



MICHAEL SPYRES

A Fool For Love

tenor arias

Constantine Orbelian
conductor

Moscow Chamber Orchestra



A Fool For Love

Michael Spyres, tenor

1. Donizetti: *La fille du régiment*: "Ah! mes amis...Pour mon âme" (4:08)
2. Stravinsky: *The Rake's Progress*: "Here I stand" (2:43)
3. Rossini: *Il barbiere di Siviglia*: "Cessa di più resistere" (7:44)
4. Donizetti: *L'elisir d'amore*: "Una furtiva lagrima" (4:34)
5. Mozart: *Don Giovanni*: "Il mio tesoro" (4:25)
6. Bizet: *Les pêcheurs de perles*: "Je crois entendre encore" (4:22)
7. Massenet: *Werther*: "Pourquoi me réveiller" (2:54)
8. Strauss: *Der Rosenkavalier*: "Di rigori armato il seno" (3:17)
9. Puccini: *La Bohème*: "Che gelida manina" (4:41)
10. Verdi: *Rigoletto*: "La donna è mobile" (2:15)
11. Donizetti: *Lucia di Lammermoor*: "Fra poco a me ricovero" (7:29)
12. Tchaikovsky: *Eugene Onegin*: "Kuda, kuda..." (6:16)
13. Cilea: *L'Arlesiana*: "È la solita storia..." (4:22)
14. Encore: Lehár: *Das Land des Lächelns*: "Dein ist mein ganzes Herz" (3:45)

Total Playing Time: 63:04

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Moscow Chamber Orchestra
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NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Love, in all its many guises, is the most complex human emotion to define and express. Thankfully, we have the art of music: perhaps the most immediate and affecting means of conveying love and its effect upon us. What I therefore seek to present to you in this album is a fanciful musical story of a typical war-torn couple, and their struggle to cope with the raptures and ravages of this intangible enigma called love. What better way to tell such a tale than in song: in particular, the arias belonging to tenors, the quintessential romantic heroes of opera? My hope for you, the listener, is to accompany one such lovelorn hero on his journey down the path of love, with all of its joys and sorrows. May his journey resonate in your own heart, and help you to feel anew the precarious paradoxes of this most precious of human emotions.

Michael Spyres

“Only in the agony of parting do we look into the depths of love.” — George Eliot

A Fool for Love

Tenor Michael Spyres carefully pondered his choices to be featured on this, his first album of collected arias. In the selected pieces, Michael has created a musical narrative of a “hopeless romantic,” and his journey through the various states of emotion that only love can bring about in a person. The lover, at love’s beginnings, sets off in an excited and capricious manner. But, realizing that he has fallen in love, he then attempts to rationalize those emotions. After these disparate impulses are reconciled, the lover happily accepts his newfound state. But as time passes, the lover’s deep reveries – as so often happens – bring him to the point that, having dreamed too much, the love itself becomes just a dream. In the final arias, the lover resigns himself to myriad emotional states: self-pity, despair, and even insanity, inevitably leading to the lover’s death. The narrative is, in effect, an exploration of love from every possible angle: from its joyous beginnings to its agonized conclusion – and how we attempt to cope with all of its manifestations. One realizes that, even as we say hello to love, goodbye is drawing near.

Act 1

Track 1

Gaetano Donizetti’s *La fille du régiment* was written while the composer was living in Paris, and premiered there in 1840. The opera details the love of Marie, an orphaned girl who was adopted by the French 21st regiment, and Tonio, who will do whatever it takes to gain the young Marie’s hand in marriage. **Ah! mes amis** appears in Act 1 following Tonio’s decision to join the unit with the understanding that only a member of the regiment can marry Marie. The aria is notoriously demanding, containing nine high Cs.

Track 2

Igor Stravinsky’s *The Rake’s Progress* is undoubtedly the apex of the 20th century master’s neo-classical period. W.H. Auden fashioned the libretto to fit Stravinsky’s precise specifications and needs. The opera follows the protagonist, Tom Rakewell, on his descent into madness, the care of his ill-intentioned companion, Nick Shadow, and his eventual partial redemption by Anne Trulove. **Here I stand** is sung by Rakewell early in Act 1, following his refusal to accept employment secured for him by Trulove’s father. Rakewell defiantly exclaims, “Since it is not by merit we rise or we fall, but the favor of fortune that governs us all... Let me live by my wits and trust to my luck.” The music, as in the rest of the opera, is an obvious homage to the operatic style of W.A. Mozart. It is similarly jaunty and gallant in character, but to call it an imitation would be ill-founded, as Stravinsky distills and filters the original classical style in a delightfully surprising and modern manner. Since its premiere in Venice in 1951, *The Rake’s Progress* has maintained a well-deserved position in the repertoire and remains one of the treasures of 20th century opera.

