera was first performed. It is not too fanciful to read an autobiographical element into Beaumarchais's creation of his multi-talented Barber of Seville. A step or two further finds some parallels with Mozart as the rather too able servant on rather too familiar terms with his social superiors.

It must therefore be a mistake to portray Figaro as the fall guy in this opera, as is sometimes the case. Admittedly, he is prone to act and to speak even faster than he thinks, but starting the action is his function in the plot. Figaro is the motor of this drama. It is his urgency which drives it forward, in spite of the delaying and braking tactics of the other characters. By contrast, the others are all relatively passive, awaiting the outturn of events. It is, after all, Figaro's marriage, as the title of the opera reminds us.

And Susanna's, although you would not know so from the title. It is Susanna, presumably a few years younger than her bridegroom, who shows him up. She sees

through the 'convenience' of the room they have been allotted and Count Almaviva's plan to take them with him on his embassy to London. She reacts quickly enough to cover up Cherubino's escape from the Countess's closet. She finds the means to pay off Figaro's debt to Marcellina. It is she who aborts his risky plan to dupe the Count by disguise in the garden at night, in favour of her cleverer version of the plan. Susanna's native wit complements Figaro's acquired ingenuity.

Indeed, and despite the opera's title, it is easy to see Susanna as the central character of the opera. Hers is certainly the longest role, if you count the notes, but it is not just the quantity of notes that counts. One of the most wonderful aspects of Mozart's genius, and not only in this opera, is his ability to draw and colour women as convincingly as men. It is a skill not shared by so many other male composers, nor by too many male writers for that matter. The idealized woman, Goethe's 'Ewigweibliche', is the bane of much nineteenth-century opera and literature. In the twentieth century, Janáček and Berg share Mozart's precious gift, but not many more.

Too much can be made of the pre-revolutionary aspects of *The Marriage of Figaro*. Figaro's Act I cavatina 'Se vuol ballare, signor contino' ('So, little master, you're dressed to go dancing' in Jeremy Sams's translation) may seem like the tocsin for battle, and his confrontation with the Count before the dances in Act III ('Maybe so. I'm not one to accuse when I don't know') may presage the collapse of the social order. But not yet. It is too facile to be wise after the event, as was Napoléon in describing Figaro's incendiary challenge 'You have taken the trouble to be born, nothing more' as 'the Revolution in action'. Beaumarchais in Paris, and Mozart after him in Vienna, are playing with fire, but it is still a play.

The counter-revolutionary argument, eloquently put by Joseph Kerman in his *Opera as Drama*, is that the true hero and heroine of the opera are the Count and Countess. Although his thesis does not entirely convince, it is true that the opera is as much an examination of their two-year-old marriage as of the marrying of Figaro and Susanna. The Count, although he is ostensibly the 'villain' of the piece, should remain sympathetic. The Countess, despite her early passivity and weepiness, regains her strength and

determination in Act III and is the catalyst for the drama in Act IV. The resolution brought about by the Countess's forgiveness of her errant husband ('I'm far more forgiving, and so I say yes') and their, at least temporary, reconciliation form the emotional climax of the opera.

Peter Hall once memorably described in a radio interview the healing effect of the great forgiveness ensemble involving the whole cast after the Countess's intervention, and especially the power of the short descending orchestral passage between that ensemble and the final chorus of jollification, a fleeting moment when all the characters stare into the abyss of tragedy. Faithlessness and betrayal may so easily destroy these marriages. There is an awful realisation of self-knowledge, and then they turn away, choosing to ignore it for the pleasures of the moment. The border between tragedy and comedy is so narrow.

This balance between the two is what makes Mozart supremely realistic and his operas so believable. It is the special insight which is evident as early as *La finta giardiniera*, composed when he was only eighteen, and which reaches its apogee with the three operas written with Lorenzo da Ponte, of which *The Marriage of Figaro* is the first. The balance is

most finely held at the drama's resolution, but it is struck throughout the opera. It is most beautifully, half-humorously exposed in Cherubino's Act I aria 'Non so più, cosa son, cosa faccio' ('I don't know what it is that I'm feeling'). And it should be there in the adolescent's half-painful, half-pleasurable reaction to Figaro's military aria 'Non più andrai' at the end of Act I ('Here's an end to your life as a rover'). The glories Cherubino anticipates are not strictly martial.

Although *The Marriage of Figaro* is nominally in four acts, corresponding to its four locations, it is musically a two-act structure similar to those of the other Da Ponte operas, *Don Giovanni* and *Così fan tutte*. Each half of each opera concludes with an extended *finale*, a device for developing the action through music which Mozart pioneered as early as *La finta giardiniera* but which he perfected in the Act II *finale* of *Figaro*. It is also the supreme example of Mozart's sense of balance. From the moment when the Count and Countess return to the bedroom and the *finale* proper starts, the outcome could as easily be tragic as comic. In the event, the humour keeps surfacing, sometimes hilariously, even farcically, but it remains a matter of life and death.

Walter Legge described the Act II *finale* thus: 'Musically this is the most masterly ensemble, not only in this opera but in all Mozart. For nearly twenty minutes the music flows unbroken, responding to every turn and twist of the complicated and fast-moving comedy, illuminating, reflecting, commenting upon the action and the widely differing emotions of the participants. Step by step with the action, the music intensifies the surprises, adds point to the subtleties, and yet casts over the whole rather sordid play of intrigue a magical cloak of the most enchanting music that, while it is always faithful to the incident, transmutes it into the purest gold of beauty.'

Everyone will choose a favourite section of this sublime *finale*. Mine is the temporary truce between the combatants (albeit hardly shared by the furiously plotting Count) before the incursion of Antonio with his broken flower pots. The Countess, Susanna and Figaro sing 'Deh signor, noi contrastate' ('Heed my pleading, I implore you, be compassionate I pray'), and, as the Count mentally searches for Marcellina, horns and basses emphasize their plea *forte*. The brief moment of hoped-for reconciliation magically anticipates the end of the opera.

According to Michael Kelly, the Irish tenor who played Basilio and Curzio in the original production, Mozart's favourite number in the opera was the sextet in Act III. It can certainly be one of the funniest sections, with its surprise revelations and reversals; yet again, Susanna's fury and discomfiture are in deadly earnest. There is a beautiful touch after the sextet has finished and the Count and Curzio have retired in disarray. Susanna asks the others who remain 'Who could be happier than I am?' and Figaro, Bartolo and Marcellina each reply 'I am'. Then together and in close harmony the quartet sings *pianissimo* 'And if the Count is furious, well that will serve him right!' This moment should not be played only for comedy.

Act IV is the most difficult act to bring off in performance. After the three interior act settings the garden should breathe the freedom and license of the open air. These secret places under the pine trees are like Shakespeare's wood outside Athens where sexual dreams may be realised. Once the *finale* proper begins with Cherubino's 'I'll approach her, oh so softly, seize the moment while I may', all moves well, but the first half of this act sees a build up of reflective arias which do nothing to progress the action. Figaro's diatribe against women

('You foolish slaves of Cupid') and Susanna's ambiguously directed love song ('Come quickly my beloved') are of course essential, but Marcellina's and Basilio's simile arias can appear marginal. In fact, they are interesting and revealing pieces. Marcellina's number fleshes out her character with some of the feminist indignation of her great speech in Act III of Beaumarchais's play. Basilio's 'donkey's hide' anecdote is a more conventional simile aria, but with a sadly ironic twist in its tail. Both add extra dimensions to their characters and to the richness of the drama, but they come too late. Towards the end of the evening, one is impatient for the plot to be resolved. So in performance, as on this recording, it is pragmatic to cut them.

This cut advances Figaro's own moment of tragic repose, when his optimistic nature for once threatens to be overwhelmed. Grandeur still than his angry aria is the short section, well into the *finale*, when the tempo broadens to *larghetto* in 3/4 time; bright G major gives way to E flat major (the key of the Countess's plaintive opening cavatina 'Porgi amor' – 'Hear my prayer'); and the clarinets return. Under the tranquil and placid night sky, with Venus and Mars locked in embrace above,

Figaro once more gathers the threads of the drama and confronts his personal destiny. This magical moment lasts only twelve bars, before he is again pulled into the breathless unravelling of the denouement. But despite what happens after and the Countess's dramatic revelation, it is enough to give him back his opera – and his marriage.

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### Synopsis

A few years before the opera begins, the Count Almaviva had wooed and wed Rosina. She was the rich ward of a Dr Bartolo of Seville, who had been planning to marry her himself to obtain her money. The Count now lives some distance from Seville in his ancestral Manor, with Figaro as his body-servant. Figaro himself is to be married today to Susanna, lady's maid to none other than Rosina, the Countess Almaviva.

### COMPACT DISC ONE

#### Act I

The first act takes place in the early morning in a small service room allotted to Figaro and Susanna as their future married quarters. The

door to the right leads to the main hall of the castle, that in the centre to the Countess's apartments, and that to the left to those of the Count. [1] After the overture, we see Susanna preparing her wedding headdress. [2] Figaro is measuring where their bed can go, [3] – [5] but when Susanna understands what Figaro is doing, she points out that this room is out of the question! It is not only a general passageway *but* more importantly, too easy of access to the Count who is pursuing her and would like to revive the feudal rights of the Lord of the Manor. Figaro is stunned to learn of the Count's interest in her. She responds that Figaro surely did not think that the dowry that the Count has promised was due to the Count's feelings for *him*. [6] – [7] She is summoned by the Countess and Figaro expresses his jealous thoughts: if the Count tries to make love to Susanna, Figaro will use every trick to upset his plans.

[8] – [9] Dr Bartolo and his housekeeper Marcellina have come from Seville. Marcellina has lent money to Figaro, with the proviso that if he is unable to pay it back, he will have to marry her. Obviously until the money can be re-paid, Figaro is not in a position to get married to anyone else. Marcellina asks Dr Bartolo for his help; he replies that he will

be only too glad to revenge himself on Figaro.

[10] – [11] Susanna returns, and as Marcellina is leaving they exchange some barbed compliments.

[12] The page boy Cherubino comes to appeal to Susanna for advice and assistance. The Count has caught him flirting with Barbarina, the gardener's daughter, and unless the Countess can be persuaded to intervene, he will be sent away, never more to see his dear Susanna or, for that matter, My Lady, whom he worships from afar. When Susanna expresses her surprise at so many loves,

[13] Cherubino tells her that he is in love with Love and hands her a song which he has written for the Countess.

[14] The Count enters, whereupon Cherubino hides himself. The Count flirts with Susanna but his advances are interrupted by Don Basilio, the music master. [15] The Count then also hides. However, when he hears what Basilio has to say about Cherubino's attentions to the Countess he emerges from his hiding place [16] – [17] and threatens to dismiss Cherubino. He recounts how he found the boy hiding under the tablecloth in Barbarina's cottage. As he demonstrates how he managed to expose his

page, Cherubino is revealed again. The Count then realises that Cherubino has overheard everything he's just been saying to Susanna.

[18] – [20] Figaro now enters with his friends to ask the Count to present Susanna with her virginal bridal adornment, but the Count puts this off until the official ceremony. [21] To get rid of Cherubino, the Count gives him a commission in his own regiment and sends him off to Seville. [22] Figaro mockingly wishes Cherubino well in his future military career.

### COMPACT DISC TWO

#### Act II

Act Two takes place in the Countess's apartment. The door on the right leads to the main staircase, that in the centre to Susanna's room, and that on the left to a small dressing room. There is a window on the wall facing.

Susanna has just left the Countess's morning tray.

[1] Rosina, now the Countess Almaviva, longs for the return of the love of her philandering lord.

[2] Susanna comes back. She had been telling the Countess of the Count's discomfiture and now adds that Figaro has sent an anonymous letter to the Count



through Basilio, revealing that the Countess has an assignation this evening in the garden with a lover. This is a fabrication to distract him from chasing Susanna.

The Countess points out that this doesn't stop Marcellina's threatened intervention. Susanna has a suggestion: she makes an assignation with the Count herself but that Cherubino keeps it, disguised as Susanna. The Countess can surprise them and this will put the Count in such a position that he will have to give his consent to the marriage.

[3] – [4] Cherubino comes in to sing his song to the Countess.

[5] – [6] The plan is explained and Susanna arranges a dress rehearsal, first of all locking the door. As he is changing, Cherubino drops his commission and the Countess remarks that it hasn't been sealed. Susanna starts to dress Cherubino as a girl.

The Countess sends Susanna for one of her own bonnets. [7] There is a knock at the main door; the Count has returned unexpectedly. Cherubino is bundled into the closet and locks himself in. [8] The Countess unlocks the main door and explains that she has been trying on a dress and talking to Susanna who has just left. The Count shows her Figaro's anonymous letter but at that point there is a clatter in the

closet – Cherubino has knocked something over. The Count demands to know who is in there. The Countess says it is Susanna and the Count orders her to open up or speak but the Countess forbids this. Susanna unnoticed comes back into the room, realises what is happening and hides herself.

[9] – [10] Since the Countess refuses to open the closet, the Count locks all the doors and goes to get tools to force the closet door, taking the Countess with him. [11] Susanna persuades Cherubino to open up. Finding all the doors locked, he jumps out of the window. [12] Susanna locks herself into the closet.

[13] The Count and Countess return and the Countess admits that she was preparing a surprise for the evening, and that it is actually Cherubino in the closet. This seems to the Count to confirm the anonymous letter.

[14] The Count calls on Cherubino to come out. The Countess begs him not to be angry if he sees Cherubino a little dishevelled, he was getting dressed up as a girl. The Count denounces his wife as faithless and is going to attack the door [15] – [16] when Susanna opens it and steps out. Both the Count and Countess are dumbfounded, the Count finds this joke as cruel as that of the anonymous letter, which they reveal to him was written by

Figaro and delivered by Basilio. He asks his wife's forgiveness.

[17] Figaro enters to announce that preparations for the wedding are nearly complete but the Count asks him if he wrote the anonymous letter. Figaro of course denies this, in spite of prompting from Susanna and the Countess.

[18] Antonio the gardener enters to complain that someone has jumped out of the window and spoilt his flowers. Figaro says it was he; Antonio thinks it was Cherubino, but Figaro says he has already left for Seville. The Count asks Figaro why he jumped. Figaro says he was waiting for Susanna when he heard a rumpus, the Count shouting, and thinking of the anonymous letter (which he has just denied writing), he took fright and jumped out of the window. Antonio asks if the papers that were dropped are his then, but the Count seizes them and asks Figaro to identify them. The Countess recognises Cherubino's commission and passes the information along to Figaro, who explains that it is the page's commission which was left with him to be sealed.

[19] Marcellina, Dr Bartolo and Don Basilio enter to present Marcellina's case against Figaro. The confusion this causes ends the act.

## COMPACT DISC THREE

### Act III

Act Three is laid in the Great Hall where all may freely come and go. It is late afternoon.

[1] The Count is trying to puzzle out the contradictions of recent happenings.

[2] – [4] The Countess sends Susanna to make an assignation with the Count for this evening. The Countess is planning to keep this herself in Susanna's place, since Cherubino has now left. On the pretext of borrowing his smelling salts, Susanna approaches the Count and makes the assignation. [5] She confides to Figaro as she leaves that she has won his case for him without the need of a lawyer.

[6] Unfortunately, the Count overhears her.

[7] He explodes, furious to find himself outwitted by his own servants.

[8] Barbarina persuades Cherubino to join her and the village girls in presenting flowers to the Countess.

[9] – [10] The Countess is waiting for Susanna and sings of wonderful moments with the Count in the past.

[11] The legal decision is that Figaro must pay his debt or marry Marcellina. Figaro says that he cannot marry without his parents' permission and as he was a founding this will

be difficult to get. However, if anyone can recognize the birthmark on his arm... Marcellina does – he is the child she had many years ago who was stolen from her: his father is none other than Dr Bartolo. Her claim to marry Figaro thus collapses. <sup>[12]</sup> – <sup>[13]</sup> However, Susanna comes in, having persuaded the Countess to advance the money necessary to repay the debt. She finds Marcellina embracing Figaro, and jumps to the wrong conclusion, but soon joins in the reconciliation.

<sup>[14]</sup> Antonio tells the count that Cherubino has not left for Seville, but is at the gardener's house, and dressed as a woman!

<sup>[15]</sup> Susanna joins the Countess and reports that the Count has accepted the assignation.

<sup>[16]</sup> The Countess dictates a note to fix a venue. <sup>[17]</sup> The note is sealed with a pin which the Count is to send back to show he accepts.

<sup>[18]</sup> – <sup>[19]</sup> Barbarina leads in a group of village girls to present flowers to the Countess. The group includes Cherubino dressed as a girl. As the girls present their flowers, the Countess notices that one reminds her of somebody. <sup>[20]</sup> Antonio and the Count entering unexpectedly, unmask this girl. It is Cherubino. The Count asks the Countess for an explanation, but she is as surprised as he is.

The Count is going to punish Cherubino, but Barbarina asks for pardon for him, and his hand in marriage, in return for her past kindnesses to the Count.

<sup>[21]</sup> Figaro enters to announce the dancing. The Count tells him that Cherubino now admits having jumped out of the window. Figaro replies that may be – if one man can jump out so can two.

<sup>[22]</sup> – <sup>[23]</sup> The double wedding ceremony proceeds, Figaro and Susanna, Marcellina and Bartolo. During this Susanna slips the Count the letter she has written. Figaro sees the Count prick his finger on a pin sealing a note which he has been passed but is not aware who sent it.

#### Act IV

The scene of Act Four is the moonlit garden. There are several arbours.

<sup>[24]</sup> Barbarina has lost the pin which the Count had given her to take back to Susanna.

<sup>[25]</sup> Figaro and Marcellina soon get the story out of her. <sup>[26]</sup> Figaro goes looking for revenge and Marcellina to warn Susanna.

<sup>[27]</sup> – <sup>[28]</sup> Figaro has asked Basilio, Antonio and Bartolo to come and help him sort matters out.

Barbarina comes back to keep an appointment with Cherubino, <sup>[29]</sup> – <sup>[30]</sup> while Figaro, wild with jealousy, waits for Susanna.

<sup>[31]</sup> – <sup>[32]</sup> Marcellina brings Susanna and the Countess to the spot and hides in one of the arbours. <sup>[33]</sup> – <sup>[34]</sup> Susanna, conscious that Figaro is listening, revenges herself for his suspicions by pretending to be waiting for the Count.

<sup>[35]</sup> – <sup>[36]</sup> As the Countess slips into Susanna's place, Cherubino arrives to keep his assignation with Barbarina, but seeing, as he thinks, Susanna, he gives chase. <sup>[37]</sup> Cherubino tries to kiss Susanna, but the Count intervenes. He tries to box Cherubino's ears, but strikes Figaro who has also intervened. Cherubino hides in an arbour.

<sup>[38]</sup> The Count then woos his own wife, believing her to be Susanna, and gives her a diamond ring. Figaro tries to scare off the Count and the pretended Susanna hides in another arbour, while the Count retires to rejoin her later. <sup>[39]</sup> Susanna, being dressed up as the Countess, now tests Figaro by pretending to flirt with him. Figaro recognises his wife's voice and decides to join in the game. This earns him a smart slap. <sup>[40]</sup> He explains and is forgiven. The Count returns and Susanna tells Figaro that the Count has just been wooing his own wife in disguise. Figaro, for the benefit of the Count, now flirts with the pretended Countess. The Count

interrupts and the pretended Countess hides in an arbour. <sup>[41]</sup> In front of Basilio, Bartolo and Antonio, the Count calls her out of the arbour. The first to emerge are Cherubino, Barbarina and Marcellina, and finally the pretended Countess. The Count accuses her of unfaithfulness. She begs forgiveness, which he will not grant. Then the real Countess appears and intercedes. The Count now must beg her pardon, which she again gives him. So all ends well.

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**Christopher Purves** studied English at King's College, Cambridge before performing and recording with the highly innovative vocal rock and roll group, *Harvey and the Wallbangers*. With the group's demise in 1988,

he resumed vocal training with David Keren, Diane Forlano and Janice Chapman.

His operatic engagements include Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*) for Welsh National Opera,

Scottish Opera and Opera North; Marcello (*La Bohème*) for Scottish Opera; Papageno (*The Magic Flute*), Faninal (*Der Rosenkavalier*) for Welsh National Opera and Opera North; Podesta (*La gazza ladra*) for Garsington Opera; Siegfried (*Genoveva*) and Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*) for Opera North. He created the role of Executioner in James Macmillan's *Ines de Castro* and has performed Macmillan's *Parthenogenesis* at the Edinburgh Festival, where he has also appeared as Cecil in *Maria Stuada* under Sir Charles Mackerras.

Concert engagements include Mozart's Mass in C at Aix-en-Provence with the Sixteen, Stravinsky's *Les Noces* with Philippe Herreweghe in Brussels, Monteverdi's *Vespers 1610* with Richard Hickox, Bach's B Minor Mass at the La Chaise-Dieu Festival, Handel's *Judas Maccabeus* in Nuremberg and *Saul* with the Gabrieli Consort at the Covent Garden and La Chaise-Dieu Festivals, John Tavener's *Apocalypse* at the Proms with the City of London Sinfonia, the *St John Passion* with Paul Goodwin in Madrid, *Messiah* with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Hallé and Ulster Orchestras, *Les Mamelles de Terecias* with the London Sinfonietta under Sir Simon Rattle, Manoah (*Samson*) with Harry Christophers, Britten's *War Requiem* and Haydn's *Creation*

with the Ulster Orchestra, *Belshazzar's Feast* with the English Northern Sinfonia under Paul Daniel and with the Hallé, and Lucifer in Handel's *La Resurrezione* for Paul McCreech in Rome, Amsterdam and London. Christopher Purves gave his debut recital at the Aldeburgh Festival in June 2004. His recordings include Gottardo (*The Thieving Magpie*) for Chandos' Opera in English series.



**Rebecca Evans** was born in South Wales and studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. She has established a major operatic career in America where she has sung Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*) for Santa Fe

Opera; Adele (*Die Fledermaus*) for Chicago Lyric Opera; Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*), Ann Trulove (*The Rake's Progress*) and Adina (*L'elisir d'amore*) for San Francisco Opera; and both Susanna and Zerlina for the Metropolitan Opera, New York.

In Europe, she is a regular guest at the Bayerische Staatsoper, Munich, where her roles have included Sophie (*Der Rosenkavalier*),

Zdenka (*Arabella*), Servilia (*La clemenza di Tito*), Ilia (*Idomeneo*) and Nanetta (*Falstaff*). Elsewhere she has sung Ilia for the Netherlands Opera and Opera de Lausanne; the title role in *The Cunning Little Vixen* for Scottish Opera; Susanna, Ilia, Marzelline (*Fidelio*), Norina (*Don Pasquale*) and Hero (*Beatrice and Benedict*) for Welsh National Opera; Romilda (*Xerxes*) for English National Opera; and Zerlina, Nanetta and Johanna (*Sweeney Todd*) at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

Her extensive concert experience includes appearances at the BBC Proms and Edinburgh Festival; Gala Concerts with Andrea Bocelli in Germany and with Luciano Pavarotti in Britain. She has performed Bach's *Magnificat* with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra under Michael Tilson Thomas; Brahms' *German Requiem* with the Boston Symphony Orchestra at the Tanglewood and Ravinia Festivals; and Mahler's Fourth Symphony with the Sapporo Symphony Orchestra under Tadaaki Otaka. She has also appeared in Australia at the Melbourne International Festival and with the Australian Chamber Orchestra. In recital, she has sung at the Wigmore Hall, London; and the Barcelona, Ravinia, Buxton and Belfast Festivals.

Rebecca Evans's many recordings include Ilia (*Idomeneo*) for Chandos' Opera in English series, Nanetta (*Falstaff*) with Sir John Eliot Gardiner, a series of Gilbert and Sullivan recordings with Sir Charles Mackerras and a solo recording of Italian songs.



**Yvonne Kenny** was born in Sydney and made her London debut in 1975 in Donizetti's *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra*. After winning the Kathleen Ferrier Competition she joined the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, where her roles have

included Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*), Ilia (*Idomeneo*), Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Adina (*L'elisir d'amore*), Liù (*Turandot*), Aspasia (*Mitridate*) and Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*). She has won international renown in the great Handel roles, notably Semele and Alcina (Covent Garden and La Fenice, Venice); Romilda (*Xerxes*) for English National Opera (in London and on tour to the USSR) and the Bavarian State Opera; Alcina with Nicholas McGegan at the Göttingen Handel

Festival; and both Cleopatra (*Giulio Cesare*) and Armida (*Rinaldo*) in Sydney.

She has sung at the Vienna State Opera (Countess (*Capriccio*) and Susanna); La Scala, Milan (*Pamina*); Berlin Staatsoper (Countess (*Capriccio*)); Paris Opéra (*Donna Elvira*); Zurich and Glyndebourne (*Donna Elvira* and Alice Ford (*Falstaff*)); Countess (*Le nozze di Figaro*) in Washington and for the Bayerische Staatsoper, Munich; the Marschallin (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* and Alice Ford for English National Opera; and the Marschallin (under Sir Charles Mackerras) in her debut with San Francisco Opera. She returns frequently to her native Australia where she has sung Gilda (*Rigoletto*), Pamina, Susanna, Alcina, Massenet's *Manon*, Fiordiligi, Alice Ford, Governess (*The Turn of the Screw*), Countess (*Capriccio*) and the title roles in *Maria Stuarda* and *L'incoronazione di Poppea*.

Yvonne Kenny has appeared in concert at the Edinburgh, Salzburg and Aix-en-Provence Festivals, in Carnegie Hall and at the BBC Promenade concerts. Her recordings for Chandos include Alice Ford (*Falstaff*), the Marschallin (highlights from *Der Rosenkavalier*) and two recital discs of Great Operatic Arias, all as part of the Opera in English series, as well as Lennox Berkeley's

*A Dinner Engagement* and Dyson's *The Canterbury Pilgrims*. For Opera Rara she has recorded *Ugo conte di Parigi*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Emilia di Liverpool*, *Il crociato in Egitto* and *Medea in Corinto*. Yvonne Kenny was made a Member of the Order of Australia for Services to Music in 1989.



**William Dazeley** was born in Warwickshire and is a graduate of Jesus College, Cambridge. He studied singing at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where he won several prizes including the prestigious Gold Medal. He also won the

1989 Decca–Kathleen Ferrier Prize, the 1990 Royal Overseas League Singing Competition, the 1991 Richard Tauber Prize and the 1991 Walther Gruner International Lieder Competition.

Now established as one of the leading baritones of his generation, he has already appeared with many of the world's important opera houses: roles include Count (*Cherubin*), Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) and Mercutio

(*Roméo et Juliette*) at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; the Count (*The Marriage of Figaro*), Figaro (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) and the title role in *Owen Wingrave* for Glyndebourne Touring Opera; Figaro (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) at the Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin; Dr Faust at the Salzburg Festival and at the Châtelet conducted by Kent Nagano; and Scheramin (*Oberon*) at the Châtelet under John Eliot Gardiner, which was also presented in concert at the Barbican.

Concert appearances have included the title role in Schumann's *Faustszenen* for a European tour conducted by Philippe Herreweghe, Schumann's *Requiem for Mignon* under John Eliot Gardiner, Mahler's *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* with the Royal Flanders Philharmonic conducted by Herreweghe, Corigliano's *Dylan Thomas* with the BBC Symphony conducted by Leonard Slatkin, and Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* with the Berlin Philharmonic.

World premieres include the role of Mahmoud in John Adams' *The Death of Klinghoffer* with the BBC Symphony, and the lead role of Jesus in Harrison Birtwistle's *The Last Supper* at the Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin conducted by Daniel Barenboim, which was then repeated at the Glyndebourne Festival.

William Dazeley gives recital performances at the Wigmore Hall, Purcell Room, St George's Bristol, and the Châtelet, and is regularly invited to sing at the Cheltenham, Aix en Provence and Saintes Festivals with such noted accompanists as Graham Johnson and Iain Burnside.



**Diana Montague** was born in Winchester and studied at the Royal Northern College of Music. Since her debut as Zerlina with Glyndebourne Touring Opera she has appeared in venues such as the Royal

Opera House, Covent Garden, the Metropolitan Opera in New York, the Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels, the Opéra national de Paris-Bastille, Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires and the Bayreuth and Salzburg Festivals.

Her repertory includes the major roles for mezzo-soprano in operas by Mozart, Gluck, Strauss, Rossini, Bellini and Berlioz, and engagements have included *Benvenuto Cellini*

with Rome Opera; *Iphigénie en Tauride* in Buenos Aires, Madrid and with Welsh National Opera; *Albert Herring*, *Le nozze di Figaro* and *Andromaca* in Rossini's *Ermione* at Glyndebourne; *Le Comte Ory* in Lausanne, Rome and Glyndebourne; Proserpina in Monteverdi's *Orfeo* in Amsterdam; *Ariadne auf Naxos* in Lisbon; Marguerite (*La Damnation de Faust*) in Geneva; Minerva (*Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*) in Amsterdam and Sydney; Meg Page (*Falstaff*); *The Bartered Bride* and *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Junon in Rameau's *Platée* with The Royal Opera at the Edinburgh Festival and in London, Octavian *Der Rosenkavalier* at English National Opera, in Bilbao and at the Teatro Real in Madrid; Marguerite in Vienna, and *Le nozze di Figaro* at La Monnaie.

Diana Montague's many recordings include Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, *Norma*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Iphigénie en Tauride*, for Opera Rara *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra*, *Zoraida di Granata* and *Il crociato in Egitto*, and, as part of Chandos' Opera in English series, *Idomeneo*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier* (highlights), *Faust*, and two recital discs of Great Operatic Arias.



Born in Edinburgh, **Frances McCafferty** is a graduate of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama.

After a number of years teaching singing, she joined the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company, where she performed all

the major contralto roles and recorded *Patience*, *Orpheus in the Underworld* and *HMS Pinafore*.

Performances include Katisha (*The Mikado*) with English National Opera, Soloka (*Cherevichki*) at Garsington, Auntie (*Peter Grimes*) at the Nationale Reis Oper, and Hata (*The Bartered Bride*) with Glyndebourne Festival Opera. She has also sung with the New Israeli Opera, Stuttgart Staatsoper, Opera Theatre Company, Glyndebourne Touring Opera, as well as the Edinburgh International Festival and at festivals in Ireland and Switzerland. She is a regular guest artist at Opera North and the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, where she created the role of Yeta Zimmerman in the world premiere of Nicholas Maw's *Sophie's Choice*, conducted by Sir Simon Rattle, directed by Trevor Nunn

and broadcast live on both BBC television and radio. Concert appearances include the RTE and National Orchestra of Ireland, the Ulster Orchestra, the Singapore Symphony Orchestra and the BBC Concert Orchestra.

She made her debut at La Fenice, Venice, singing Katisha (*The Mikado*) and has also sung Madame Popova (*The Bear*) for the Cerniers Festival, Switzerland, and the Nurse (*Boris Godunov*) for the Royal Opera, Covent Garden.



Following studies at London University and Trinity College of Music, **Jonathan Veira** won the 1996 Sir Peter Pears Singing Competition and was sponsored in his studies at the National Opera Studio by

Glyndebourne Festival Opera and the Friends of Covent Garden.

Jonathan Veira has appeared with the major UK opera companies including The Royal Opera, English National Opera, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Scottish Opera, Welsh National Opera, Garsington Opera and

Opera Northern Ireland. His roles with them have included Banker/Theatre Director (*Lulu*), Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*), Harasta (*The Cunning Little Vixen*), Kolenatý (*The Makropulos Case*), Baron Mirko Zeta (*The Merry Widow*), Tonio (*Pagliacci*), Leporello (*Don Giovanni*), Varlaam (*Boris Godunov*), Calchas (*La Belle Hélène*), Sharpless (*Madam Butterfly*), Sacristan (*Tosca*), Mustafa (*L'italiana in Algeri*) and Keçal (*The Bartered Bride*).

International engagements have included The Doctor (*Vanessa*) for Opéra du Rhin; Schauard (Leoncavallo's *La Bohème*) at the Wexford Festival; Leporello (*Don Giovanni*) and Papageno (*The Magic Flute*) for Opera New Zealand; Dr Bartolo (*Le nozze di Figaro*) for Opéra de Nice, Zurich Opera, Glyndebourne Festival Opera and the Opéra de Montpellier; and Claggart (*Billy Budd*), Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*), and *Falstaff* for the Royal Danish Opera.

**John Graham-Hall** studied at King's College, Cambridge and the Royal College of Music. He has sung with all the major British opera companies where roles include Albert Herring (Royal Opera House, Covent Garden); Vanya Kudrjas (*Katya Kabanova*), Flute (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) and Bob Boles



(*Peter Grimes*) for Glyndebourne Festival Opera; Don Basilio, Monostatos, Lysander (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Alwa (*Lulu*) and Herod (*Salome*) for English National Opera; Cassio (*Otello*) for Welsh National

Opera; Eisenstein, Schoolmaster (*The Cunning Little Vixen*) for Scottish Opera; and Aschenbach (*Death in Venice*), Lysander, Albert Herring and Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*) for Glyndebourne Touring Opera.

Other engagements have included Bob Boles (Netherlands Opera); Basilio (La Monnaie); the title role in Pascal Dusapin's new opera *Perela, l'Homme de fumée* at the Opéra de Paris-Bastille and in Montpellier. Other roles at English National Opera, where he was a Company Principal, have included Sylvester (*The Silver Tassie*), Goro (*Madam Butterfly*), Triquet (*Eugene Onegin*), Monostatos (*The Magic Flute*), Mime (*The Rhinegold*) and Alwa (*Lulu*).

John Graham-Hall has worked with many distinguished conductors including Haitink, Harnoncourt, Boulez, Andrew Davis, Tate,

Rattle, Gardiner and Abbado. His concert career has taken him all over Europe, working with all the major British orchestras and appearing frequently at the Barbican and the South Bank. Recordings for Chandos include Vaughan Williams's *The Poisoned Kiss*, *Peter Grimes*, and, as part of the Opera in English series, *The Thieving Magpie* and Berg's *Wozzeck*.



**Graeme Danby** was born in County Durham and studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London. His long association with English National Opera includes appearances as Lorenzo in Bellini's

*The Capulets and the Montagues*, Pimen (*Boris Godunov*), Don Basilio (*The Barber of Seville*), Dulcamara (*The Elixir of Love*), Somnus (*Semele*), Quince (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Collatinus (*The Rape of Lucretia*), Arkel (*Pelleas and Melisande*) and Poo-Bah (*The Mikado*).

His debut at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden was in *La traviata*, and his

Glyndebourne debut was as Antonio (*Le nozze di Figaro*). Further UK engagements include Bartolo (*Le nozze di Figaro*) for Opera North and the Garsington Festival; Collatinus at the Buxton Festival; and Bosun (*Billy Budd*) and Masetto (*Don Giovanni*) for Scottish Opera.

Concert appearances include Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 and Verdi's *Requiem* at the Royal Albert Hall, Mahler's Eighth Symphony at the Royal Festival Hall, and *Iolanthe* at Manchester's Bridgewater Hall.



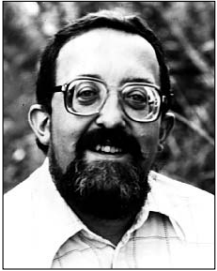
**Sarah Tynan** was born in London and studied at the Royal Northern College of Music and the Royal Academy of Music (with Penelope Mackay). At the RAM, she was awarded the Queen's Commendation for Excellence.

Operatic engagements include Pretty Polly in Birtwistle's *Punch and Judy* at the Teatro Nacional S. João in Porto, the Governess in Britten's *Turn of the Screw* for a British Council tour of Russia, Elsie Maynard (*The Yeomen of the Guard*) and Gianetta (*The Gondoliers*) for

Phoenix Opera, and *Barbarina* for Opera Holland Park. Opera appearances at the RAM include the title role in *The Cunning Little Vixen* (conducted by Sir Charles Mackerras) and Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*) (conducted by Sir Colin Davis).

Other engagements include her debut with Welsh National Opera as Iphis in Handel's *Jephtha*; Eleanora in Salieri's *Prima la musica and Mlle Silberklang* in Mozart's *Der Schauspieldirektor* with the City of London Sinfonia/Richard Hickox; and the Mozart Requiem conducted by Sir Roger Norrington at the Spitalfields Festival. Sarah Tynan is currently a member of the English National Opera Young Singers Programme.

**Stuart Kale** is internationally recognised as one of the most outstanding singing actors in the operatic world. A consummate musician, his roles cover a huge range of repertoire from Monteverdi to Messiaen. He began his career at Welsh National Opera before joining English National Opera, where he remained for eight years, singing roles such as Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*), Michael in Martinů's *Julietta*, Alfred (*Die Fledermaus*) and Nanki-Poo in Jonathan Miller's production of *The Mikado*. In 1987 he began his flourishing



freelance career singing Hauptmann (*Wozzeck*) at the Opera du Rhin in Strasbourg and later in Nancy, returning to ENO to sing Herod (*Salome*).

Notable engagements since include the High Priest in *Idomeneo* at Covent Garden; Hauptmann (*Wozzeck*) in San Francisco, Geneva, Zurich, Montpellier, Bordeaux and Bologna; Shuisky (*Boris Godunov*) in Strasbourg, Bordeaux and Montpellier; Quint (*The Turn of the Screw*) and Truffaldino (*The Love for Three Oranges*) for English National Opera; Zinoviev (*Lady Macbeth*) in Toulouse and Marseille; Valzacchi and the three tenor roles in *Lulu* at the Châtelet; Aeghiste in Karlsruhe; Bob Boles at the Munich State Opera, Covent Garden, Genova and Strasbourg; Captain Vere (*Billy Budd*) in Cologne; and Gregor (*The Makropoulos Case*) and Herod in Strasbourg.

Recordings in Chandos' Opera in English series include *Boris Godunov* (highlights), *Madam Butterfly*, *Otello*, *Falstaff*, *Wozzeck* and *The Thieving Magpie*.

Geoffrey Mitchell's singing career has encompassed a remarkably wide repertoire from early to contemporary music and has taken him to Scandinavia, Germany, the former Czechoslovakia, Canada and Australasia. Early conducting experience with the BBC led to a wider involvement with his own singers and in turn to the establishment of the **Geoffrey Mitchell Choir**. Early recordings resulted in the Choir's long-term involvement with Opera Rara for which it has made over thirty recordings. The Choir is enjoying a growing reputation with further work from the BBC and international record companies. For Chandos the Geoffrey Mitchell Choir has participated in numerous recordings in the acclaimed Opera in English series sponsored by the Peter Moores Foundation.

One of the world's great orchestras, the **Philharmonia Orchestra** is now in its sixth season with renowned German maestro Christoph von Dohnányi as Principal Conductor. That post was first held by Otto Klemperer, and the Orchestra has since had important collaborations with Lorin Maazel (as Associate Principal Conductor), Riccardo Muti (as Principal Conductor and Music Director), Giuseppe Sinopoli (as Music

Director) and, currently, Kurt Sanderling (as Conductor Emeritus), Vladimir Ashkenazy (as Conductor Laureate) and Sir Charles Mackerras (as Principal Guest Conductor), besides such eminent figures as Wilhelm Furtwängler, Richard Strauss, Arturo Toscanini, Guido Cantelli, Herbert von Karajan and Carlo Maria Giulini. It continues to engage world-class conductors and soloists, and attracts Europe's most talented young players to join its orchestral ranks.

