

THE

*Aldburgh*

CONNECTION



## *Matinée musicale*

WALTER HALL  
SUNDAY, MARCH 7, 1999  
2:30 p.m.

## MATINÉE MUSICALE

SALLY DIBBLEE, soprano

LINDA MAGUIRE, mezzo

ERIC SHAW, tenor

BRUCE KELLY, baritone

STEPHEN RALLS & BRUCE UBUKATA, piano



Our sincere thanks to:

Dean and Rosemary Dover for sponsoring Sally Dibblee

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In 1855, at the age of 63, Rossini was persuaded by his French-born second wife, Olympe, to leave Italy and settle in Paris. Increasingly racked by illness, he was regarded as a spent force musically, having written very little since his last opera, *Guillaume Tell*, in 1829. Olympe had faith in the skill of French doctors and herself yearned for the delights of Parisian society.

Whether medical science helped him or the Gallic spirit invigorated him or, the most likely, his wife's devoted care won him round, Rossini took a new lease on life, physically and mentally. His days as a composer for the stage were indeed over — the world had already seen Wagner's *Tannhäuser* and Verdi's *La Traviata* and Rossini felt his own operatic style, for better or for worse, outmoded. But, by virtue of the popularity of his existing output, he was now one of the most famous composers living in Paris, along with Meyerbeer and Offenbach.

Olympe, desiring to improve her social status, encouraged her husband to entertain lavishly. In their apartment on the rue de la Chaussée d'Antin, or in their grander villa in suburban Passy, the Rossinis held their famous *samedi soirs*. Beginning on 18 December, 1858, over a period of nearly ten years, artists, politicians, diplomats and the well-to-do mingled to hear a galaxy of musical talent. Invitations were much prized, since the lucky recipient stood a fair chance of meeting at least one of the following: Auber, Boïto, Gounod, Liszt, Meyerbeer, Saint-Saëns, Thomas, Verdi, as well as leading singers and instrumentalists of the day and other artistic figures, such as Delacroix, Doré, Dumas *père*, Hanslick and Ricordi.

Rossini assembled the programmes for the *soirées* with special care. As well as Haydn and Mozart, the music of contemporary composers was often heard, especially Verdi, Gounod and Liszt. But the chief excitement was aroused by Rossini's own new music: for, from 1857 onwards, he was composing a great number of small salon pieces, some 150 in all, songs and piano pieces, which he collected in a series of volumes entitled *Péchés de vieillesse* (Sins of old age). Olympe, with an eye to the future, jealously kept



the manuscripts under lock and key, and the majority of the pieces have only been published within the last forty years. In today's concert, most of the Rossini pieces are taken from *Péchés de vieillesse*; the rest are from an earlier collection, *Les Soirées musicales*, published in 1835.



## ROSSINI AT HOME

### La passeggiata (*Péchés de vieillesse*)

Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868)

*The promenade: Since the sky is clear, limpid and quiet the wave, let us sail from the shore; love will guide us.*

*To the waves, the air, the flowers we will speak of love, and the beating heart will answer for them.*

*But heaven! the wind whistles, the lagoon foams — quick, hurry away!*

*Ah, no! The moon appears; fear was vain. Let us sing in this happy land.*

### Une Caresse à ma femme (A caress for my wife) (*Péchés de vieillesse*) Rossini

Rossini's piano pieces are, at one and the same time, precursors of Chabrier and Satie and also echoes of Rameau and Couperin.

### La Chanson du bébé (*Péchés de vieillesse*)

Rossini

The music parodies Offenbach and the text refers to his operetta *Barbe-bleue* and two of his singers, Schneider and Térésa.

*The baby's song: Mama, the big baby calls you. I want some jam, some ripe currants. Atchi!*

*Papa, pipi, Maman, caca! Baby wants a song from Bluebeard; your voice would beat Schneider and Térésa. Nurse calls me a jewel, but when I'm bad, they whip me.*

## THE VISITORS

### Soirée en mer (Hugo)

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

*Evening at sea: When, at sunset, we two float aimlessly in our boat under the stars, when we both think we read what nature writes, answer, why does my soul sigh while your face smiles?*

*Tell me, why do thoughts fill my soul? It is because I see the dark waves and you the magic stars.*

*You do well: look at the gleaming heavens. You see God smile, while I see man weep.*