Track 3

Cessa di più resistere, by Gioachino Rossini, has had an extraordinarily tumultuous life as an aria. Its first incarnation was as Count Almaviva’s grand finale to Act 2 of what was then called *Almaviva, ossia L’inutile precauzione*, which premiered in Rome in 1816. Within that same year, the title of the opera was changed to *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and the aria was curiously removed from the production. Not one to let a good aria go to waste, Rossini was quick to adapt the music to Angelina’s aria, *Nacqui all’affanno*, in *La Cenerentola*. But, thanks to American tenor Rockwell Blake’s insistence (and the slew of tenors who have followed suit), the aria has, to general acclaim, been restored to *Il Barbiere*. The aria is truly a bombastic affair. From its sheer length to its many challenging vocal flourishes, it is one of the most demanding arias in the entire bel canto canon.

Track 4

The exquisitely crafted **Una furtiva lagrima** is the standout aria sung by Nemorino in Gaetano Donizetti’s *L’elisir d’amore*, premiered in Milan in 1832. In this aria, from the second act of the opera, we find Nemorino noticing his beloved Adina weeping after he has administered what he believes to be a love potion to her. He deduces this to mean that the potion has successfully won him the heart of his beloved. Observing Adina’s apparent “enchantment,” Nemorino becomes increasingly intoxicated by his love, and his singing builds in romantic fervor. The aria remains one of the most often excerpted works for tenor from one of Donizetti’s most popular operatic works.

Track 5

Il mio tesoro intanto, from Act 2 of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s masterpiece, *Don Giovanni*, is sung by the noble Don Ottavio. Having concluded that Don Giovanni is responsible

for the death of Donna Anna's father, Ottavio exhorts those present to console and tend to his beloved Anna while he goes to avenge her father's murder. He promises to "return only as the messenger of punishment and death." The opera, completed in 1787, is in the comedic Italian style, despite its decidedly dark sentiments. Its completion marked another successful collaboration with librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte, who also served as librettist to Mozart on *Le nozze di Figaro* and *Così fan tutte*. The true genius of Mozart's late Italian operas was his blend of the various *comedia* and *seria* styles. Mozart uses these styles to clearly delineate and provide musical contrast among the characters depicted in the operas, with Don Ottavio and the other nobles in *Don Giovanni* cast in the opera *seria* style, indicative of his social stature as well as the earnest quality of his convictions.

Track 6

Les pêcheurs de perles, Georges Bizet's debut opera, received its premiere in Paris in 1863. The opera centers around two fishermen, Nadir and Zurga, who both agree not to pursue their love for the same woman in order to save their friendship. When that woman, Leïla, reappears and is recognized first by Nadir, he is overcome by passion and confesses his love to her in the romance **Je crois entendre encore**. The music for the aria maintains a mysteriously solemn and tender tone, as Nadir is inescapably cognizant of the fact that the confession of his love will also certainly mean the dissolution of a dear friendship.

Act 2

Track 7

Jules Massenet's *Werther* premiered initially in Vienna in 1892 in a German translation and was staged later that same year in its original French in Geneva. The opera's title character is a young poet who accompanies a young woman named Charlotte to a ball. Afterwards, Werther professes his love for her, but she informs him that she is already engaged to be married to another. **Pourquoi me réveiller** occurs in Act 3 of the opera, where Werther comes to visit Charlotte on Christmas Eve after she had requested that he not see her until then due to his ill-behavior at her wedding earlier that year. In the aria, Werther recites the poetry of Ossian, a poet he had been in the process of translating. As the aria progresses, Werther becomes conscious of the fact that Charlotte does indeed reciprocate his love. The music perfectly underscores the crescendo to this palpable sense of longing finally required.

Track 8

After completing two such intensely dramatic works as *Salome* and *Elektra*, Richard Strauss made public his desire to write a comedic opera in the style of Mozart. Those intentions would come to fruition in the operatic comedy in 3 acts, *Der Rosenkavalier*, premiered in 1911 in Dresden. In correspondence with his librettist, Hugo von Hofmannsthal (with whom he had also collaborated on *Elektra* and would continue to do so for several projects thereafter), Strauss delightedly pronounced Hugo to be "[Lorenzo] da Ponte and [Eugène] Scribe rolled into one." The opera's story follows the lives of a Viennese Princess von Werdenberg, her lover Octavian, her cousin Baron Ochs, and his fiancée Sophie. The aria **Di rigori armato il seno** – a passionate love-song – appears in the first act of the opera and is sung by an Italian tenor sent on behalf of the Ambassador from Portugal (it's the only aria he gets to sing). While he entertains the Princess, Baron Ochs comically tries to engage the Princess's notary in drafting a marriage contract with Sophie's family. Though the opera is comedic in

nature, it still exhibits the luscious orchestration and heightened romanticism that came to define Strauss's compositional persona.