Resident Orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall, it maintains a central position in British musical life also through regional residencies which provide an ideal opportunity to expand a dynamic educational and community-based programme. Winner of numerous awards, it has garnered unanimous critical acclaim for its innovative programming policy, at the heart of which is a commitment to performing and commissioning new music by today's leading composers.

An increasing number of the Orchestra's concerts are being broadcast by BBC Radio 3, including its annual performance at the BBC Proms. As the world's most recorded symphony orchestra, with over 1000 releases to its credit, among these a number of television and feature film soundtracks, the

Philharmonia Orchestra enjoys a worldwide reputation. The discography includes, for Opera Rara, several recital discs as well as eleven complete operas, and for Chandos, in the Opera in English series sponsored by the Peter Moores Foundation, *The Thieving Magpie*, *Wozzeck*, *Don Giovanni*, *The Elixir of Love*, *Lucia of Lammermoor*, *Faust*, *Carmen*, *Aida*, *La Bohème*, *Madam Butterfly*, *Turandot*, the award-winning *Tosca* and solo recital albums of operatic arias with Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny and John Tomlinson. The Philharmonia Orchestra continues to consolidate its international renown through regular tours and through recent prestigious residencies at the Châtelet Théâtre Musical in Paris, the Megaron in Athens and the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in New York.

**David Parry** studied with Sergiu Celibidache and began his career as Sir John Pritchard's assistant. He made his debut with English Music Theatre, then became a staff conductor at Städtische Bühnen, Dortmund and at Opera North. He was Music Director of Opera 80 from 1983 to 1987 and since 1992 has been the founding Music Director of Almeida Opera.

He works extensively in both opera and concert, nationally and internationally. He has conducted several productions at English National Opera and Opera North and appears regularly with the Philharmonia and London Philharmonic Orchestras. In 1996 he made his debut at the Glyndebourne Festival conducting *Così fan tutte*, following it in 1998 with the world premiere of Jonathan Dove's *Flight*.

He is a frequent visitor to Spain where he has given concerts with most of the major Spanish orchestras. He conducted the Spanish premiere of *Peter Grimes* in Madrid and in 1996 the first Spanish production of *The Rake's Progress*. He has appeared in Germany, Switzerland, and The Netherlands, at the Pesaro Festival in Italy, the Hong Kong International Festival, in Japan with a tour of *Carmen*, and in Mexico with the UNAM Symphony Orchestra. Recent new productions he has conducted include *Fidelio* at the New Zealand Festival, *Lucia di Lammermoor* at New

Israeli Opera and *Don Giovanni* at Staatsoper Hannover.

His work in the recording studio includes the BBC Television production of Marschner's *Der Vampyr* and twenty-eight complete opera recordings under the sponsorship of the Peter Moores Foundation. Among these are numerous discs for the Opera Rara label which have won several awards, including the Belgian Prix Cecilia for Donizetti's *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra*. For Chandos he has conducted a series of recitals of operatic arias – with Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny, John Tomlinson, Della Jones and Andrew Shore – as well as *Idomeneo*, *Carmen*, *The Thieving Magpie*, *Don Giovanni*, *Don Pasquale*, *The Elixir of Love*, *Lucia of Lammermoor*, *Ermani*, *Il trovatore*, *Aida*, *Faust*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *La bohème*, *Turandot*, the award-winning *Tosca* and highlights from *Der Rosenkavalier*, all in association with the Peter Moores Foundation.



Yvonne Kenny as Countess Almaviva  
with Washington Opera

Carol Pratt



## PETER MOORES FOUNDATION

British philanthropist Sir Peter Moores established the Peter Moores Foundation in 1964 to realise his charitable aims and, to fulfill one of these, the Compton Verney House Trust in 1993 to create a new art gallery in the country. Through his charities he has disbursed more than £93 million to a wide variety of arts, environmental and social causes 'to get things done and open doors for people'.

Sir Peter's philanthropic work began with his passion for opera: in his twenties he helped a number of young artists in the crucial, early stages of their careers, several of whom – Dame Joan Sutherland, Sir Colin Davis and the late Sir Geraint Evans amongst them – became world-famous.

Today, the Peter Moores Foundation supports talented young singers with annual scholarships awarded through the Royal Northern College of Music, has made it possible for Chandos Records to issue the world's largest catalogue of operas recorded in English translation, and enabled Opera Rara to record rare *bel canto* repertoire which would otherwise remain inaccessible to the general public.

In live performance, the Foundation has encouraged the creation of new work and schemes to attract new audiences, financed the publication of scores, especially for world premieres of modern operas, and enabled rarely heard works to be staged by British opera companies and festivals.

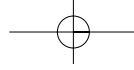
Projects supported by the Foundation to help the young have ranged from a scheme to encourage young Afro-Caribbeans 'stay at school' for further education, to the endowment

of a Faculty Directorship and Chair of Management Studies at Oxford University (providing the lead donation which paved the way for the development of the Said Business School).

In 1993 the Foundation bought Compton Verney, a Grade 1 Georgian mansion in Warwickshire, designed by Robert Adam, with grounds by Capability Brown. Compton Verney House Trust was set up by Sir Peter to transform the derelict mansion into a world-class art gallery that would provide an especially welcoming environment for the 'first-time' gallery visitor. The gallery, which houses six permanent collections, a Learning Centre for all ages, and facilities for major visiting exhibitions, was opened in March 2004 by HRH the Prince of Wales. The Compton Verney website can be found at: [www.comptonverney.org.uk](http://www.comptonverney.org.uk)

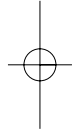
Sir Peter Moores was born in Lancashire and educated at Eton College and Christ Church, Oxford. He was a student at the Vienna Academy of Music, where he produced the Austrian premiere of Benjamin Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia*, and worked as an assistant producer with Viennese artists in Naples, Geneva and Rome, before returning to England in 1957 to join his father's business, Littlewoods. He was Vice-Chairman of Littlewoods in 1976, Chairman from 1977 to 1980 and remained a director until 1993.

He received the Gold Medal of the Italian Republic in 1974, an Honorary MA from Christ Church, Oxford, in 1975, and was made an Honorary Member of the Royal Northern College of Music in 1985. In 1992 he was appointed Deputy Lieutenant of Lancashire by HM the Queen. He was appointed CBE in 1991 and received a Knighthood in 2003 for his charitable services to the arts.



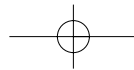
Rebecca Evans as Susanna  
with Welsh National Opera

BillCooper



Diana Montague as Cherubino  
with The Royal Opera

Clive Banda /ArenalPAL



## Figaro's Hochzeit

Figaro müßte etwa dreißig Jahre alt sein, wenn wir seinem Erfinder Caron de Beaumarchais Glauben schenken. Auch Mozart war dreißig, als die Oper 1786 uraufgeführt wurde. Es wäre kaum zu weit hergeholt, in Beaumarchais' Schöpfung seines vielbegabten Barbiers von Sevilla gewisse autobiographische Züge hineinzulesen. Geht man noch einen oder zwei Schritte weiter, so findet man auch gewisse Parallelen mit Mozart selbst als dem allzu begabten Bediensteten, der mit den oberen Gesellschaftsschichten einen allzu vertraulichen Umgang pflegte.

Es wäre daher falsch, Figaro als den Tölpel in dieser Oper darzustellen, wie es gelegentlich geschieht. Zugegeben, er neigt dazu, schneller zu handeln und noch schneller zu sprechen, als er denkt, aber schließlich ist es seine Aufgabe, die Handlung in Gang zu bringen. Figaro ist der Motor dieses Dramas. Sein Drängen treibt die Dinge voran, trotz der Verzögerungs- und Bremsaktiken der übrigen Figuren. Im Gegensatz zu ihm sind die anderen alle vergleichsweise passiv und warten eher ab, wie die Dinge sich entwickeln. Und schließlich geht es ja um Figaros Hochzeit, wie

der Titel der Oper uns ins Gedächtnis ruft.

Und Susannas, auch wenn wir dies dem Titel nicht entnehmen können. Susanna, die wohl einige Jahre jünger ist als ihr Bräutigam, fällt die Rolle zu, sich als die Überlegene zu erweisen. Sie erkennt, wie "geschickt" das ihnen zugeteilte Zimmer ausgewählt wurde, und durchschaut Graf Almavivas Plan, sie auf seine Reise nach London mitzunehmen. Sie reagiert schnell genug, um Cherubinos Entkommen aus der Kammer der Gräfin zu vertuschen. Sie findet die Mittel, Figaros Schulden bei Marcellina zu begleichen. Sie ist es auch, die seinen riskanten Plan, den Grafen durch die nächtliche Verkleidung im Garten zu täuschen, verwirft und durch ihre eigene, klügere List ersetzt. Susannas angeborener Verstand ergänzt Figaros erworbene Findigkeit.

In der Tat könnte man – trotz des Titels – leicht Susanna als die Hauptfigur dieser Oper sehen. Jedenfalls fällt ihr die längste Rolle zu, geht man nach der Zahl der Noten, doch zählt hier nicht die bloße Quantität. Einer der wunderbarsten Aspekte von Mozarts Genie – nicht nur in dieser Oper – ist seine Fähigkeit, Frauenrollen ebenso überzeugend zu entwerfen

und auszuschmücken wie die von Männern. Diese Begabung teilt er mit nur wenigen anderen männlichen Komponisten, und bei männlichen Schriftstellern verhält es sich kaum anders. Die idealisierte Frau, das "Ewigweibliche" Goethes, ist der Fluch so mancher Oper und manchen literarischen Werks des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts. Im zwanzigsten Jahrhundert teilen Janáček und Berg Mozarts wertvolle Begabung, sonst jedoch kaum jemand.

Um die vorrevolutionären Elemente in *Die Hochzeit des Figaro* wird leicht zuviel Aufhebens gemacht. Figaros Cavatina im Ersten Akt, "Se vuol ballare, signor contino" ("Will einst das Gräflin ein Tänzchen wagen" – "So, little master, you're dressed to go dancing") mag wie ein Schlachtruf klingen und seine Konfrontation mit dem Grafen vor den Tanzszenen im Dritten Akt ("Das mag sein. Ich mache keine Vorwürfe, wo ich mir meiner Sache nicht sicher bin" – "Maybe so. I'm not one to accuse when I don't know") könnte den Zusammenbruch der gesellschaftlichen Ordnung vorausdeuten. Aber noch ist es nicht so weit. Es ist zu leicht, im Nachhinein klug zu sein, wie es auch Napoleon war, als er Figaros aufrührerische Herausforderung "Sie haben sich die Mühe

gemacht, geboren zu werden, weiter nichts" als "die Revolution in Aktion" beschrieb. Beaumarchais in Paris und nach ihm Mozart in Wien spielen mit dem Feuer, aber noch ist es Spiel.

Das von Joseph Kerman in seiner Studie *Opera as Drama* eloquent formulierte kontrarevolutionäre Argument besagt, daß die wahren Helden dieser Oper der Graf und die Gräfin sind. Auch wenn diese These nicht ganz zu überzeugen vermag, ist doch zutreffend, daß die Oper ebenso eine Prüfung ihrer vor zwei Jahren geschlossenen Ehe ist wie der bevorstehenden Hochzeit von Figaro und Susanna. Der Graf mag zwar vordergründig der "Bösewicht" des Stücks sein, sollte aber doch als sympathische Figur dargestellt werden. Die anfänglich passive und larmoyante Gräfin gewinnt im Dritten Akt ihre Kraft und Entscheidungsfähigkeit zurück und fungiert bei den dramatischen Entwicklungen des Vierten Akts als Katalysator. Die durch die ihrem irrenden Gatten vergebende Gräfin ("Wie könnt ich dir zürnen? Mein Herz spricht für dich" – "I'm far more forgiving, and so I say yes") herbeigeführte Lösung des Konflikts und ihre – zumindest zeitweilige – Versöhnung bilden den emotionalen Höhepunkt der Oper.

Peter Hall hat einmal in einem Radio-Interview in unvergesslicher Weise die heilsame Wirkung des großen Vergebungsensembles beschrieben, in dem sich alle Mitwirkenden nach dem Einschreiten der Gräfin zusammenfinden; besonders betonte er den kraftvollen Effekt der kurzen abwärtschreitenden Orchesterpassage zwischen dem Ensemble und dem abschließenden Chor, der die Lustbarkeiten eröffnet – ein flüchtiger Augenblick, in dem alle Figuren in den Abgrund des Tragischen blicken. Untreue und Verrat könnten diese Ehen so leicht zerstören. Es gibt einen furchtbaren Moment der Selbsterkenntnis, dann wendet man sich ab und zieht es vor, dieses Wissen um des vergänglichen Vergnügens willen zu ignorieren. Der Grat zwischen Tragödie und Komödie ist sehr schmal.

Es ist diese Balance zwischen den beiden Polen, die Mozart so überaus realistisch erscheinen lassen und seine Opern so glaubwürdig machen. Sein besonderer Scharfblick zeigt sich bereits in *La finta giardiniera*, die Mozart schon mit achtzehn Jahren schrieb, und erreicht ihren Gipfel mit den drei Opern zu Libretti von Lorenzo Da Ponte, von denen *Die Hochzeit des Figaro* die

erste ist. Am ausgewogensten zeigt sich diese Balance in der Auflösung des Konflikts, doch eigentlich durchzieht sie die gesamte Oper. Besonders deutlich und geradezu humorvoll erscheint sie in Cherubinos Arie im Ersten Akt “Non so più, cosa son, cosa faccio” (“Ich weiß nicht, was ich bin, was ich mache” – “I don’t know what it is that I’m feeling”). Zu spüren sein sollte sie auch in der teils schmerzvollen, teils erfreuten Reaktion auf Figaros militärische Arie “Non più andrai” am Ende des Ersten Akts (“Du wirst nicht mehr umherstreichen” – “Here’s an end to your life as a rover”). Die Herrlichkeiten, die Cherubino erwarten, sind nicht eigentlich militärischer Art.

Obwohl *Die Hochzeit des Figaro* offiziell aus vier Akten besteht, die den vier Orten der Handlung entsprechen, ist das Werk aus musikalischer Sicht als Zweiakter konzipiert, ähnlich den anderen beiden Da-Ponte-Opern *Don Giovanni* und *Così fan tutte*. In diesen Opern endet jede Hälfte mit einem ausgedehnten Finale – ein musikalisches Mittel der Handlungsgestaltung, das Mozart zum ersten Mal bereits in *La finta giardiniera* einsetzte, im Finale des Zweiten Akts des *Figaro* jedoch zu höchster Perfektion entwickelte. Zugleich liegt hier ein

herausragendes Beispiel des Mozartschen Sinns für Ausgewogenheit vor. Von dem Moment an, als der Graf und die Gräfin in ihr Schlafzimmer zurückkehren und das eigentliche Finale beginnt, könnte die Situation sich gleichermaßen zur Tragödie wie zur Komödie entwickeln. Tatsächlich setzt sich immer wieder der Humor durch – gelegentlich voller Heiterkeit, manchmal possenhafte –, trotzdem aber geht es um Leben und Tod.

Walter Legge hat das Finale des Zweiten Akt wie folgt beschrieben: “Aus musikalischer Sicht ist dies das meisterhafteste Ensemble, nicht nur in dieser Oper, sondern bei Mozart überhaupt. Nahezu zwanzig Minuten lang fließt die Musik ununterbrochen dahin, wobei sie auf jede Drehung und Wendung der komplexen, sich rasch entfaltenden Komödie reagiert und zugleich die Handlung und die verschiedensten Emotionen der Beteiligten erhellt, reflektiert und kommentiert. Schritt für Schritt die Handlung begleitend, intensiviert die Musik die Überraschungen und vertieft die Subtilitäten, zugleich aber wirft sie über das ganze recht niedere Intrigenspiel ein magisches Gewand der bezauberndsten Klänge, die dem Geschehen zwar getreulich folgen, dieses aber in das reinste Gold der Schönheit transformieren.”

Jeder wird sich aus diesem sublimeren Finale seine Lieblingspassage auswählen. Meine ist die zeitweilige Waffenruhe zwischen den Streitenden (allerdings kaum geteilt von dem wild intrigierenden Grafen) vor dem Auftauchen Antonios mit seinen zerbrochenen Blumentöpfen. Die Gräfin, Susanna und Figaro singen “Deh signor, noi contrastate” (“O Herr, widersetzt Euch nicht” – “Hear my pleading, I implore you, be compassionate I pray”), und während der Graf sich fragt, wo Marcellina bleibt, wird ihr Flehen von Hörnern und Bässen im Forte verstärkt. Dieser kurze Moment erhoffter Versöhnung nimmt auf magische Weise das Ende der Oper vorweg.

Nach Meinung des irischen Tenors Michael Kelly, der in der Uraufführung den Basilio und den Curzio spielte, war Mozarts Lieblingsnummer das Sextett im Dritten Akt. In der Tat kann dieses Stück mit seinen überraschenden Enthüllungen und Wendungen eine der komischsten Passagen der gesamten Oper sein; doch auch hier sind Susannas Wut und Verwirrung bitterer Ernst. Es gibt eine schöne Stelle nach dem Ende des Sextetts, als der Graf und Curzio sich hastig zurückgezogen haben. Susanna fragt die Zurückbleibenden: “Wer könnte glücklicher

sein als ich?“ – “Who could be happier than I am?“, worauf Figaro, Bartolo und Marcellina jeder für sich antworten: “Ich” (“I am”). Darauf singt das Quartett zusammen in dichter Harmonie und im Pianissimo: “Und von mir aus kann der Graf vor Wut platzen” (“And if the Count is furious, well that will serve him right!”). In dieser Passage sollte man nicht nur den komischen Effekt betonen.

Der Vierte Akt ist in einer Aufführung am schwierigsten zu realisieren. Nach den drei im Innern des Schlosses spielenden Akten sollte der Garten die Freiheit und Freizügigkeit der frischen Luft atmen. Diese versteckten Plätze unter den Pinien sind wie Shakespeares Wald vor den Toren Athens, wo erotische Träume wahr werden können. Sobald das eigentliche Finale mit Cherubinos “Leise, ganz leise tret’ ich ihr näher, die Zeit wird nicht verloren sein” (“I’ll approach her, oh so softly, seize the moment while I may”) beginnt, schreitet das Geschehen problemlos fort, die erste Hälfte dieses Aktes hingegen besteht aus einer Anhäufung von kontemplativen Arien, die die Handlung in keiner Weise vorantreiben. Figaros Tirade gegen die Frauen (“Ach, öffnet doch eure Augen, ihr unvorsichtigen und torhaften Männer” – “You foolish slaves of Cupid”) und Susannas zweideutige

ausgerichtetes Liebeslied (“Komm schnell, zögere nicht, du schöne Freude” – “Come quickly my beloved”) sind natürlich von zentraler Bedeutung, Marcellinas und Basilios Gleichnisarien hingegen könnten marginal erscheinen. Eigentlich sind dies interessante und aufschlußreiche Stücke. Marcellinas Arie stattet ihren Charakter mit Zügen der weiblichen Entrüstung ihrer großen Rede im Dritten Akt von Beaumarchais’ Schauspiel aus. Bei Basilios “Eselshaut“-Anekdote handelt es sich um eine eher konventionelle Gleichnisarie, die jedoch zum Schluß noch eine traurig-ironische Wendung nimmt. Beide Stücke verleihen ihren Figuren zusätzliche Facetten und bereichern die dramatische Handlung, doch sie kommen zu spät. Zum Ende des Abends wartet der Zuschauer ungeduldig auf die Lösung des Konflikts. Bei Aufführungen ist es daher angebracht, diese beiden Arien zu streichen.

Diese Streichung betont Figaros eigenen Moment tragischen Innehaltens, als sein optimistisches Naturell zum ersten Mal überwältigt zu werden droht. Großartiger noch als seine wütende Arie ist die schon mitten im Finale stehende kurze Passage, wo das Tempo sich zum *Larghetto* im 3/4-Takt verlangsamt, das helle G-Dur dem getragenen

Es-Dur weicht (der Tonart, in der zu Beginn auch die klagende Cavatina “Porgi amor” – “Gewähre, Amor” (“Hear my prayer”) der Gräfin steht) und die Klarinetten zurückkehren. Unter dem stillen und gelassenen Nachthimmel, an dem eng umschlungen Venus und Mars erscheinen, nimmt Figaro ein weiteres Mal die Fäden des Dramas in die Hand und stellt sich seinem persönlichen Schicksal. Dieser magische Augenblick dauert nur zwölf Takte, bevor Figaro erneut in die atemberaubenden Wirren der Auflösung verstrickt wird. Doch ganz gleich was sich danach abspielt und ungeachtet der dramatischen Enthüllung durch die Gräfin – dieser Augenblick genügt, ihm seine Oper zurückzugeben und seine Ehe zu retten.

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### Synopse

Einige Jahre vor Beginn der Oper hat Graf Almaviva seine Rosina umworben und geheiratet. Sie war das reiche Mündel eines Dr. Bartolo aus Sevilla, der die Absicht gehegt hatte, sie selbst zu ehelichen, um an ihr Geld zu kommen. Der Graf lebt nun in einiger Entfernung von Sevilla auf seinem Familiensitz; Figaro ist sein Kammerdiener.

Figaro selbst soll am heutigen Tage Susanna heiraten, die Kammerzofe Rosinas, der Gräfin Almaviva.

### COMPACT DISC ONE

#### Erster Akt

Der erste Akt spielt am frühen Morgen in einem kleinen Bedienstetenzimmer, das Figaro und Susanna als ihr zukünftiges Ehegemach zugewiesen worden ist. Die rechte Türe führt zum großen Saal des Schlosses, die mittlere zu den Privatgemächern der Gräfin und die linke zu denen des Grafen. [1] Nach der Ouvertüre sehen wir Susanna, die ihren hochzeitlichen Kopfschmuck anfertigt. [2] Figaro ist damit beschäftigt, auszumessen, wo das Bett stehen könnte, [3] – [5] doch als Susanna sieht, was er da tut, erklärt sie, der Raum käme keinesfalls in Frage! Nicht nur dient er als allgemeiner Durchgang, sondern, wichtiger noch, das Zimmer ist viel zu leicht zugänglich für den Grafen, der ihr nachstellt und gerne wie früher Anspruch auf sein Recht als Feudalherr erheben würde. Figaro ist baß erstaunt, als er hört, daß der Graf sich für sie interessiert. Sie erwidert, er habe doch wohl kaum geglaubt, der Graf habe ihnen aus Zuneigung zu *ihm* eine Mitgift versprochen. [6] – [7] Während

die Gräfin sie zu sich ruft, verleiht Figaro seinen eifersüchtigen Gedanken Ausdruck: Sollte der Graf versuchen, Susanna zu verführen, wird Figaro alles daransetzen, seine Pläne zu durchkreuzen.

[8] – [9] Dr. Bartolo und seine Haushälterin Marcellina sind aus Sevilla eingetroffen. Marcellina hat Figaro Geld geliehen und damit die Bedingung verknüpft, daß er sie heiraten muß, wenn er das Geld nicht zurückzahlen kann. Bevor dieses nicht erstattet ist, ist Figaro daher offensichtlich nicht in der Lage, jemand anderen zu heiraten. Marcellina bittet Dr. Bartolo um Hilfe; dieser erwidert, daß er mehr als willens sei, sich an Figaro zu rächen.

[10] – [11] Susanna kehrt zurück und indem Marcellina sich entfernt, tauschen die beiden noch einige geharnischte Komplimente aus.

[12] Der Pagenjunge Cherubino erscheint und bittet Susanna um Rat und Hilfe. Der Graf hat ihn erwischt, als er mit der Gärtnerochter Barbarina flirtete, und wenn die Gräfin nicht dazu gebracht werden kann, sich für ihn einzusetzen, soll er weggeschickt werden und wird nie mehr seine liebe Susanna sehen und auch nicht die Herrin, die er doch heimlich von ferne liebt. Als Susanna ihr Erstaunen über soviel Liebe äußert, [13] erklärt Cherubino ihr, daß er in die Liebe verliebt sei

und überreicht ihr ein Lied, das er für die Gräfin geschrieben hat.

[14] Der Graf tritt auf, woraufhin Cherubino sich versteckt. Der Graf flirtet mit Susanna, seine Avancen werden jedoch von dem Musiklehrer Don Basilio unterbrochen.

[15] Daraufhin versteckt sich auch der Graf. Als er jedoch vernimmt, was Basilio über Cherubinos Aufmerksamkeiten gegenüber der Gräfin zu sagen hat, kommt er aus seinem Versteck hervor [16] – [17] und droht, Cherubino zu entlassen. Er erzählt noch einmal, wie er den Jungen in seinem Versteck unter der Tischdecke in Barbarinas Häuschen entdeckte. Indem er demonstriert, wie es ihm gelang, seinen Pagen ausfindig zu machen, wird Cherubino ein weiteres Mal entdeckt. Der Graf begreift, daß Cherubino alles eben zu Susanna Gesagte mitangehört hat.

[18] – [20] Nun erscheint Figaro mit seinen Freunden und bittet den Grafen, Susanna ihren jungfräulichen Brautschmuck zu präsentieren, was dieser jedoch bis zur offiziellen Zeremonie aufschieben möchte.

[21] Um Cherubino loszuwerden, gibt der Graf im eine Stellung in seinem Regiment und schickt ihn nach Sevilla. [22] Figaro wünscht Cherubino spöttisch viel Glück in seiner zukünftigen militärischen Laufbahn.

## COMPACT DISC TWO

### Zweiter Akt

Der zweite Akt spielt in den Gemächern der Gräfin. Die rechte Tür führt zur Haupttreppe, die in der Mitte zu Susannas Zimmer und die linke zu einer kleinen Ankleidekammer. In der gegenüberliegenden Wand befindet sich ein Fenster.

Susanna hat der Gräfin soeben ihr Frühstückstablett gebracht.

[1] Rosina, jetzt Gräfin Almaviva, sehnt sich danach, die Liebe ihres treulosen Herrn zurückzugewinnen.

[2] Susanna kehrt zurück. Sie hat der Gräfin von der Verlegenheit des Grafen berichtet und fügt nun hinzu, daß Figaro ihm durch Basilio einen anonymen Brief hat zukommen lassen, der ihm verrät, daß die Gräfin heute Abend im Garten ein Stelldichein mit einem Liebhaber hat. Dabei handelt es sich um eine Finte, die ihn davon abhalten soll, Susanna nachzustellen.

Die Gräfin weist darauf hin, daß damit aber noch nicht Marcellinas drohende Intervention abgewendet ist. Susanna hat eine Idee: Sie selbst wird mit dem Grafen ein Stelldichein vereinbaren, dann aber den als Susanna verkleideten Cherubino hinschicken. Die

Gräfin könnte dann die beiden überraschen, und damit geriete der Graf in eine Lage, in der er der Heirat einfach zustimmen müsse.

[3] – [4] Cherubino kommt herein, um der Gräfin sein Lied vorzusingen.

[5] – [6] Der Plan wird ihm erläutert und Susanna arrangiert eine Generalprobe, wobei sie als erstes die Tür verschließt. Während er sich umzieht, läßt Cherubino seinen Anstellungsbrief fallen und die Gräfin bemerkt, daß dieser nicht versiegelt ist. Susanna beginnt, Cherubino als Mädchen zu verkleiden.

Die Gräfin schickt Susanna, eine ihrer eigenen Hauben zu holen. [7] An der rechten Tür ist ein Klopfen zu hören; der Graf ist unerwartet zurückgekehrt. Cherubino wird rasch in die Ankleidekammer geschoben und schließt sich ein. [8] Die Gräfin öffnet die rechte Türe und erklärt, sie habe gerade ein Kleid anprobiert und sich dabei mit Susanna unterhalten, die soeben hinausgegangen ist. Der Graf zeigt ihr Figaros anonymen Brief, in diesem Augenblick ist jedoch aus der Kammer ein Geräusch zu hören – Cherubino hat irgendetwas umgeworfen. Der Graf verlangt zu wissen, wer dort drinnen ist. Die Gräfin erwidert, das sei Susanna, woraufhin der Graf dieser befiehlt, die Tür zu öffnen oder etwas

zu sagen, was die Gräfin jedoch verbietet. Inzwischen kehrt Susanna unbemerkt in den Raum zurück, begreift die Situation und versteckt sich.

[9] – [10] Da die Gräfin sich weigert, die Kammer zu öffnen, verschließt der Graf sämtliche Türen und geht Werkzeug holen, um die verschlossene Tür gewaltsam aufzubrechen; die Gräfin nimmt er mit.

[11] Susanna überredet Cherubino, seine Tür zu öffnen. Da alle übrigen Ausgänge verschlossen sind, springt er aus dem Fenster. [12] Susanna schließt sich in der Kammer ein.

[13] Der Graf und die Gräfin kehren zurück und die Gräfin gesteht, daß sie für den Abend eine Überraschung geplant habe und daß sich in Wirklichkeit der Cherubino in der Kammer befinde. In den Augen des Grafen scheint dies den anonymen Brief zu bestätigen. [14] Der Graf ruft Cherubino zu, er möge herauskommen. Die Gräfin bittet ihn, nicht verärgert zu sein, wenn Cherubino ein wenig zerzaust aussehe, er sei dabei gewesen, sich als Mädchen zu verkleiden. Der Graf klagt seine Frau der Untreue an und will sich gerade an der Tür zu schaffen machen, [15] – [16] als Susanna diese öffnet und austritt. Graf und Gräfin sind sprachlos; der Graf empfindet diesen Scherz als ebenso herzlos wie den

anonymen Brief, den, wie sie ihm gestehen, Figaro geschrieben und Basilio überbracht hat. Er bittet seine Frau um Vergebung.

[17] Figaro erscheint und verkündet, daß die Hochzeitsvorbereitungen nun nahezu abgeschlossen sind, doch der Graf fragt ihn, ob er den anonymen Brief geschrieben habe. Figaro streitet dies natürlich ab, obwohl Susanna und die Gräfin ihm die richtige Antwort zuflüstern.

[18] Der Gärtner Antonio tritt auf, um sich darüber zu beklagen, daß jemand aus dem Fenster gesprungen ist und seine Blumen zerstört hat. Figaro sagt, das sei er gewesen; Antonio glaubt, daß es Cherubino war, aber der, sagt Figaro, ist bereits nach Sevilla abgereist. Der Graf fragt Figaro, warum er gesprungen sei. Figaro erwidert, er habe auf Susanna gewartet, als er ein großes Getöse vernommen habe, der Grafen habe gebrüllt, und da ihm der anonyme Brief eingefallen sei (den zu schreiben er gerade noch abgestritten hat), habe er es mit der Angst bekommen und sei aus dem Fenster gesprungen. Antonio fragt, ob die auf den Boden gefallenen Papiere denn dann ihm gehören, doch der Graf greift nach ihnen und fordert Figaro auf, sie zu identifizieren. Die Gräfin erkennt Cherubinos Einstellungsbrief und gibt diese Information

an Figaro weiter, der prompt erklärt, es handele sich um den Kontrakt des Pagen, den er noch versiegeln solle.

[19] Marcellina, Dr. Bartolo und Don Basilio erscheinen, um Marcellinas Anklage gegen Figaro vorzubringen. Mit der hierdurch gestifteten Verwirrung endet der Akt.

#### COMPACT DISC THREE

#### Dritter Akt

Der Dritte Akt spielt im großen Saal, wo alle frei kommen und gehen können. Es ist später Nachmittag.

[1] Der Graf versucht, sich die Widersprüche der jüngsten Ereignisse zu erklären. [2] – [4] Die Gräfin schickt Susanna zu ihm, um für den Abend ein Treffen zu vereinbaren. Sie beabsichtigt, selbst an Susannas Stelle zu erscheinen, da Cherubino ja inzwischen nicht mehr da ist. Susanna gibt vor, sich das Riechsatz des Grafen borgen zu wollen und trifft bei dieser Gelegenheit die Verabredung. [5] Beim Hinausgehen vertraut sie Figaro an, daß sie seinen Fall auch ohne Advokaten gewonnen habe.

[6] Unglücklicherweise überhört der Graf ihre Worte. [7] Er explodiert vor Wut darüber, daß seine eigenen Diener ihn übertölpelt haben.

[8] Barbarina überredet Cherubino, sich ihr und den Dorfmadchen anzuschließen, die der Gräfin Blumen überreichen wollen.

[9] – [10] Die Gräfin wartet auf Susanna und singt dabei von wundervollen Augenblicken, die sie in der Vergangenheit mit dem Grafen erlebt hat.

[11] Das Rechtsurteil bestimmt, daß Figaro seine Schulden bezahlen oder Marcellina heiraten muß. Figaro entgegnet, er könne nicht ohne Zustimmung seiner Eltern heiraten, und die sei schwierig zu beschaffen, da er ein Findelkind gewesen sei. Wenn allerdings unter den Anwesenden jemand das Muttermal an seinem Oberarm erkennen könnte ... Marcellina erkennt es – Figaro ist das Kind, das ihr viele Jahre zuvor gestohlen wurde, und sein Vater ist kein anderer als Dr. Bartolo. Ihr Anspruch, Figaro zu heiraten, wird damit nichtig. [12] – [13] Nun erscheint jedoch Susanna, die die Gräfin überredet hat, das für die Begleichung der Schulden notwendige Geld vorzustrecken. Sie sieht, wie Marcellina Figaro umarmt und zieht daraus die falschen Schlüsse, wird aber bald in die Versöhnung einbezogen.

[14] Antonio erzählt dem Grafen, daß Cherubino nicht nach Sevilla abgereist ist, sondern sich – als Mädchen verkleidet – im Gärtenhaus befindet!

[15] Susanna nähert sich ihr und berichtet, der Graf habe der Verabredung zugestimmt.

[16] Die Gräfin diktiert ihr eine Nachricht, um einem Treffpunkt zu verabreden. [17] Die Notiz wird mit einer Brosche versiegelt, die der Graf ihr als Zeichen seiner Zustimmung zurücksenden soll.

[18] – [19] Barbarina führt eine Gruppe von Dorfmadchen herein, um der Gräfin Blumen zu überreichen. Unter diesen befindet sich auch der als Mädchen verkleidete Cherubino. Indem die Mädchen ihre Blumen darbieten, fällt der Gräfin auf, daß eines von ihnen sie an jemanden erinnert. [20] Antonio und der Graf erscheinen unerwartet und entlarven dieses Mädchen. Es ist Cherubino. Der Graf bittet die Gräfin um eine Erklärung, doch sie ist ebenso überrascht wie er selbst. Der Graf will Cherubino bestrafen, doch Barbarina erbittet seine Vergebung und zugleich auch die Erlaubnis, Cherubino zu heiraten – als Gegenleistung für dem Grafen in der Vergangenheit erwiesene Gefälligkeiten.

[21] Figaro tritt auf, um den Tanz anzukündigen. Der Graf erklärt ihm, Cherubino habe nun zugegeben, aus dem Fenster gesprungen zu sein. Figaro erwidert, das möge schon so sein – wenn ein Mann aus dem Fenster springen könne, so könnten es auch zwei.

[22] – [23] Die doppelte Hochzeitsfeier nimmt ihren Lauf – Figaro und Susanna, Marcellina und Bartolo. Währenddessen steckt Susanna dem Grafen den von ihr geschriebenen Brief zu. Figaro beobachtet, wie der Graf seinen Finger an einer Brosche sticht, die den ihm zugesteckten Brief versiegelt, weiß aber nicht, von wem dieser stammt.

#### Vierter Akt

Schauplatz des Vierten Akts ist der im hellen Mondlicht liegende Garten. In diesem befinden sich mehrere Lauben.

[24] Barbarina hat die Brosche verloren, die der Graf ihr gegeben hat, um sie Susanna zurückzubringen. [25] Figaro und Marcellina erfahren von ihr schon bald die ganze Geschichte. [26] Figaro sinnt auf Rache, während Marcellina Susanna warnen will.

[27] – [28] Figaro hat Basilio, Antonio und Bartolo um Unterstützung gebeten, wenn er die Sache ins Reine bringt.

Barbarina kommt zurück, um ein Stelldichein mit Cherubino wahrzunehmen, [29] – [30] während Figaro wild vor Eifersucht auf Susanna wartet.

[31] – [32] Marcellina bringt Susanna und die Gräfin in den Garten und versteckt sich in einer der Lauben. [33] – [34] Susanna – wissend,

daß Figaro sie belauscht – rächt sich für seine Verdächtigung, indem sie vorgibt, auf den Grafen zu warten.

[35] – [36] Indem die Gräfin an Susannas Stelle schlüpft, taucht Cherubino auf, um seine Verabredung mit Barbarina einzuhalten; als er jedoch – wie er glaubt – Susanna sieht, macht er sich davon. [37] Cherubino versucht nun, Susanna zu küssen, doch der Graf unterbricht ihn. Er will Cherubino eine Ohrfeige geben, erwischt jedoch Figaro, der ebenfalls eingreifen wollte. Cherubino versteckt sich in einer der Lauben.

[38] Der Graf macht nun seiner eigenen Frau den Hof, die er für Susanna hält, und gibt ihr einen Diamantring. Figaro versucht den Graf zu vertreiben, und die angebliche Susanna versteckt sich in einer weiteren Laube, während der Graf sich zurückzieht, um sich ihr später erneut zu nähern. [39] Die als Gräfin gekleidete Susanna testet nun Figaro, indem sie mit ihm zu flirten beginnt. Figaro erkennt die Stimme seiner Frau und beschließt, das Spiel mitzuspielen. Das bringt ihm einen kräftigen Hieb ein. [40] Er erklärt – und ihm wird vergeben. Der Graf kehrt nun zurück und Susanna erzählt Figaro, daß er seiner eigenen verkleideten Frau den Hof gemacht habe. Um den Grafen weiter zu täuschen,

flirtet Figaro nun mit der vermeintlichen Gräfin. Der Graf mischt sich ein und die falsche Gräfin versteckt sich in einer Laube.

[41] In Gegenwart von Basilio, Bartolo und Antonio befiehlt der Graf ihr, aus der Laube herauszukommen. Zuerst tauchen Cherubino, Barbarina und Marcellina auf, dann schließlich die vermeintliche Gräfin. Der Graf klagt sie der Untreue an. Sie erbittet seine Vergebung, die er ihr verweigert. Nun erscheint die wirkliche Gräfin und greift ein. Jetzt ist es an dem Grafen, um Vergebung zu bitten, die sie ihm ein weiteres Mal gewährt. Damit endet alles im Guten.

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Übersetzung: Stephanie Wollny

**Christopher Purves** studierte Anglistik am King's College Cambridge, bevor er mit der innovativen Rockgruppe *Harvey and the Wallbangers* von sich reden machte. Als sich die Gruppe 1988 auflöste, nahm er seine Gesangsausbildung bei David Keren, Diane Forlano und Janice Chapman wieder auf.