Oh! quand je dors (Hugo)

Franz Liszt (1811-86)

*Oh! when I sleep, come close to my bed, as Laura appeared to Petrarch. And when in passing your breath touches me, suddenly my lips will part.*

*The dark dream, which persisted for so long on my sad brow, your glance lifts like a star; suddenly my dream will become radiant.*

*Then on my lips, where flickers a clear flame of love that God Himself refines, place a kiss and from angel become woman. Suddenly my soul will awaken.*

O ma belle rebelle (de Baïf)

Charles Gounod (1818-93)

*O my fair rebel, how cruel you are, when with a soft word, a proud and graceful look or a small but divine gesture you plunge my heart into amorous fire!*

*How cruel you are, when bitter desire burns my heart; the flames compel me to beg for just one kiss, with which you will not appease me.*

*If only Cupid could make you fall in love with me, then one day, by my revenge you would know what it means to refuse a kiss to a lover.*

## A TASTE FOR THE EXOTIC

La regata veneziana (Pepoli) (Les Soirées musicales)

Rossini

*The Venetian regatta: Row up, dear Tonio, push, push, pull, pull! Beppe mops his brow, hand on hip, the poor fellow is exhausted. Tonio, row up now!*

*Beppe, old fellow, don't tire yourself with that oar, we're almost there. Push, come along now, and row some more. Merciful heaven, when a girl has a sweet heart in the race, oh heaven grant her consolation, let her not suffer any more!*

Li marinari (Pepoli) (Les Soirées musicales)

Rossini

*Wagner scored this piece for orchestra, just before starting work on The Flying Dutchman.*

*The sailors: Keep watch there, sailor — On watch I stand. The night grows darker and the fair wind has turned. The waves roar, and soon the sea will rise and menace us. Be careful. Slacken off. Forward, abaft. Bring in that sail. More, more. Now we've come about, where are we going? Who knows?*

*The thunder rolls, the wind whistles, the lightning flashes, we're letting in water. Take heart, I shall prevail. Amidst fortune's raging, fear will never bet- ter me, I know my angel on shore has prayed for me.*

*See, the sky is clearing, the sun shines through. It was love's prayer that brought us this rainbow. When we reach the shore, I shall kiss my beloved a thousand times, she will ever be the true star of her faithful sailor. Make for the shore, sailor, and long live the sea.*



Anzoleta avanti la regata (*La regata veneziana: Péchés de vieillesse*) Rossini

*Anzoleta before the regatta: Over there, see the flag flying on high; look, you can see it, now go for it. Bring it back to me this evening, or run away and hide.*

*Don't falter, Momolo, row your gondola with heart and soul, then you cannot help being first. Remember that your sweetheart watches anxiously from this arbour.*

I gondolieri (*Péchés de vieillesse*) Rossini

*The gondoliers: Let us glide on agile sails, the heavens are resplendent with beauty. The moon is without clouds, the sea is without storm.*

*Glide, then rest in the meadow; to the gondolier is given the greatest of all that is good.*

*It does not matter whether the sun shines or the sad moon appears, always on the lagoon the gondolier is King.*

Danse sibérienne (Siberian dance) (*Péchés de vieillesse*) Rossini

## ANOTHER VISITOR

Quartet: Un dì, se ben rammentomi (*Rigoletto*) Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

*The Duke begins his seduction of Maddalena while, outside the door, the spurned Gilda and her father Rigoletto comment on his faithlessness.*



## INTERMISSION

during which tea will be served in the Torel Room

with the kind assistance of students  
of the Opera Division, Faculty of Music



## THE MOST BRILLANT SALON

Grandes variations sur une Marche favorite de l'Opéra *Guillaume Tell* de Rossini (Variations on a theme from *William Tell*)      Henri Herz (1803-88)

Born in Vienna, Herz moved to Paris in 1816 and eventually became one of the most fashionable pianists there. He toured the New World in the 1840's, making a fortune with which to build a piano factory and a concert hall.

After an introduction and Rossini's theme, there are four variations followed by an extended finale.