Track 9

Giacomo Puccini's *La Bohème* premiered in Turin in 1896 and has since become one of the most beloved operas in the canon. Based on a novel by Henri Murger, the opera details the lives of young and impoverished bohemians living in Paris. **Che gelida manina** is heard in the opera's first act, beginning after Rodolfo and Mimì touch hands while the two are looking for her room key, which she has dropped on the floor. The aria begins with Rodolfo's observation that Mimì's hands are chilly – and, as he attempts to warm them with his own, Rodolfo introduces himself, declaring "Who am I? A poet." He goes on to discuss his dreams and aspirations before asking for her introduction in turn. This deservedly famous piece is a high point of musical romanticism, with thickly scored lyrical outpourings tempered by tender moments of confession.

Track 10

La donna è mobile is one of the foremost operatic workhorses in any operatic tenor's repertoire. Featured twice in the third act of Giuseppe Verdi's 1851 opera *Rigoletto*, the aria is sung by the Duke of Mantua as he recounts the fickle nature of women. The opera's title character serves as court jester to the Duke, and suffers numerous humiliations at the Duke's hands. Rigoletto hopes to keep Gilda, his daughter, hidden from the Duke's philandering eye. The aria's obvious jolly and frivolous tunefulness is made all the more chilling in its reprise at the end of the third act as it is overheard by Rigoletto, signalling that the Duke – whom he had plotted to kill – still lives. Spurred by this realization, Rigoletto searches the bag he believes to contain the Duke's lifeless body – only to find, to his horror, that it contains the body of his beloved Gilda.

Track 11

Lucia de Lammermoor, by Gaetano Donizetti, premiered in Naples in 1835. The opera conveys the tale of Lucia, sister to the Lord of Lammermoor, and her star-crossed love for Edgardo of the Ravenwoods: a family with whom Lucia's own has been embroiled in a generations-long dispute. The aria **Fra poco a me ricovero** is sung by Edgardo in the third and final act of the opera. The aria embodies Edgardo's utter despair at the thought of his own doom amid the "tombs of my ancestors," referencing his very family as "an ill-fated line." Edgardo, thinking that Lucia is still alive and newly married to his rival, implores her not to visit his tomb with her new husband by his side as he sings "respect, at least, the remains... of him who died for you." Then he learns that Lucia has died, but his grief is tempered by his resolve to join her in the afterlife. After Lucia's bier passes, Edgardo stabs himself and falls dead.

Track 12

Kuda, kuda vī udalilis is the final aria sung by the young poet Lensky before his fatal duel with the title character in Act 2 of Pyotr Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, premiered in Moscow in 1879. In the aria, Lensky contemplates the events that have led him to this day. He speculates wildly; not only on the outcome of the duel, but whether his beloved will even "shed a tear over my untimely grave" and that the world itself might forget him entirely. The libretto, taken from the great Russian poet Alexander Pushkin's story of the same name, eerily mirrors the poet's own death in a duel over a woman.

Track 13

Francesco Cilea's *L'Arlesiana*, premiered in Milan in 1897, details the betrothal of Vivette to Federico, whose heart actually belongs to a woman from Arles. Federico's aria ***È la solita storia*** appears in the opera's second act after Vivette disappointedly learns of Federico's love for another. After she departs from Federico, he sings with great despair about his wish "to forget everything" and his realization that "before me I always have her sweet face." The aria builds gradually to its climax: "Fatal vision, leave me! How you have wounded me! Alas!" This foreshadows that, even though Federico will try earnestly to forget his love for the girl from Arles, it will ultimately be his undoing.

Encore Track:

Das Land des Lächelns (The Land of Smiles) is – after *The Merry Widow* – Franz Lehár's most beloved operetta. Premiered in Vienna in 1929, it's essentially a rewrite of an unsuccessful earlier work, *Die gelbe Jacke* (The Yellow Jacket). Set in Vienna and China, the work tells the tale of noble heroine Lisa's marriage to Chinese Prince Sou-Chong. But, after returning with him to China, the culture shock turns out to be too much for her, especially when she learns that her new husband is expected to take several more wives. In ***Dein ist mein ganzes Herz***, Sou-Chong attempts in vain to reassure Lisa that she is his only true love as he sings "my whole heart is yours." The aria was written as a so-called "Tauber-song," for Lehár's friend, the legendary Viennese tenor Richard Tauber, who made the role famous.