Hervorzuheben unter seinen Opernrollen sind Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*) an der Welsh National Opera, Scottish Opera und Opera North, Marcello (*La Bohème*) an der Scottish



Opera, Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*), Faninal (*Der Rosenkavalier*) an der Welsh National Opera und Opera North, Podesta (*La gazza ladra*) an der Garsington Opera sowie Siegfried (*Genoveva*) und Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*) an der Opera North. Er schuf die Rolle des Executioner in James Macmillans *Ines de Castro* und ist in Macmillans *Parthenogenesis* bei den Edinburgher Festspielen aufgetreten, wo man ihn auch als Cecil in *Maria Stuarda* unter der Leitung von Sir Charles Mackerras erlebt hat.

Zu seinem Konzertprogramm gehörten Mozarts Messe C-Dur in Aix-en-Provence mit The Sixteen, Strawinskys *Les Noces* mit Philippe Herreweghe in Brüssel, Monteverdis *Vespro della Beate Vergine* mit Richard Hickox, Bachs Messe h-Moll beim Festival de la Chaise-Dieu, Händels *Judas Maccabeus* in Nürnberg und *Saul* mit dem Gabrieli Consort beim Covent Garden Festival und Festival de la Chaise-Dieu, John Taversers *Apocalypse* bei den Proms mit der City of London Sinfonia, die *Johannespassion* mit Paul Goodwin in Madrid, *Messiah* mit dem Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Hallé Orchestra und Ulster Orchestra, *Les Mamelles de Térésias* mit der London Sinfonietta unter Sir Simon Rattle, Manoah (*Samson*) mit Harry Christophers, Brittens *War*

*Requiem* und Haydns *Schöpfung* mit dem Ulster Orchestra, *Belshazzar's Feast* mit der English Northern Sinfonia unter Paul Daniel und mit dem Hallé Orchestra sowie Lucifer in Händels *La Resurrezione* für Paul McCreech in Rom, Amsterdam und London. Christopher Purves gab sein Solodebüt beim Aldeburgh Festival im Juni 2004. Für die Chandos-Serie "Opera in English" hat er die Partie des Gottardo (*La gazza ladra*) aufgenommen.

**Rebecca Evans** wurde in Südwest Wales geboren und studierte an der Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Als Opernsängerin hat sie besonders in Amerika viel Beachtung gefunden, so etwa als Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*) an der Santa Fe Opera, Adele (*Die Fledermaus*) an der Chicago Lyric Opera, Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*), Ann Trulove (*The Rake's Progress*) und Adina (*L'elisir d'amore*) an der San Francisco Opera sowie Susanna und Zerlina an der Metropolitan Opera New York. In Europa gastiert sie regelmäßig an der Bayerischen Staatsoper, wo sie Sophie (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Zdenka (*Arabella*), Servilia (*La clemenza di Tito*), Ilia (*Idomeneo*) und Nanetta (*Falstaff*) gesungen hat. Weitere Rollen waren Ilia an der Niederländische Opera und Opéra de Lausanne,

die Titelrolle in *Das schlaue Fuchslein* an der Scottish Opera, Susanna, Ilia, Marzelline (*Fidelio*), Norina (*Don Pasquale*) und Héro (*Béatrice et Bénédict*) an der Welsh National Opera, Romilda (*Xerxes*) an der English National Opera sowie Zerlina, Nanetta und Johanna (*Sweeney Todd*) an der Royal Opera Covent Garden.

Zu ihren umfangreichen Konzertverpflichtungen gehören die BBC Proms und die Edinburgher Festspiele, Galakonzerte mit Andrea Bocelli in Deutschland und mit Luciano Pavarotti in Großbritannien. Sie hat Bachs *Magnificat* mit dem San Francisco Symphony Orchestra unter Michael Tilson Thomas, das *Requiem* von Brahms mit dem Boston Symphony Orchestra bei den Festspielen von Tanglewood und Ravinia und Mahlers Vierte mit dem Sapporo Symphony Orchestra unter Tadaaki Otaka aufgeführt. In Australien ist sie beim Melbourne International Festival und mit dem Australian Chamber Orchestra aufgetreten. Als Recitalkünstlerin hat sie in der Londoner Wigmore Hall sowie bei den Festspielen von Barcelona, Ravinia, Buxton und Belfast gesungen.

Neben zahlreichen anderen Schallplatten hat Rebecca Evans Ilia (*Idomeneo*) für die

Chandos-Serie "Opera in English", Nanetta (*Falstaff*) mit Sir John Eliot Gardiner, eine Reihe von Gilbert-und-Sullivan-Aufnahmen mit Sir Charles Mackerras und eine Soloschallplatte mit italienischen Liedern aufgenommen.

Die aus Sydney stammende **Yvonne Kenny** gab ihr Londoner Operndebüt 1975 als Donizettis *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra*. Nachdem sie den Kathleen Ferrier Wettbewerb gewonnen hatte, kam sie an die Royal Opera Covent Garden, wo sie Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*), Ilia (*Idomeneo*), Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Adina (*L'elisir d'amore*), Liù (*Turandot*), Aspasia (*Mitridate*) und Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*) sang. Internationalen Ruhm errang sie in den großen Händel-Rollen, vor allem Semele und Alcina (Covent Garden und Teatro La Fenice), Romilda (*Xerxes*) an der English National Opera (in London und auf Tournee durch die Sowjetunion) und der Bayerischen Staatsoper, Alcina mit Nicholas McGegan bei den Händel-Festspielen Göttingen sowie Cleopatra (*Giulio Cesare*) und Armida (*Rinaldo*) in Sydney.

Erfolge feierte sie auch an der Wiener Staatsoper (Gräfin (*Capriccio*) und Susanna),

Mailänder Scala (*Pamina*), Deutschen Staatsoper Berlin (Gräfin (*Capriccio*)), Pariser Opéra (Donna Elvira), in Zürich und in Glyndebourne (Donna Elvira und Alice Ford (*Falstaff*)), als Gräfin (*Le nozze di Figaro*) in Washington und an der Bayerischen Staatsoper, Marschallin (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Purcells *The Fairy Queen* und Alice Ford an der English National Opera sowie als Marschallin (unter der Leitung von Sir Charles Mackerras) bei ihrem Debüt an der San Francisco Opera. Sie kehrt regelmäßig nach Australien zurück, wo sie Gilda (*Rigoletto*), Pamina, Susanna, Alcina, Massenets *Manon*, Fiordiligi, Alice Ford, Governess (*The Turn of the Screw*), Gräfin (*Capriccio*) und die Titelrollen in *Maria Stuarda* und *L'incoronazione di Poppea* gesungen hat.

Yvonne Kenny ist konzertant bei den Festspielen von Edinburgh, Salzburg und Aix-en-Provence, in der Carnegie Hall und bei den BBC Proms aufgetreten. Für Chandos hat sie Alice Ford (*Falstaff*), die Marschallin (Auszüge aus *Der Rosenkavalier*) und zwei Recitals mit großen Opernarien aufgenommen, alle in der Reihe "Opera in English", sowie Lennox Berkeleys *A Dinner Engagement* und Dysons *The Canterbury Pilgrims*. Für Opera Rara hat sie an *Ugo conte di Parigi*, *Robinson Crusoe*,

*Emilia di Liverpool*, *Il crociato in Egitto* und *Medea in Corinto* mitgewirkt. 1989 wurde sie für ihre Verdienste um die Musik mit dem Order of Australia geehrt.

**William Dazeley** wurde in Warwickshire geboren und studierte am Jesus College Cambridge. Im Rahmen seiner Gesangsausbildung an der Guildhall School of Music and Drama wurde er unter anderem mit der begehrten Goldmedaille ausgezeichnet. Darüber hinaus gewann er den Decca-Kathleen-Ferrier-Preis 1989, den Gesangswettbewerb der Royal Overseas League 1990, den Richard-Tauber-Preis 1991 und den internationalen Walther-Gruner-Liederwettbewerb 1991.

Als einer der führenden Baritone seiner Generation ist er inzwischen an vielen berühmten Opernhäusern in aller Welt aufgetreten, mit Rollen wie Comte (*Cherubin*), Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) und Mercutio (*Roméo et Juliette*) an der Royal Opera Covent Garden, als Graf (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Figaro (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) und Owen Wingrave mit der Glyndebourne Touring Opera, als Figaro (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) an der Deutschen Staatsoper Berlin, Dr. Faust bei den Salzburger Festspielen und am Châtelet

Théâtre Musical in Paris unter der Leitung von Kent Nagano sowie als Scherasmin (*Oberon*) am Châtelet mit John Eliot Gardiner und in einer konzertanten Aufführung im Londoner Barbican.

Konzerterfolge waren auch die Titelrolle in Schumanns *Faustszenen* auf einer Europatournee mit Philippe Herreweghe, Schumanns *Requiem für Mignon* mit John Eliot Gardiner, Mahlers *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* mit Herreweghe und dem Koninklijk Filharmonisch Orkest van Vlaanderen, Coriglianos *Dylan Thomas* mit Leonard Slatkin und dem BBC Symphony Orchestra sowie das *Weihnachtsoratorium* von Bach mit den Berliner Philharmonikern.

In Welturaufführungen hat er Mahmoud in der John-Adams-Oper *The Death of Klinghoffer* mit dem BBC Symphony Orchestra und Jesus in Harrison Birtwistles *The Last Supper* an der Deutschen Staatsoper Berlin unter der Leitung von Daniel Barenboim gesungen; mit letzterer Inszenierung kam er später auch nach Glyndebourne.

William Dazeley gibt Solokonzerte in der Wigmore Hall und dem Purcell Room (London), St. George's (Bristol) und am Châtelet, und er wird regelmäßig zur

Teilnahme an Festspielen wie Cheltenham, Aix-en-Provence und Saintes eingeladen, begleitet von Spitzenpianisten wie Graham Johnson und Iain Burnside.

**Diana Montague** wurde in Winchester geboren und studierte am Royal Northern College of Music. Seit ihrem Debüt als Zerlina mit der Glyndebourne Touring Opera ist sie an vielen namhaften Opernhäusern – Royal Opera Covent Garden, Metropolitan Opera New York, Théâtre de la Monnaie Brüssel, Opéra national de Paris-Bastille, Teatro Colón Buenos Aires – sowie bei den Bayreuther und Salzburger Festspielen aufgetreten.

Ihr Repertoire umfasst die wichtigen Rollen für Mezzosopran in Opern von Mozart, Gluck, Strauss, Rossini, Bellini und Berlioz, und zu ihren Verpflichtungen gehörten *Benvenuto Cellini* in Rom, *Iphigénie en Tauride* in Buenos Aires, Madrid und an der Welsh National Opera, *Albert Herring*, *Le nozze di Figaro* und Andromaca in Rossinis *Ermione* in Glyndebourne, *Le Comte Ory* in Lausanne, Rom und Glyndebourne, Proserpina in Monteverdis *Orfeo* in Amsterdam, *Ariadne auf Naxos* in Lissabon, Marguerite (*La Damnation de Faust*) in Genf, Minerva (*Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*) in Amsterdam und Sydney, Meg

Page (*Falstaff*), *Die verkaufte Braut* und *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* an der Royal Opera Covent Garden, Junon in Rameaus *Platée* mit der Royal Opera bei den Edinburger Festspielen und in London, Oktavian (*Der Rosenkavalier*) an der English National Opera, in Bilbao und am Teatro Real in Madrid, Marguerite in Wien und *Le nozze di Figaro* an La Monnaie.

Diana Montague hat zahlreiche Schallplatten aufgenommen, u.a. Monteverdis *Orfeo*, *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, *Norma*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Iphigénie en Tauride*, für Opera Rara *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra*, *Zoraida di Granata* und *Il crociato in Egitto* sowie für die Chandos-Serie "Opera in English" *Idomeneo*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, Oktavian in *Der Rosenkavalier* (Auszüge), *Faust* und zwei Recitals mit großen Opernarien.

**Frances McCafferty** wurde in Edinburgh geboren und studierte an der Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. Nach einigen Jahren als Gesangslehrerin trat sie der D'Oyly Carte Opera Company bei, mit der sie alle großen Altrollen in den Gilbert-und Sullivan-Opern sang und *Patience*, *Orpheus in the Underworld* und *HMS Pinafore* auf Schallplatte aufnahm.

Andere Rollen waren Katisha (*The Mikado*) an der English National Opera, Soloka (*Die Pantöffelchen*) in Garsington, Auntie (*Peter Grimes*) an der niederländischen Nationale Reisopera und Hata (*Die verkaufte Braut*) in Glyndebourne. Weitere Stationen waren die New Israeli Opera, Staatsoper Stuttgart, Opera Theatre Company, Glyndebourne Touring Opera sowie die Edinburger Festspiele und Festivals in Irland und der Schweiz. Sie gastiert regelmäßig an der Opera North und der Royal Opera Covent Garden, wo sie die Rolle der Yeta Zimmerman in der Welturaufführung von Nicholas Maws *Sophie's Choice* sang – eine von Simon Rattle dirigierte Aufführung unter der Regie von Trevor Nunn, die von der BBC als Funk- und Fernseh-Livesendung ausgestrahlt wurde. Konzertauftritte hat sie mit dem RTE Concert Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, Ulster Orchestra, Singapore Symphony Orchestra und BBC Concert Orchestra gegeben.

Am Teatro La Fenice in Venedig debütierte sie als Katisha (*The Mikado*). Sie hat Madame Popova (*The Bear*) beim Festival von Cerniers in der Schweiz und Amme (*Boris Godunow*) an der Royal Opera Covent Garden gesungen.

Nach seinem Studium an der Universität London und am Trinity College of Music gewann **Jonathan Veira** 1996 den Sir Peter Pears Gesangswettbewerb und wurde bei seiner weiteren Ausbildung am National Opera Studio durch die Glyndebourne Festival Opera und die Friends of Covent Garden unterstützt.

Jonathan Veira ist an allen großen britischen Opernhäusern aufgetreten: Royal Opera, English National Opera, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Scottish Opera, Welsh National Opera, Garsington Opera und Opera Northern Ireland. Zu seinen Rollen gehörten dabei Bankier/Theaterdirektor (*Lulu*), Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*), Harašta (*Das schlaue Fuchslein*), Dr. Kolenatý (*Die Sache Makropulos*), Baron Mirko Zeta (*Die lustige Witwe*), Tonio (*Pagliacci*), Leporello (*Don Giovanni*), Warlaam (*Boris Godunow*), Calchas (*La Belle Hélène*), Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*), Mesner (*Tosca*), Mustafa (*L'italiana in Algeri*) und Keçal (*Die verkaufte Braut*).

International reüssierte er als Doctor (*Vanessa*) an der Opéra du Rhin, Schaunard (Leoncavallos *La Bohème*) beim Wexford Festival, Leporello (*Don Giovanni*) und Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*) an der Opera New Zealand, Dr. Bartolo (*Le nozze di Figaro*) an der Opéra de Nice, in Zürich, Glyndebourne

und an der Opéra de Montpellier sowie als Claggart (*Billy Budd*), Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*) und *Falstaff* an Den Kongelige Opera Kopenhagen.

**John Graham-Hall** studierte am King's College Cambridge und am Royal College of Music. Er ist mit allen namhaften Opernensembles Großbritanniens aufgetreten, so etwa als Albert Herring (Royal Opera Covent Garden), Kudrjásý (*Katja Kabanowa*), Flute (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) und Bob Boles (*Peter Grimes*) in Glyndebourne, als Don Basilio, Monostatos, Lysander (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Alwa (*Lulu*) und Herodes (*Salome*) an der English National Opera, Cassio (*Otello*) an der Welsh National Opera, Eisenstein, Lehrer (*Das schlaue Fuchslein*) an der Scottish Opera sowie Aschenbach (*Death in Venice*), Lysander, Albert Herring und Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*) mit der Glyndebourne Touring Opera.

Weitere Rollen waren Bob Boles (Niederlandse Opera), Basilio (La Monnaie), die Titelrolle in Pascal Dusapins neuer Oper *Perela, L'Homme de fumée* an der Opéra de Paris-Bastille und in Montpellier. An der English National Opera, der er als erster Tenor angehörte, sang er auch Sylvester (*The Silver*

*Tassie*), Goro (*Madam Butterfly*), Triquet (*Eugen Onegin*), Monostatos (*Die Zauberflöte*), Mime (*Das Rheingold*) und Alwa (*Lulu*).

John Graham-Hall hat mit vielen berühmten Dirigenten zusammengearbeitet, u.a. Haitink, Harnoncourt, Boulez, Andrew Davis, Tate, Rattle, Gardiner und Abbado. Seine Konzertkarriere hat ihn durch ganz Europa geführt, er hat mit allen namhaften britischen Orchestern konzertiert und ist in London häufig im Barbican und in der Festival Hall aufgetreten. Zu seinen Schallplattenaufnahmen für Chandos gehören *The Poisoned Kiss* von Vaughan Williams, *Peter Grimes* und, in der Reihe "Opera in English", *The Thieving Magpie* und Bergs *Wozzeck*.

**Graeme Danby** wurde in County Durham geboren und studierte an der Royal Academy of Music in London. Seine langjährige Wirken an der English National Opera fand Ausdruck in Rollen wie Lorenzo in Bellinis *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, Pimen (*Boris Godunow*), Don Basilio (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*), Somnus (*Semele*), Quince (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Collatinus (*The Rape of Lucretia*), Arkel (*Pelléas et Mélisande*) und Poo-Bah (*The Mikado*).

Er debütierte an der Royal Opera Covent Garden in *La traviata* und in Glyndebourne als Antonio (*Le nozze di Figaro*). Weitere Rollen waren Bartolo (*Le nozze di Figaro*) an der Opera North und beim Garsington Festival, Collatinus beim Buxton Festival sowie Bosun (*Billy Budd*) und Masetto (*Don Giovanni*) an der Scottish Opera. Konzertant ist er in Beethovens Neunter und Verdis *Requiem* in der Royal Albert Hall aufgetreten, in Mahlers Achter in der Royal Festival Hall und in *Iolanthe* in der Bridgewater Hall Manchester.

**Sarah Tynan** wurde in London geboren und studierte am Royal Northern College of Music und an der Royal Academy of Music (bei Penelope Mackay), wo sie mit der Queen's Commendation for Excellence ausgezeichnet wurde.

Zu ihren Opernrollen gehören Pretty Polly in Birtwistles *Punch and Judy* am Teatro Nacional S. João in Porto, Governess in Britten's *Turn of the Screw* auf einer Russland-Tournee der Kulturorganisation British Council, Elsie Mainard (*The Yeomen of the Guard*) und Gianetta (*The Gondoliers*) an der Phoenix Opera sowie Barbarina an der Opera Holland Park. An der RAM sang sie die

Titelrolle in *Das schlaue Fuchslein* (mit Sir Charles Mackerras) und Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*) (mit Sir Colin Davis).

Sie debütierte an der Welsh National Opera als Iphis in Händels *Jephtha*, sang Eleanora in Salieris *Prima la musica* und Mlle. Silberklang in Mozarts *Der Schauspieldirektor* mit der City of London Sinfonia/Richard Hickox und Mozarts *Requiem* mit Sir Roger Norrington beim Spitalfields Festival. Sarah Tynan wird von der National Opera im Rahmen des Nachwuchsförderprogramms unterstützt.

**Stuart Kale** gilt auf der internationalen Opernszene als einer der besten singenden Schauspieler. Das Repertoire dieses Vollblutmusikers ist denkbar breit gefächert und reicht von Monteverdi bis Messiaen. Er begann seine Karriere an der Welsh National Opera, bevor er der English National Opera beitrug, wo er in seinen acht Jahren u.a. Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*), Michael in Martinůs *Julietta*, Alfred (*Die Fledermaus*) und Nanki-Poo in Jonathan Millers Inszenierung von *The Mikado* sang. 1987 leitete er seine blühende Karriere als freischaffender Sänger mit dem Hauptmann (*Wozzeck*) an der Opéra du Rhin in Straßburg und in Nancy ein, bevor

er als Herodes (*Salome*) an der English National Opera gastierte.

Bedeutende Rollen waren der Oberpriester in *Idomeneo* an der Royal Opera Covent Garden, Hauptmann (*Wozzeck*) in San Francisco, Genf, Zürich, Montpellier, Bordeaux und Bologna, Schuiski (*Boris Godunow*) in Straßburg, Bordeaux und Montpellier, Quint (*The Turn of the Screw*) und Truffaldino (*The Love for Three Oranges*) an der English National Opera, Sinowi (*Lady Macbeth von Mzensk*) in Toulouse und Marseille, Valzacchi und die drei Tenorrollen von *Lulu* am Châtelet Théâtre Musical in Paris, Aeghiste in Karlsruhe, Bob Boles in München, Covent Garden, Genua und Straßburg, Captain Vere (*Billy Budd*) in Köln sowie Gregor (*Die Sache Makropulos*) und Herodes in Straßburg.

Für die Chandos-Serie "Opera in English" hat er *Boris Godunov* (Auszüge), *Madam Butterfly*, *Otello*, *Falstaff*, *Wozzeck* und *The Thieving Magpie* aufgenommen.

Geoffrey Mitchells Gesangskarriere hat ihm ein bemerkenswert breitgefächertes Repertoire von der alten bis zur neuen Musik beschert und ihn nach Skandinavien, Deutschland, in die ehemalige Tschechoslowakei, nach Kanada

und Australasien geführt. Nachdem er bei der BBC erste Dirigiererfahrungen gesammelt hatte, begann er mit eigenen Sängern zu arbeiten und gründete den **Geoffrey Mitchell Choir**. Aus ersten Aufnahmen entwickelte sich eine langfristige Zusammenarbeit des Chors mit Opera Rara, für die er über dreißig Tonträger aufgenommen hat. Der Chor genießt wachsendes Ansehen und ist bei der BBC und internationalen Plattenfirmen gefragt. Für Chandos hat der Geoffrey Mitchell Choir an zahlreichen Aufnahmen der hervorragend kritisierten Reihe Opera in English unter der Schirmherrschaft der Peter Moores Foundation teilgenommen.

Das **Philharmonia Orchestra**, eines der großen Orchester der Welt, steht nun bereits im sechsten Jahr unter der Leitung seines berühmten deutschen Chefdirigenten Christoph von Dohnányi. Er setzt eine Tradition fort, die mit Otto Klemperer begann und über Lorin Maazel (Erster Gastdirigent), Riccardo Muti (Chefdirigent und Musikalischer Leiter), Giuseppe Sinopoli (Musikalischer Leiter) bis zu Kurt Sanderling (Emeritierter Dirigent), Vladimir Ashkenazy (Ehrendirigent) und Sir Charles Mackerras (Hauptgastdirigent) führt, aber auch die

Zusammenarbeit mit Wilhelm Furtwängler, Richard Strauss, Arturo Toscanini, Guido Cantelli, Herbert von Karajan und Carlo Maria Giulini einbezog. Das Orchester verpflichtet weiterhin Gastdirigenten und Solisten von Weltrang, während einige der größten europäischen Nachwuchstalente in seine Reihen aufgenommen werden.

Das Philharmonia Orchestra ist in der Royal Festival Hall ansässig und nimmt eine zentrale Position im Musikleben Großbritanniens ein, nicht nur durch seine Londoner Konzerte, sondern auch durch feste Kontakte mit Aufführungsstätten in anderen Teilen des Landes, die eine ideale Gelegenheit für die Erweiterung seines dynamischen und bevölkerungsnahen musikpädagogischen Programms bieten. Das Orchester ist mit zahlreichen Preisen ausgezeichnet worden und hat beispiellose kritische Unterstützung für seine innovative Programmpolitik gewonnen, die in ihrem Kern der Bestellung und Darbietung neuer Musik von führenden Komponisten unserer Zeit verpflichtet ist.

Die Konzerte des Orchesters werden immer häufiger von BBC Radio 3 übertragen, nicht zuletzt im Rahmen der jährlichen BBC Proms. Mit über 1000 Schallplattenaufnahmen verfügt das Philharmonia Orchestra über die

größte Orchesterdiskographie der Welt, die auch Fernseh- und Filmmusik beinhaltet, und genießt weltweit höchstes Ansehen. Das Orchester hat für Opera Rara mehrere Recitals sowie elf komplette Opern eingespielt und in der Reihe "Opera in English" für Chandos mit Unterstützung durch die Peter Moores Foundation *The Thieving Magpie*, *Wozzeck*, *Don Giovanni*, *The Elixir of Love*, *Lucia of Lammermoor*, *Faust*, *Carmen*, *Aida*, *La Bohème*, *Madam Butterfly*, *Turandot*, die preisgekrönte *Tosca* und Opernarien in Solorecitals mit Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny und John Tomlinson aufgenommen. Das Philharmonia Orchestra untermauert seinen internationalen Rang durch regelmäßige Tourneen und Gastauftritte an berühmten Häusern wie dem Châtelet Théâtre Musical in Paris, dem Megaron in Athen und dem Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in New York.

**David Parry** hat bei Sergiu Celibidache studiert und seine berufliche Laufbahn als Assistent von Sir John Pritchard begonnen. Er hat am English Music Theatre debütiert und wurde dann Dirigent mit Festvertrag an den Städtischen Bühnen Dortmund und an der Opera North. Von 1983 bis 1987 war er Musikdirektor der

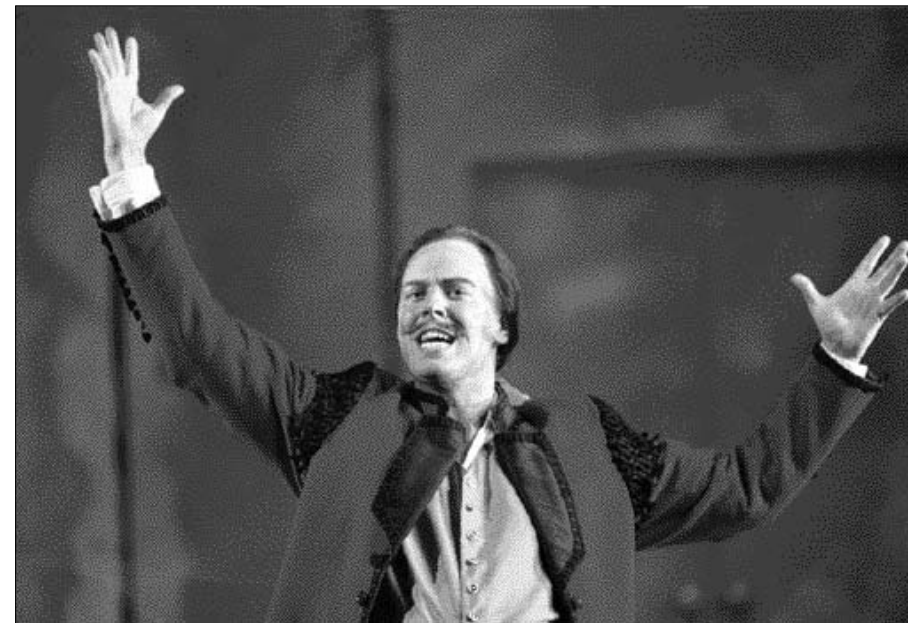
Opera 80 und seit 1992 Gründungsmitglied und Direktor der Almeida Opera.

Er übt in Großbritannien und international eine weitgespannte Tätigkeit in den Bereichen Oper und Konzert aus, hat mehrere Produktionen der English National Opera und der Opera North dirigiert und tritt regelmäßig mit dem Philharmonia Orchestra und dem London Philharmonic Orchestra auf. 1996 gab er sein Debüt beim Glyndebourne Festival mit *Così fan tutte* und hat dort 1998 die Uraufführung von Jonathan Doves *Flight* geleitet.

Er ist häufig in Spanien zu Gast und hat mit den meisten bedeutenden spanischen Orchestern Konzerte gegeben. In Madrid hat er die spanische Uraufführung von *Peter Grimes* dirigiert, und 1996 die erste spanische Inszenierung von *The Rake's Progress*. Er ist in Deutschland, der Schweiz und den Niederlanden aufgetreten, bei den Festspielen in Pesaro, beim Hong Kong International Festival, in Japan anlässlich einer *Carmen*-Tournee und in Mexiko mit dem UNAM Symphony Orchestra. Zu den Neuproduktionen, die er in letzter Zeit dirigiert hat, zählen *Fidelio* beim New Zealand Festival, *Lucia di Lammermoor* an der New Israeli Opera und *Don Giovanni* an der Staatsoper Hannover.

Seine Tätigkeit im Aufnahmestudio umfasst die Produktion von Marschners *Der Vampyr* fürs BBC-Fernsehen und achtundzwanzig vollständige Opernaufzeichnungen unter der Schirmherrschaft der Peter Moores Foundation. Darunter befinden sich zahlreiche Aufnahmen der Reihe Opera Rara, die mehrere Preise gewonnen haben, beispielsweise den belgischen Prix Cecilia für Donizettis *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra*. Für Chandos hat er die Aufzeichnung einer Serie von Programmen mit Opernarien geleitet (mit Bruce Ford,

Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny, John Tomlinson, Della Jones und Andrew Shore), außerdem *Idomeneo*, *Carmen*, *The Thieving Magpie*, *Don Giovanni*, *Don Pasquale*, *The Elixir of Love*, *Lucia of Lammermoor*, *Ernani*, *Il trovatore*, *Aida*, *Faust*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *La bohème*, *Turandot*, die preisgekrönte *Tosca* und Highlights us dem *Rosenkavalier*, jeweils in Zusammenarbeit mit der Peter Moores Foundation.



Bill Cooper

William Dazeley as Count Almaviva with Opera North

## Les Noces de Figaro

Figaro aurait une trentaine d'années, si l'on en croit Caron de Beaumarchais qui a imaginé le personnage. Lorsque l'opéra fut créé en 1786, Mozart avait aussi trente ans. Voir un élément autobiographique dans la création par Beaumarchais de son Barbier de Séville, personnalité aux talents multiples, n'est guère un caprice de l'imagination. Et si l'on y regarde de plus près, quelques similitudes avec Mozart apparaissent dans la personnalité de ce sujet trop talentueux et un peu trop familier avec ses supérieurs en termes sociaux.

C'est sans doute une erreur donc de présenter Figaro dans cet opéra, et tel est le cas parfois, comme le bouc émissaire. Il est vrai qu'il a tendance à agir et à parler plus vite qu'il ne pense, mais son rôle dans l'intrigue est de lancer l'action. Figaro est le moteur du drame. C'est l'urgence qui l'anime qui le fait progresser, en dépit des intrigues des autres protagonistes qui le retardent ou le freinent. Et, par contraste, ces derniers sont tous relativement passifs, attendant de voir le cours que prendront les événements. Ce sont les noces de Figaro après tout, comme nous le rappelle le titre de l'opéra.

Et de Susanna, bien que le titre ne le précise pas. C'est Susanna, un peu plus jeune sans doute que son futur époux, qui ouvre la voie au personnage. Elle perçoit d'emblée la "commodité" de la chambre qui leur a été cédée et voit clair dans le projet du comte Almaviva de les prendre avec lui en mission à Londres. Elle réagit avec la rapidité voulue pour couvrir Cherubino contraint de se sauver par le cabinet attenant à la chambre de la Comtesse. Elle trouve les moyens nécessaires pour que soit acquittée la dette de Figaro envers Marcellina. C'est elle qui fait avorter le plan risqué qu'il conçoit afin de duper le Comte la nuit dans le jardin en se déguisant, pour le remplacer par son propre projet, plus ingénieux. Le bon sens naturel de Susanna complète l'ingéniosité acquise par Figaro.

En effet, et en dépit du titre de l'œuvre, Susanna pourrait aisément être considérée comme le personnage central de l'opéra. Son rôle est le plus long sûrement, en termes de notes, mais il n'y a pas que le nombre de notes qui importe. L'un des plus merveilleux aspects du génie de Mozart, dans cet opéra et ailleurs, est son habileté à dessiner et à colorer les

caractères féminins avec autant de conviction que les caractères masculins. C'est un talent que partagent à vrai dire peu d'hommes qu'ils soient compositeurs ou auteurs. La femme idéalisée, l'"Ewigweibliche" de Goethe est le fléau de nombreux opéras et œuvres littéraires au dix-neuvième siècle. Au vingtième siècle, ce talent précieux qu'avait Mozart ne s'est manifesté pour ainsi dire que chez Janáček et Berg.

Trop d'importance peut être accordée aux aspects pré-révolutionnaires des *Noces de Figaro*. La cavatine de Figaro dans l'Acte I "Si vous voulez danser, mon petit comte" ("So, little master, you're dressed to go dancing") peut apparaître comme le tocsin annonçant le combat et sa confrontation avec le Comte avant les danses dans l'Acte III ("Et pourquoi pas? Je ne dispute pas de ce que j'ignore." – "Maybe so. I'm not one to accuse when I don't know") pourrait présager du démantèlement de l'ordre social. Mais ce n'est pas le moment encore. Il est trop facile de faire preuve de sagesse quand a eu lieu l'événement, comme Napoléon lorsqu'il décrit le défi incendiaire de Figaro "Vous avez pris la peine de naître" comme "la Révolution en action". Beaumarchais à Paris, et Mozart ensuite à Vienne, jouent avec le feu, mais cela reste du drame.

Selon Joseph Kerman qui défend avec éloquence l'argument contre-révolutionnaire dans *Opera as Drama*, les véritables héros et héroïne de l'opéra sont le Comte et la Comtesse. Bien que sa thèse ne soit pas tout à fait convaincante, il est vrai que l'opéra est autant une interrogation sur leurs deux années de mariage que sur le futur mariage de Figaro et Susanna. Le Comte, s'il est ostensiblement le "scélérat" dans cette œuvre, devrait rester sympathique. La Comtesse, en dépit d'un épisode de passivité et de pleurnicheries, retrouve force et détermination dans l'Acte III et est le catalyseur du drame dans l'Acte IV. La résolution amenée par la clémence de la Comtesse face au comportement dévoyé de son époux ("Plus docile que vous, je vous l'accorde" – "I'm far more forgiving, and so I say yes.") et leur réconciliation, temporaire du moins, forment le climax émotionnel de l'opéra.

Peter Hall décrit de façon mémorable, lors d'une interview à la radio, l'effet léniifiant du grand ensemble du pardon qui regroupe tous les protagonistes du drame et suit l'intervention de la Comtesse, et tout spécialement la force du bref passage orchestral descendant entre cet ensemble et le chœur final de réjouissance, instant fugace lorsque tous contemplant les abysses de la tragédie. Par

la perfidie et la trahison, ces unions peuvent si facilement être anéanties. Une terrifiante prise de conscience a lieu, puis les acteurs du drame se détournent, choisissant d'oublier pour profiter des plaisirs du moment. La frontière entre tragédie et comédie est si fragile.

C'est l'équilibre que Mozart établit entre ces deux pôles qui le rend suprêmement réaliste et qui confère tant de crédibilité à ses opéras. C'est cette vision particulière manifeste déjà dans *La finta giardiniera*, composé lorsqu'il n'avait que dix-huit ans et qui atteint un sommet dans les trois opéras écrits avec Lorenzo da Ponte dont le premier est *Les Noces de Figaro*. Cet équilibre est maintenu avec une particulière délicatesse dans la résolution du drame, mais il est assuré tout au long de l'opéra. Il est merveilleusement illustré, avec une touche d'humour, dans l'aria de Cherubino dans l'Acte I "Non so più, cosa son, cosa faccio" ("Je ne sais qui je suis, ce que je fais" – "I don't know what it is that I'm feeling"). Et il imprègne sans doute la réaction mi-douloureuse, mi-satisfaite de l'adolescent à l'aria militaire de Figaro "Non più andrai" à la fin de l'Acte I ("Plus n'iras" – "Here's an end to your life as a rover"). Les gloires qu'escompte Cherubino ne sont pas strictement martiales.

Si formellement *Les Noces de Figaro* est une œuvre en quatre actes correspondant aux quatre lieux où se déroule l'action, musicalement nous avons à faire à une structure en deux actes similaire à celle des deux autres opéras Da Ponte, *Don Giovanni* et *Così fan tutte*. Chacune des deux parties de ces opéras se termine par un long *finale*, un procédé de développement de l'action par la musique dont Mozart fut le pionnier dans *La finta giardiniera* déjà, mais qu'il perfectionna dans le *finale* de l'Acte II de *Figaro*. L'œuvre est aussi l'exemple suprême du sens de l'équilibre de Mozart. A partir du moment où le Comte et la Comtesse retournent dans la chambre et où le *finale* proprement dit commence, l'issue pourrait aussi bien être tragique que comique. En l'occurrence, l'humour émerge sans cesse, parfois de manière désopilante, et même grotesque, mais la situation reste une question de vie ou de mort.

Walter Legge décrit en ces termes le *finale* de l'Acte II: "Musicalement c'est l'ensemble le plus magistral, non seulement de cet opéra, mais dans tout Mozart. Pendant près de vingt minutes, la musique s'épanche en un flux continu, épousant chaque sinuosité de cette comédie complexe et précipitée, illuminant,

réfléchissant, commentant l'action et la large palette d'émotions des participants. Emboîtant le pas à l'action, la musique amplifie les effets de surprise, souligne les subtilités et revêt cependant l'ensemble de ce jeu d'intrigues assez sordide d'une houppelande magique aux sonorités les plus enchanteresses qui, tout en restant fidèles à l'action, la transmutent en la plus pure merveille qui soit."

Dans ce *finale* sublime, chacun aura son passage d'élection. Le mien est la trêve temporaire entre les combattants (bien que le Comte aux folles intrigues ne soit guère dans cet état d'esprit) avant l'incursion d'Antonio avec les débris de ses pots de fleurs. La Comtesse, Susanna et Figaro chantent "Deh signor, noi contrastate" ("Ah, Monseigneur, consentez: couronnez donc mes (leurs) désirs." – "Heed my pleading, I implore you, be compassionate I pray") et, tandis que le Comte part en pensée à la recherche de Marcellina, cors et contrebasses soulignent leur plaidoyer *forte*. Ce bref moment de réconciliation espérée est une anticipation magique de la fin de l'opéra.

Selon Michael Kelly, le ténor irlandais qui interpréta les rôles de Basilio et de Curzio dans la production originale, Mozart avait une prédilection, dans cet opéra, pour le sextuor de

l'Acte III. Ce passage pourrait certes être l'un des plus comiques avec ses révélations-surprises et ses revirements, mais une fois encore, la furie et la déconvenue de Susanna sont d'un sérieux absolu. Il y a un moment superbe après la fin du sextuor et le départ du Comte et de Curzio dans la confusion. Susanna demande à ceux qui sont restés: "Qui connaît bonheur semblable au mien?" – "Who could be happier than I am?" et Figaro, Bartolo et Marcellina répondent chacun "Moi" ("I am") Puis ensemble et en parfaite harmonie, le quatuor chante *pianissimo* "Et que le comte crève de ma joie!" ("And if the Count is furious, well that will serve him right!"). L'interprétation de ce moment ne devrait pas être teinté de comédie seulement.