*La pastorella dell'Alpi (Pepoli) (Les Soirées musicales)*      Rossini

*The Alpine shepherdess: Each morning you see me, a fair shepherdess, bearing my basket of fresh fruit and flowers. If you are here at first light, fair roses you'll have, and apples bedewed, so come to my garden. Ahu, ah!*

*Should you lose your way in the hideous night, you will surely find the path to my cabin. Come, oh traveller, the shepherdess is here, but my dearest thoughts one alone shall hear. Ahu, Ahu!*

*La serenata (Pepoli) (Les Soirées musicales)*      Rossini

*Serenade: See the pale moon behind its faint veil; come to the dark wood, for - tune smiles. Come here, amidst the dark shadows, don't make a sound; come and fear not, none shall know but love.*

## FAREWELL

*L'ultimo ricordo (Redaelli) (Péchés de vieillesse)*      Rossini

In his setting, subtitled *Elegia*, Rossini deletes the poet's 'Elvira' and substitutes his own wife's name 'Olimpia'.

*The last memory: Hear the last words of a dying man: this withered flower I leave you, Olympe, as a gift. You scarcely realized how precious it was since the day I stole it from your bosom.*

*Then it was the prize of love, now the pain of sorrow. Return and adorn your breast with this withered flower.*



Marche et réminiscences pour mon dernier voyage...  
(March and recollections for my final journey...) (*Péchés de vieillesse*) Rossini

A grim funeral march is first of all interrupted by heavy knocking (at the gate of heaven?) — marked 'frappons'. Then come quotations from eight of Rossini's most famous operas (named) and finally a section marked 'Mon portrait', a graceful and light-hearted theme. But the march resumes ('allons'), then some gentle knocking ('on ouvre'), the march ceases ('j'y suis') and is followed by one single word, 'Requiem'.

## AN OPERATIC ENVOI

We cannot leave Rossini without this most ebullient of operatic farewells...



### THE ALDEBURGH CONNECTION CONCERT SOCIETY

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There is one concert remaining in this Sunday Series: April 25, *The Lyre of Orpheus*, a programme built around music in the life and writings of Robertson Davies, with **Mary Lou Fallis, Catherine Robbin and Daniel Neff**. Tickets are \$24/\$18 seniors and students. Tel. (416) 516-1496.

We are presenting two more concerts in our Recital Series, at the Glenn Gould Studio: Friday May 14 at 8 pm, *The Songs of Henri Duparc*, with **Catherine Robbin and Gerald Finley** (Tickets \$23/\$17) and our *1st Annual Greta Kraus Schubertiad* on Friday, June 11, at 7:30 pm; this festive evening will include a performance of *Die schöne Müllerin* by **Benjamin Butterfield** (Tickets \$33/\$27). Please call the Glenn Gould Studio at (416) 205-5555.

Box office revenues cover only a portion of our operating budget; grants, corporate funding and individual donations are needed for the balance. Audience members are asked to consider joining one of our supporting categories: **Benefactor** (\$1000 or more), **Champion** (\$500 or more), **Patron** (\$100 or more) and **Friend** (\$50 or more). Donations may be made by cheque or VISA, and may be made in instalments, if you prefer. You will



(\$100 or more) and Friend (\$50 or more). Donations may be made by cheque or VISA, and may be made in instalments, if you prefer. You will receive information on our activities, and all donations will be acknowledged with a receipt for income tax purposes. Other donations and suggestions for corporate sponsorship will be gratefully received, and donors may also act as sponsors for an entire concert, an artist, a special commission, or the intermission tea! Your support is vital in helping to ensure the continuation of these concerts.



We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the following in presenting today's concert:

- Dean and Rosemary Dover
- Michiel Horn
- Iain and Barbara Scott
- Margaret Ubukata
- Muriel Lessmann
- The Ontario Arts Council and The City of Toronto through the Toronto Arts Council
- many individual donors



Aldeburgh is the small town on the east coast of England where Benjamin Britten, Peter Pears and Eric Crozier founded the Festival of Music which flourishes to this day. Artistic directors Stephen Ralls and Bruce Ubukata have visited and worked there for many summers, as has a large number of the singers appearing with The Aldeburgh Connection.