L'Acte IV est le plus difficile à mener à bien lors de l'exécution de l'oeuvre. Après trois actes se déroulant à l'intérieur du château, le jardin devrait exhaler un parfum de liberté. Les recoins sous les pins évoquent la forêt de Shakespeare, hors d'Athènes, où peuvent se réaliser des rêves voluptueux. Lorsque le *finale* proprement dit commence sur les paroles de Cherubino: "Je l'approcherai, oh si doucement, et saisirai le moment tant que je le peux" ("I'll approach her, oh so softly, seize the moment while I may"), tout avance bien, mais



la première moitié de cet acte voit se développer des arias méditatifs qui ne contribuent en rien au progrès de l'action. La diatribe de Figaro contre les femmes ("Oh vous folles esclaves de Cupidon" – "You foolish slaves of Cupid") et la mélodie d'amour quelque peu ambiguë de Susanna ("Ah, viens, ne tarde plus, mon beau plaisir" – "Come quickly my beloved") sont évidemment essentiels, mais les arias di paragone de Marcellina et Basilio peuvent sembler marginaux. En fait, ce sont des airs intéressants et révélateurs. L'air de Marcellina étoffe son caractère en faisant apparaître un peu de cette indignation féministe perçue dans son importante intervention dans l'Acte III de la pièce de Beaumarchais. L'anecdote "peau d'âne" de Basilio est une aria di paragone plus conventionnel, mais assombri par une note tristement ironique. Tous deux ajoutent une dimension aux caractères et à la richesse du drame, mais ils arrivent trop tard. En fin de soirée, on est impatient de voir l'intrigue se dénouer. Et les supprimer lors des exécutions est donc plus pragmatique.

Du fait de cette suppression, c'est plut tôt que Figaro lui-même vit un moment tragique, lorsque sa nature optimiste menace pour une fois d'être submergée. La brève section, au cœur

du *finale*, dans laquelle le tempo prend de l'ampleur sous forme d'un *larghetto* en 3/4 est plus magnifique encore que son aria vibrant de colère; le lumineux sol majeur cède la place à un mi bémol majeur (la tonalité de la cavatine plaintive que chante la Comtesse lorsqu'elle apparaît pour la première fois "Porgi amor" – "Prête, Amour, quelque confort" – "Hear my prayer"), et les clarinettes réapparaissent. Sous un ciel obscurci par la nuit, tranquille et serein, sous Vénus et Mars unis en une étreinte passionnée, Figaro rassemble une fois encore les fils du drame et affronte sa destinée. Ce moment magique ne durent que douze mesures, puis il se trouve à nouveau précipité dans l'haletant dénouement. Mais ceci suffit, en dépit de ce qui survient ensuite et de la révélation dramatique de la Comtesse, à lui rendre son opéra – et son mariage.

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### Synopsis

Quelques années avant que débute l'opéra, le comte Almaviva avait courtoisé Rosina et l'avait épousée. Elle était la riche pupille d'un certain docteur Bartolo de Séville qui avait lui-même envisagé de se marier avec elle afin de mettre la main sur sa fortune. Le comte Almaviva vit

non loin de Séville dans son manoir ancestral, et Figaro est son valet. Figaro quant à lui va célébrer aujourd'hui ses noces avec Susanna, qui n'est autre que la chambrière de Rosina, la comtesse Almaviva.

### COMPACT DISC ONE

#### Acte I

Le premier acte se déroule au petit matin dans une chambrette cédée à Figaro et à Susanna comme futur logement. La porte de droite mène à la salle principale du château, la porte centrale aux appartements de la Comtesse et la porte de gauche à ceux du Comte. [1] Après l'ouverture de l'opéra, nous trouvons Susanna préparant son chapeau de mariée. [2] Figaro mesure la chambrette pour y placer le lit, [3] – [5] mais comprenant les intentions de Figaro, Susanna précise qu'il est hors de question de s'installer là! Cette pièce est non seulement un lieu de passage, *mais* elle est surtout trop facile d'accès pour le Comte qui la poursuit et voudrait rétablir les privilèges féodaux du seigneur du château. Figaro est abasourdi d'apprendre que le Comte s'intéresse à Susanna. Celle-ci lui répond qu'il devait se douter que la dot promise par le Comte n'était pas à la mesure des sentiments qu'il éprouvait

pour lui. [6] – [7] Susanna est appelée par la Comtesse. Figaro exprime sa jalousie: si le Comte tente de conter fleurette à Susanna, il usera de tous les mauvais tours possibles pour déjouer ses plans.

[8] – [9] Le docteur Bartolo et sa gouvernante Marcellina arrivent de Séville. Marcellina a prêté de l'argent à Figaro à la condition qu'il l'épouse s'il ne peut la rembourser. Tant qu'il n'a pu lui restituer la somme, Figaro n'est évidemment pas en mesure d'envisager un autre mariage. Marcellina demande de l'aide au Docteur Bartolo; celui-ci répond qu'il ne sera que trop heureux de se venger sur Figaro.

[10] – [11] Susanna réapparaît, et lorsque Marcellina quitte la pièce, elles échangent quelques phrases acerbes.

[12] Le page Cherubino vient demander conseil et assistance à Susanna. Le Comte l'a surpris flirtant avec Barbarina, la fille du jardinier, et à moins que l'on persuade la Comtesse d'intervenir, il sera congédié et ne verra plus jamais sa chère Susanna, ni d'ailleurs la Comtesse qu'il vénère à distance. Lorsque Susanna exprime sa surprise face à ses amours multiples, [13] Cherubino lui dit qu'il est amoureux de l'Amour et il lui remet une petite chanson qu'il a écrite pour la Comtesse.

<sup>14</sup> Le Comte entre, et Cherubino se cache. Le Comte fait la cour à Susanna, mais ses avances sont interrompues par Don Basilio, le maître de musique. <sup>15</sup> Le Comte se cache aussi. Toutefois, lorsqu'il entend ce que Basilio a à dire au sujet de l'intérêt que porte Cherubino à la Comtesse, il émerge de sa cachette <sup>16</sup> – <sup>17</sup> et menace de congédier Cherubino. Il raconte qu'il a trouvé le page caché sous la nappe du guéridon chez Barbarina. Au moment où il montre comment il a réussi à trouver son page, Cherubino est découvert dans sa cachette, une fois encore. Le Comte se rend compte que Cherubino a entendu ce qu'il vient de dire à Susanna.

<sup>18</sup> – <sup>20</sup> Figaro entre avec ses amis pour demander au Comte de revêtir Susanna de sa robe de mariée, symbole de candeur, mais le Comte désire attendre la cérémonie officielle. <sup>21</sup> Pour se débarrasser de Cherubino, le Comte lui donne une charge dans son propre régiment et l'envoie à Séville. <sup>22</sup> Ironiquement, Figaro souhaite un destin heureux à Cherubino dans sa future carrière militaire.

## COMPACT DISC TWO

### Acte II

L'acte II se déroule dans les appartements de la

Comtesse. La porte, à droite, mène à l'escalier principal, la porte du fond à la chambre de Susanna et une porte, à gauche, à un petit cabinet. Le mur qui lui fait face est percé d'une fenêtre.

Susanna vient de déposer chez la Comtesse le plateau du petit déjeuner.

<sup>1</sup> Rosina, devenue la comtesse Almaviva, espère retrouver l'amour de son époux qui court la prétontaine.

<sup>2</sup> Susanna réapparaît. Elle avait raconté à la Comtesse la déconvenue du Comte; elle ajoute maintenant que Figaro a envoyé une lettre anonyme au Comte par l'entremise de Basilio, disant que la Comtesse a un rendez-vous galant en soirée, dans le jardin. Ceci est une invention pure et simple pour empêcher qu'il poursuive Susanna.

La Comtesse souligne que ceci n'évitera pas l'intervention que menace de faire Marcellina. Susanna a une idée: elle donnera elle-même rendez-vous au Comte, mais y enverra à sa place Cherubino, travesti. La Comtesse les surprendra et ceci mettra le Comte dans une situation telle qu'il devra donner son consentement au mariage.

<sup>3</sup> – <sup>4</sup> Cherubino entre pour chanter sa petite chanson à la Comtesse.

<sup>5</sup> – <sup>6</sup> Le plan est mis au point et Susanna

fait un essai de déguisement. Elle ferme tout d'abord la porte. Pendant qu'il se dévêtit, Cherubino laisse tomber son brevet et la Comtesse remarque qu'il n'a pas été cacheté. Susanna habille Cherubino en fille.

La Comtesse envoie Susanna chercher un de ses bonnets. <sup>7</sup> On frappe à la porte principale; le Comte est rentré à l'improviste. Cherubino se précipite dans le cabinet attenant à la chambre et s'y enferme. <sup>8</sup> La Comtesse ouvre la porte principale fermée à clef et explique au Comte qu'elle essayait une robe et parlait à Susanna qui vient de quitter. Le Comte lui montre la lettre anonyme de Figaro, et c'est à ce moment qu'un bruit fracassant provient du cabinet – Cherubino doit avoir renversé quelque chose. Le Comte veut savoir qui s'y trouve. C'est Susanna, aux dires de la Comtesse; le Comte lui donne l'ordre d'ouvrir ou de répondre, mais la Comtesse le lui interdit. A ce moment, Susanna revient subrepticement dans la chambre; elle se rend compte de ce qui se passe et se cache.

<sup>9</sup> – <sup>10</sup> Comme la Comtesse refuse de lui donner accès au cabinet, le Comte ferme toutes les portes à clef et va chercher des outils pour forcer la serrure de celle du cabinet; il veut que la Comtesse l'accompagne.

<sup>11</sup> Susanna persuade Cherubino d'ouvrir. Trouvant toutes les portes fermées, il saute par la fenêtre. <sup>12</sup> Susanna s'enferme dans le cabinet.

<sup>13</sup> Le Comte et la Comtesse réapparaissent. La Comtesse admet qu'elle préparait une surprise pour la soirée. Elle admet aussi que c'est Cherubino, qui se trouve dans le cabinet. Ceci, aux yeux du Comte, semble éclaircir la question du billet anonyme. <sup>14</sup> Le Comte intime Cherubino de sortir. La Comtesse le supplie de ne pas se fâcher s'il voit Cherubino un peu débraillé: il se travestissait en fille. Le Comte accuse son épouse d'infidélité, <sup>15</sup> – <sup>16</sup> puis ouvre la porte du cabinet et Susanna paraît sur le seuil. Le Comte et la Comtesse sont tous deux ahuris et le Comte trouve cette plaisanterie aussi cruelle que celle de la lettre anonyme qui, lui révèlent-elles, a été écrite par Figaro et délivrée par Basilio. Il demande pardon à son épouse.

<sup>17</sup> Figaro entre pour annoncer que les préparatifs de la noce sont presque terminés. Le Comte lui demande s'il est l'auteur de la lettre anonyme. Figaro le nie bien sûr, malgré que Susanna et la Comtesse l'incitent à l'admettre.

<sup>18</sup> Antonio, le jardinier, entre pour se plaindre que quelqu'un a sauté par la fenêtre et

a abîmé ses fleurs. Figaro avoue être le coupable. Antonio pense qu'il s'agit plutôt de Cherubino, mais Figaro le prétend déjà parti pour Séville. Le Comte demande à Figaro pourquoi il a fait cela. Figaro prétend qu'il attendait Susanna quand il a entendu des bruits étouffés, le Comte qui criait, et pensant au billet anonyme (qu'il vient de dire qu'il n'a pas écrit), il a pris peur et a sauté par la fenêtre. Antonio demande si donc les papiers trouvés au sol lui appartiennent, mais le Comte s'en empare et demande à Figaro de quoi il s'agit. La Comtesse reconnaît le brevet de Cherubino et en avertit Figaro qui explique que c'est le brevet du page qui lui a été confié pour être cacheté.

[9] Marcellina, le Docteur Bartolo et Don Basilio entrent pour soutenir la cause de Marcellina contre Figaro. La confusion que ceci engendre clôturé l'acte.

### COMPACT DISC THREE

#### Acte III

L'acte III se déroule dans la Grande salle où tous peuvent aller et venir. Il est tard dans l'après-midi.

[1] Le Comte essaye d'élucider les contradictions des récents événements. La

Comtesse envoie Susanna fixer un rendez-vous au Comte dans la soirée. [2] – [4] La Comtesse a l'intention, comme Cherubino est parti, d'y aller à la place de Susanna. Sous prétexte de lui emprunter son flacon de sels, Susanna adresse la parole au Comte et lui fixe rendez-vous.

[5] En quittant, elle confie à Figaro qu'elle lui a fait gagner son procès, sans avocat.

[6] Malheureusement, le Comte l'entend.

[7] Il est furieux de se trouver dupé par ses propres sujets.

[8] Barbarina persuade Cherubino de se joindre à elle et aux jeunes filles du village pour offrir des fleurs à la Comtesse.

[9] – [10] La Comtesse attend Susanna et chante les moments merveilleux qu'elle a vécus avec le Comte naguère.

[11] La sentence veut que Figaro paye sa dette ou épouse Marcellina. Figaro dit qu'il ne peut se marier sans l'assentiment de ses parents, et vu son statut d'enfant trouvé, ce sera difficile à avoir. Toutefois si quelqu'un reconnaît l'hieroglyphe imprimé sur son bras... Marcellina reconnaît la marque – il est l'enfant qu'elle a eu il y a bon nombre d'années et qui lui a été volé; son père n'est autre que le Docteur Bartolo. Marcellina n'exige donc plus d'épouser Figaro.

[12] – [13] Mais Susanna entre, après avoir

persuadé la Comtesse de lui avancer la somme nécessaire au remboursement de la dette de Figaro. Elle trouve Marcellina embrassant Figaro et en tire une conclusion hâtive et erronée; peu après, elle participe toutefois à ces moments de réconciliation.

[14] Antonio dit au Comte que Cherubino n'est pas parti par Séville, mais qu'il se trouve dans la maison du jardinier, travesti en fille!

[15] Susanna rejoint la Comtesse et l'informe que le Comte a accepté le rendez-vous.

[16] La Comtesse lui dicte une note pour en fixer le lieu. [17] Le billet est scellé avec une épingle que le Comte devra renvoyer pour montrer qu'il accepte de s'y rendre.

[18] – [19] Barbarina fait entrer un groupe de jeunes paysannes désireuses d'offrir des fleurs à la Comtesse. Parmi elles se trouve Cherubino travesti. Au moment où les jeunes filles lui remettent les fleurs, la Comtesse a l'impression de reconnaître l'une d'entre elles. [20] Antonio et le Comte rentrent à l'improviste et démasquent la jeune fille. Elle n'est autre que Cherubino. Le Comte exige une explication de la Comtesse, qui est aussi surprise que lui. Le Comte est sur le point de châtier Cherubino lorsque Barbarina l'implore de lui pardonner et lui demande de pouvoir l'épouser en échange des faveurs qu'elle lui a accordées.

[21] Figaro entre pour annoncer la danse. Le Comte lui dit que Cherubino reconnaît maintenant qu'il a sauté par la fenêtre. Figaro répond que c'est possible – si lui a sauté, un autre a pu le faire aussi.

[22] – [23] La double cérémonie de noces – celles de Figaro et Susanna, et celles de Marcellina et Bartolo – commence. Pendant celles-ci, Susanna remet furtivement au Comte le billet qu'elle a écrit. Figaro voit le Comte se piquer le doigt avec l'épingle qui scelle le feuillet qui lui a été donné, mais dont il ignore l'auteur.

#### Acte IV

Le jardin, au clair de lune, sert de décor au quatrième acte. On y voit plusieurs pavillons.

[24] Barbarina a perdu l'épingle que le Comte lui a demandé de remettre à Susanna.

[25] Figaro et Marcellina lui font bientôt raconter toute l'histoire. [26] Figaro cherche à prendre sa revanche et Marcellina à prévenir Susanna. [27] – [28] Figaro a demandé à Basilio, Antonio et Bartolo de venir l'aider à débrouiller l'affaire.

Barbarina revient pour aller au rendez-vous fixé avec Cherubino, [29] – [30] tandis que Figaro, fou de jalousie, attend Susanna.

[31] – [32] Marcellina arrive avec Susanna et la Comtesse et elle se cache dans un des

pavillons. <sup>[33]</sup> – <sup>[34]</sup> Susanna, consciente que Figaro les écoute, se venge de ses soupçons en prétendant qu'elle attend le Comte.

<sup>[35]</sup> – <sup>[36]</sup> Tandis que la Comtesse se glisse à la place de Susanna, Cherubino arrive pour retrouver Barbarina. Mais voyant, comme il le croit, Susanna, il lui donne la chasse. <sup>[37]</sup> Cherubino tente d'embrasser Susanna, mais le Comte intervient. Il veut donner un soufflet à Cherubino, mais il frappe Figaro qui s'est approché. Cherubino se cache dans un des pavillons.

<sup>[38]</sup> Le Comte fait alors la cour à sa propre épouse qu'il prend pour Susanna et il lui donne une bague ornée d'un brillant. Figaro essaye de faire fuir le Comte et la soi-disant Susanna se cache dans un autre pavillon tandis que le Comte se retire pour la rejoindre plus tard. <sup>[39]</sup> Susanna qui a revêtu les vêtements de la Comtesse met maintenant Figaro à l'épreuve en essayant de lui faire la cour. Figaro reconnaît la voix de Susanna et décide d'entrer lui aussi dans le jeu. Ceci lui vaut une belle gifle. <sup>[40]</sup> Il explique l'affaire et est pardonné. Le Comte réapparaît et Susanna dit à Figaro que le Comte vient de conter fleurette à sa propre épouse, travestie. Figaro, faisant ainsi l'affaire du Comte, fait la cour maintenant à la prétendue Comtesse. Le Comte les interrompt

et la prétendue Comtesse se cache dans un pavillon. <sup>[41]</sup> Devant Basilio, Bartolo et Antonio, le Comte lui demande de sortir du pavillon. Les premiers à apparaître sont Cherubino, Barbarina et Marcellina, et enfin la soi-disant Comtesse. Le Comte l'accuse d'infidélité. Elle lui demande pardon, mais le Comte refuse ses excuses. La véritable Comtesse apparaît alors et intercède en sa faveur. Le Comte doit maintenant lui demander pardon à elle, ce qu'il obtient une fois encore. Tout est bien qui finit bien.

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Traduction: Marie-Françoise de Meeüs

**Christopher Purves** a étudié la littérature anglaise au Kings College de Cambridge avant de se produire et d'enregistrer avec le groupe vocal de rock and roll très innovateur, *Harvey and the Wallbangers*. À la suite de la dissolution du groupe en 1988, il reprit ses études vocales avec David Keren, Diane Forlano et Janice Chapman.

Il a chanté des rôles tels que Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*) au Welsh National Opera, au Scottish Opera et à l'Opera North, Marcello (*La Bohème*) au Scottish Opera, Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*), Faninal (*Der*

*Rosenkavalier*) au Welsh National Opera et à l'Opera North, Podesta (*La gazza ladra*) au Garsington Opera, Siegfried (*Genoveva*) et Dulcamara (*Lelisir d'amore*) à l'Opera North. Il a créé le rôle du Bourreau dans *Ines de Castro* de James Macmillan. Il s'est produit dans *Parthenogenesis* de Macmillan au Festival d'Édimbourg, où il a également chanté le rôle de Cecil dans *Maria Stuarda* sous la direction de Sir Charles Mackerras.

En concert, Christopher Purves s'est produit dans la Messe en ut mineur de Mozart à Aix-en-Provence avec l'ensemble Sixteen, *Les Noces* de Stravinski sous la direction de Philippe Herreweghe à Bruxelles, les *Vêpres de 1610* de Monteverdi sous la direction de Richard Hickox, la Messe en si mineur de Bach au Festival de La Chaise-Dieu, *Judas Maccabeus* de Haendel à Nuremberg, *Saul* avec le Gabrieli Consort à Covent Garden et à La Chaise-Dieu, l'*Apocalypse* de John Tavener aux BBC Proms de Londres avec le City of London Sinfonia, la *Passion selon saint Jean* sous la direction de Paul Goodwin à Madrid, le *Messie* avec le Scottish Chamber Orchestra, le Hallé Orchestra et l'Orchestre d'Ulster, *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* avec le London Sinfonietta sous la direction de Sir Simon Rattle, Manoah (*Samson*) sous la direction de Harry

Christophers, le *War Requiem* de Britten et *Die Schöpfung* de Haydn avec l'Orchestre d'Ulster, *Belshazzar's Feast* avec l'English Northern Sinfonia sous la direction de Paul Daniel et avec le Hallé Orchestra, et Lucifer dans *La Resurrezione* de Haendel sous la direction de Paul McCreech à Rome, Amsterdam et Londres. Christopher Purves a fait ses débuts en récital au Festival d'Aldeburgh en juin 2004. Ses enregistrements incluent le rôle de Gottardo (*La gazza ladra*) pour la série Opera in English de Chandos.

Née dans le Sud du Pays de Galles, **Rebecca Evans** a étudié à la Guildhall School of Music and Drama de Londres. Elle poursuit une importante carrière lyrique aux États-Unis où elle a chanté Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*) au Santa Fe Opera, Adele (*Die Fledermaus*) au Chicago Lyric Opera, Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*), Ann Trulove (*The Rake's Progress*) et Adina (*Lelisir d'amore*) au San Francisco Opera, et les rôles de Susanna et de Zerlina au Metropolitan Opera de New York.

En Europe, elle est régulièrement invitée au Bayerische Staatsoper de Munich où elle s'est produite dans les rôles de Sophie (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Zdenka (*Arabella*), Servilia (*La clemenza di Tito*), Ilia (*Idomeneo*), et Nanetta

(*Falstaff*). Elle a également chanté le rôle d'Ilia à l'Opéra des Pays-Bas et à l'Opéra de Lausanne, le rôle titre dans *Le Petit Renard rusé* au Scottish Opera, Susanna, Ilia, Marzelline (*Fidelio*), Norina (*Don Pasquale*) et Hero (*Béatrice et Bénédicte*) au Welsh National Opera, Romilda (*Xerxes*) à l'English National Opera, Zerlina, Nanetta and Johanna (*Sweeney Todd*) au Royal Opera de Covent Garden.

Très demandée en concert, Rebecca Evans s'est produite aux BBC Proms de Londres et au Festival d'Édimbourg, dans des concerts de gala avec Andrea Bocelli en Allemagne et avec Luciano Pavarotti en Angleterre. Elle a chanté dans le *Magnificat* de Bach avec le San Francisco Symphony Orchestra sous la direction de Michael Tilson Thomas, *Ein deutsches Requiem* de Brahms avec le Boston Symphony Orchestra au Festival de Tanglewood et au Festival de Ravinia, et dans la Quatrième Symphonie de Mahler avec l'Orchestre symphonique de Sapporo sous la direction de Tadaaki Otaka. Elle s'est également produite en Australie au Festival de Melbourne et avec l'Australian Chamber Orchestra. En récital, elle a chanté au Wigmore Hall de Londres, et dans les festivals de Barcelone, Ravinia, Buxton et Belfast.

La très riche discographie de Rebecca Evans

inclut le rôle d'Ilia (*Idomeneo*) pour la série Opera in English de Chandos, Nanetta (*Falstaff*) sous la direction de Sir John Eliot Gardiner, plusieurs opéras de Gilbert et Sullivan sous la direction de Sir Charles Mackerras, et un album de mélodies italiennes.

Née à Sydney, **Yvonne Kenny** a fait ses débuts à Londres en 1975 dans *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* de Donizetti. Après avoir remporté le Concours Kathleen Ferrier, elle est devenue membre du Royal Opera de Covent Garden où elle a chanté les rôles de Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*), Ilia (*Idomeneo*), Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Adina (*L'elisir d'amore*), Liù (*Turandot*), Aspasia (*Mitridate*) et Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*). Elle s'est faite une réputation internationale pour ses interprétations des grands rôles haendéliens, notamment Semele et Alcina (à Covent Garden et à La Fenice de Venise), Romilda (*Xerxes*) à l'English National Opera (à Londres et en tournée en URSS) et au Bayerische Staatsoper de Munich, Alcina sous la direction de Nicholas McGegan au Festival Haendel de Göttingen, Cleopatra (*Giulio Cesare*) et Armida (*Rinaldo*) à Sydney.

Yvonne Kenny a chanté au Staatsoper de Vienne (la Comtesse (*Capriccio*) et Susanna), à

La Scala de Milan (Pamina), au Berlin Staatsoper (la Comtesse (*Capriccio*)), à l'Opéra de Paris (Donna Elvira), à Zurich et à Glyndebourne (Donna Elvira et Alice Ford (*Falstaff*)), la Comtesse (*Le nozze di Figaro*) à Washington et au Bayerische Staatsoper de Munich, la Maréchale (*Der Rosenkavalier*), *The Fairy Queen* de Purcell et Alice Ford à l'English National Opera, la Maréchale (sous la direction de Sir Charles Mackerras) pour ses débuts au San Francisco Opera. Elle retourne fréquemment en Australie où elle a chanté les rôles de Gilda (*Rigoletto*), Pamina, Susanna, Alcina, *Manon* de Massenet, Fiordiligi, Alice Ford, la Gouvernante (*The Turn of the Screw*), la Comtesse (*Capriccio*) et les rôles titres dans *Maria Stuarda* et *L'incoronazione di Poppea*.

Yvonne Kenny s'est produite en concert dans les festivals d'Édimbourg, Salzburg et Aix-en-Provence, au Carnegie Hall de New York et aux BBC Proms de Londres. Ses enregistrements dans la série Opera in English de Chandos incluent Alice Ford (*Falstaff*), la Maréchale (extraits de *Der Rosenkavalier*) et deux récitals dans la série Great Operatic Arias. Elle a également enregistré *A Dinner Engagement* de Lennox Berkeley et *The Canterbury Pilgrims* de Dyson. Pour la série Opera Rara, elle a enregistré *Ugo conte di*

*Parigi*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Emilia di Liverpool*, *Il crociato in Egitto* et *Medea in Corinto*. En 1989, Yvonne Kenny a été créée Member of the Order of Australia pour ses services rendus à la musique.

Né dans le Warwickshire, **William Dazeley** fit ses études à Jesus College à Cambridge. Il étudia le chant à la Guildhall School of Music and Drama où il remporta plusieurs prix dont la prestigieuse Médaille d'Or. Il remporta également le Prix Decca–Kathleen Ferrier en 1989, le Concours de chant de la Royal Overseas League en 1990, le Prix Richard Tauber en 1991 et le Concours international de Lieder Walther Gruner également en 1991.

Reconnu comme l'un des plus grands barytons de sa génération, il a déjà chanté avec les plus grandes compagnies lyriques du monde. Il fut entre autres le Comte (*Cherubin*), Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) et Mercutio (*Roméo et Juliette*) au Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; le Comte (*Les Noces de Figaro*), Figaro (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) et le rôle-titre d'*Owen Wingrave* pour le Glyndebourne Touring Opera; Figaro (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) au Deutsche Oper à Berlin; Dr Faust au Festival de Salzburg et au Châtelet sous la baguette de Kent Nagano; et

Scherasmin (*Oberon*) au Châtelet sous la baguette de John Eliot Gardiner, une œuvre également proposée dans une version de concert au Barbican.

En concert, il a chanté entre autres le rôle-titre de *Faustszenen* de Schumann dans le cadre d'une tournée européenne dirigée par Philippe Herreweghe, le *Requiem pour Mignon* de Schumann sous la baguette de John Eliot Gardiner, *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* de Mahler avec le BBC Symphony Orchestra dirigé par Leonard Slatkin et le *Christmas Oratorio* de Bach avec la Philharmonie de Berlin.

Parmi ses créations mondiales, notons le rôle de Mahmoud dans *The Death of Klinghoffer* de John Adams avec le BBC Symphony Orchestra ainsi que le rôle principal de Jésus dans *The Last Supper* de Harrison Birtwistle au Deutsche Oper de Berlin sous la baguette de Daniel Barenboïm, opéra repris ensuite dans le cadre du Festival de Glyndebourne.

William Dazeley se produit en récital au Wigmore Hall, à la Purcell Room, à St George's à Bristol et au Châtelet. Il est régulièrement invité à chanter aux Festivals de Cheltenham, Aix-en-Provence et Saintes, avec des accompagnateurs aussi distingués que Graham Johnson et Iain Burnside.

Née à Winchester, **Diana Montague** a étudié au Royal Northern College of Music de Manchester. Depuis ses débuts dans le rôle de Zerlina avec le Glyndebourne Touring Opera, elle s'est produite dans des théâtres tels que le Royal Opera de Covent Garden de Londres, le Metropolitan Opera de New York, le Théâtre de la Monnaie de Bruxelles, l'Opéra national de Paris-Bastille, le Teatro Colón de Buenos Aires, ainsi qu'aux festivals de Bayreuth et Salzburg.

Son répertoire inclut les grands rôles de mezzo-soprano dans les opéras de Mozart, Gluck, Strauss, Rossini, Bellini et Berlioz. Elle s'est produite dans *Benvenuto Cellini* à l'Opéra de Rome, *Iphigénie en Tauride* à Buenos Aires, Madrid et au Welsh National Opera, *Albert Herring*, *Le nozze di Figaro* et dans le rôle d'Andromaca dans *Ermione* de Rossini à Glyndebourne, *Le Comte Ory* à Lausanne, Rome et Glyndebourne, Proserpina dans l'*Orfeo* de Monteverdi à Amsterdam, *Ariadne auf Naxos* à Lisbonne, Marguerite (*La Damnation de Faust*) à Genève, Minerva (*Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*) à Amsterdam et Sydney, Meg Page (*Falstaff*); *La Fiancée vendue* et *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* au Royal Opera de Covent Garden, Junon dans *Platée* de Rameau avec le Royal Opera au

Festival d'Édimbourg et à Londres, Octavian (*Der Rosenkavalier*) à l'English National Opera, à Bilbao et au Teatro Real de Madrid, Marguerite à Vienne, et *Le nozze di Figaro* au Théâtre de la Monnaie de Bruxelles.

Parmi les nombreux enregistrements de Diana Montague, on citera l'*Orfeo* de Monteverdi, *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, *Norma*, *Lucia di Lammermoor* et *Iphigénie en Tauride*. Elle a enregistré *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra*, *Zoraida di Granata* et *Il crociato in Egitto* pour Opera Rara, *Idomeneo*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, Octavian dans *Der Rosenkavalier* (extraits) et *Faust* dans la série Opera in English, et deux récitals dans la série Great Operatic Arias.

Née à Édimbourg, **Frances McCafferty** est diplômée de la Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. Après avoir enseigné le chant pendant plusieurs années, elle est devenue membre de la D'Oyly Carte Opera Company avec laquelle elle a interprété tous les grands rôles de mezzo-soprano, et enregistré *Patience*, *Orphée aux Enfers*, et *HMS Pinafore*.

Elle a chanté des rôles tels que Katisha (*The Mikado*) avec l'English National Opera, Soloka (*Cherevichki*) au Garsington Opera, Auntie (*Peter Grimes*) au Nationale Reis Oper

et Hata (*La Fiancée vendue*) au Festival de Glyndebourne. Elle s'est également produite au Nouvel Opéra d'Israël, au Staatsoper de Stuttgart, à l'Opera Theatre Company, avec le Glyndebourne Touring Opera, ainsi qu'au Festival d'Édimbourg et dans des festivals en Irlande et en Suisse. Elle est régulièrement invitée par l'Opera North et par le Royal Opera de Covent Garden où elle a créé le rôle de Yeta Zimmerman dans la première mondiale de *Sophie's Choice* de Nicholas Maw, sous la direction de Sir Simon Rattle, dans une mise en scène de Trevor Nunn et retransmis en direct à la Télévision et à la Radio de la BBC. Elle s'est produite en concert avec le RTE et l'Orchestre national d'Irlande, l'Orchestre d'Ulster, le Singapore Symphony Orchestra et le BBC Concert Orchestra.

Frances McCafferty a fait ses débuts à La Fenice de Venise dans le rôle de Katisha (*The Mikado*), et elle a également chanté Madame Popova (*The Bear*) en Suisse au Festival de Cerniers, et la Nourrice (*Boris Godounov*) au Royal Opera de Covent Garden.

Après avoir étudié à l'Université de Londres et au Trinity College of Music, **Jonathan Veira** a remporté en 1996 le Concours de chant Sir Peter Pears, puis a bénéficié du soutien

financier du Festival de Glyndebourne et des Amis de Covent Garden pour poursuivre sa formation au National Opera Studio de Londres.

Il s'est produit avec les grandes compagnies lyriques en Grande-Bretagne, notamment au Royal Opera de Covent Garden, à l'English National Opera, au Festival de Glyndebourne, au Scottish Opera, au Welsh National Opera, au Garsington Opera et à l'Opéra d'Irlande du Nord, dans des rôles tels que le Directeur de théâtre (*Lulu*), Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*), Harasta (*Le Petit Renard rusé*), Kolenatý (*L'Affaire Makropoulos*), le Baron Mirko Zeta (*Die lustige Witwe*), Tonio (*Pagliacci*), Leporello (*Don Giovanni*), Varlaam (*Boris Godounov*), Calchas (*La Belle Hélène*), Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*), Sacristan (*Tosca*), Mustafa (*L'italiana in Algeri*) et Keçal (*La Fiancée vendue*).

Jonathan Veira s'est produit à l'étranger dans des rôles tels que le Docteur (*Vanessa*) à l'Opéra du Rhin, Schaunard (dans *La Bohème* de Leoncavallo) au Wexford Festival, Leporello (*Don Giovanni*) et Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*) à l'Opera New Zealand, Bartolo (*Le nozze di Figaro*) à l'Opéra de Nice, à l'Opéra de Zurich, au Festival de Glyndebourne et à l'Opéra de Montpellier, Claggart (*Billy Budd*), Don

Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*), et *Falstaff* à l'Opéra royal du Danemark.

**John Graham-Hall** a fait ses études au King's College de Cambridge et au Royal College of Music de Londres. Il s'est produit avec toutes les grandes compagnies lyriques de Grande-Bretagne dans des rôles tels que Albert Herring (Covent Garden), Vanya Kudrjas (*Katya Kabanova*), Flute (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) et Bob Boles (*Peter Grimes*) au Festival de Glyndebourne, Don Basilio, Monostatos, Lysander (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Alwa (*Lulu*) et Hérode (*Salomé*) à l'English National Opera, Cassio (*Otello*) au Welsh National Opera, Eisenstein, l'Instituteur (*Le Petit Renard rusé*) au Scottish Opera, Aschenbach (*Death in Venice*), Lysander, Albert Herring et Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*) avec le Glyndebourne Touring Opera.

Parmi les autres engagements de John Graham-Hall, on citera Bob Boles (Opéra des Pays-Bas), Basilio (Théâtre de la Monnaie de Bruxelles), le rôle titre dans le nouvel opéra de Pascal Dusapin, *Perela, l'Homme de fumée*, à l'Opéra de Paris-Bastille et à Montpellier. À l'English National Opera, où il a été "Company Principal", il a également incarné les rôles de Sylvester (*The Silver Tassie*), Goro

(*Madam Butterfly*), Triquet (*Eugene Onegin*), Monostatos (*The Magic Flute*), Mime (*The Rhinegold*) et Alwa (*Lulu*).

John Graham-Hall a chanté sous la direction de nombreux chefs éminents tels que Haitink, Harnoncourt, Boulez, Andrew Davis, Tate, Rattle, Gardiner et Abbado. Il s'est produit en concert à travers toute l'Europe, travaillant avec tous les grands orchestres britanniques, et se produisant fréquemment à Londres au Barbican Centre et au South Bank. Ses enregistrements pour Chandos incluent *The Poisoned Kiss* de Vaughan Williams, *Peter Grimes* de Britten, et dans la série Opera in English, *The Thieving Magpie* et *Wozzeck* de Berg.

Né dans le comté de Durham, **Graeme Danby** a étudié à la Royal Academy of Music de Londres. Il est associé depuis longtemps avec l'English National Opera où il a incarné des rôles tels que Lorenzo dans *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* de Bellini, Pimen (*Boris Godounov*), Don Basilio (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*), Somnus (*Semele*), Quince (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Collatinus (*The Rape of Lucretia*), Arkel (*Pelléas et Mélisande*) et Poo-Bah (*The Mikado*).

Il a fait ses débuts au Royal Opera de

Covent Garden dans *La traviata*, et à Glyndebourne dans le rôle d'Antonio (*Le nozze di Figaro*). Parmi ses autres engagements en Grande-Bretagne, on peut citer Bartolo (*Le nozze di Figaro*) à l'Opera North et au Garsington Festival, Collatinus au Buxton Festival, Bosun (*Billy Budd*) et Masetto (*Don Giovanni*) au Scottish Opera.

En concert, Graeme Danby s'est produit dans la Neuvième Symphonie de Beethoven et le *Requiem* de Verdi au Royal Albert Hall de Londres, dans la Huitième Symphonie de Mahler au Royal Festival Hall de Londres, et dans *Iolanthe* au Bridgewater Hall de Manchester.

**Sarah Tynan** est née à Londres et a fait ses études au Royal Northern College of Music et à la Royal Academy of Music (avec Penelope Mackay) où elle a reçu the Queen's Commendation for Excellence.

Parmi ses rôles à l'opéra, notons Pretty Polly dans *Punch and Judy* de Birtwistle au Teatro Nacional S. João à Porto, la gouvernante dans *The Turn of the Screw* de Britten lors d'une tournée du British Council en Russie, Elsie Maynard (*The Yeomen of the Guard*) et Gianetta (*The Gondoliers*) pour Phoenix Opera ainsi que Barbarina pour Opera Holland Park.

A la Royal Academy of Music, elle a tenu le rôle-titre de *La Petite Renarde rusée* (sous la direction de Sir Charles Mackerras) et le rôle de Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*) (sous la direction de Sir Colin Davis).

Elle a également été Iphis dans *Jephtha* de Haendel pour ses débuts avec le Welsh National Opera; Eleanora dans *Prima la musica* de Salieri et Mlle Silberklang dans *Der Schauspieldirektor* de Mozart avec le City of London Sinfonia sous la baguette de Richard Hickox; elle a chanté le *Requiem* de Mozart sous la baguette de Sir Roger Norrington dans le cadre du Festival de Spitalfields.

Sarah Tynan est membre de l'English National Opera Young Singers Programme, programme mis sur pied pour aider les jeunes talents.

**Stuart Kale** est reconnu sur la scène internationale comme l'un des chanteurs-acteurs les plus remarquables du monde opératique. Musicien accompli, ses rôles recouvrent un large répertoire allant de Monteverdi à Messiaen. Il commença sa carrière avec le Welsh National Opera avant de rejoindre les rangs de l'English National Opera où il resta huit ans, tenant des rôles tels Don

Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*), Michael dans *Julietta* de Martinů, Alfred (*Die Fledermaus*) et Nanki-Poo dans le *Mikado* mis en scène par Jonathan Miller. En 1987, il commença une carrière florissante en indépendant, chantant Hauptmann (*Wozzeck*) à l'Opéra du Rhin à Strasbourg puis à Nancy, retrouvant la scène de l'English National Opera sous les traits de Hérode (*Salomé*).