Sally Dibblee's 1998/99 season includes her Utah Opera debut as Liu in Puccini's *Turandot*, Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro* in Edmonton, and Marguerite in Manitoba Opera's *Faust*. Last season she was acclaimed by Vancouver critics in the title role of Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah*, sang Musetta in Vancouver Opera's *La bohème*, the Governess in Britten's *Turn of the Screw* in Winnipeg and Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* for Opera Ontario in Kitchener and Hamilton. She has been soloist with the Calgary Philharmonic in Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* and Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Requiem*, has sung *Carmina Burana* in Edmonton, Kingston, with the Bach-Elgar Choir and the Elmer Iseler Singers, and she appears this year as soloist in Mozart's *Requiem* for Chorus Niagara in St. Catharines.

Linda Maguire is heard in opera and concert performances throughout the world. Last season saw her in the première of Peter Maxwell Davies's *Job* in Vancouver, in the Verdi *Requiem* on a summer tour of European cities, in Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with the TSO and in Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* in Christchurch, New Zealand. She also garnered rave reviews as Donna Elvira in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* in Ottawa, and appeared in the leading role



of Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride* for Toronto's Opera in Concert. Upcoming is her debut as Vitellia in *La clemenza di Tito* for Dallas Opera, as soloist in Mozart's *C Minor Mass* for the Montreal Symphony, in Penderecki's *Polish Requiem* with the Vancouver Bach Society, and in a program of Handel's "trouser roles" with Tafelmusik. Her growing discography includes Handel's *La Resurrezione* with Les Musiciens du Louvre, on Archiv/Deutsche Grammophon.

**Eric Shaw** is a recent graduate of the Opera Division, where he was seen last season as Johnny Inkslinger in Britten's *Paul Bunyan*. He is now forging a busy career on opera and concert stages across Canada. He has appeared as soloist in Mozart's *Mass in C minor* with the Amadeus Choir and has been heard on CBC as soloist in *The Creation*, *Messiah* and *Judas Maccabeus*. Operatic assignments this season include Frederick in *Pirates of Penzance* for Vancouver Opera, *Ariadne auf Naxos* for Pacific Opera Victoria, and Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah* for Opera in Concert. Other recent highlights include appearances at the Aldeburgh Festival in the role of Lysander in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and as Nanki-Poo in *Mikado* at the Pitten Festival in Austria. Mr Shaw appeared with The Aldeburgh Connection earlier this season in *Miroir brûlant*, a programme of music by Francis Poulenc.

**Bruce Kelly** has an active career in opera and concert on both sides of the Atlantic, with major operatic roles in Strasbourg, Nice, Avignon and Moscow, as well as here at home, appearing as guest soloist with the major symphony orchestras in Toronto, Kitchener-Waterloo, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Windsor and Victoria. Recent highlights include the roles of Conochar in Healey Willan's *Deirdre*, and Thoas in *Iphigénie en Tauride* with Opera in Concert, Escamillo in concert with Kingston Symphony, Rodolfo in Leoncavallo's *La bohème* with Opera York, *Merry Widow* with Opera Lyra, Willan's *Requiem* with The Cellar Singers, Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with Festival Canada Ottawa and Haydn's *Creation* on tour in Budapest and Vienna. This season he sings *Belshazzar's Feast* with the Kitchener-Waterloo Philharmonic Choir, Verdi's *Requiem* with Consort Caritatis Choir, Doctor Falke in *Die Fledermaus* with Toronto Operetta Theatre, and Vaughan Williams' *Sea Symphony* and Elgar's *Cornation Ode* for Toronto Classical Singers.



You are invited to view the masks displayed in the Faculty of Music's main upstairs lobby. These were created by members of the Ontario Society of Artists for The Aldeburgh Connection's *Poulenc Soirée*, held this past January 29 at the Glenn Gould Studio. They are exhibited here during the Faculty of Music's production of Poulenc's opera *Dialogues des Carmélites*, this weekend and next Friday and Saturday evenings.

The masks represent Poulenc and his major poets: Jean Cocteau, Max Jacob, Louise de Vilmorin, Guillaume Apollinaire, Maurice Carême, Louis Aragon, Paul Eluard, Jean Anouilh and Colette. They are available for sale through a silent auction taking place over this week, and concluding after the final performance of the opera on March 13, as a fundraiser for The Aldeburgh Connection and the Opera Division of the Faculty of Music.

More information available in the main lobby.



We wish to thank Visions Display Inc. for providing the floral arrangement for the stage.

Visions Display Inc is proud to be Toronto Special Events Magazine's Decor Company of the Year for 1998. As a custom design display house, it specializes in creative decor for functions and corporate events.

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