Depuis, il a été notamment le Grand Prêtre dans *Idomeneo* à Covent Garden, Hauptmann (*Wozzeck*) à San Francisco, Genève, Zurich, Montpellier, Bordeaux et Bologne; Chouiski (*Boris Godounov*) à Strasbourg, Bordeaux et Montpellier; Quint (*The Turn of the Screw*) et Truffaldino (*The Love for Three Oranges*) pour l'English National Opera; Zinovi (*Lady Macbeth*) à Toulouse et Marseille; Valzacchi et les trois rôles de ténor dans *Lulu* au Châtelet; Aeghiste à Karlsruhe; Bob Boles à l'Opéra de Munich, Covent Garden, Genève et Strasbourg; Captain Vere (*Billy Budd*) à Cologne; et Gregor (*L'Affaire Makropoulos*) et Hérode à Strasbourg.

Il a enregistré entre autres pour Chandos dans la série Opera in English *Boris Godounov* (extraits), *Madam Butterfly*, *Otello*, *Falstaff*, *Wozzeck* et *The Thieving Magpie*.

Durant sa carrière de chanteur, Geoffrey Mitchell aborda un répertoire remarquablement varié, depuis la musique ancienne jusqu'à la musique contemporaine, se produisant en Scandinavie, en Allemagne, dans l'ancienne Tchécoslovaquie, au Canada et en Australasie. Après avoir fait ses premières armes de chef d'orchestre avec la BBC, il décida de prendre une part active dans ce domaine avec ses propres chanteurs et fonda le **Geoffrey Mitchell Choir**. Par suite de ses premiers enregistrements l'ensemble travaille depuis longtemps avec Opera Rara pour qui il a réalisé plus de trente enregistrements. Ce Chœur ne cesse d'élargir sa réputation, travaillant avec la BBC et plusieurs maisons de disques internationales. Pour Chandos, le Geoffrey Mitchell Choir a participé à plusieurs enregistrements pour Opera in English, une série de disques très prisés financée par la Peter Moores Foundation.

Reconnu comme l'un des plus grands orchestres du monde, le **Philharmonia Orchestra** a depuis plus de cinq ans le grand maestro allemand Christoph von Dohnányi pour chef principal. Le premier à avoir tenu ce poste fut Otto Klemperer et l'Orchestre depuis lors a collaboré avec succès avec Lorin Maazel

(au poste de chef principal assistant), Ricardo Muti (chef principal et directeur musical), Giuseppe Sinopoli (directeur musical), une tradition qui se poursuit aujourd'hui avec Kurt Sanderling (chef émérite), Vladimir Ashkenazy (chef lauréat) et Sir Charles Mackerras (chef principal invité). L'ensemble a également été associé à des personnalités aussi éminentes que Wilhelm Furtwängler, Richard Strauss, Arturo Toscanini, Guido Cantelli, Herbert von Karajan et Carlo Maria Giulini. L'Orchestre continue à collaborer avec des chefs et des solistes de stature mondiale et recrute les jeunes instrumentistes les plus talentueux d'Europe.

Orchestre résident au Royal Festival Hall, il joue également un rôle central dans la vie musicale britannique en choisissant des résidences régionales qui sont l'occasion idéale de développer un programme éducatif dynamique centré sur la communauté. Lauréat de nombreux prix, l'ensemble a été salué unanimement par les critiques pour ses programmes innovateurs dont l'un des objectifs principaux est l'interprétation et la commande d'œuvres nouvelles des plus grands compositeurs d'aujourd'hui.

Un nombre croissant de concerts de l'Orchestre sont retransmis par BBC Radio 3, entre autres sa participation annuelle aux



Promenade Concerts de la BBC. L'orchestre symphonique le plus enregistré au monde, avec plus de mille disques à son actif, parmi lesquels plusieurs bandes originales pour le cinéma et la télévision, le Philharmonia Orchestra est réputé dans le monde entier. Sa discographie comprend, pour Opera Rara, plusieurs disques de récitals ainsi que onze intégrales d'opéras et, pour Opera in English chez Chandos, série financée par la Peter Moores Foundation, *The Thieving Magpie*, *Wozzeck*, *Don Giovanni*, *The Elvira*, *Le Cid*, *Sir John of Ruochard*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Faust*, *Carmen*, *Aïda*, *La Bohème*, *Madam Butterfly*, *Turandot*, une version primée de *Tosca* ainsi que plusieurs récitals solistes d'airs lyriques avec Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny et John Tomlinson. Le Philharmonia Orchestra consolide constamment sa réputation internationale grâce à des tournées régulières et récemment de prestigieuses résidences au Châtelet Théâtre Musical à Paris, au Megaron à Athènes et au Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts à New York.

Après avoir étudié avec Sergiu Celibidache, **David Parry** commença sa carrière comme assistant de Sir John Pritchard. Il fit ses débuts avec l'English Music Theatre avant de devenir

l'un des chefs d'orchestre au Städtische Bühnen à Dortmund et à Opera North. Directeur musical d'Opera 80 de 1983 à 1987, il est directeur musical d'Almeida Opera depuis sa fondation en 1992.

Sa carrière, nationale et internationale, est extrêmement remplie, aussi bien sur la scène lyrique qu'en concert. Il a dirigé plusieurs productions de l'English National Opera et de l'Opera North et collabore régulièrement avec le Philharmonia Orchestra et le London Philharmonic Orchestra. C'est avec *Così fan tutte* qu'il fit ses débuts au Festival de Glyndebourne en 1996, une scène qu'il retrouva en 1998 pour diriger la création mondiale de *Flight* de Jonathan Dove.

Il séjourne fréquemment en Espagne où il a dirigé en concert la plupart des grands orchestres espagnols. C'est lui qui dirigea la première espagnole de *Peter Grimes* à Madrid et en 1996 la première production espagnole de *The Rake's Progress*. Il a dirigé en Allemagne, en Suisse, aux Pays-Bas, au Festival de Pesaro en Italie, au Festival international de Hong-Kong, au Japon pour une tournée de *Carmen* et au Mexique avec l'Orchestre symphonique d'UNAM. Il a récemment dirigé plusieurs nouvelles productions dont *Fidelio* au Festival de Nouvelle-Zélande, *Lucia di Lammermoor*

avec le New Israeli Opera et *Don Giovanni* à l'Opéra d'état de Hannover.

En studio, il a participé entre autres à la production de la BBC Television de *Der Vampyr* de Marschner, dirigeant aussi vingt-huit intégrales d'opéras financées par la Peter Moores Foundation. Plusieurs de ces intégrales furent enregistrées pour Opera Rara et primées, *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* de Donizetti recevant en Belgique le Prix Cecilia. Pour Chandos, David Parry a dirigé une série

d'enregistrements d'airs d'opéra (avec Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny, John Tomlinson, Della Jones et Andrew Shore) de même que *Don Giovanni*, *Don Pasquale*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Ernani*, *Il trovatore*, *Aïda*, *Faust*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *La bohème*, *Turandot*, l'enregistrement primé de *Tosca* et des extraits de *Der Rosenkavalier*, tous ces enregistrements étant réalisés en collaboration avec la Peter Moores Foundation.

## Le nozze di Figaro

Secondo il suo creatore, Caron de Beaumarchais, Figaro dovrebbe avere circa trent'anni. Mozart aveva la stessa età nel 1786, anno in cui l'opera venne eseguita per la prima volta. Non è completamente fuori luogo leggere un elemento autobiografico nell'eccentrico personaggio del barbiere di Siviglia creato da Beaumarchais. Basta fare ancora qualche passo avanti per trovare alcuni paralleli con Mozart, servitore anche troppo abile e in rapporti di confidenza anche eccessiva con i suoi superiori.

È errato quindi descrivere Figaro come il capro espiatorio di quest'opera, come talvolta accade. È vero che il personaggio ha la tendenza ad agire e a parlare senza riflettere, ma la sua funzione nella vicenda è proprio quella di dare l'avvio all'azione. Figaro è il motore di questo dramma. È la sua insistenza a portarlo avanti, a dispetto delle tattiche di dilazione a cui fanno ricorso gli altri personaggi per rallentare la vicenda. Per contro, gli altri si dimostrano tutti relativamente passivi e attendono l'esito degli eventi. Dopo tutto si tratta delle nozze di Figaro, come ci ricorda il titolo dell'opera.

E di Susanna, anche se il titolo non lo farebbe pensare. È Susanna, presumibilmente qualche anno più giovane del suo sposo, a dimostrare i limiti di lui. È lei a non lasciarsi ingannare dalla "comodità" della camera da letto assegnata a lei e a Figaro e dal progetto del Conte Almaviva di portarli con sé alla sua ambasciata di Londra. È lei a reagire con sufficiente tempestività per occultare la fuga di Cherubino dallo studio della Contessa. È lei a trovare il modo di ripagare il debito di Figaro a Marcellina. È lei a troncargli sul nascere il rischioso piano di lui di ingannare il Conte con un travestimento nel giardino di notte, in favore della propria versione, più astuta. L'ingegno innato di Susanna è complementare all'ingenuità acquisita di Figaro.

Anzi, e a dispetto del titolo dell'opera, è facile vedere in Susanna il personaggio centrale dell'opera. Il suo è certamente il ruolo più lungo, se si contano le note, ma non solo per questo. Uno degli aspetti più meravigliosi del genio di Mozart, e non solo in quest'opera, è la capacità di ritrarre e colorare le donne in maniera convincente quanto gli uomini. È una qualità non condivisa da tanti altri

compositori, né da molti scrittori. La donna idealizzata, la "Ewigweibliche" di Goethe, è la maledizione di gran parte dell'opera e della letteratura dell'Ottocento. Nel Ventesimo secolo a condividere il prezioso dono di Mozart saranno Janáček e Berg, ma non molti altri.

Si può leggere anche troppo negli aspetti prorivoluzionari delle *Nozze di Figaro*. La cavatina di Figaro nell'Atto I, "Se vuol ballare, signor contino" ("So, little master, you're dressed to go dancing" nella traduzione inglese di Jeremy Sams) può sembrare il segnale d'allarme e il suo scontro con il Conte prima delle danze nell'Atto III ("Perché no? Io non impugno mai quel che non so" – "Why not. I'm not one to accuse when I don't know") può far presagire il crollo dell'ordine sociale. Ma è presto ancora. È troppo facile vedere le cose col senno di poi, come fece di Napoleone nel definire l'accusa sfida di Figaro – "Voi vi siete preso il disturbo di nascere, null'altro" – come "rivoluzione in atto". Beaumarchais a Parigi e Mozart dopo di lui a Vienna scherzano con il fuoco, ma si tratta pur sempre di una commedia.

La tesi controrivoluzionaria, eloquentemente espressa da Joseph Kerman in *Opera as Drama*, è che il vero eroe e l'eroina

dell'opera siano il Conte e la Contessa. Per quanto non sia completamente convincente, è vero che l'opera è un esame dei due anni del loro matrimonio quanto delle nozze di Figaro e Susanna. Il Conte, sebbene sia apparentemente il "cattivo" dell'opera, deve rimanere simpatico. La Contessa, per quanto inizialmente passiva e lacrimosa, ritrova la propria forza e determinazione nell'Atto III ed è il catalizzatore del dramma nell'Atto IV. La soluzione che nasce dal perdono della Contessa nei confronti dell'errore del marito ("Più docile io sono, e dico di sì" – "I'm far more forgiving, and so I say yes") e la loro riconciliazione, almeno temporanea, costituiscono il culmine emotivo dell'opera.

Durante un'intervista radiofonica, il regista Peter Hall ha proposto una descrizione memorabile dell'effetto risanatore del grande concertato del perdono che coinvolge l'intero cast dopo l'intervento della Contessa, e soprattutto il potere del breve passaggio discendente orchestrale tra questo concertato e il festoso coro finale, un fugace momento in cui tutti i personaggi confrontano l'abisso della tragedia. L'infedeltà e il tradimento possono distruggere così facilmente questi matrimoni. C'è un terribile momento di autocoscienza e poi tutti distolgono lo sguardo, scegliendo di

ignorarlo per i piaceri del momento. Il confine tra tragedia e commedia è molto tenue.

È proprio l'equilibrio tra i due generi a rendere Mozart estremamente realistico e le sue opere così credibili. È la profondità particolare già evidente ne *La finta giardiniera*, composta ad appena diciott'anni, che raggiunge il proprio apogeo con la trilogia realizzata in collaborazione con Lorenzo da Ponte, di cui *Le nozze di Figaro* è la prima opera. L'equilibrio migliore si ritrova nel momento della risoluzione del dramma, ma viene raggiunto in tutta l'opera. Viene splendidamente e in parte umoristicamente esposto nell'aria di Cherubino nell'Atto I "Non so più, cosa son, cosa faccio" ("I don't know what it is that I'm feeling"). E dovrebbe essere presente nella reazione a metà tra dolore e piacere dell'adolescente all'aria militare di Figaro "Non più andrai" ("Here's an end to your life as a rover") alla fine dell'Atto I. Le glorie che Cherubino pregusta non sono solo marziali.

Sebbene *Le nozze di Figaro* sia nominalmente in quattro atti, che corrispondono alle sue quattro ambientazioni, musicalmente si tratta di una struttura in due atti simile a quelle delle altre opere di da Ponte, *Don Giovanni* e *Così fan tutte*. Ciascuna metà di ogni opera si conclude con un vasto finale,

un espediente per sviluppare l'azione attraverso la musica di cui Mozart fu pioniere già ne *La finta giardiniera* ma che perfezionò nel finale dell'Atto II del *Figaro*. È anche il supremo esempio del senso di equilibrio mozartiano. Dal momento in cui il Conte e la Contessa ritornano nella camera da letto e inizia il vero e proprio finale, l'esito potrebbe essere ugualmente tragico o comico. L'umorismo continua ad emergere in momenti ora divertenti ora addirittura farseschi, ma si tratta pur sempre di una questione di vita e di morte.

Walter Legge ha descritto così il finale dell'Atto II: "Dal punto di vista musicale questo è il concertato più magistrale, non solo in quest'opera ma in tutta la produzione di Mozart. Per quasi venti minuti la musica fluisce ininterrotta, rispondendo a tutte le alternanze e ai colpi di scena della complicata e rapida vicenda, illuminando, riflettendo, commentando l'azione e le emozioni enormemente diverse dei partecipanti. Passo per passo con l'azione, la musica intensifica le sorprese, aggiunge senso alle sottigliezze e però copre l'intera e piuttosto sordida vicenda di intrigo con il magico manto della musica più incantevole che, per quanto sempre fedele alla vicenda, la tramuta in una bellezza purissima, aurea."

Tutti avranno il loro momento preferito in questo sublime finale. Il mio è la tregua temporanea tra i combattenti (per quanto non condivisa dal Conte che complotta furiosamente) prima dell'ingresso di Antonio con i suoi vasi rotti. La Contessa, Susanna e Figaro cantano "Deh signor, noi contrastate" ("Hear my pleading, I implore you, be compassionate I pray?") e, mentre il Conte cerca mentalmente Marcellina, corni e contrabbassi sottolineano con un forte la loro preghiera. Il breve momento di sperata riconciliazione anticipa magicamente la fine dell'opera.

Secondo Michael Kelly, il tenore irlandese che interpretò Basilio e Curzio nell'allestimento originale, il brano preferito di Mozart nell'opera era il sestetto dell'Atto III. Può essere indubbiamente una delle sezioni più divertenti, con le sue rivelazioni e i capovolgimenti a sorpresa, eppure ancora una volta l'ira e la frustrazione di Susanna sono realissime. C'è un bellissimo tocco dopo la fine del sestetto, dopo la disordinata ritirata del Conte e di Curzio. Susanna chiede a quelli che sono rimasti "Chi al par di me contenta?" ("Who could be happier than I am?") e Figaro, Bartolo e Marcellina rispondono ognuno "Io" ("I am"). Poi insieme e in stretta armonia il

quartetto canta pianissimo "E schiatti il signor Conte al gusto mio!" ("And if the Count is furious, well that will serve him right!") Questo momento non dovrebbe essere eseguito solo per il suo effetto comico.

L'Atto IV è il più difficile da eseguire bene in una rappresentazione teatrale. Dopo le tre ambientazioni all'interno, il giardino dovrebbe comunicare la libertà e la licenza dell'aria aperta. I nascondigli sotto i pini sono come il bosco di Shakespeare nei dintorni di Atene, dove le fantasie sessuali sono realizzabili. Una volta iniziato il finale vero e proprio con "Pian pianin le andrò più presso, tempo perso non sarà" – "I'll approach her, oh so softly, seize the moment while I may" di Cherubino, tutto procede bene, ma la prima metà di questo atto vede un accumularsi di arie di riflessione che nulla fanno per portare avanti la vicenda. La diatriba di Figaro contro le donne ("Aprite un po' quegl'occhi" – "You foolish slaves of Cupid.") e l'ambiguo canto d'amore di Susanna ("Deh, vieni, non tardar" – "Come quickly my beloved") sono naturalmente indispensabili, ma le arie di similitudine di Marcellina e Basilio possono sembrare marginali. In realtà sono brani interessanti e rivelatori. Quello di Marcellina dà corpo al suo personaggio con l'indignazione femminista del

suo grande discorso nell'Atto III dell'opera teatrale di Beaumarchais. L'aneddoto del "cuoio d'asino" di Basilio è un'aria di similitudine più convenzionale, ma con un colpo di scena tristemente ironico. Entrambe le arie aggiungono una dimensione ulteriore ai personaggi e alla ricchezza del dramma, ma arrivano troppo tardi. Verso la fine della serata, si è impazienti di arrivare all'epilogo. Quindi nelle rappresentazioni è più pratico tagliarli.

Questo taglio anticipa il momento di tragico riposo di Figaro, quando la sua natura ottimista per una volta minaccia di essere sopraffatta. Ancora più grande della sua aria incollerita è la sezione breve, inserita nel finale, in cui il tempo si amplia in un larghetto in tre quarti; la vivace tonalità di sol maggiore lascia il posto al mi bemolle maggiore (la chiave della piangente cavatina di esordio della Contessa "Porgi amor" – "Hear my prayer"); e ritornano i clarinetti. Sotto il tranquillo e placido cielo notturno dove Venere e Marte osservano abbracciati, Figaro riunisce ancora una volta le fila del dramma e affronta il suo destino personale. Questo magico momento dura solo dodici battute, prima di reinserirsi nello svolgimento affannoso dell'epilogo. Ma nonostante quanto accade dopo e la drammatica rivelazione della Contessa, è

sufficiente per restituirgli l'opera e il suo matrimonio.

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### Synopsis

Antefatto dell'opera: il Conte Almaviva si è innamorato di Rosina, pupilla del Dottor Bartolo di Siviglia, e l'ha sposata a dispetto del tutore, che avrebbe preferito impalmare lui la ragazza e assicurarsi la sua dote. Il Conte si è poi trasferito lontano da Siviglia nella sua villa di famiglia, dove vive, e Figaro è diventato suo servitore. Oggi sono previste le nozze di Figaro e Susanna, cameriera di Rosina, ormai diventata la Contessa Almaviva.

### COMPACT DISC ONE

#### Atto I

Il primo atto si svolge di mattina presto in quella che sarà la camera nuziale assegnata a Figaro e Susanna. La porta a destra conduce alla sala principale del castello, quella centrale alle stanze della Contessa e quella di sinistra a quelle del Conte. [1] A conclusione dell'ouverture vediamo Susanna che prepara il cappello per le nozze. [2] Figaro prende le misure per vedere dove sistemare il letto,

[3] – [5] ma Susanna va su tutte le furie quando capisce ciò che sta facendo l'uomo. Oltre a essere una sala di passaggio, è troppo accessibile al Conte che le fa la corte e vorrebbe riesumare l'antico ius primae noctis feudale. Figaro rimane sbalordito quando viene a sapere che il Conte si interessa alla sua fidanzata. La donna ribatte che Figaro pecca di ingenuità se pensa che la dote promessa dal Conte sia solo una dimostrazione del suo affetto per il servitore. [6] – [7] Susanna viene chiamata dalla Contessa e Figaro manifesta la sua gelosia: se il Conte cerca di sedurre la fidanzata, Figaro utilizzerà ogni espediente per mandare all'aria i suoi piani.

[8] – [9] Da Siviglia sono arrivati il Dottor Bartolo e la sua governante Marcellina. Quest'ultima ha concesso un prestito a Figaro a condizione che, se non riuscirà a pagarlo, dovrà sposarla. Naturalmente finché il prestito non viene restituito Figaro non può sposare un'altra donna. Marcellina chiede l'aiuto del Dottor Bartolo il quale si dichiara ben lieto di vendicarsi di Figaro.

[10] – [11] Ritorna Susanna e mentre Marcellina se ne va le due donne si scambiano degli acidi convenevoli.

[12] Entra il paggio Cherubino per chiedere consigli e l'aiuto di Susanna. Il Conte lo ha

sorpreso con Barbarina, la figlia del giardiniere; se non riuscirà a convincere la Contessa a intercedere per lui, sarà cacciato via e non potrà più vedere la sua cara Susanna o la Signora che venera da lontano. Quando Susanna manifesta la propria sorpresa per le sue tante avventure, [13] Cherubino le rivela di essere innamorato dell'Amore e le consegna una canzone da lui composta per la Contessa.

[14] Entra il Conte e Cherubino si nasconde. Il Conte corteggia Susanna ma viene interrotto dal maestro di musica, Don Basilio. [15] A questo punto anche il Conte si nasconde. Tuttavia quando sente quello che Basilio ha da dire a proposito delle attenzioni di Cherubino nei confronti della Contessa esce dal suo nascondiglio [16] – [17] e minaccia di licenziare il paggio. Racconta di aver trovato il ragazzo nascosto sotto il tavolo nella casa di Barbarina e, mentre dimostra come è riuscito a smascherarlo, scopre nuovamente Cherubino. Il Conte quindi si rende conto che Cherubino ha sentito la sua precedente conversazione con Susanna.

[18] – [20] Adesso entra Figaro con i suoi amici e chiede al Conte di offrire a Susanna la veste bianca delle nozze, ma il Conte rimanda fino alla cerimonia ufficiale. [21] Per liberarsi di Cherubino, il Conte gli dà un incarico presso

il proprio reggimento e lo spedisce a Siviglia.  
 [2] Figaro esprime un comico augurio a Cherubino per la sua futura carriera militare.

## COMPACT DISC TWO

### Atto II

Il secondo atto si svolge nell'appartamento della Contessa. La porta di destra conduce alla scala principale, quella al centro alla camera di Susanna e quella di sinistra a un piccolo spogliatoio. Sulla parete dirimpetto si vede una finestra.

Susanna ha appena lasciato il vassoio con la colazione della Contessa.

[1] Rosina, oggi Contessa Almaviva, si augura di riconquistare l'amore del suo donnaiolo consorte.

[2] Ritorna Susanna. Aveva rivelato alla Contessa la sconfitta del Conte e adesso aggiunge che Figaro ha inviato una lettera anonima al Conte tramite Basilio, in cui gli rivela che la Contessa ha un appuntamento quella sera con un amante nel giardino. Si tratta di una bugia per impedirgli di perseguitare Susanna.

La Contessa fa notare che questo non ferma il minacciato intervento di Marcellina. Susanna ha un'idea: fisserà lei stessa un

appuntamento con il Conte, ma invierà Cherubino, vestito da donna. La Contessa potrà sorprenderli e questo costringerà il Conte a dare il proprio consenso alle nozze.

[3] – [4] Cherubino entra per cantare la sua canzone alla Contessa.

[5] – [6] Viene spiegato il piano e Susanna organizza una prova generale, chiudendo per prima cosa la porta a chiave. Mentre si cambia, Cherubino lascia cadere la sua patente per l'esercito e la Contessa vede che non è stata sigillata. Susanna inizia a vestire Cherubino da donna.

La Contessa manda Susanna a prendere una delle sue cuffie. [7] Qualcuno bussa al portone d'ingresso: il Conte è tornato all'improvviso. Cherubino viene spinto nell'armadio e si chiude dentro. [8] La Contessa apre e spiega che stava provando un abito e parlava con Susanna, che è appena uscita. Il Conte le mostra la lettera anonima di Figaro, ma in quel momento si sente un rumore proveniente dall'armadio – Cherubino ha rovesciato qualcosa. Il Conte esige di sapere chi si trova lì dentro. La Contessa dice che si tratta di Susanna e il Conte le ordina di aprire o parlare, ma la Contessa glielo proibisce. Senza farsi vedere, Susanna rientra nella stanza, capisce quello che sta accadendo e si nasconde.

[9] – [10] Dal momento che la Contessa rifiuta di aprire l'armadio, il Conte chiude a chiave tutte le porte ed esce con la moglie per prendere degli attrezzi e forzare la porta. [11] Susanna convince Cherubino ad aprire. Trovando tutte le porte chiuse, il ragazzo scappa dalla finestra. [12] Susanna si chiude nell'armadio.

[13] Ritornano il Conte e moglie. La Contessa ammette che stava preparando una sorpresa per la sera e che nell'armadio si trova in realtà Cherubino. Questo sembra confermare il contenuto della lettera anonima. [14] Il Conte chiede a Cherubino di uscire. La Contessa lo supplica di non prendersela se vede Cherubino un po' in disordine, dal momento che si stava vestendo da donna. Il Conte accusa la moglie di infedeltà e sta per buttare giù la porta [15] – [16] quando esce Susanna. Il Conte e la Contessa sono stupefatti, il Conte considera questo uno scherzo crudele come la lettera anonima e le donne gli rivelano che è stata scritta da Figaro e consegnata da Basilio. Il Conte chiede perdono alla moglie.

[17] Entra Figaro per annunciare che i preparativi delle nozze sono quasi terminati, ma il Conte gli chiede se è stato lui a scrivere la lettera anonima. Figaro nega naturalmente, nonostante le imbeccate di Susanna e della Contessa.

[18] Entra Antonio, il giardiniere, per lamentarsi: qualcuno è uscito dalla finestra e ha rotto i vasi con i fiori. Figaro dice che è stato lui; Antonio è convinto che si trattasse di Cherubino, ma Figaro dice che è già partito per Siviglia. Il Conte chiede a Figaro perché è saltato dalla finestra e Figaro risponde che stava aspettando Susanna quando ha sentito un diverbio, il Conte che gridava, e pensando alla lettera anonima (che ha appena negato di aver scritto) si è spaventato ed è saltato fuori dalla finestra. Antonio chiede se le carte che sono cadute sono sue, ma il Conte le prende e chiede a Figaro di identificarle. La Contessa riconosce la patente di Cherubino e passa l'informazione a Figaro, il quale spiega che il paggio l'aveva lasciata a lui perché la sigillasse.

[19] Entrano Marcellina, il dottor Bartolo e don Basilio per rivendicare il contratto di Marcellina e Figaro e il secondo atto si conclude tra la confusione generale.

## COMPACT DISC THREE

### Atto III

Il Terzo atto si svolge nel salone dove tutti possono andare e venire liberamente. È il tardo pomeriggio.

<sup>1</sup> Il Conte sta cercando di spiegarsi le contraddizioni degli ultimi avvenimenti.

<sup>2</sup> – <sup>4</sup> La Contessa invia Susanna a prendere appuntamento con lui per questa sera. Adesso che Cherubino è partito, la donna pensa di andare lei all'appuntamento al posto di Susanna. Con la scusa di chiedergli in prestito i sali, Susanna si avvicina al Conte e consegna il biglietto. <sup>5</sup> Uscendo, confida a Figaro che ha vinto la sua causa senza bisogno di avvocato. <sup>6</sup> Purtroppo il Conte la sente. <sup>7</sup> Esplose, furioso nel trovarsi ingannato dai suoi stessi servitori.

<sup>8</sup> Barbarina convince Cherubino ad andare con lei e con le ragazze del villaggio a offrire fiori alla Contessa.

<sup>9</sup> – <sup>10</sup> La Contessa aspetta Susanna e rievoca il passato e i suoi meravigliosi momenti d'amore con il Conte.

<sup>11</sup> Il giudizio legale in merito alla lite tra Figaro e Marcellina è che l'uomo debba pagare il proprio debito o sposarla. Figaro sostiene che non può sposarsi senza il consenso dei suoi genitori e, dal momento che è un trovatello, la cosa sarà difficile, a meno che qualcuno non riconosca il segno sul suo braccio... È una rivelazione per Marcellina: Figaro è il bambino da lei avuto molti anni prima e che le era stato rapito. Suo padre non è altri che il Dottor

Bartolo. La sua pretesa di sposare Figaro quindi crolla. <sup>12</sup> – <sup>13</sup> Però entra Susanna che ha convinto la Contessa ad anticipare il denaro necessario per ripagare il debito. Nel vedere Marcellina che abbraccia Figaro arriva alla conclusione sbagliata, ma ben presto si unisce anche lei alla riconciliazione.

<sup>14</sup> Antonio rivela al Conte che Cherubino non è partito per Siviglia, ma si trova nella casa del giardiniere ed è vestito da donna.

<sup>15</sup> Arriva Susanna e riferisce che il Conte ha accettato l'appuntamento. <sup>16</sup> La Contessa detta un biglietto per fissare il posto.

<sup>17</sup> Il biglietto viene chiuso con una spilla che il Conte deve rimandare per dimostrare che accetta.

<sup>18</sup> – <sup>19</sup> Entra Barbarina con le ragazze del villaggio. Nel gruppo si trova Cherubino vestito da donna. Mentre le ragazze le offrono i fiori, la Contessa nota che una di esse le ricorda qualcuno. <sup>20</sup> L'ingresso improvviso di Antonio e del Conte la smaschera: si tratta di Cherubino. Il Conte chiede spiegazioni alla Contessa, ma la donna è sorpresa quanto lui. Il Conte decide di punire Cherubino, ma Barbarina lo supplica di perdonarlo e chiede di sposarlo, in cambio delle sue passate gentilezze.

<sup>21</sup> Entra Figaro per annunciare la danza. Il Conte gli dice che Cherubino adesso ammette

di essere saltato fuori dalla finestra. Figaro risponde che è possibile: se può saltare una persona, possono saltare anche due.

<sup>22</sup> – <sup>23</sup> Procede la doppia cerimonia nuziale per Figaro e Susanna, Marcellina e Bartolo. Durante il suo svolgimento Susanna consegna di nascosto al Conte la lettera che ha scritto. Figaro vede il conte pungersi il dito con una spilla che sigilla un biglietto che gli è stato consegnato, ma non sa chi l'abbia inviato.

#### Atto IV

Il quarto atto si svolge nel giardino illuminato dalla luna, dove si trovano diversi cespugli.

<sup>24</sup> Barbarina ha perso la spilla che le aveva dato il Conte perché la riportasse a Susanna.

<sup>25</sup> Figaro e Marcellina ben presto si fanno raccontare la storia. <sup>26</sup> Figaro vuole vendetta e Marcellina va ad avvisare Susanna.

<sup>27</sup> – <sup>28</sup> Figaro ha chiesto a Basilio, Antonio e Bartolo di andare ad aiutarlo a sistemare le cose.

Barbarina ritorna per un appuntamento con Cherubino <sup>29</sup> – <sup>30</sup> mentre Figaro, fuori di sé dalla gelosia, aspetta Susanna.

<sup>31</sup> – <sup>32</sup> Marcellina conduce Susanna e la Contessa sul posto e si nasconde in uno dei cespugli. <sup>33</sup> – <sup>34</sup> Susanna, sapendo che Figaro

ascolta, si vendica per i suoi sospetti facendo finta di attendere il Conte.

<sup>35</sup> – <sup>36</sup> Mentre la Contessa prende il posto di Susanna, arriva Cherubino per il suo appuntamento con Barbarina ma, credendo di vedere Susanna, <sup>37</sup> la segue e cerca di baciarla; interviene il Conte, che cerca di dare uno schiaffo a Cherubino e colpisce invece Figaro che è intervenuto anche lui. Cherubino si nasconde in un cespuglio.

<sup>38</sup> Il Conte quindi corteggia la moglie, credendo che si tratti di Susanna, e le dà un anello di brillanti. Figaro cerca di spaventare il Conte e la finta Susanna si nasconde in un altro cespuglio, mentre il Conte si ritira per raggiungerla più tardi. <sup>39</sup> Susanna, che porta gli abiti della Contessa, adesso mette alla prova Figaro fingendo di flirtare con lui. Figaro riconosce la voce della moglie e decide di stare al gioco. Così ci rimedia uno schiaffo.

<sup>40</sup> Spiega e viene perdonato. Ritorna il Conte e Susanna dice a Figaro che il Conte ha corteggiato la propria moglie travestita. Adesso Figaro, a beneficio del Conte, flirta con la finta contessa. Il Conte lo interrompe e la finta Contessa si nasconde in un cespuglio.

<sup>41</sup> Davanti a Basilio, Bartolo e Antonio, il Conte le chiede di venire fuori dal cespuglio. I primi a uscire sono Cherubino, Barbarina e

Marcellina, e alla fine la finta contessa. Il Conte la accusa di essere infedele. La donna chiede di essere perdonata e lui rifiuta. A questo punto entra la vera Contessa a intercedere per lei. Adesso è il Conte a dover chiedere perdono; la moglie glielo concede ancora una volta. Così tutto finisce bene.

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**Christopher Purves** ha studiato inglese presso il King's College di Cambridge prima di esibirsi e registrare con l'innovativo complesso rock *Harvey and the Wallbangers*. Quando il gruppo si è sciolto nel 1988 ha ripreso gli studi di canto con David Keren, Diane Forlano e Janice Chapman.

I suoi impegni operistici comprendono Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*) per la Welsh National Opera, la Scottish Opera e Opera North; Marcello (*La Bobème*) per la Scottish Opera; Papageno (*Il flauto magico*), Faninal (*Der Rosenkavalier*) per Welsh National Opera e Opera North; il Podestà (*La gazza ladra*) per la Garsington Opera; Siegfried (*Genoveva*) e Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*) per Opera North. Ha creato il ruolo del Boia in *Ines de Castro* di James Macmillan e ha interpretato

*Parthenogenesis* di Macmillan al Festival di Edimburgo, dove è comparso anche nelle vesti di Cecil nella *Maria Stuarda* diretta da sir Charles Mackerras.

Gli impegni concertistici comprendono la Messa in do maggiore di Mozart a Aix-en-Provence con i Sixteen, *Les Noces* di Stravinskij con Philippe Herreweghe a Bruxelles, i *Vespri del 1610* di Monteverdi con Richard Hickox, la Messa in re minore di Bach al festival di La Chaise-Dieu, *Judas Maccabeus* di Handel a Norimberga e *Saul* con il Gabrieli Consort ai festival del Covent Garden e di La Chaise-Dieu, *Apocalypse* di John Tavener ai Prom con la City of London Sinfonia, la *Passione secondo San Giovanni* con Paul Goodwin a Madrid, il *Messiah* con la Scottish Chamber Orchestra, la Hallé e la Ulster Orchestra, *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* di Poulenc con la London Sinfonietta diretta da sir Simon Rattle, Manoah (*Samson*) con Harry Christophers, *War Requiem* di Britten e la *Creazione* di Haydn con la Ulster Orchestra, *Belshazzar's Feast* di Walton con la English Northern Sinfonia diretta da Paul Daniel e con la Hallé, e Lucifero ne *La Resurrezione* di Handel per Paul McCreesh a Roma, Amsterdam e Londra. Christopher Purves ha svolto il suo primo recital all'Aldeburgh Festival nel giugno 2004. La

discografia comprende Gottardo (*The Thieving Magpie*) per la serie Opera in English di Chandos.

**Rebecca Evans** è nata nel Galles del sud e ha studiato presso la Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Ha un'importante carriera teatrale in America dove ha cantato Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*) per la Santa Fe Opera; Adele (*Die Fledermaus*) per la Chicago Lyric Opera; Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*), Ann Trulove (*The Rake's Progress*) e Adina (*L'elisir d'amore*) per la San Francisco Opera; Susanna e Zerlina per la Metropolitan Opera di New York.

In Europa è ospite regolare della Bayerische Staatsoper di Monaco, per cui ha interpretato, tra l'altro, Sophie (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Zdenka (*Arabella*), Servilia (*La clemenza di Tito*), Ilia (*Idomeneo*) e Nannetta (*Falstaff*). Inoltre ha cantato Ilia per la Netherlands Opera e l'Opera de Lausanne; il ruolo di protagonista in *The Cunning Little Vixen* per la Scottish Opera; Susanna, Ilia, Marzelline (*Fidelio*), Norina (*Don Pasquale*) e Hero (*Beatrice and Benedict*) per la Welsh National Opera; Romilda (*Xerxes*) per la English National Opera; Zerlina, Nanetta e Johanna (*Sweeney Todd*) alla Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

La sua intensa attività concertistica comprende apparizioni ai Prom della BBC e al Festival di Edimburgo; concerti di gala con Andrea Bocelli in Germania e con Luciano Pavarotti in Gran Bretagna. Ha interpretato il *Magnificat* di Bach con la San Francisco Symphony Orchestra diretta da Michael Tilson Thomas; il Requiem di Brahms con la Boston Symphony Orchestra ai festival di Tanglewood e Ravinia; la quarta Sinfonia di Mahler con la Sapporo Symphony Orchestra diretta da Tadaaki Otaka. È inoltre comparsa in Australia al Melbourne International Festival e con la Australian Chamber Orchestra. Si è esibita in recital alla Wigmore Hall di Londra e ai festival di Barcellona, Ravinia, Buxton e Belfast.

La ricca discografia di Rebecca Evans comprende Ilia (*Idomeneo*) per la serie Opera in English di Chandos, Nanetta (*Falstaff*) con sir John Eliot Gardiner, una serie di registrazioni di opera di Gilbert and Sullivan con sir Charles Mackerras e un disco solistico di brani italiani.

**Yvonne Kenny** è nata a Sydney e ha esordito a Londra nel 1975 nella *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* di Donizetti. Dopo aver vinto il concorso intitolato a Kathleen Ferrier entrava alla Royal

Opera House, Covent Garden, dove i suoi ruoli hanno compreso Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*), Ilia (*Idomeneo*), Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Adina (*L'elisir d'amore*), Liù (*Turandot*), Aspasia (*Mitridate*) e Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*). Ha conquistato fama internazionale con i grandi ruoli handeliani, soprattutto Semele e Alcina (Covent Garden e La Fenice); Romilda (*Xerxes*) per English National Opera (a Londra e in tournée in URSS) e l'Opera di Stato della Baviera; Alcina con Nicholas McGegan al Festival di Handel a Göttingen; Cleopatra (*Giulio Cesare*) e Armida (*Rinaldo*) a Sydney.

Ha cantato con l'opera di Vienna (Contessa (*Capriccio*) e Susanna), La Scala di Milano (Pamina); la Staatsoper di Berlino (Contessa (*Capriccio*)); l'Opéra di Parigi (Donna Elvira); Zurigo e Glyndebourne (Donna Elvira e Alice Ford (*Falstaff*)); Contessa (*Le nozze di Figaro*) a Washington e per l'Opera di Monaco; ha interpretato la Marescialla (*Der Rosenkavalier*), *The Fairy Queen* di Purcell e Alice Ford per English National Opera; è stata la Marescialla (per la direzione di sir Charles Mackerras) nel suo debutto con la San Francisco Opera. Ritorna spesso nel suo paese, l'Australia, dove ha cantato Gilda (*Rigoletto*), Pamina, Susanna, Alcina, Manon (*Massenet*), Fiordiligi, Alice

Ford, la Governante (*The Turn of the Screw*), la Contessa (*Capriccio*) e il ruolo di protagonista in *Maria Stuarda* e *L'incoronazione di Poppea*.

Yvonne Kenny è comparsa in concerto ai festival di Edimburgo, Salisburgo e Aix-en-Provence, alla Carnegie Hall e ai Prom della BBC. La discografia per Chandos comprende Alice Ford (*Falstaff*), la Marescialla (*Der Rosenkavalier*, momenti salienti) e due dischi di arie operistiche (Great Operatic Arias), tutti nell'ambito della serie Opera in English, oltre a registrare *A Dinner Engagement* di Lennox Berkeley e *The Canterbury Pilgrims* di Dyson. Per Opera Rara ha registrato *Ugo conte di Parigi*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Emilia di Liverpool*, *Il crociato in Egitto* e *Medea in Corinto*. Per il suo contributo alla musica Yvonne Kenny è stata insignita dell'onorificenza Member of the Order of Australia.

**William Dazeley** è nato nel Warwickshire e ha conseguito la laurea a Cambridge, presso il Jesus College. Ha studiato canto presso la Guildhall School of Music and Drama, dove si è aggiudicato diversi premi, tra cui la prestigiosa Gold Medal. Ha vinto inoltre il premio Decca-Kathleen Ferrier Prize del 1989, il concorso di canto Royal Overseas League del 1990, il premio Richard Tauber nel

1991 e il concorso internazionale liederistico Walther Gruner nello stesso anno.

Considerato uno dei principali baritoni della sua generazione, è già apparso in molti importanti teatri lirici di tutto il mondo. I ruoli comprendono il Conte (*Cherubin*), Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) e Mercurio (*Roméo et Juliette*) alla Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; il Conte (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Figaro (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) e il ruolo di protagonista in Owen Wingrave per la Glyndebourne Touring Opera; Figaro (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) alla Deutsche Staatsoper di Berlino; Dr Faust al festival di Salisburgo e allo Châtelet per la direzione di Kent Nagano; Scherasmin (*Oberon*) allo Châtelet diretto da John Eliot Gardiner, presentato anche in concerto al Barbican.

Le apparizioni in concerto comprendono il ruolo di protagonista in *Faustszenen* di Schumann in una tournée europea diretta da Philippe Herreweghe, *Requiem per Mignon* di Schumann diretto da John Eliot Gardiner, *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* di Mahler con la Royal Flanders Philharmonic diretta da Herreweghe, *Dylan Thomas* di Corigliano con la BBC Symphony diretta da Leonard Slatkin, e l'*Oratorio di Natale* di Bach con i Berliner Philharmoniker.

Le prime mondiali comprendono il ruolo di Mahmoud in *The Death of Klinghoffer* di John Adams con la BBC Symphony, e il ruolo principale di Jesus in *The Last Supper* di Harrison Birtwistle alla Deutsche Staatsoper di Berlino, diretto da Daniel Barenboim, replicato poi al Glyndebourne Festival.

William Dazeley si esibisce in recital presso la Wigmore Hall, la Purcell Room, St George's a Bristol e lo Châtelet, e viene regolarmente invitato a cantare ai festival di Cheltenham, Aix en Provence e Saintes con accompagnatori illustri quali Graham Johnson e Iain Burnside.

**Diana Montague** è nata a Winchester e ha studiato presso il Royal Northern College of Music. Dopo il suo esordio nelle vesti di Zerlina con la Glyndebourne Touring Opera è comparsa alla Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, alla Metropolitan Opera di New York, al Théâtre de la Monnaie di Bruxelles, all'Opéra national de Paris-Bastille, al Teatro Colón di Buenos Aires e ai Festival di Bayreuth e Salisburgo.

Il suo repertorio riunisce i principali ruoli per mezzosoprano nelle opere di Mozart, Gluck, Strauss, Rossini, Bellini e Berlioz, e i suoi impegni hanno compreso *Benvenuto*



*Cellini* con l'Opera di Roma; *Iphigénie en Tauride* a Buenos Aires, Madrid e con la Welsh National Opera; *Albert Herring*, *Le nozze di Figaro* e *Andromaca* nell'*Ermione* di Rossini a Glyndebourne; *Le Comte Ory* a Losanna, Roma e Glyndebourne; *Proserpina* nell'*Orfeo* di Monteverdi ad Amsterdam; *Ariadne auf Naxos* a Lisbona; *Marguerite (La Damnation de Faust)* a Ginevra; *Minerva (Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria)* ad Amsterdam e Sydney; *Meg Page (Falstaff)*; *The Bartered Bride* e *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* alla Royal Opera House Covent Garden, *Junon* nel *Platée* di Rameau con la Royal Opera al Festival di Edimburgo e a Londra, *Octavian in Der Rosenkavalier* alla English National Opera, a Bilbao e al Teatro Real di Madrid; *Marguerite* a Vienna e *Le nozze di Figaro* al teatro La Monnaie.

Le ricca discografia di Diana Montague comprende *Orfeo* di Monteverdi, *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, *Norma*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Iphigénie en Taurine*; per Opera Rara *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra*, *Zoraida di Granata* e *Il crociato in Egitto*, e per la serie Opera in English di Chandos, *Idomeneo*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Octavian in Der Rosenkavalier* (momenti salienti), *Faust*, e due dischi di Great Operatic Arias.

Nata a Edimburgo, **Frances McCafferty** si è diplomata presso la Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. Dopo diversi anni come insegnante di canto è entrata alla D'Oyly Carte Opera Company, dove ha interpretato i principali ruoli per contralto e ha registrato *Patience*, *Orpheus in the Underworld* e *HMS Pinafore*.

I suoi ruoli comprendono *Katisha (The Mikado)* con la English National Opera, *Soloka (Cherevichki)* a Garsington, *Auntie (Peter Grimes)* alla Nationale Reis Oper e *Hata (The Bartered Bride)* con la Glyndebourne Festival Opera. Ha inoltre cantato con la New Israeli Opera, l'Opera di Stoccarda, l'Opera Theatre Company, la Glyndebourne Touring Opera, oltre a comparire al Festival internazionale di Edimburgo e quelli dell'Irlanda e della Svizzera. È regolarmente ospite di Opera North e della Royal Opera, Covent Garden, dove ha creato il ruolo di Yeta Zimmerman alla prima mondiale di *Sophie's Choice* di Nicholas Maw diretta da sir Simon Rattle, per la regia di Trevor Nunn, trasmessa dal vivo in radio e televisione dalla BBC. Nel Regno Unito ha svolto concerti con la RTE e la National Orchestra of Ireland, l'Orchestra dell'Ulster, la Singapore Symphony Orchestra e la BBC Concert Orchestra.

Frances McCafferty ha esordito al Teatro La Fenice di Venezia nelle vesti di *Katisha (The Mikado)*; ha inoltre cantato *Madame Popova (The Bear)* per il festival svizzero di Cerniers e la nutrice (*Boris Godunov*) per la Royal Opera, Covent Garden.

Dopo i suoi studi presso la London University e il Trinity College of Music, **Jonathan Veira** ha vinto nel 1996 il concorso di canto intitolato a Sir Peter Pears e ha ottenuto una borsa di studio dalla Glyndebourne Festival Opera e dall'associazione Friends of Covent Garden per il National Opera Studio.

Jonathan Veira è comparso con le principali compagnie liriche del Regno Unito: The Royal Opera, English National Opera, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Scottish Opera, Welsh National Opera, Garsington Opera e Opera Northern Ireland. I suoi ruoli hanno compreso il banchiere/direttore teatrale (*Lulu*), *Dulcamara (L'elisir d'amore)*, *Harasta (La volpe astuta)*, *Kolenatý (L'affare Makropulos)*, il barone *Mirko Zeta (La vedova allegra)*, *Tonio (Pagliacci)*, *Leporello (Don Giovanni)*, *Varlaam (Boris Godunov)*, *Calchas (La Belle Hélène)*, *Sharpless (Madama Butterfly)*, il sagrestano (*Tosca*), *Mustafa (L'italiana in Algeri)* e *Keçal (La sposa venduta)*.

I suoi impegni internazionali hanno compreso *The Doctor (Vanessa)* per Opéra du Rhin; *Schaunard (La Bohème)* di Leoncavallo al festival di Wexford; *Leporello (Don Giovanni)* e *Papageno (The Magic Flute)* per Opera New Zealand; *Dr Bartolo (Le nozze di Figaro)* per l'Opéra de Nice, l'opera di Zurigo, la Glyndebourne Festival Opera e l'Opéra de Montpellier; *Claggart (Billy Budd)*, *Don Alfonso (Così fan tutte)* e *Falstaff* per la Royal Danish Opera.

**John Graham-Hall** ha studiato presso il King's College di Cambridge e il Royal College of Music di Londra. Ha cantato con le principali compagnie teatrali britanniche, interpretando ruoli tra cui *Albert Herring* (Royal Opera House, Covent Garden); *Vanya Kudrjas (Katá Kabánova)*, *Flute (A Midsummer Night's Dream)* e *Bob Boles (Peter Grimes)* per la Glyndebourne Festival Opera; *Don Basilio*, *Monostato*, *Lysander (A Midsummer Night's Dream)*, *Alwa (Lulu)* e *Herod (Salome)* per la English National Opera; *Cassio (Otello)* per la Welsh National Opera; *Eisenstein*, il maestro di scuola (*La volpe astuta*) per la Scottish Opera; *Aschenbach (Death in Venice)*, *Lysander*, *Albert Herring* e *Ferrando (Così fan tutte)* per la Glyndebourne Touring Opera.

Altri impegni hanno compreso Bob Boles (Netherlands Opera); Basilio (La Monnaie); il ruolo di protagonista nella nuova opera di Pascal Dusapin, *Perela, l'Homme de fumée* all'Opéra de Paris-Bastille e a Montpellier. Per la English National Opera, di cui è stato solista, ha interpretato Sylvester (*The Silver Tassie*), Goro (*Madam Butterfly*), Triquet (*Eugene Onegin*), Monostatos (*The Magic Flute*), Mime (*The Rhinegold*) e Alwa (*Lulu*).

John Graham-Hall ha lavorato con molti illustri direttori d'orchestra, tra cui Bernanrd Haitink, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Pierre Boulez, Andrew Davis, Jeffrey Tate, Simon Rattle, John Eliot Gardiner e Claudio Abbado. La sua carriera concertistica lo ha portato in tutta Europa a lavorare con le principali orchestre britanniche con apparizioni frequenti negli auditori del Barbican e del South Bank. La discografia per Chandos comprende *The Poisoned Kiss* di Vaughan Williams, *Peter Grimes* e, per la serie Opera in English, *The Thieving Magpie* di Rossini e *Wozzeck* di Berg.

**Graeme Danby** è nato in Irlanda, nella contea di Durham e ha studiato presso la Royal Academy of Music di Londra. Nel corso della sua lunga collaborazione con English National

Opera è comparso nelle vesti di Lorenzo ne *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* di Bellini, Pimen (*Boris Godunov*), Don Basilio (*The Barber of Seville*), Dulcamara (*The Elixir of Love*), Somnus (*Semele*), Quince (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Collatinus (*The Rape of Lucretia*), Arkel (*Pelleas and Melisande*) e Poo-Bah (*The Mikado*).

Ha debuttato alla Royal Opera House, Covent Garden ne *La traviata*, e a Glyndebourne nelle vesti di Antonio (*Le nozze di Figaro*). Altri impegni nel Regno Unito comprendono Bartolo (*Le nozze di Figaro*) per Opera North e per il Garsington Festival; Collatinus al festival di Buxton; Bosun (*Billy Budd*) e Masetto (*Don Giovanni*) per la Scottish Opera.

Le apparizioni in concerto comprendono la Sinfonia N. 9 di Beethoven e la Messa da *Requiem* di Verdi alla Royal Albert Hall, l'ottava Sinfonia di Mahler alla Royal Festival Hall e *Iolanthe* alla Bridgewater Hall di Manchester.

**Sarah Tynan** è nata a Londra e ha studiato presso il Royal Northern College of Music e la Royal Academy of Music (con Penelope Mackay), dove ha ricevuto la Queen's Commendation for Excellence.

I suoi impegni operistici comprendono Pretty Polly in *Punch and Judy* di Birtwistle al Teatro Nacional S. João di Porto, la Governante in *The Turn of the Screw* di Britten per una tournée del British Council in Russia, Elsie Maynard (*The Yeomen of the Guard*) e Gianetta (*The Gondoliers*) per la Phoenix Opera, e Barbarina per Opera Holland Park. Le apparizioni teatrali alla Royal Academy of Music comprendono il ruolo di protagonista in *The Cunning Little Vixen* (diretta da sir Charles Mackerras) e Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*) (diretta da sir Colin Davis).

Altri impegni comprendono il suo debutto con la Welsh National Opera nel ruolo di Iphis in *Jephtha* di Handel; Eleanora in *Prima la musica* di Salieri, Mlle Silberklang in *Der Schauspieldirektor* di Mozart con la City of London Sinfonia/Richard Hickox; e il Requiem di Mozart diretto da sir Roger Norrington al Festival di Spitalfields. Sarah Tynan attualmente partecipa allo Young Singers Programme della English National Opera.

**Stuart Kale** ha una reputazione a livello internazionale come uno dei più notevoli cantanti-attori del mondo della lirica. È un eccellente musicista; i suoi ruoli coprono un

repertorio estremamente vasto che va da Monteverdi a Messiaen. Ha iniziato la sua carriera alla Welsh National Opera prima di entrare alla English National Opera, dove è rimasto per otto anni, interpretando, fra l'altro, il ruolo di Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*), Michael nella *Julietta* di Martinů, Alfred (*Die Fledermaus*) e Nanki-Poo nell'allestimento del *Mikado* per la regia di Jonathan Miller. Nel 1987 iniziava una carriera indipendente di successo cantando Hauptmann (*Wozzeck*) all'Opéra du Rhin e a Nancy e facendo ritorno alla English National Opera per interpretare Herod (*Salome*).

Tra i suoi principali impegni vanno ricordati l'Alto Sacerdote in *Idomeneo* al Covent Garden; Hauptmann (*Wozzeck*) a San Francisco, Ginevra, Zurigo, Montpellier, Bordeaux e Bologna; Sciuiski (*Boris Godunov*) a Strasburgo, Bordeaux e Montpellier; Quint (*The Turn of the Screw*) e Truffaldino (*The Love for Three Oranges*) per English National Opera; Zinovij (*La lady Macbeth del distretto di Mzensk*) a Tolosa e Marsiglia; Valzacchi e i tre ruoli per tenore nella *Lulu* allo Châtelet; Bob Boles (*Peter Grimes*) all'Opera di Monaco, al Covent Garden, a Genova e a Strasburgo; Captain Vere (*Billy Budd*) a Colonia; Gregor (*L'affare Makropoulos*) e Herod a Strasburgo.

Le registrazioni per la serie Opera in English di Chandos comprendono *Boris Godunov* (brani salienti), *Madam Butterfly*, *Otello*, *Falstaff*, *Wozzeck* e *The Thieving Magpie*.

La carriera di cantante di Geoffrey Mitchell racchiude un repertorio notevole che spazia dalla musica antica a quella contemporanea e che l'ha portato in Scandinavia, Germania, nella ex Cecoslovacchia, in Canada e Australasia. L'esperienza di direzione degli inizi con la BBC lo ha condotto ad un maggiore coinvolgimento con i suoi stessi cantanti e inoltre alla creazione del **Geoffrey Mitchell Choir**. Le prime registrazioni sono sfociate nel coinvolgimento a lungo termine del Coro con Opera Rara, per la quale ha inciso più di trenta registrazioni. Il Coro gode di una fama sempre maggiore con ulteriore lavoro dalla BBC e da case discografiche internazionali. Per la Chandos il Geoffrey Mitchell Choir ha partecipato a numerose registrazioni nelle applaudite serie di Opera in English con il patrocinio della Peter Moores Foundation.

La **Philharmonia Orchestra**, una delle più grandi orchestre del mondo, è diretta per la sesta stagione consecutiva dal famoso maestro tedesco Christoph von Dohnányi, in qualità di

Direttore Principale. In precedenza questa carica era appartenuta a Otto Klemperer e da allora l'Orchestra ha collaborato con nomi di prestigio come Lorin Maazel (Direttore Principale Associato), Riccardo Muti (Direttore Principale e Direttore Musicale), Giuseppe Sinopoli (Direttore Musicale) e, attualmente, Kurt Sanderling (Direttore Emerito), Vladimir Ashkenazy (Direttore Laureato) e Sir Charles Mackerras (Direttore Principale Ospite), oltre che con artisti importanti come Wilhelm Furtwängler, Richard Strauss, Arturo Toscanini, Guido Cantelli, Herbert von Karajan e Carlo Maria Giulini. L'Orchestra continua a collaborare con direttori e solisti di fama mondiale, oltre ad attrarre nelle sue fila i giovani musicisti europei di maggiore talento.

Orchestra Residente presso la Royal Festival Hall di Londra, occupa una posizione centrale nella vita musicale britannica anche attraverso residenze regionali che offrono un'opportunità ideale per espandere il suo dinamico programma educativo, basato sulle comunità. Vincitrice di numerosi premi, è stata lodata all'unanimità dai critici per la sua politica di programmazione particolarmente innovativa e fortemente incentrata sull'impegno ad eseguire e commissionare musiche nuove firmate dai maggiori compositori contemporanei.

I concerti dell'Orchestra sono trasmessi sempre più frequentemente da BBC Radio 3, incluso l'apparizione annuale in occasione dei BBC Proms. La Philharmonia Orchestra gode di una reputazione a livello mondiale ed è l'orchestra sinfonica che ha inciso di più in tutto il mondo, con un catalogo di oltre 1000 incisioni, tra cui una serie di colonne sonore per film e televisione. La sua discografia include, per Opera Rara, numerosi dischi di recital, oltre a undici opere complete, e nella serie Opera in English per Chandos, sponsorizzata dalla Peter Moores Foundation, *The Thieving Magpie*, *Wozzeck*, *Don Giovanni*, *The Elixir of Love*, *Lucia of Lammermoor*, *Faust*, *Carmen*, *Aida*, *La Bohème*, *Madam Butterfly*, *Turandot*, *la Tosca*, vincitrice di un premio, e vari album di recital, con assoli di arie d'opera eseguite da Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny e John Tomlinson. La Philharmonia Orchestra continua a consolidare la sua fama internazionale con frequenti tournèe e attraverso le recenti, prestigiose residenze presso il Châtelet Théâtre Musical di Parigi, il Megaron di Atene e il Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts di New York.

**David Parry** ha studiato con Sergiu Celibidache ed ha cominciato la sua carriera come assistente di Sir John Pritchard. Ha debuttato all'English Music Theatre, quindi è diventato direttore d'orchestra presso la Städtische Bühnen di Dortmund e la Opera North. È stato Direttore Musicale di Opera 80 dal 1983 al 1987 e dal 1992 è stato Direttore Musicale fondatore dell'Opera di Almeida.

Lavora copiosamente in opere e concerti, a livello nazionale ed internazionale. Ha diretto diverse produzioni presso la English National Opera e la Opera North e appare regolarmente con la Philharmonia Orchestra e la London Philharmonic Orchestra. Nel 1996 ha debuttato con *Così fan tutte* al Glyndebourne Festival, dove nel 1998 ha diretto la prima mondiale di *Flight* di Jonathan Dove.

È un frequente visitatore della Spagna dove si è esibito in concerto con la maggior parte delle maggiori orchestre spagnole. Ha diretto la prima spagnola di *Peter Grimes* a Madrid e nel 1996 la prima produzione spagnola di *The Rake's Progress*. È apparso in Germania, Svizzera, Paesi Bassi, al Festival di Pesaro in Italia, al Festival Internazionale di Hong Kong, in Giappone con una tournèe della *Carmen* e in Messico con la UNAM Symphony

Orchestra. Recenti nuove produzioni da lui dirette comprendono il *Fidelio* al Festival della Nuova Zelanda, *Lucia di Lammermoor* alla New Israeli Opera e *Don Giovanni* alla Staatsoper di Hannover.

Il suo lavoro in studio di registrazione comprende la produzione della BBC di *Der Vampyr* di Marschner nonché ventotto registrazioni operistiche complete con il patrocinio della Peter Moores Foundation. Tra questi vi sono numerosi dischi per l'etichetta Opera Rara che hanno vinti parecchi premi, tra cui il belga Prix Cecilia per la *Rosmonda*

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

Mike Hoban



John Graham-Hall as Don Basilio with Glyndebourne Festival Opera



On session:  
Christopher Purves

Bill Cooper



On session:  
Rebecca Evans

Bill Cooper



On session:  
William Dazeley

Bill Cooper



On session:  
Yvonne Kenny

Bill Cooper



On session:  
Diana Montague

Bill Cooper



On session:  
Graeme Danby and  
Jonathan Veira

Bill Cooper



On session:  
Frances McCafferty

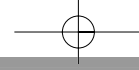
Bill Cooper



On session:  
John Graham-Hall

Bill Cooper





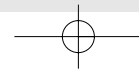
On session:  
Stuart Kale

Bill Cooper



On session:  
Sarah Tynan

Bill Cooper





On session:  
Christopher Purves  
and Rebecca Evans

Bill Cooper



On session;  
David Parry

Bill Cooper

COMPACT DISC ONE

1 Overture

Act I

*An incompletely furnished room, with an armchair in the middle. Figaro has a ruler in his hand, Susanna is seated at a mirror, trying on a small, flowered hat.*

Duettino

Figaro

2 Fifteen, sixteen, twenty, thirty, thirty-seven by forty-three.

Susanna

Oh, this hat is simply lovely, everything a hat should be. Take a look, my darling Figaro. I will wear it at the wedding. Take a look, my darling Figaro, at my lovely new creation.

Figaro

It will make a great sensation: everything a hat should be.

Susanna

Look, my love.

Figaro

Yes, I've seen it. And yes, it's charming.

Susanna

We will make a lovely couple when the nuptial knot is tied.

Figaro

It will make a great sensation when the nuptial knot is tied.

Susanna and Figaro

Yes, it is our wedding morning, and to crown all the joy we are sharing your/my Susanna will be wearing such a beautiful hat for a bride.

Figaro

Susanna, you're so clever. What a beautiful hat for a bride.

Susanna

Susanna, I'm so clever. What a beautiful hat for a bride.

Recitative

Susanna

3 What on earth are you measuring, my darling Figaretto?

Figaro

I'm seeing if the bed that the Count said he'll give us would fit inside our beautiful new home.

Susanna

You don't mean this room?

Figaro

Certainly, and it's a very generous gift from his lordship.

Susanna

You can sleep on your own then!

Figaro

Why so unreasonable?

Susanna

I have reasons enough.

Figaro

Then why can't you tell me what they are?

Susanna

'Cos I don't want to! Stop bossing me around!

Figaro

I can't believe it. How can you look this gift horse in the mouth when it's the best room in the palace?

Susanna

Because I'm Susanna and you're a half-wit!

Figaro

Flattery will get you nowhere. But, Susanetta, see if you can find a bedroom which is better.

Duettino

Figaro

4 Supposing one evening the Countess should need you.

Ding ding! Ding ding!

Then she won't have to ring more than twice.

And then it might happen my master should want me.

Dong dong! Dong dong!

I'd be there by his side in a trice.

Susanna

Supposing one morning the Count were to call you, our sweet little Count were to call you.

Ding ding! Ding ding!

And to send you a long way away.

Ding ding! Dong dong!

If he wants me he knows where to find me; he'll be there behind me.

Figaro

Take care what you say.

Susanna

Then listen!

Figaro

I'm listening.

Susanna

If you want the story, then don't be suspicious – it's grossly unfair.

Figaro

I do want the story: my nagging suspicions are too much to bear.

Recitative

Susanna

5 All right, shut up and listen.

Figaro

I'm listening. Tell me the worst.

Susanna

Our noble Count, weary of chasing all the pretty girls in the neighbourhood, has decided to try

his luck just a bit nearer home. And it's not with his wife the Countess, more's the pity. He's lost his appetite for her.

**Figaro**  
Well then, who is it?

**Susanna**  
It's your very own Susanna!

**Figaro**  
What, you?

**Susanna**  
Well, who else? And when he needs me he won't have far to wander.  
Proximity makes the heart grow fonder.

**Figaro**  
Bravo! I get the picture.

**Susanna**  
So much for all his charity and all his kindness, so attentive to our every need.

**Figaro**  
Oh yes, I see. That's charity indeed!

**Susanna**  
Wait a bit, it gets better. Don Basilio, who teaches me singing, acts as his agent, so instead of singing pretty phrases he only sings his master's praises.

**Figaro**  
What, Basilio? He's disgusting!

**Susanna**  
And you imagine that it was thanks to your good looks that I got such a handsome dowry?

**Figaro**  
I hoped I had a hand in it.

**Susanna**  
Well, so did he, and soon he'll want to get his hands on me, to claim his feudal rights.

**Figaro**  
Never! I thought he'd abolished that shameful tradition.

**Susanna**  
He regrets the abolition and now he's keen to reinstate it with me.

**Figaro**  
Splendid! That's perfect! So, Count Almaviva, you are looking for some fun? We can provide it... Who's ringing? It's your mistress.

**Susanna**  
No time for a farewell kiss, I must be running.

**Figaro**  
Be brave, my dearest darling.

**Susanna**  
And you be cunning!

*(Exit Susanna.)*

**Figaro**  
[6] Bravo, my lord and master!

Now I'm beginning to see how you've planned it. It's all very simple when you start to understand it. We're off to London, you as minister, me as messenger, and my Susanna to succour and support you. Well, if that's what you're up to, Figaro has caught you!

**Cavatina**

**Figaro**  
[7] So, little master, you're dressed to go dancing, dressed in your best to go strutting and prancing. I'll put an end to your fun pretty soon; you may go dancing but I'll call the tune, yes, I'll call the tune.

If you want dancing, I'll be your master; faster and faster, dance till you drop. You'll see, you'll see, be careful, Figaro, be careful!

Stay under cover, then you'll discover what he's about.

I will be cunning, slyly deceiving, cutting and running, ducking and weaving. He may be clever but he's met his match. I can undo any scheme he can hatch.

So, little master, you're dressed to go dancing; dressed in your best to go strutting and prancing. I'll put an end to your fun pretty soon; you may go dancing but I'll call the tune, yes, I'll call the tune.

*(Exit Figaro, enter Bartolo and Marcellina.)*

**Recitative**

**Bartolo**

[8] But why did you wait till the day of the wedding to appoint me your adviser?

**Marcellina**

I'm very confident, dear doctor, you can break up any couple, even at the altar: all you need is a pretext. I have one here. According to this contract he must pay back my money or else... Listen... Only Susanna stands in our way. We must be certain that she continues to reject the Count's advances. He'll want to get his own back, so he'll act in my favour and Figaro will have to be my husband.

**Bartolo**

Splendid, delighted to help. You will instruct me; don't omit any detail.

*(aside)*

I'd be delighted to fob him off with my old housemaid Marcellina, as revenge for robbing me of my Rosina!

**Aria**

**Bartolo**

[9] Now for vengeance, glorious vengeance! Vengeance has the sweetest flavour, one that connoisseurs can savour. He who lets a crime go unpunished is twice as guilty and doubly base. I will beat him, I'll unseat him,

I will fight him, I'll defeat him.  
Yes, I swear it, yes, I swear that I will beat him,  
It won't be easy, but I'm sure to win the case.

With ingenuity and with acuity  
I'll study law and I'm happy to do it.  
If I can outwit him with some ambiguity,  
where there's a will there must be a way.  
I'm well respected, I'm Doctor Bartolo!  
That bastard Figaro, I'll make him pay.

*(Exit Bartolo, enter Susanna.)*

**Recitative**

**Marcellina**

<sup>10</sup> So all is not lost, I can still live in hope. If it isn't  
Susanna! Let's test the water... Pretend I haven't  
seen her... So that's the little jewel Figaro thinks  
he'll marry!

**Susanna**

What's that she's saying?

**Marcellina**

You'd think he could do better, but you know  
the old proverb: 'L'argent fait tout'.

**Susanna**

How dare you! Who would waste tuppence  
ha'penny on you!

**Marcellina**

Well done! The fair Susanna – such an innocent  
manner, so demure and so proper, so virginal...

**Susanna**

I'd better go.

**Marcellina**

I'd better stop her!

**Duettino**

**Marcellina**

<sup>11</sup> I bow to your grace – after you, I implore you.

**Susanna**

But I know my place so I won't go before you.

**Marcellina**

Oh no, I implore you.

**Susanna**

No, no, after you.

**Susanna and Marcellina**

I know what is proper to say and to do.

**Marcellina**

The spotless madonna.

**Susanna**

The matron of honour.

**Marcellina**

The Count's little treasure.

**Susanna**

The lady of pleasure.

**Marcellina**

Your quality...

**Susanna**

Quantity...

**Marcellina**

Your status.

**Susanna**

Your age!

**Marcellina**

Oh, this is unbearable! I'm bursting with rage!

**Susanna**

You gaudy old parakeet, go back in your cage!

*(Exit Marcellina.)*

**Recitative**

**Susanna**

<sup>12</sup> Good riddance, you old spinster, frustrated old  
schoolmarm! Just because you taught my lady,  
don't start thinking you can lord it over me.

*(Enter Cherubino.)*

**Cherubino**

Oh, thank heavens it's you.

**Susanna**

It's me. What do you want?

**Cherubino**

Ah, my darling, it's appalling!

**Susanna**

Your darling? What's the matter?

**Cherubino**

The Count! Yesterday he caught me alone with  
Barbarina; he dismissed me on the spot, and if  
the Countess (my beautiful Countess) doesn't  
plead for my reinstatement then I am done for.  
Ah, never more to see my dear Susanna!

**Susanna**

Never more to see me? Typical! What about your  
passion for the Countess? You used to worship  
her, used to revere her.

**Cherubino**

Ah! If only I dared to come near her! You're so  
lucky, you see her whenever you want to: you  
dress her in the morning, undress her in the  
evening, always fiddling with her ribbons and  
her laces... Can't we swap places? What's that?  
Let me see it!

**Susanna**

Ah, that's a ribbon from her favourite bonnet,  
the one she goes to bed in.

**Cherubino** *(snatching the ribbon)*

Oh, give it me, I beg you; give it for pity's sake!

**Susanna**

Give it back!

**Cherubino** *(covering the ribbon with kisses)*

O sweetest, o fairest, o most divine of ribbons! I  
will wear it till the day I die!

**Susanna**

That's disgraceful behaviour!

**Cherubino**

Now don't be angry, I've something here for you:  
a little song I've been writing.

**Susanna**

Well, what am I supposed to do with it?

**Cherubino**

Read it to the Countess, read it to yourself, read  
it to Barbarina, to Marcellina – if every woman  
read it I'd be glad.

**Susanna**

Poor little Cherubino, have you gone mad?

**Aria**

**Cherubino**

<sup>13</sup> I don't know what it is that I'm feeling,  
why my brain and my senses are reeling;  
every woman I see makes me tremble,  
makes me tremble with pleasure and pain.

Speak of love and my heart is a-flutter,  
say the word and I turn into butter.  
Goaded by passion I'm driven to utter  
words of longing I cannot explain.

All through the day I'm yearning,  
all through the night I'm burning;  
I serenade the mountains,  
the trees, the glade, the fountains,  
so all the world can share it,  
and then the breeze may bear it  
into the wide unknown.

All through the day I'm yearning,  
all through the night I'm burning.  
I sing to shadows, to seas and mountains,  
to echoes, to fountains,  
so all the world can share it.  
And then the breeze may bear it  
into the wide unknown.

And when there's no one near me,  
no, not a soul to hear me,  
I sing it all alone.

**Recitative**

**Cherubino** (*seeing the Count*)

<sup>14</sup> Now I'm done for!

**Susanna**

What's the matter?

**Cherubino**

It's the Count! What shall I do?

(*Cherubino hides. Enter the Count.*)

**Count**

Susanna, you are looking rather nervous and  
flustered.

**Susanna**

My lord, I beg your pardon, but, if someone  
should see us – I beg you leave at once.

**Count**

I'll leave when I'm ready. Listen.

**Susanna**

Why should I listen?

**Count**

Just be patient. You know the King has  
appointed me ambassador to London. I have  
decided Figaro will go with me.

**Susanna**

May I say something?

**Count**

Say it, my darling, for you must claim the rights  
which are yours today and always. Ask me,  
compel me, command me.

**Susanna**

What do you mean by rights? I don't claim  
them, I don't want them, I don't expect them.  
I'm so unhappy!

**Count**

Ah yes, Susanna, but I can make you happy! You  
know how much I love you – at least I'm sure  
Basilio has told you. So listen: if you'd grant me  
a moment's bliss in the garden later on this  
evening... you would see that I know how to be  
grateful.

**Basilio** (*offstage*)

I think he's just gone out.

**Count**

Who's that?

**Susanna**

Oh heavens!

**Count**

Go out there – send them away!

**Susanna**

What, and leave you alone here?

**Basilio** (*entering*)

He will be with the Countess. I'll go and find him.

**Count**

I'll hide behind the chair.

**Susanna**

No, don't do that!

**Count**

Quiet! Get rid of him quickly!

**Susanna**

Oh no, it's useless!

(*The Count hides behind the chair as Cherubino  
runs round to hide in it; Susanna covers  
Cherubino.*)

**Basilio**

<sup>15</sup> Susanna, heaven bless you! I suppose you  
wouldn't have seen the Count?

**Susanna**

And why should I have seen the Count? Sorry,  
can't help you.

**Basilio**

Just a moment, it seems that Figaro wants to see  
him.

**Susanna**

(Oh heavens!) To see the man who hates him  
more than you do.

**Count**

(Let's see if he betrays me.)

**Basilio**

Well, that's a thing I've never heard before, that if you love someone's wife you have to hate the husband. Which is to say his lordship loves you.

**Susanna**

How vile to be the agent of another man's lust! I spit on your sermons, they mean nothing to me. I don't want the Count, I don't want his love.

**Basilio**

Well, suit yourself then. No accounting for taste. But I can't believe that you're any different from the others; when it comes to a lover you'd prefer someone fine and aristocratic to some page boy in the attic!

**Susanna**

To Cherubino?

**Basilio**

Yes, Cherubino, our little household Cupid. I saw him here this morning, he was sniffing round your doorway; very stupid.

**Susanna**

You're disgusting, spying on all the servants!

**Basilio**

I don't think I'm disgusting, I'm just observant! And what about that love song? I wouldn't want to pry, but I'm your friend, I can keep a secret. Was it for you or for my lady?

**Susanna**

(Whoever could have told him?)

**Basilio**

By the way, you should teach him to behave more discreetly; that rather frank way he stares at her at meal times, devouring her completely. I hope the Count hasn't noticed. You know what he's like: a tiger when he is roused...

**Susanna**

You snake! Spreading gossip and inventing iniquitous rumours!

**Basilio**

No, you misjudge me. I'm very strict with rumours: I repeat what people are saying, I never embellish.

**Count** (*emerging*)

Really? And what are people saying?

**Basilio**

Oh heavenly!

**Susanna**

Oh hellish!

**Terzetto**

**Count**

<sup>16</sup> It's outrageous! Search the castle, find the rascal and bring him here.

**Basilio**

My intrusion brought confusion, I'm not wanted, I'll disappear.

**Susanna**

I am ruined, I am done for,  
I am faint with pain and fear!

**Count**

Go and find him, the rascal!

**Basilio and Count**

Ah, she's fainted, the little darling,  
this is more than her heart can bear;  
feel it beating, it's hardly there.

**Basilio** (*approaching the armchair to sit her down in it*)

Have this chair, you'll feel much better.

**Susanna**

Ah, where am I?

Ah, how dare you!

Go away and let me be,  
oh go away and let me be!

**Basilio**

Do not worry, I will not hurt you,  
and your virtue is safe with me,  
yes, your virtue is safe with me.

**Count**

Do not worry, I won't hurt you,  
do not worry, you're safe with me,  
little darling, you're safe with me.

**Basilio**

Cherubino's reputation,  
merely gossip and speculation.

**Susanna**

Pure invention, pay no attention;  
not a word of it is true; it is not true.

**Count**

Find him, find the dirty rascal!

**Susanna and Basilio**

Ah, forgive him!

**Count**

Find him, find the dirty rascal!

**Susanna and Basilio**

He's a baby!

**Count**

He's a baby?

That's as maybe; but I know much more than you.

He's a baby; not as much as you might think.

**Susanna**

Tell us! What?

**Basilio**

What? Tell us?

**Count**

It happened yesterday. Barbarina's door was locked so I knock, then she opens it, blushing rather sweetly; this arouses my suspicions, so I search the room completely. Then I gently raise the cover from the table and then discover that damned pageboy...

(*discovering Cherubino*)

I don't believe it!

**Susanna**

Heavens, how frightful!

**Basilio**

Ah, how delightful!

**Count**

Oh, the virtuous Susanna!

**Susanna**

It's the worst that could have happened.

**Count**

Now I see that it was true.

**Susanna**

God in heav'n, what shall I do?

It's the worst that could have happened.

**Basilio**

That's the way with pretty women,  
her behaviour's nothing new.

**Count**

Now I see that it was true.

Oh, the virtuous Susanna!

**Recitative**

**Count**

<sup>17</sup> Basilio, run and tell Figaro to come here.  
(*indicating Cherubino*)

I want him to see this.

**Susanna**

And I want him to hear this; go quickly!

**Count**

One moment. Why so fearless? You're plainly guilty, so let's hear your excuses.

**Susanna**

Virtue like mine needs no excuses.

**Count**

But how long had he been here?

**Susanna**

He was already here when you entered; he'd come to beg me to intercede with my lady on his behalf. He was alarmed by your sudden intrusion so he hid by the chair in his confusion.

**Count**

But I sat in the chair as soon as I came in!

**Cherubino**

I ran round the back and hid behind it.

**Count**

And when I went behind it?

**Cherubino**

Then I ran round the front and hid inside it.

**Count**

My God! He's heard every word of our conversation!

**Cherubino**

I tried to hear as little as possible.

**Count**

I bet you did!

**Basilio**

Be careful, someone's coming.

**Count** (*pulling Cherubino out of the armchair*)

And you, you little snake – I'll deal with you later!

(*Enter Figaro and vassals.*)

**Chorus**

**Vassals**

<sup>18</sup> Praise and adore him, bow down before him,  
mighty and merciful, our noble lord.  
He has protected, he has respected  
this fairest flower of all womankind.  
Honour and virtue sweetly combined.  
Praise and adore him, bow down before him.  
Most wise and merciful, our noble lord!

**Recitative and Chorus**

**Count** (*to Figaro*)

<sup>19</sup> So what is all this nonsense?

**Figaro** (*aside, to Susanna*)

Here's where the fun starts. Think quickly, my Susanna.

**Susanna**

We haven't a hope.

**Figaro**

My lord, in our own humble way we bring a fitting tribute to your enlightened attitude; we wish to express our gratitude for not enforcing the rights of long ago.

**Count**

Those rights have been abolished, as well you know.

**Figaro**

And we are the first to reap the fruit of your enlightened position. To celebrate the passing of this tradition, will you present this white and spotless garment? It was made to adorn the pure Susanna, as a symbol of her virtue and of her honour.

**Count**

(He's cunning as the devil! I can hardly refuse).  
I'm very grateful for this thoughtful gesture, but I'm hardly worthy to receive such an honour. When I abolished that shameful tradition I was merely restoring natural order.

**All**

God bless you, God bless you, God bless you!

**Susanna**

What restraint!

**Figaro**

And what virtue!

**Count**

As I have promised I'll perform the marriage ceremony, but first let me crave your indulgence: give me time to gather my faithful subjects, so our jubilation and your joy will be all the greater. (I must find Marcellina.) My friends, till later.



**Vassals**

- [20] Praise and adore him, bow down before him.  
Mighty and merciful, our noble lord.  
He has protected, he has respected  
This fairest flower of all womankind.  
Honour and virtue sweetly combined.  
Praise and adore him, bow down before him,  
Most wise and merciful, our noble lord.

*(Exeunt vassals.)*

**Recitative**

**Figaro**

- [21] God bless you!

**Susanna**

God bless you!

**Basilio**

God bless you!

**Figaro** *(to Cherubino)*

Why aren't you joining in?

**Susanna**

He doesn't feel like singing because the Count has dismissed him.

**Figaro**

What? Today of all days!

**Susanna**

On the day of our wedding!

**Figaro**

When the world is rejoicing!

**Cherubino**

Your lordship, please forgive me.

**Count**

You don't deserve it.

**Susanna**

He is only a baby.

**Count**

Well, he's growing up fast.

**Cherubino**

I've behaved very badly; but I can keep a secret...

**Count**

All right, I will pardon you – and I will go one better: there is a vacancy for an officer in my regiment. You've got the job, congratulations, leave at once!

**Susanna and Figaro**

Please let him stay today!

**Count**

Those are my orders!

**Cherubino**

My lord and master speaks, and I obey.

**Count**

For the very last time you may kiss your Susanna. (Well, that was rather brilliant!)

**Figaro**

Hey, gallant soldier, one final embrace.

*(softly, to Cherubino)*

(I need a word with you before you go.)

Farewell, dear little Cherubino. Say goodbye to the past, look to the future!

**Aria**

**Figaro**

- [22] Here's an end to your life as a rover,  
here's an end to the young Casanova.  
It was fun for a while, but it's over;  
we will soon wipe the smile off your face.

Here's an end to our proud little peacock,  
scrubbed and powdered and primped to  
perfection.

Here's an end to your girlish complexion,  
to your ribbons and satins and lace.

We will soon wipe the smile off your face.

Here's an end to airs and graces, pretty laces,  
your perfection, your girlish complexion.

Off you go to join the fighting!

You may find it quite exciting.

Wearing armour may not suit you,

but it's handy when they shoot you.

All around you the battle rages;

think of fame, not of the wages.

Not your usual exertions

but alarms and excursions.

After twenty days of marching  
you will wish that you were dead,  
and all the trumpeting and drumming  
means the enemy is coming,

and the bullets will be humming  
all around your pretty head.

Here's an end to airs and graces,  
pretty hats, pretty laces.

Here's an end to perfection,  
to your face, your girlish complexion.

You may live to tell the story  
and I rather hope you do,  
for it's off to death and glory,  
it's a soldier's life for you.

COMPACT DISC TWO

**Act II**

*A luxurious room with an alcove and three doors*

**Cavatina**

**Countess**

- [1] Hear my prayer, humbly I beg you,  
soothe my sorrow, my lonely sigh.  
Oh, may his love be reawakened,  
or, forsaken, let me die.

Hear my prayer, I humbly beg you,  
soothe my sorrow, heed my cry.

**Recitative**

**Countess**

- [2] Come here, dear Susanna, and finish your story.

**Susanna**

No more to tell you.

**Countess**

But he tried to seduce you.

**Susanna**

No, not exactly; he wouldn't waste compliments on a girl of my position. It was more a financial proposition.

**Countess**

You see, he no longer loves me.

**Susanna**

Then why on earth is he jealous?

**Countess**

That is the way with all modern husbands – they're unfaithful on principle, by nature capricious. It's only pride that makes them all jealous. But if Figaro loves you, then he's the one to...

*(Enter Figaro.)*

**Figaro**

La la la la la...

**Susanna**

Here he is. Come and help us. My lady is anxious.

**Figaro**

No need to worry, it's all going smoothly and this is the position: it seems that his lordship has intentions towards my Susanna; with cunning and with duplicity he hopes to reinstate his traditional rights. The whole thing's very possible and very natural.

**Countess**

Possible?

**Susanna**

Natural?

**Figaro**

Perfectly natural! And if Susanna wants it, perfectly possible.

**Susanna**

Will you get to the point.

**Figaro**

This is the point. When he goes off to London, he'll take me as his courier and my Susanna as his personal assistant for his personal enjoyment. And when Susanna refuses this offer of employment, then he'll threaten to support Marcellina. That is all there is to say.

**Susanna**

How can you take the whole thing so lightly? It's a serious matter.

**Figaro**

I may be joking, but I'm taking it seriously. Here's how I've planned it: I'm going to send the Count an anonymous letter (via Don Basilio), informing him of a secret assignation, that tonight while we're feasting you'll be meeting a lover.

**Countess**

Oh no, you mustn't! You know he's so jealous!

**Figaro**

So much the better.

**Susanna**

But we still have to deal with Marcellina.

**Figaro**

I want you to tell his lordship that this evening he's to meet you in the garden; and little Cherubino, if he's taken my advice he won't have left yet. We'll dress him as a woman, then he can take your place in the garden; the Monsieur will relent – he'll have to, of course, for when Madama finds him in the grounds she'll have grounds for divorce.

**Countess**

What d'you think?

**Susanna**

It might work.

**Countess**

It's very risky...

**Susanna**

If we can convince him... but we must hurry.

**Figaro**

His lordship's out hunting, and won't be back for an hour or two. I'm off now; I'll send Cherubino straight to you. When he comes you can dress him at your leisure.

**Countess**

And then?

**Figaro**

And then...

I'll put an end to your fun pretty soon; you may go dancing but I'll call the tune, yes, I'll call the tune.

*(Exit Figaro.)*

**Countess**

<sup>3</sup> How it grieves me, Susanna, to think that Cherubino heard all that nonsense my husband has told you. Ah, you can't know... Why didn't Cherubino come to me for protection? Where's the song he gave you?

**Susanna**

Here it is. As soon as he comes in let's make him sing it. Quiet, someone's coming. It's him! *(Cherubino enters.)* Look who it is, it's our handsome young officer!

**Cherubino**

Ah, do not call me by that hateful title. It just reminds me that I am forced to leave her, my Countess Almaviva.

**Susanna**

Isn't she lovely?

**Cherubino**

Ah yes, she is!

**Susanna** *(mocking him)*

Ah yes, she is! You great hypocrite! Remember the song you gave me this morning? Sing it to the Countess.

**Countess**

Tell me who wrote it.

**Susanna**

He did. And he's so modest – look, he's blushing like a schoolgirl.

**Countess**

Take my guitar, Susanna, and play it with him.

**Cherubino**

But will my lady accept this humble gift I'm bringing?

**Susanna**

Of course she will, of course; stop talking and start singing.

**Arietta**

**Cherubino**

- [4] Tell me what love is; what can it be?  
 What is this yearning burning in me?  
 Can I survive it, will I endure?  
 This is my sickness; is there a cure?  
 First this obsession seizing my brain,  
 starting in passion, ending in pain;  
 I start to shiver, then I'm on fire,  
 then I'm a-quiver with seething desire.  
 Who knows the secret, who holds the key?  
 I long for something – what can it be?  
 My brain is reeling; I wonder why.  
 And then the feeling I'm going to die.  
 By day it haunts me, haunts me by night,  
 this tender torment tinged with delight.

**Recitative**

**Countess**

- [5] Bravo, your voice is lovely! I never knew that you could sing so sweetly.

**Susanna**

Oh, he's so good at anything he chooses to do. Come along, handsome soldier – has Figaro explained?

**Cherubino**

Yes, he's explained.

**Susanna**

Then let me have a look; oh yes, that's perfect, you're the same height as me. Take your coat off.

**Countess**

What are you doing?

**Susanna**

Don't be nervous.

**Countess**

But someone might come in.

**Susanna**

Let them. It's not illegal. I'll just lock the door. What on earth shall we do with his hair?

**Countess**

Fetch me a bonnet from my dressing room, quickly!  
*(Susanna goes to fetch a bonnet.)*  
 What is that paper?

**Cherubino**

My commission.

**Countess**

Well, they don't waste much time!

**Cherubino**

It was sent via Basilio.

**Countess**

In their hurry they've forgotten to seal it.

**Susanna** *(returning)*

Forgotten to seal what?

**Countess**

His commission.

**Susanna**

They don't waste much time! Here is your bonnet.

**Countess**

Quickly now, at the double! If the Count were to see us then there'd be trouble!

**Aria**

**Susanna**

- [6] Kneel down and let me look at you –  
*(Susanna takes Cherubino and makes him kneel a slight distance from the Countess, who has seated herself.)*  
 for Heaven's sake keep still.  
 Stop wriggling, stop giggling;  
 be quiet and keep still.  
*(She combs his hair.)*  
 Now let me take a look at you.

Splendid! That fits the bill!

*(While Susanna is dressing his hair, Cherubino regards the Countess tenderly.)*

Why can't you keep your eyes on me?

Stop looking over there.

You know it's rude to stare.

*(Continuing to dress his hair, Susanna places the bonnet on him.)*

Stop fidgeting; why can't you try to concentrate?

Stop looking over there.

Try not to fidget, let's have a look at you.

Please concentrate – thank you.

We'll do this up more neatly...

Now drop your eyes discreetly...

Now try and smile more sweetly.

You'll spoil it all completely with that ungracious frown.

Let's have you on your feet, please;

try walking up and down.

He's really rather charming

he's thoroughly disarming.

A little bit unsteady,

but loving it already.

If all the women fall for him,

I see the reason why.

He's got a certain something you can't deny;

all women seem to love him and I see why,

I see the reason why.

**Recitative**

**Countess**

- [7] Enough of this nonsense!

**Susanna**

It may be nonsense, but it's making me jealous!  
You little monkey, how dare you be so pretty?  
It's outrageous!

**Countess**

That's quite enough of that...  
Now, will you help me roll up his sleeves past  
the elbow. That way the dress will sit more  
comfortably on his shoulders.

**Susanna** (*doing so*)

This way.

**Countess**

No, higher, like this.  
(*discovering a ribbon tied around Cherubino's arm*)  
Now what's this ribbon?

**Susanna**

The one he stole from me.

**Countess**

But it's blood-stained.

**Cherubino**

It's blood-stained? But how can that be? Oh, I  
remember... Yes, of course; I slipped and fell  
and cut myself, so I bandaged the wound with  
this ribbon.

**Susanna**

Just show me. You'll survive! Amazing, his arm's  
even whiter than mine. It's just like a girl's!

**Countess**

Can't you ever be serious? Go into my dressing  
room. On the little desk you'll find a bandage.  
As for this ribbon, who knows... I like the  
colour, I'd be sorry to part with it.

**Susanna**

The bandage. But how shall we tie it up?

**Countess**

Another ribbon; bring it here. Oh yes, and bring  
my dress.

**Cherubino**

No! With that one it'll heal all the quicker.

**Countess**

But why? This one is better.

**Cherubino**

Yes, but a ribbon which has touched the hair, or  
even touched the flesh of someone...

**Countess** (*interrupting him*)

Someone else, then it heals you straight away?  
Does it really? Well, you learn something new  
every day!

**Cherubino**

How can you tease me? You know I have to leave  
you.

**Countess**

Who's a poor wounded soldier!

**Cherubino**

I'm so unhappy!

**Countess** (*much moved*)

You're crying...

**Cherubino**

Oh God! I wish that I was dying! As I  
approached my final moment, you'd bend down  
and you'd kiss me.

**Countess** (*drying his eyes with a handkerchief*)

Don't be silly – you know this is madness. Who's  
knocking at the door?

**Count** (*outside*)

Why is this locked?

**Countess**

It's my husband – God help us! He'll kill me,  
and you, without your breeches – just look at  
you! He will have read the letter, and he can be  
so jealous...

**Count**

Why are you waiting?

**Countess**

I'm alone... Yes, alone.

**Count**

To whom were you speaking?

**Countess**

To you, only to you.

**Cherubino**

After all that has happened he'll be furious, and  
certain to suspect me.

(*Cherubino hides.*)

**Countess**

Father in Heaven, please protect me!

*She unlocks the door to admit the Count, who enters.*

**Count**

What does this mean? It was never your custom  
to lock yourself in your bedroom.

**Countess**

That's true... but I was... yes, I was in here  
trying...

**Count**

Trying what?

**Countess**

Trying clothes on; trying clothes on with  
Susanna. She's gone back to her room.

**Count**

Nevertheless, you seem to be distracted. I've just  
received this letter.

**Countess**

Heavens! The letter that Figaro wrote him.

(*Cherubino knocks something over.*)

**Count**

What's making that noise? I could have sworn  
something fell over.

**Countess**

I didn't hear anything.

**Count**

Because you've got something else on your mind.

**Countess**

Like what?

**Count**

Somebody's in there!

**Countess**

And who might that be?

**Count**

I'm asking you; I've only just arrived.

**Countess**

Oh yes, Susanna... Susanna...

**Count**

Who's gone back, or so you said, to her own room.

**Countess**

To her room, or mine, I can't remember.

**Count**

Susanna? So why this over-anxious manner?

**Countess**

That's your imagination.

**Count**

I may be wrong, but you looked all hot and bothered.

**Countess**

Normally it's you who gets all hot and bothered over Susanna!

**Count**

Well, that's as may be, and as she's in there let's see her.

*(Susanna enters and hides.)*

**Terzetto**

**Count**

9 Come out of there, Susanna!

Come out of there, I say!

**Countess**

She can't come out, believe me, she can't do what you say.

**Susanna**

But where is Cherubino?

How did he get away?

**Count**

You dare to contradict me? Why?

**Countess**

Her manners shame your own: She's trying on her wedding dress, she needs to be alone.

**Count**

Her lover's in there hiding, oh yes, I should have known.

**Countess**

An uglier situation I've never ever known.

**Susanna**

A trickier situation I've never ever known.

**Count**

Susanna!

**Countess**

Be sensible!

**Count**

Come out this minute!

**Countess**

I beg you!

**Count**

This minute!

**Countess**

Be sensible!

**Count**

Come out, I say!

**Countess**

Why should the girl obey?

**Count**

Give me at least an answer, yes, speak to me Susanna.

**Countess**

No, no, I say you're not to; I order you, be silent!

**Count**

My lady, do be careful.

**Susanna**

There's bound to be a scandal; a terrible catastrophe is sure to happen now!

**Countess**

My lord, we must be careful; a scandal is unthinkable, it must not be allowed.

**Count**

My lady, do be careful; a scandal is unthinkable, it must not be allowed.

**Susanna**

There's bound to be a scandal – it's sure to happen now.

There's bound to be a scandal:

a terrible catastrophe is sure to happen now.

**Recitative**

**Count**

10 So you're proposing not to open it?

**Countess**

How dare you even ask me to open the door?

**Count**

Well, suit yourself. Why waste time with keys? Come quickly?

**Countess**

What's this? How dare you impugn the honour of a lady?

**Count**

You're right. Excuse me; any noise of disturbance will provoke all sorts of gossip among the servants. But don't you worry, I'll do it single handed. You will wait for me here, but before I go I'll make absolutely sure. I think I'll lock every single door.

*(The Count does so.)*

**Countess** *(aside)*  
What behaviour!

**Count**  
Would you condescend to come with me, my lady? Will you do me the honour? Here's my arm.

**Countess**  
Here's mine.

**Count** *(indicating the dressing room)*  
Don't you worry about Susanna; she'll be fine.

*(Exit the Count and Countess.)*

**Duettino**

**Susanna**  
<sup>11</sup> Don't worry, Cherubino,  
it's only me, Susanna.  
Don't worry, but hurry, yes hurry.  
We'll get you out of here.

**Cherubino**  
I'm absolutely petrified,  
I'm paralysed with fear.

**Susanna**  
Oh dear, the doors are locked and bolted,  
oh dear, we'll never ever get you out of here.

**Cherubino**  
The doors are locked and bolted,  
oh dear, you'll never ever get me out of here.

**Cherubino**  
I mustn't meet the master.

**Susanna**  
Yes, that would be disaster.

**Cherubino**  
There's only one solution: I'll jump into the garden.

**Susanna**  
You'll only break your ankle – don't do it!  
Come back for pity's sake.

**Cherubino**  
I mustn't meet the master.

**Susanna**  
Don't do it, Cherubino!

**Cherubino**  
That would be a disaster.

**Susanna**  
It's far too high to risk it –  
come back, for pity's sake!

**Cherubino**  
Let me go! Let me go!  
For my lady I would jump from even higher –  
I'd even jump through fire.  
I'm ready, this is goodbye.

**Susanna**  
You'll only break your ankle – ah! what a way to die!

*(Cherubino jumps.)*  
Oh God, Cherubino!

**Recitative**

**Susanna**  
<sup>12</sup> Look at the little devil! How he's running,  
disappearing in the distance. Right, no time for  
me to waste. He'll be back here any minute,  
and when he comes into the room guess who'll  
be in it!

*(Enter the Count and Countess. The Count brings  
a hammer and a crow-bar. He examines all the  
doors.)*

**Count**  
<sup>13</sup> Everything as I left it. For the last time, will you  
open it or shall I?  
*(He prepares to force open the door.)*

**Countess**  
Wait a minute and allow me to speak. Do you  
think I've betrayed you? Do you think I've been  
lying?

**Count**  
Just as you wish, when I can look inside and see  
the truth for myself.

**Countess**  
Yes, you can see, but you must be prepared.

**Count**  
So it isn't Susanna?

**Countess**  
No, someone else altogether, someone who  
could never give you cause for concern. You see,  
for this evening we were trying out a game – a  
charade – and I swear nothing immodest,  
nothing bad, nothing wrong...

**Count**  
Who is it? Tell me, I will kill him!

**Countess**  
Please listen! (What can I say?)

**Count**  
You'll tell me.

**Countess**  
He's just a boy.

**Count**  
Just a boy?

**Countess**  
Yes. Cherubino.

**Count**  
*(Why is it my misfortune to bump into that boy  
at every turning?) Really? He hasn't gone yet?  
He's disobeyed me? Now the light starts to  
dawn, I can see things much better. Now I  
understand the meaning of that letter.*

**Finale**

**Count**  
<sup>14</sup> Out you come, you vile seducer,  
wretched boy, come out of there!

**Countess**

Do not hurt him, I beseech you;  
he is innocent, I swear.  
This is more than I can bear.

**Count**

Yet again you dare refuse me!

**Countess**

Will you hear me?

**Count**

Well, I'm waiting!

**Countess**

Well, it might arouse suspicion, groundless  
suspicion,  
when you see him in this condition,  
all dishevelled, with his hair down...

**Count**

All dishevelled, with his hair down?  
Do continue!

**Countess**

He was wearing women's clothing...

**Count**

I have always thought you shameless,  
but how could you stoop so low?

**Countess**

I protest that I am blameless,  
you are wrong to doubt me so!

**Count**

Bring the key here!

**Countess**

He has done nothing!

**Count**

Bring the key here!

**Countess**

He has done nothing.

**Count**

I know nothing! Wanton woman, get you hence –  
don't compound your foul offence.  
Must you denigrate my name?  
Must you cover me with shame?

**Countess**

Husband... yes... but...

**Count**

No, it's useless.

**Countess**

But...

**Count**

No excuses.

**Countess**

I am blameless!

**Count**

Your face betrays you! I will kill him!

**Countess**

Jealous rage has fired his passion,  
full of anger and of shame.

**Count**

He has dared to stain my honour,  
he has dared to debase my noble name.  
Now I know you...

**Countess**

No, you wrong me.

**Count**

And you are shameless!

**Countess**

I am blameless!

**Count**

I will kill him!  
He has dared to stain my honour,  
he has dared to debase my noble name.

**Countess**

Jealous rage has fired his passion,  
full of anger and of shame.

*(Susanna emerges.)*

**Count**

Susanna!

**Countess**

Susanna!

**Susanna**

<sup>15</sup> You called, sir?  
You seem quite appalled, sir.  
*(ironically)*

The guilty offender has come to surrender;  
It's not Cherubino, it's just little me.

**Count**

It can't be! I hardly believe what I see.

**Countess** *(aside)*

Susanna was in there, but how could that be?

**Susanna** *(aside)*

They simply refuse to believe what they see.

**Count**

Who's with you?

**Susanna**

There's no one, but do go and see.

**Count**

There's someone, he's in there; where else could  
he be?

*(The Count goes to look for himself.)*

**Countess**

<sup>16</sup> I cannot believe it – Susanna, where is he?

**Susanna**

He jumped from the window and managed to  
flee.

**Count** *(comes out of the dressing room in confusion)*

I don't understand it –  
I hardly believe it –  
if I have offended, forgive me, I beg you.  
Your joke was a cruel one,  
though you've had your fun.

**Susanna and Countess**

How can we forgive you the wrong you have done?

**Count**

I love you!

**Countess**

Don't say that!

**Count**

I swear it!

**Countess**

How can you? You called me unfaithful, you doubted my honour.

**Count**

Come help me, Susanna, to steady her nerve.

**Susanna**

Mistrust and suspicion is all we deserve.

**Countess**

Was ever a woman more wrongly accused?  
Was ever a heart more disdainfully used?

**Count**

Come help me, Susanna, she's rather confused.

**Susanna**

A husband who's jealous cannot be excused.  
My lady...

**Count**

Rosina!

**Countess**

Rosina? No, not any longer.  
For now you neglect me, despise and reject me,  
delight in my misery and laugh at my pain.

**Count**

I'm sorry I hurt you,  
made light of your virtue.  
Ah, forgive me, my lady,  
and love me again.  
Forgive me and love me again.

**Susanna**

He's sorry he hurt you,  
made light of your virtue,  
forgive him, my lady,  
and love him again.  
Forgive him and love him again.

**Countess**

So cruel! So cruel to laugh at my sorrow, to  
laugh at my pain.  
Ah, now you laugh at my pain.

**Count**

You swore he was in there.

**Countess**

But only to test you.

**Count**

So why were you panicking?

**Countess**

To trick you, to tease you.

**Count**

Well, whose was that letter then?

**Countess and Susanna**

Invented by Figaro and sent by Basilio.

**Count**

The traitors, I'll teach them.

**Countess and Susanna**

The way you've behaved you can hardly complain.

**Count**

I'm sure you'll forgive me, my darling Rosina.  
Let's hope no resentment, no anger remains.

**Countess**

You see, my Susanna, I'm so tender-hearted,  
Is this the reward we deserve for our pains?

**Susanna**

They always get round us, so much for our  
freedom;  
there's always a man who is holding the reins.  
So much for our freedom, so much for our  
freedom;  
we think we are free but we're always in chains.

**Count**

Please look at me.

**Countess**

Ungrateful!

**Count**

Please look at me, I wronged you; and I'm sorry.

**Susanna**

This bitter experience may teach them to love  
one another again.  
They will love one another again,  
they will learn to love each other again.

**Count and Countess**

This bitter experience may teach us to love one  
another again.  
We will learn to love each other again.

*(Enter Figaro.)*

**Figaro**

<sup>17</sup> The wedding procession is ready and waiting.  
You hear the musicians  
so with your permission  
we'll follow our friends who await us to fête us  
and dance at our wedding, our glorious day.  
So with your permission we'll hurry away.

**Count**

There's no need to hurry.

**Figaro**

They're getting impatient.

**Count**

There's no need to worry;  
before you rush off I have something to say.

**Susanna, Countess and Figaro**

Who knows what will happen, or what he will  
say?

**Count**

There're one or two cards that I still have to play.

**Count**

Let me try to jog your memory.  
*(shows him the letter)*  
Have you seen this note before?



**Figaro** (*pretending to examine it*)

Never seen it.

**Susanna**

Never seen it?

**Figaro**

No!

**Susanna, Countess and Count**

Never seen it?

**Figaro**

No!

**Susanna**

But you gave it to Basilio...

**Countess**

To deliver...

**Count**

You remember?

**Figaro**

Afraid I don't.

**Susanna**

The disguise for Cherubino...

**Countess**

And the meeting in the garden...

**Count**

You can tell me.

**Figaro**

Afraid I can't.

**Count**

There's no point in your denying – you may think you're good at lying, but your face gives you away.

**Figaro**

Then appearances deceive you.

**Countess and Susanna**

If you lie he won't believe you; he knows all about the letter, there is nothing you can say.

**Count**

You deny it?

**Figaro**

I'll stay quiet.

**Count**

What's the answer?

**Figaro**

What's the question?

**Susanna and Countess**

Can't you see the fun has ended and the curtain has descended? When there's nothing more to say, it's the end of any play.

**Figaro**

But a play should end in jollity, in theatrical tradition; so you'll grant us your permission to enjoy our wedding day.

Heed my pleading, I implore you, be compassionate I pray.

**Susanna**

Heed our pleading, I implore you, be compassionate I pray.

**Countess**

Heed their pleading, I implore you, be compassionate I pray.

**Count**

Where the hell is Marcellina? What is keeping her away?

*(Enter Antonio with a pot of trampled geraniums.)*

**Antonio**

<sup>18</sup> Oh, my lord! My lord!

**Count**

What do you want?

**Antonio**

Bloody man, bloody nerve, bloody cheek!

**Count, Countess, Susanna and Figaro**

What is this, what has happened?

**Antonio**

Won't you listen?

**Count, Countess, Susanna and Figaro**

You mind how you speak!

**Antonio**

You chuck all kinds of stuff out the window,

some of which I would rather not mention.

But it didn't escape my attention

When a man came a-tumbling down.

**Count**

From the window?

**Antonio**

On top of my hydrangea.

**Count**

Into the garden?

**Antonio**

Yes!

**Countess and Susanna** (*to Figaro*)

Now we're in danger!

**Count**

What is happening?

**Countess, Susanna and Figaro** (*aside*)

Who knows what will happen?

*(aloud)*

Why on earth is this drunkard in here?

**Count**

Where's the man who fell into the garden?

**Antonio**

Bugged off, that's begging your pardon, like a shot and he got clean away.

**Susanna** (*to Figaro*)

Cherubino...

**Figaro** (*to Susanna*)

I know, 'cos I saw him.

(*laughing aloud*)

Ha, ha, ha, ha!

**Count**

That will do!

**Antonio**

What's so funny?

**Count**

That will do!

**Antonio**

What's so funny?

**Figaro**

We can hardly believe what you say  
when you're drunk as a skunk every day.

**Count**

Tell me slowly, tell me everything: he jumped  
from the window?

**Antonio**

From the window.

**Count**

To the garden?

**Antonio**

To the garden.

**Countess, Susanna and Figaro**

Can't you tell, can't you smell, he's been drinking?

**Count**

Pray continue. You saw what he looked like?

**Antonio**

No, I didn't.

**Susanna and Countess**

Look out, Figaro, listen!

**Figaro** (*to Antonio*)

You're boring us rigid for hours,  
for the sake of a few tatty flowers.  
And I don't see why I should deny it,  
that the man in the window was me.

**Count**

What? You're joking!

**Countess and Susanna** (*aside*)

Now that was ingenious.

**Figaro**

No I'm not.

**Antonio**

It was you, then?

**Figaro**

Yes, why not?

**Count**

It's hard to believe it.

**Antonio**

Then explain why you seem to be taller.  
When you jumped you were nowhere as tall.

**Figaro**

Well, you always look small when you fall.

**Antonio**

Well, I never!

**Countess and Susanna** (*aside*)

Will he never stop talking?

**Count** (*to Antonio*)

What do you think?

**Antonio**

Well, it looked like the page boy.

**Count**

Cherubino?

**Countess and Susanna** (*aside*)

Cherubino, now we're done for!

**Figaro** (*ironically*)

Cherubino? Yes, that's brilliant.  
He rode back from Seville like the clappers;  
he rode back from Seville, but of course!

**Antonio**

No, the bloke who fell down wasn't riding,  
'cos I'm sure I'd have noticed the horse.

**Count**

Give me patience!

**Countess and Susanna** (*aside*)

Give us strength!

**Count**

Enough of this nonsense!

**Countess and Susanna** (*aside*)

What on earth can we do?

**Count** (*to Figaro*)

It was you?

**Figaro**

Yes, it's true.

**Count**

Tell me why.

**Figaro**

I was scared...

**Count**

Scared of what?

**Figaro**

I was in there – I was waiting for my Susanetta,  
and I heard these peculiar noises...  
You were shouting – I thought of that letter...  
so I jumped full of fear and confusion;  
when I landed I twisted my knee.  
(*He pretends that he is hurt.*)

**Antonio**

Well then, these are your papers. You dropped  
them in the garden.

**Count**

Aha! Give them to me!

**Figaro**

Now he's cornered me.

**Countess and Susanna** (*softly, to Figaro*)

You must be careful, crafty and careful!

**Count**

Then you'll know what these papers might be?

**Figaro**

Just a moment – these papers, let me see...

**Antonio**

It is probably a list of his creditors.

**Figaro**

No, your bills from the boozer.

**Count** (*to Figaro*)

I'm waiting.

(*to Antonio*)

That's enough from you.

**Countess, Susanna and Figaro**

Off with you and leave us!

**Antonio**

I will go, but if ever I catch you...

**Count, Countess and Susanna**

Off with you!

**Figaro**

Run along, I'm not frightened of you.

**Count, Countess and Susanna**

Off with you, and don't come back!

(*Exit Antonio*)

**Count**

Well then?

**Countess** (*to Susanna*)

Oh God, Cherubino's commission!

**Susanna** (*to Figaro*)

Cherubino's commission!

**Count**

I'm waiting...

**Figaro**

I'm so stupid, I'd forgotten.

It's just the commission;

Cherubino had left it with me.

**Count**

Why was that, then?

**Figaro** (*confused*)

It needed...

**Count**

It needed?

**Countess** (*to Susanna*)

Needed sealing.

**Susanna** (*to Figaro*)

Needed sealing.

**Count**

Do tell me.

**Figaro**

Well, it's usual...

**Count**

Now don't be embarrassed!

**Figaro**

When it's signed it is usual to seal it.

**Count** (*aside*)

Once again he has slipped through my clutches.

**Susanna and Countess** (*aside*)

If my nerve can survive such a nightmare,

I will never be frightened again.

**Figaro**

I will always know how to outwit him,

he is storming and stamping in vain.

**Count**

He will drive me insane.

(*Enter Marcellina, Basilio and Bartolo*)

**Marcellina, Basilio and Bartolo**

<sup>19</sup> Noble lord, we come for justice,  
will you listen to our plea?

**Count** (*aside*)

They have come here to work my vengeance.

Ah, what a comfort they are to me.

**Countess, Figaro and Susanna**

They have come for retribution;

what solution can there be?

**Figaro**

Have you noticed rogues and half-wits  
always come in groups of three?

**Count**

Hold your tongue and let me hear them;

let me listen to your plea.

I will act as referee.

**Marcellina**

This man signed a binding contract

joining both of us in marriage.

I have come to claim the forfeit

or the promise made to me.

**Countess, Susanna and Figaro**

Forfeit? Promise?

**Count**

Enough, be silent! The decision rests with me.

**Bartolo**

I have come as her adviser,

as her counsel and supporter.

All the papers are in order,

as I'm sure you will agree.

**Countess, Susanna and Figaro**

It's outrageous!

**Count**

Enough! Be silent! The decision rests with me.

**Basilio**

As a man of reputation

I come to join the deputation

for the proper compensation

in the payment of a fee.

**Countess, Susanna and Figaro**

This is madness, it's complete and utter  
madness!

**Count**

Enough! Be silent!  
Let me take a look at the contract...  
Yes, it all seems in order to me.

**Countess, Susanna and Figaro**

Rage and sorrow and vexation,  
driving me to desperation.  
They have plotted with the devil,  
bringing sadness to my heart.

**Marcellina, Basilio, Count and Bartolo**

What an ending to the story,  
now we smell the scent of glory.  
God in Heaven has smiled upon us,  
bringing gladness to my heart.

COMPACT DISC THREE

**Act III**

*A richly decorated hall prepared for a wedding  
festivity, with two thrones*

**Recitative**

**Count** (*walking up and down*)

- [1] This is very perplexing! That anonymous letter,  
then Susanna locked inside the dressing room,  
my wife getting flustered, a man who jumps  
from the window to the garden, and then  
another, who claims he was the first one. I don't  
know what to think. Or could it be that another  
of my lackeys has got ideas above his station?  
Worst of all, the Countess; I doubted her, I

insulted her, her self-respect would never allow  
it. And then my honour, my reputation, where  
is it now? Gone to damnation!

**Countess** (*entering with Susanna, and keeping out  
of sight*)

- [2] Don't be afraid! Tell him to wait for you in the  
garden.

**Count**

I must know if Cherubino really went to Seville.  
I'll send Basilio to find out the truth.

**Susanna**

My lady, if Figaro...

**Countess**

Don't breathe a word to Figaro; leave it to me, I  
will go in your place.

**Count**

By this evening Basilio should be back.

**Susanna**

My lady, I dare not!

**Countess**

Remember, my peace of mind depends on you.

**Count**

What of Susanna? Who knows, maybe she's  
already let the cat out of the bag. If she's  
betrayed me, I'll make him marry that old hag.

**Susanna**

Marcellina! My lord!

**Count**

What do you want?

**Susanna**

Your lordship's looking angry.

**Count**

Just tell me what you want.

**Susanna**

It's just... it's just my lady, she's got a slight  
headache and she sent me to ask you for her  
smelling salts.

**Count**

Here, take them.

**Susanna**

I will return them.

**Count**

Er, no, for maybe you will need them for yourself.

**Susanna**

What, me? Women of my class don't suffer from  
headaches!

**Count**

Not even if they lose their fiancé on the day of  
their wedding?

**Susanna**

We'll pay off Marcellina with the dowry which  
you so kindly promised.

**Count**

Which I promised? Really?

**Susanna**

I thought that it was settled.

**Count**

Yes, if you'd agreed to my little proposition.

**Susanna**

To please your lordship is my duty and my  
desire. I have no higher ambition.

**Duet**

**Count**

- [3] How could you be so cruel, making me suffer so?  
You were so cruel, making me suffer so.

**Susanna**

A girl needs time to ponder, should it be yes or  
no?

**Count**

Then you'll be there this evening?

**Susanna**

You speak and I obey.

**Count**

Swear you'll be there to meet me.

**Susanna**

How could I stay away?

**Count**

You'll meet me?

**Susanna**

Yes!

**Count**

You will not cheat me?

**Susanna**

No!

**Count**

You will not cheat me?

**Susanna**

I will be there; you speak and I obey.

**Count**

With passion I am dying;  
feel how my heart is aflame.

**Susanna**

I see no harm in lying, you have to play the game.  
A tiny little lie is no cause for shame.

**Recitative**

**Count**

- [4] But I don't understand: this morning you were so distant.

**Susanna**

The page boy could have heard us.

**Count**

What of Basilio? You can always talk to him.

**Susanna**

Do you think that we need a Basilio?

**Count**

You're right: and you have given your word. But if you disappoint me... What of the Countess? She's waiting for her smelling salts.

**Susanna**

You should have known it was a trick, so that we could be alone.

**Count**

You're wonderful!

**Susanna**

Someone's coming!

**Count**

She will be mine!

**Susanna**

You shouldn't count your chickens before they're hatched!

**Figaro** (*entering*)

- [5] Hey, Susanna, how's it going?

**Susanna**

Quiet! We don't need a lawyer, you've won the case already!

**Figaro**

What has happened?

*Exeunt Figaro and Susanna.*

**Recitative and Aria**

**Count**

- [6] 'You've won the case already.' What does that mean? They are out to deceive me. Treachery! I'll teach them to presume to attack me. They shall be punished; I'll enjoy passing sentence. What if he's managed to pay off Marcellina?

How could he? He's got no money. And then Antonio won't allow his beloved niece Susanna to marry such a nobody as Figaro. I will work on Antonio and swell his bloated pride. It will work in my favour. I have decided.

- [7] Must I be made to suffer while servants take their pleasure? He dares to steal my treasure, she should be mine by right. Must passion still torment me, must I stand by and bless her? Must Figaro possess her, caress her in my sight? Must this be so? Ah, no, I will not spare you, I'll teach you to betray me! Impudent slave, how dare you! Is this how you repay me? You have the gall to laugh at me in my unhappy plight. Only the thought of vengeance for all the grief you cause me consoles me and restores me, and fills me with delight.

*(Exit Count, enter Barbarina and Cherubino.)*

**Recitative**

**Barbarina**

- [8] Come on, come on, Cherubino; I've got a secret: all of the prettiest girls in the palace are gathering in my house. But, frankly, very few are prettier than you are.

**Cherubino**

Ah, but the Count thinks I'm in Seville, in the army. If he finds that I'm still here, he'll go barmy.

**Barbarina**

Oh, don't be such a spoilsport! If he finds you with a girl, it won't be the first time. Listen... We're all getting dressed up for the wedding; you could come in disguise and join us giving flowers to the Countess. I'll show you how it's done; come on, it'll be fun.

*(Exit Barbarina and Cherubino.  
Enter the Countess.)*

**Recitative and Aria**

**Countess**

- [9] And Susanna's not here; I'm so anxious to discover if the Count accepted her proposal. Perhaps our project is a little too rash when I've a husband so impetuous and jealous. But where's the harm? That I should change my clothes and wear instead Susanna's while she wears mine, under cover of darkness... Oh, heaven! So these are the mis'erable depths I am reduced to by a husband's neglect. What an unpredictable mixture of passions rages in his heart: he is disdainful, he's jealous – first he woos me, then rejects me, and then betrays me. Ah, he has forced me to conspire with servants.

- [10] I remember his love so tender,  
all those sweet lies I longed to hear.  
Yes, he loved me, but, ah, how quickly

so much love can disappear.  
 But my faith was my undoing,  
 and my joy has turned to woe;  
 still I can't forget his wooing  
 and the love of long ago.  
 Oh, I hope my love will save me  
 from this wilderness of pain,  
 and the tender love he gave me  
 will be made to live again.  
 I remember how he would love me,  
 may his passion live again.

*(Exit the Countess.)*

**Curzio**

<sup>11</sup> The case is decided; he must pay her or marry her. That is the verdict.

**Marcellina**

What a relief!

**Figaro**

What a nightmare.

**Marcellina**

At last the man I love will be my husband.

**Figaro**

I appeal to your lordship...

**Count**

The motion is carried, you pay up or get married. Thank you, Don Curzio.

**Curzio**

And thank you to your lordship.

**Bartolo**

What a wonderful sentence!

**Figaro**

Wonderful for whom?

**Bartolo**

Punishment and repentance!

**Figaro**

She'll never be my wife.

**Bartolo**

Oh, yes, she will.

**Curzio**

You must pay her or marry her. Those are the terms on which she lent you all the money.

**Figaro**

I'm a patrician; I may not be married without my parents' permission.

**Count**

But where are they? Do we know them?

**Figaro**

To be honest, I'm still searching. Give me ten years or so, then I will have found them.

**Bartolo**

You mean you were a foundling?

**Figaro**

Not quite, more like a lostling. I was kidnapped.

**Count**

Kidnapped?

**Marcellina**

Kidnapped?

**Bartolo**

Can you prove it?

**Curzio**

And prove it legally?

**Figaro**

The gold and jewels, and rich embroidered garments which were found in my cradle and were taken by the gypsies. All this is proof enough of my noble birth. But most important, I have a hieroglyph upon my arm...

**Marcellina**

Not a mark stamped on your right arm?

**Figaro**

Who told you that?

**Marcellina**

Oh heavens! It's him then!

**Figaro**

Well yes, it's me...

**Curzio**

Who?

**Count**

Who?

**Bartolo**

Who?

**Marcellina**

Rafaello!

**Bartolo**

Kidnapped by gypsies?

**Figaro**

Yes, near a castle.

**Bartolo**

This is your mother.

**Figaro**

My wet nurse?

**Bartolo**

No, your mother.

**Count and Curzio**

His mother?

**Figaro**

I can't believe it!

**Marcellina**

This is your father.

**Sextet**

**Marcellina** (*embracing Figaro*)

<sup>12</sup> Darling boy, let me embrace you.  
 Oh, what joy that we're together.

**Figaro** (*to Bartolo*)

Come to me, my dearest father.  
 Can't you see I'm moved to tears?

**Bartolo** (*embracing Figaro*)

Son and father reunited  
 after all these lonely years.

**Curzio**

That's his father? And that's his mother?  
Then the banns cannot proceed.

**Count**

No, it can't be... don't believe it.  
That's the last thing that I need.  
I will leave them here together,  
this is very odd indeed.

**Marcellina**

I'm your mother!  
Kiss your mother!

**Bartolo**

I am your father!

**Figaro**

Beloved father! Beloved mother!

**Susanna** (*entering*)

Noble sir, where are you going?  
Here's the money that is owing.  
I have come to pay for Figaro,  
I have come to set him free.

**Count and Curzio**

God alone knows what is happening,  
we had better wait and see.

**Susanna** (*turning and seeing Figaro embracing Marcellina*)

He's embracing Marcellina!  
Lying toad! You filthy cheat!  
You're a scoundrel!

**Figaro**

No, Susanna!

**Susanna**

Don't you touch me!

**Figaro**

Listen, my darling...

**Susanna**

I'll give you darling!

**Marcellina and Bartolo**

Such devotion, such emotion.  
Don't you think it's rather sweet?

**Figaro**

Such devotion, such emotion.  
My Susanna is so sweet.

**Count**

All the cards are stacked against me;  
but I won't admit defeat.

**Curzio**

He is so angry, all the cards are stacked against  
him,  
but he won't admit defeat.

**Susanna**

I'm so angry I am bursting,  
but I won't admit defeat.

**Marcellina** (*runs to embrace Susanna*)

Try not to be angry, my own dearest daughter;  
if I am his mother, I'm your mother too,  
a mother to him and a mother to you.

**Susanna** (*to Bartolo*)

His mother?

**Bartolo**

His mother.

**Susanna** (*to the Count*)

His mother?

**Count**

His mother.

**Susanna** (*to Don Curzio*)

His mother?

**Curzio**

His mother.

**Susanna** (*to Marcellina*)

His mother?

**Marcellina, Curzio, Count and Bartolo**

His mother!

**Susanna** (*to Figaro*)

Your mother?

**Figaro**

And this is my father  
who swears it is true.

**Susanna** (*to Bartolo*)

His father?

**Bartolo**

His father.

**Susanna** (*to the Count*)

His father?

**Count**

His father.

**Susanna** (*to Don Curzio*)

His father?

**Curzio**

His father.

**Susanna** (*to Marcellina*)

His father?

**Marcellina, Curzio, Count and Bartolo**

His father!

**Susanna** (*to Figaro*)

Your father?

**Figaro**

And this is my mother  
who swears it is so;  
my father, who swears it is so.

**Susanna, Marcellina, Bartolo and Figaro**

This wonderful moment, this joyous reunion,  
it's almost too much for my poor heart to bear.

**Curzio and Count**

Such anger and torment are burning within me,  
unbearable, this fury of rage and despair.

(*The Count and Curzio retire.*)

**Recitative**

**Marcellina**

<sup>13</sup> This is our little baby, the sweet memento of a love that has vanished.

**Bartolo**

That's in the past, and it's over and done with: but since I am his father, and since you are his mother, I suppose we should get married to each other.

**Marcellina**

Today? We'll have a double wedding.  
(*to Figaro*)

Take this; it is the contract for the money you owed me; it is your dowry.

**Susanna** (*throws a purse to the ground*)

Take this from my lady.

**Bartolo** (*does the same*)

And one from me.

**Figaro**

Thank you. All contributions gratefully received.

**Susanna**

We'd better tell my lady and my uncle of this unexpected delight. Who could be happier than I am?

**Figaro**

I am!

**Bartolo**

I am!

**Marcellina**

I am!

**Susanna, Marcellina, Figaro and Bartolo**

And if the Count is furious, well that will serve him right!

(*Exeunt Susanna, Marcellina, Figaro and Bartolo. Enter the Count and Antonio, with a hat in his hand.*)

**Recitative**

**Antonio**

<sup>14</sup> I must warn you, my lord, that Cherubino is still lurking round the castle. If you're looking for proof, I've got his hat.

**Count**

How could that be, tell me, how? He should be in Seville by now.

**Antonio**

Well, in that case Seville is in my house. There he's dressed as a woman, and there he left all his other clothes.

**Count**

Treachery!

**Antonio**

Come with me, and you will see what you will see.

(*Exeunt Count and Antonio. Enter the Countess and Susanna.*)

**Countess**

<sup>15</sup> That's amazing! But how did the Count react?

**Susanna**

His face was a picture and the varnish was cracked!

**Countess**

Careful! If we enrage him, we may not defeat him. Now what have you arranged? Where are you going to meet him?

**Susanna**

In the garden.

**Countess**

Let's fix a place. Write to him.

**Susanna**

My lady, I wouldn't dare.

**Countess**

I'll take the blame. Yes, we'll disguise it as a poem. Let's say, a song to the breezes.

(*Susanna sits down and writes.*)

**Duetto**

**Susanna**

<sup>16</sup> ...the breezes...

**Countess** (*dictating*)

Would you feel the gentle breezes...

**Susanna**

feel the gentle breezes...

**Countess**

...blowing through the trees tonight.

**Susanna**

...blowing through the trees tonight.

**Countess**

You can feel them in the pinewood.

**Susanna**

You can feel them in the pinewood.

**Countess**

That is all we need to write.

**Susanna**

That is all we need to write.

**Susanna and Countess**

That is all we need to write.

**Recitative**

**Susanna** (*folds the letter*)

<sup>17</sup> That should do the trick! What's the best way to seal it?

**Countess**

I know, let's use this pin. It will do for a seal. I have it. We can write on the back: 'return seal to sender'.

**Susanna**

Yes, that's ideal, that makes it sound mysterious.

**Countess**

Someone's coming: things are getting serious!

(*Susanna puts the note in her bosom.*)

(*Enter a group of girls including Barbarina, with Cherubino in disguise.*)



**Chorus**

**Girls**

[18] Gentle lady, may these presents bring us favour in your sight. Pray accept these simple posies, roses red and roses white.

For a simple village maiden may not come with flowers laden; may the little that we give you bring you pleasure and delight.

**Recitative**

**Barbarina**

[19] Madam, with your permission, some girls from the village, we've come to see you, and hope that you'll allow us to present to you this humble gift of flowers.

**Countess**

Oh thank you, they're enchanting!

**Susanna**

Yes they are, they're lovely.

**Countess**

But tell me, who's this? This little girl who's blushing so shyly?

**Barbarina**

She is one of my cousins; she came to visit and to be here for the wedding.

**Countess**

Let us make our charming stranger welcome.

Won't you come here?

*(She takes Cherubino's flowers and kisses him on the forehead.)*

Give me your bouquet. Don't be afraid; she's blushing. But Susanna, doesn't she remind you of someone?

**Susanna**

The spitting image!

*Antonio (entering with the Count and pulling off Cherubino's hat, replacing it with his officer's cap)*

[20] Hey, what did I tell you! Here's your missing soldier!

**Countess**

Oh heavens!

**Susanna**

Just our luck!

**Count**

Well, my lady!

**Countess**

My lord, I can assure you that I'm as surprised and as angry as you are.

**Count**

But this morning?

**Countess**

This morning we decided we would dress him up as a girl, just for a game: they've simply done the same.

**Count**

And why are you still here?

**Cherubino**

My lord...

**Count**

You will be punished, how dare you disobey me!

**Barbarina**

Dearest master, you remember what you say when you come into my bedroom to hug me and to kiss me: 'If you love me, Barbarina, I will grant your every wish.'

**Count**

That's what I say?

**Barbarina**

Oh yes. Well now, I have a wish, to marry Cherubino. But don't forget, I'll always be your little pussy cat.

**Countess (to the Count)**

Well fancy, what do you say to that?

**Antonio**

Bravo, my daughter! She has remembered everything I've taught her.

**Count**

I'm in a trap, the devils, they've caught me! The whole world's been plotting to thwart me.

**Figaro (entering)**

[21] My lord, if you detain these lovely girls any longer, there'll be no party, no dancing.

**Count**

You're dancing? As much as your knee will allow!

**Figaro** *(pretends to straighten his leg, then tries to dance)*

It's feeling better now. Let's join the celebration.

**Countess (to Susanna)**

This is a tricky situation!

**Susanna (to the Countess)**

Leave everything to him.

**Count**

You're very lucky, those vases were only clay.

**Figaro**

You'll excuse me, but we must be on our way.

**Antonio**

But what about the page boy? Was he galloping back from Seville?

**Figaro**

He was galloping, maybe trotting, why should you worry? Come on girls, we must hurry.

**Count**

And in your pocket was Cherubino's commission?

**Figaro**

What's all this? The Spanish Inquisition?

**Antonio**

No point in waving, Susanna, he's not looking. Here's someone who will prove that Figaro's a liar.

**Figaro**  
Cherubino!

**Antonio**  
Got it in one!

**Figaro**  
What has he told you?

**Count**  
He's told the truth; he says that he was the one who jumped into the garden.

**Figaro**  
What a copycat! Really! Since I jumped from the window, I presume that's what he did!

**Count**  
What, both of you?

**Figaro**  
Maybe so. I'm not one to accuse when I don't know.

**Finale**

**Figaro**  
[22] Now I can hear them, the musicians.  
You pretty maidens must take up your positions.  
You take my arm, Susanna.

**Susanna**  
Here I am.

*(All exit, except the Count and Countess.)*

**Count**  
I will kill them!

**Countess**  
How can I bear it?

**Count**  
My lady!

**Countess**  
No time for talking,  
we must bless the couples;  
our duty must be done.  
Remember, one bride has your special protection.  
Be seated.

**Count**  
By all means.  
I'll sit and plan my vengeance.

*(The Count and Countess seat themselves on thrones. Enter Figaro, Susanna, Marcellina, Barbarina, Bartolo, Antonio, hunters with guns, court attendants and country people. Country girls bring the bridal hat with white plumes, two others a white veil, and two others gloves and a nosegay. They are followed by Figaro with Marcellina. Two other girls carry a similar hat for Susanna,*

*followed by Bartolo with Susanna. Bartolo leads Susanna to the Count, and she kneels to receive from him the hat etc. Figaro leads Marcellina to the Countess for the same purpose.)*

**Two serving girls**  
As true-hearted lovers  
we praise and applaud  
the pillar of justice,

our virtuous lord.  
Since his abolition  
of shameful tradition,  
our pride and our honour  
are safely restored.

**Vassals**  
We all sing the praise  
of our virtuous lord,  
our pride and our honour  
are safely restored.

*(Susanna, kneeling during the duet, plucks the Count's sleeve, shows him the note, then reaches to her head in a manner visible to the audience, and while the Count pretends to adjust her bonnet, she gives him the note. The Count quickly hides it, and Susanna rises and curtsies. Figaro comes to receive her, and they dance the Fandango. Marcellina rises a little later. Bartolo receives her from the Countess.)*

**Count** *(takes the note and pricks his finger with the pin as he opens it. He throws the pin to the ground.)*  
Ah! That's typical of women:  
they never know the right place to stick a pin in.  
Ah! I understand now.

**Figaro** *(sees it all and says to Susanna)*  
He is reading a letter which  
some floozy has handed him discreetly.  
The silly girl has sealed it with a needle.  
Look, I think he's pricked his finger.  
*(The Count reads the note, kisses it, looks for the*

*pin, finds it and sticks it in his lapel.)*  
Silly fool, now he's dropped it,  
ah, now he's found it.

**Count**  
This joyous evening, this double celebration  
must finish, as befits any wedding, full of joy  
and jubilation. My dearest friends, I invite you  
to a banquet with music, with fireworks; there'll  
be dancing, there'll be laughter. And may all  
those dear to my heart live happy ever after.

**Vassals**  
[23] As true-hearted lovers  
we praise and applaud  
the pillar of justice,  
our virtuous lord.  
Since his abolition  
of shameful tradition,  
our pride and our honour  
are safely restored.  
We all sing the praise  
of our virtuous lord,  
and our pride and our honour  
are safely restored.

**Act IV**  
*A garden*

**Cavatina**

**Barbarina** *(looking for something on the floor)*  
[24] I have lost it, I'm so stupid,  
ah, wherever can it be?

I can't find it;  
cousin Susanna, and the Count,  
what will he say?

*(Enter Figaro and Marcellina.)*

**Recitative**

**Figaro**

<sup>25</sup> Barbarina, what's happened?

**Barbarina**

Oh my cousin, I've lost it.

**Figaro**

Lost what?

**Marcellina**

Yes, what?

**Barbarina**

The needle that his lordship gave me to give  
back to Susanna.

**Figaro**

To Susanna, a needle. Little girls are all the same,  
playing clever little games; bet you know every  
trick in the book.

**Barbarina**

What's wrong? How angry you look!

**Figaro**

Can't you see that I'm joking? Here we are! Here  
is the needle, the one which the Count gave to  
you to give back to Susanna; I presume it was

used to seal a letter. See, I know all about it.

**Barbarina**

Why do you ask, if you already know?

**Figaro**

I just wanted to see what he told you, when he  
sent you on his errand.

**Barbarina**

Nothing unusual: 'Here, Barbarina, take this  
needle to the lovely Susanna, and tell her that it  
points to the pinewood.'

**Figaro**

Ah, yes, the pinewood!

**Barbarina**

That's right, but that's not all: 'Careful that no  
one sees you', but you won't say a word.

**Figaro**

No, you can trust me.

**Barbarina**

It's hardly your business.

**Figaro**

Oh no, hardly.

**Barbarina** *(leaving)*

Bye-bye; nice to have seen you. I'm off to  
Susanna, and then to Cherubino.

**Figaro**

<sup>26</sup> Mother!

**Marcellina**

My son!

**Figaro**

I'm dying!

**Marcellina**

You must learn to be patient.

**Figaro**

No use, it's over.

**Marcellina**

Patience, patience, and still more patience. This  
is serious, so let's take one thing at a time. For  
instance, are you sure that you know who's  
playing tricks on whom?

**Figaro**

But what about the needle? Oh mother, it's the  
same one I saw the Count fingering earlier.

**Marcellina**

That's true, that gives you the right to be  
cautious, to be suspicious; but not in your rage  
and confusion to jump to a conclusion.

**Figaro**

Oh, I'll be watching: I know where they are  
meeting, so I'll know where to hide!

**Marcellina**

Where are you going, my son?

**Figaro**

My revenge for all husbands has begun.

**Recitative**

**Barbarina**

<sup>27</sup> The pavilion on the right, Cherubino told me.  
Is it this one or that one? Suppose he doesn't  
come? They've all been very generous; they've  
given me an orange, an apple, a tangerine, 'a  
little gift for someone': yes, they know who it's  
meant for, it's an open secret! My master hates  
him, but I think he's gorgeous. This cost me a  
kiss: it doesn't matter, I'll get it back, and with  
interest!

*(She enters the pavilion on the left.)*

*(Enter Figaro in a cloak, and carrying a lantern.  
Then Basilio, Bartolo, a group of workmen etc.)*

**Figaro**

<sup>28</sup> That's Barbarina! Who goes there?

**Basilio**

For heaven's sake, you asked us to join you.

**Bartolo**

Why are you growling? You sound like a  
pantomime villain! What is the meaning of this  
ludicrous meeting?

**Figaro**

All will soon be revealed. For in this very spot  
we're to celebrate the union of my honest wife  
and our noble lord.

**Basilio**

Oh, that is excellent, now I begin to see, (and

they've managed the whole thing without me).

**Figaro**

Just be patient and stay in our positions, and when I whistle, come rushing out together.

**Recitative and Aria**

<sup>29</sup> Everything's ready; the hour of reckoning is at hand. There's someone coming... Susanna? No one there. Darkness surrounds me... and I have begun to understand how painful it is to be a husband. How shameless to betray me on the day of our wedding. He was reading that letter and I was watching, little knowing I was laughing at myself. Oh, Susanna, Susanna, what a blow you have dealt me! With all your girlish glances and your innocent laughter... who would not have believed you? Why, it's mad to trust women, they'll all deceive you.

<sup>30</sup> You foolish slaves of Cupid, how can you be so stupid? Just look at what these women are, you won't believe your eyes. Slavishly we adore them, prostrate ourselves before them. We're worshipping the devil in disguise. They wheedle and chivy us until we give in, perverse and lascivious, they drive us to sin; these tigresses, pawing us and clawing us so sweetly; these comets that shine on us and blind us completely; these sirens that sing to us,

these leeches that cling to us, these roses that prick us, these vixens that trick us, these daughters of Circe who show us no mercy, the monkeys that cheat us, the spiders that eat us, these witches, the bitches, pretending to love us, you know it is true.

I see that you know what I'm saying, I see that it's happened to you. You foolish slaves of Cupid, how can you be so stupid? Just see them as they really are: the devil in disguise.

*(Exit Figaro. Enter the Countess and Susanna, disguised, and Marcellina.)*

**Recitative**

**Susanna**

<sup>31</sup> My lady, Marcellina says Figaro will be here.

**Marcellina**

He's here already: you'd better keep your voice down.

**Susanna**

One lover's listening, the other's on his way to seduce me. The scene is set.

**Marcellina** *(leaving)*

I'll hide myself in here.

**Susanna**

<sup>32</sup> My lady, you are trembling. Are you too cold here?

**Countess**

The night is rather chilly. I'll go inside.

**Figaro** *(aside)*

Now comes the climax of the drama.

**Susanna**

I'd prefer to stay here, if your ladyship will allow it; I want to take the air a while, to cool down.

**Figaro**

Cool down! Yes, you need to!

**Countess** *(hides herself)*

Stay, and take your time then.

*(Exit the Countess.)*

**Susanna**

He doesn't know I know, which is doubly delicious. Now I'll teach him to be so damn suspicious!

**Recitative and Aria**

**Susanna**

<sup>33</sup> At last, the moment I've longed for, when I lose myself completely in the arms of my beloved. Yes, I have scruples, but I will keep them hidden. Are not pleasures much sweeter when forbidden? This enchanted place, the silken touch of evening, mirror my secret desire, this fire that burns inside me. See how the moon has shrouded its light to hide me.

<sup>34</sup> Come quickly my beloved, I implore you.

All of my being is waiting, aching for you.

Do you not hear the voice of nature calling?

Share my secret delight as night is falling.

Caressing breezes make the treetops shiver.

Night is whispering softly to the river.

A breathless hush descends on all creation;

nature trembles in rapt anticipation.

Come, my beloved, while all the world reposes.

Come, beloved, and I will crown your head with

roses.

**Recitative**

**Figaro**

<sup>35</sup> Treachery! Now I can see how she has deceived me! Am I awake, or dreaming?

*(The Countess enters, followed by Cherubino, who is singing.)*

**Countess** *(disguised as Susanna)*

It's Cherubino.

**Cherubino**

There's someone there; I'll go in and join Barbarina. Oh God, it's a woman!

**Countess**

This is impossible!

**Cherubino**

That's funny! I know it's dark, but that cloak – I could swear it was Susanna's.

**Countess**

If my husband appears, shame and dishonour!

**Finale**

**Cherubino**

<sup>36</sup> I'll approach her, oh so softly,  
seize the moment while I may.

**Countess**

Ah, my husband, if he saw us,  
there'd be hell, yes, hell to pay.

**Cherubino** (*to the Countess*)

Susannetta! doesn't answer,  
she pretends she hasn't seen me.  
Very well, then!

That's a game that two can play.  
(*He takes her hand and caresses it.*)

**Countess** (*tries to free herself, disguising her voice*)

Don't you touch me!  
Little rascal, will you get away from here?

**Cherubino**

So flighty, high and mighty,  
but I know why you are here.

**Count** (*entering*)

<sup>37</sup> Here she is, my dear Susanna.

**Susanna and Figaro**

Here's the hawk to catch the sparrow.

**Cherubino**

Why this cold and haughty manner?

**Countess**

I will scream if you don't leave me!

**Cherubino**

First you'll kiss me, and then I'll leave you.

**Countess**

What an utter scandal this is!

**Susanna, Count and Figaro**

Ah, this chills me to the marrow,  
for another man is here,  
and it sounds like Cherubino.

**Cherubino**

Are you saving up your kisses  
so the Count can have his share?  
Don't be so prudish, it doesn't suit you.  
Don't you remember I was there behind the chair?

**Countess**

You are shameless!

**Susanna, Count and Figaro**

He is shameless!

**Susanna, Countess, Count and Figaro**

Heavens, how can we get rid of him,  
he will spoil the whole affair.

**Cherubino**

Let me kiss you.

**Countess**

Oh heavens, his lordship!

**Cherubino**

Oh heavens, his lordship!

(*Exit Cherubino.*)

**Figaro**

I must see what's happening here.

**Count**

I will teach you better manners  
with a clip around the ear.

**Figaro**

This will teach me to be curious,  
I was rash to interfere.

**Count**

Serves him right for interfering,  
he's no business being here.

**Susanna and Countess**

He deserved that,  
and this will teach him to be curious,  
he was rash to interfere.

**Count** (*to the Countess*)

<sup>38</sup> Now we're alone together,  
come closer, my beloved.

**Countess**

I swear to do whatever you desire, my lord.

**Figaro**

I have always loved and trusted her  
and this is my reward!

**Count**

Here is my hand, my darling.

**Countess**

And here is mine.

**Count**

My angel!

**Figaro**

'My angel!'

**Count**

Your skin so white and tender,  
your hand so slight and slender,  
they thrill my heart with ecstasy,  
fill me with wild desire!

**Susanna, Countess and Figaro**

This mad infatuation  
has robbed him of his reason,  
his senses are on fire  
and he is blinded by desire.

**Count**

Darling, do not be cruel,  
accept this little jewel.  
(*He gives the Countess a ring.*)  
See how it burns and glows  
like my heart within my breast.

**Countess**

It is Susanna's duty  
to yield to your request.

**Susanna, Count and Figaro**

Although the plan is working,  
we've yet to see the best.

**Countess** (*to the Count*)

My lord, I see a light,  
I fear that people may be near.

**Count**

Come on my Aphrodite,  
let us hide ourselves in here.

**Susanna and Figaro**

Observe, you foolish husbands,  
and shed a silent tear.

**Countess**

It's very dark inside here.

**Count**

That's why we want to hide here;  
you'll find the light is bright enough  
for what I have in hand.

**Susanna and Countess**

The plot is working perfectly,  
exactly what we planned.

**Figaro**

She's following him quite willingly,  
I begin to understand.

**Count**

Who's there?

**Figaro**

Why should you care?

**Countess**

That's Figaro! I'll hide.

(*goes into the right pavilion*)

**Count**

I'll follow shortly,  
you go inside.

(*disappears among the bushes*)

**Figaro**

<sup>[39]</sup> Night shrouds the world in mystery  
as Venus in her majesty  
draws Mars to share her lechery;  
Vulcan will foil their treachery  
and punish their deceit.

**Susanna** (*disguised as the Countess*)

Hey, Figaro, be quiet!

**Figaro**

The Countess makes her entrance  
and times it to perfection.  
A crime requires detection,  
your husband and my Susanna,  
the thief and his accomplice,  
the villain and the cheat.

**Susanna** (*forgetting to change her voice*)

Be quiet, or they'll hear you.  
I'll stay till I have caught them,  
and vengeance will be sweet.

**Figaro**

(Susanna!) You want vengeance?

**Susanna**

Yes!

**Figaro**

Countess, let's find revenge together.

**Susanna**

He thinks that I'm deceiving him,  
and I will play along.

**Figaro**

She wants to set a trap for me,  
and I will play along.

**Figaro**

Ah, if Madama wants to...

**Susanna**

Come on, what are you saying?  
Come on, no more delaying.

**Figaro**

Humbly I kneel before you,  
to worship and adore you.  
remember he betrayed you  
in this accursed place.

**Susanna**

Oh, how I'd love to punish him!...

**Figaro**

This is turning out delightfully!

**Susanna**

... to strike his stupid face!

**Figaro**

Her anger grows apace!

**Susanna**

I have the strong desire to strike him,  
to strike his stupid face!

**Figaro**

Her anger grows apace.

**Susanna** (*disguising her voice slightly*)

What passion makes you woo me?

**Figaro**

The anger coursing through me!  
Let's waste no time, my darling,  
give me your hand, my lady,  
and let me feel...

**Susanna**

I'll let you feel this!

**Figaro**

Don't hit me!

**Susanna**

You want it, then take it,  
and here's another!

I'll teach you

if this is what you wanted,

I'll gladly give you this!

**Figaro**

Be gentle I beseech you.

These blows are bliss and ecstasy.

as sweet as any kiss!

**Susanna**

Your shameless infidelity!  
I'll punish you for this!

**Figaro** (*kneels*)

<sup>40</sup> I surrender, my love,  
for your voice was so loving and tender  
that I knew all along it was you.  
**Susanna** (*surprised*)  
Did you really?

**Figaro**

How could I mistake it?

**Susanna and Figaro**

I surrender, my love,  
to a love that is tender and true!

**Count** (*entering*)

I have lost her,  
I must have gone past her.

**Susanna and Figaro**

Heaven help us,  
that sounds like the master.

**Count** (*turns towards the pavilion in which the  
Countess has hidden, and opens it*)

Hey, Susanna!  
Where are you?  
Do you hear me?

**Susanna**

Good, she's managed to fool him completely.

**Figaro**

Who?

**Susanna**

The Countess!

**Figaro**

The Countess?

**Susanna**

Precisely!

**Susanna and Figaro**

Now the play will be rounded off nicely  
if we play on his innermost fears.

**Figaro** (*falls at Susanna's feet*)

Ah, my lady, be mine I implore you.

**Count**

It's my wife! I have come without my weapon!

**Figaro**

I am bursting with longing before you!

**Susanna**

I am yours, for you know I adore you.

**Count**

Ah, the traitors!

**Susanna and Figaro**

We'll be happy hereafter,  
love and laughter will dry all our tears.

**Count**

<sup>41</sup> Quickly, bring your weapons!

(*Exit Susanna.*)

**Figaro** (*pretending great fear*)

Ah, my master!

**Count**

Quickly, someone help me!

**Basilio, Curzio, Antonio and Bartolo** (*entering*)

What has happened?

**Count**

Now I will show you  
how he's cheated and betrayed me,  
just you wait and you will see!

**Basilio, Curzio, Antonio and Bartolo**

I'm astounded,  
quite dumbfounded.  
Who in heaven can it be?

**Figaro**

I'm astounded,  
quite dumbfounded.  
They will have to wait and see.

(*Enter Susanna (disguised as the Countess),  
followed by Cherubino, Barbarina and Marcellina.*)

**Count**

No point in resisting,  
you treacherous woman,  
so much for insisting  
you're faithful to me!  
(*The Count reaches into the left pavilion and pulls  
out a resisting Cherubino, then Barbarina,*

*Marcellina and Susanna.*)

The page boy!

**Antonio**

My daughter!

**Figaro**

My mother!

**Basilio, Curzio, Antonio and Bartolo**

The mistress!

**Count**

She's everyone's mistress;  
she stands on display  
for all the world to see.

**Susanna** (*kneels before the Count, holding her  
handkerchief before her face*)

Forgive me, forgive me!

**Count**

No, don't even ask it!

**Figaro**

Forgive her, forgive her!

**Count**

No, no forgiveness!

**Susanna, Cherubino, Barbarina, Basilio,**

**Curzio, Figaro, Bartolo and Antonio**

Forgive her!

**Count**

No!

*Countess (comes out of the pavilion and is about to kneel when the Count prevents her)*

I beg your forgiveness for them, not for me.

**Basilio, Curzio, Count, Antonio and Bartolo**

Oh this is delusion  
and utter confusion;  
I do not believe what I see.

*Count (supplicatingly)*

My lady, forgive me!

**Countess**

I'm far more forgiving  
and so I say yes.

**All**

The voice of forgiveness  
shall end all distress.  
What a day of grief and sadness;  
what a day of mirth and madness;  
love has turned it into gladness,  
love alone has won the day.  
Lovers who revel in dancing and laughter  
will be happy ever after.  
Do you hear the happy music  
playing for their/our wedding day?  
Yes, it is their/our wedding day.  
We must hurry,  
for it is their/our wedding day.

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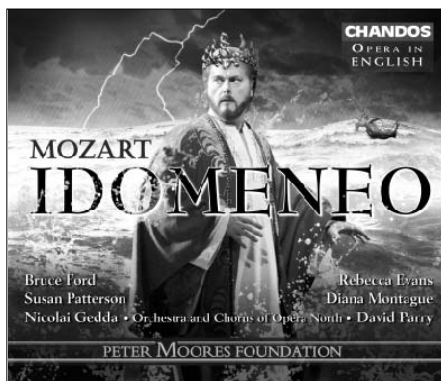


Jonathan Veira as Bartolo with Glyndebourne Festival Opera

Mike Hoban



Opera in English on Chandos



CHAN 3103(2)



CHAN 3057(3)

Opera in English on Chandos



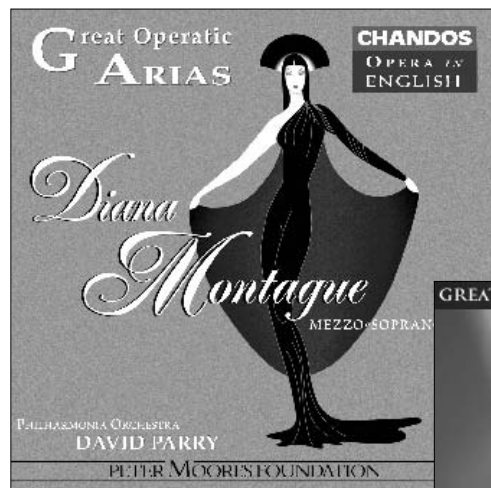
CHAN 3035

CHAN 3099



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Opera in English on Chandos



CHAN 3010



CHAN 3093

The Opera in English series:

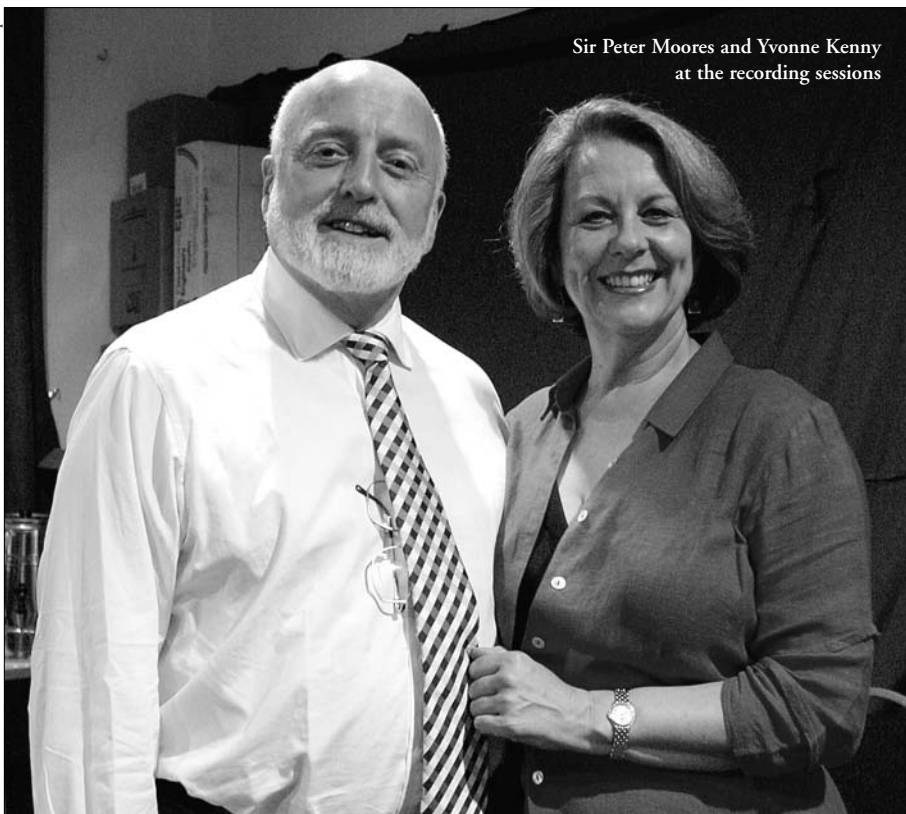
- CHAN 3011(2) Donizetti: Don Pasquale
- CHAN 3027(2) Donizetti: The Elixir of Love
- CHAN 3083(2) Donizetti: Lucia of Lammermoor
- CHAN 3017(2) Donizetti: Mary Stuart
- CHAN 3073 Janet Baker sings scenes from Mary Stuart
- CHAN 3003 Leoncavallo: Pagliacci (The Touring Company)
- CHAN 3004 Mascagni: Cavalleria rusticana (Rustic Chivalry)
- CHAN 3005(2) Pagliacci & Cavalleria rusticana
- CHAN 3008(2) Puccini: La bohème
- CHAN 3070(2) Puccini: Madam Butterfly
- CHAN 3000(2) Puccini: Tosca
- CHAN 3066 Jane Eaglen sings Tosca
- CHAN 3086(2) Puccini: Turandot
- CHAN 3025(2) Rossini: The Barber of Seville
- CHAN 3097(2) Rossini: The Thieving Magpie
- CHAN 3074(2) Verdi: Aida
- CHAN 3052(2) Verdi: Ernani
- CHAN 3079(2) Verdi: Falstaff
- CHAN 3068(2) Verdi: Otello
- CHAN 3030(2) Verdi: Rigoletto
- CHAN 3023(2) Verdi: La traviata
- CHAN 3036(2) Verdi: Il trovatore (The Troubadour)
- CHAN 3067 A Verdi Celebration
- CHAN 3091(2) Bizet: Carmen
- CHAN 3014(3) Gounod: Faust
- CHAN 3089(2) Gounod: Faust (abridged)
- CHAN 3033(2) Massenet: Werther
- CHAN 3094(2) Berg: Wozzeck
- CHAN 3019(2) Handel: Julius Caesar
- CHAN 3072 Janet Baker sings scenes from Julius Caesar
- CHAN 3081(2) Mozart: The Abduction from the Seraglio

- CHAN 3057(3) Mozart: Don Giovanni
- CHAN 3103(2) Mozart: Idomeneo
- CHAN 3022 Strauss: Der Rosenkavalier (The Knight of the Rose, highlights)
- CHAN 3054(3) Wagner: The Rhinegold
- CHAN 3038(4) Wagner: The Valkyrie
- CHAN 3045(4) Wagner: Siegfried
- CHAN 3060(5) Wagner: Twilight of the Gods
- CHAN 3065(16) Wagner: Complete Ring Cycle
- CHAN 3101(2) Janáček: The Cunning Little Vixen
- CHAN 3029(2) Janáček: Osud (Fate)
- CHAN 3106(2) Janáček: Jenůfa
- CHAN 3007 Mussorgsky: Boris Godunov (highlights)
- CHAN 3042(2) Tchaikovsky: Eugene Onegin

Great Operatic Arias

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- CHAN 3035 Yvonne Kenny
- CHAN 3099 Yvonne Kenny 2
- CHAN 3049 Della Jones
- CHAN 3010 Diana Montague
- CHAN 3093 Diana Montague 2
- CHAN 3112 Barry Banks
- CHAN 3006 Bruce Ford
- CHAN 3100 Bruce Ford 2
- CHAN 3088 Bruce Ford sings Viennese Operetta
- CHAN 3013 Dennis O'Neill
- CHAN 3105 Dennis O'Neill 2
- CHAN 3085 Alan Opie
- CHAN 3077 Andrew Shore
- CHAN 3032 Alastair Miles
- CHAN 3044 John Tomlinson
- CHAN 3076 John Tomlinson 2
- CHAN 3078 Baroque Celebration

Bill Cooper



Sir Peter Moores and Yvonne Kenny  
at the recording sessions

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Vocal and language consultant: Ludmilla Andrew

Staging director: Charles Kilpatrick

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Music librarian: Jacqui Compton

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MOZART: THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO

**CHANDOS** DIGITAL 3-disc set **CHAN 3113(3)**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

# THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO

*Opera buffa* in four acts

Libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte, English translation by Jeremy Sams

Count Almaviva.....William Dazeley *baritone*  
 Countess Almaviva.....Yvonne Kenny *soprano*  
 Susanna, her maid, betrothed to Figaro .....Rebecca Evans *soprano*  
 Figaro, valet to Count Almaviva .....Christopher Purves *baritone*  
 Cherubino, the Count's page.....Diana Montague *mezzo-soprano*  
 Bartolo, a doctor from Seville.....Jonathan Veira *bass-baritone*  
 Marcellina, Bartolo's housekeeper.....Frances McCafferty *mezzo-soprano*  
 Don Basilio, music master.....John Graham-Hall *tenor*  
 Don Curzio, notary.....Stuart Kale *tenor*  
 Antonio, gardener, Susanna's uncle.....Graeme Danby *bass*  
 Barbarina, Antonio's daughter .....Sarah Tynan *soprano*

Geoffrey Mitchell Choir  
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 David Parry

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COMPACT DISC THREE  
ACTS III & IV TT 72:22

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