Notes by Andrew Paul Jackson

A Fool For Love – the story, Act 1

To My Love,

So much has happened since last we spoke. I still can't believe you agreed to marry me! I know that the future is hard to predict, especially now with the war – but I'm sure we are fighting the good fight. Just seeing the flag waving as we march together fills me with such pride! (1) I wish you could be here to share what I'm seeing. The world is so full of endless possibilities. I know that I don't have much money now, but I'm confident that when I come back to you, all my dreams will come true. I know that, with your love and a little bit of luck, I'll be able to conquer anything! I don't know what my destiny holds, but I do know that it'll be different from anybody else's. (2) It's strange how life often seems to be such a cruel game, but then everything takes a turn for the better. Just the other day, someone asked me why I am here – and, seizing the chance to defend your honor, I told him that I believe in your principles of liberty, justice, and battling oppression.

I hope you know that, because of you, I feel like the luckiest man in the world! Oh, how I long for the day when, once I am your husband, we will lay entwined, your precious head on my chest. (3) Do you remember the last time I saw you? There was such joyful cheering from the crowd as my ship set sail – but through it all, I could see only the single tear in your eye. Ever since, I've been haunted by that solitary tear – because, to me, it's the truest testament to our love. And, simply knowing that you care so much for me, how could I possibly ask for more? (4) Far away from you as I am, I yearn for the day when I will again

be with you to dry your tears. Sadly, I have my orders – and only after our mission is accomplished can I return. (4)

I miss you so much! Just yesterday, as I awoke, I couldn't tell if I was in the real world, or still dreaming. I thought I heard your voice, like a dove's song, borne on the wind as I gazed out over the starlit sea. The sound echoed softly through the night as we sailed ever further. Ah, how enchanting my memories as the sweet sound enveloped me. (6) I must go now – but know that I think of you always.

Your Beloved

A Fool For Love – the story, Act 2

To my Lost Love,

I know that this might be difficult for you to hear, but I had to write you one last time. I need to tell you why I have come to this. When you last wrote me – about all the flowers in bloom and how wonderful our days together used to be – you spoke of your pain at our final meeting. Why did you bring back that memory? (7) Why did you choose those hurtful words?

You spoke of the distance between us even as you looked into my eyes; all you saw was grief and broken dreams. Don't you remember how guarded I first was at the entire notion of love – and how you were the first to shatter my heart of ice with that first stroke of your piercing glance? (8) On the night we met, you asked me for a light – and, whether you realized it or not, you changed my dreams with that single question. You gave me new hope as we told each other everything that was in our hearts and shared our deepest secrets. (9) Little did I realize that soon, with your sweet charms and pretty face, you would be flitting about, looking for someone else. I should have listened to my friends when they said you would break my heart, and I would end up in misery. You lied when you said you loved me. (10)

I can't go on any longer like this. I came to this graveyard to write to you and explain why I am here. I'm writing on the night of your wedding: one that should have been ours. While you are off celebrating your new life, I am desolate and in tears. Life is no longer worth living, but even the thought of death gives me no comfort. Please grant me one favor: never come visit me. Forget me. Never think of our golden days, or even what the future will bring. (11) It doesn't matter, because it is in the hands of fate.

Soon you will read this letter – and I can't help but wonder if you will visit me anyway, and perhaps even shed a tear when you realize how truly and passionately I loved you. I devoted everything to you. (12) I will be waiting for you on the other side. I know it sounds like the same old story – but now, all I want is to forget you, and be at peace. Every time I try, it is in vain: I still see your beloved face before me ... but, perhaps in death, there will be oblivion. (13)

VOCAL TEXTS

LA FILLE DU RÉGIMENT, Act 1 - "Ah, mes amis... Pour mon âme"

TONIO

Ah! mes amis, quel jour de fête!
Je vais marcher sous vos drapeaux.
L'amour qui m'a tourné la tête
Désormais, désormais, me rend un héros.

Ah! quel bonheur oui mes amis
Je vais marcher sous vos drapeaux.
Oui, celle pour qui je respire,
A mes vœux a daigné sourire

Et ce doux espoir de bonheur
Trouble ma raison et mon cœur!

Pour mon âme quel destin!
J'ai sa flamme, et j'ai sa main!
Jour prospère!
Me voici militaire.
Militaire et mari!

J'en fais serment!

THE RAKE'S PROGRESS, Act 1, scene 1 - "Here I stand"

TOM RAKEWELL

Here I stand, my constitution sound,
my frame not ill favored, my wit ready, my heart light.

I play the industrious apprentice in a copybook?
I submit to the drudge's yoke?
I, slave through a lifetime to enrich others,
and then be thrown away like a gnawed bone?
Not !!

Have not grave doctors assured us that good works
are of no avail for Heaven predestines all?
In my fashion I may profess myself of their party
and herewith entrust myself to Fortune.
Since it is not by merit
We rise or we fall,
But the favour of Fortune,
That governs us all.

THE DAUGHTER OF THE REGIMENT, Act 1 - "Ah, mes amis... Pour mon âme"

TONIO

Ah, my friends, what a day of celebration!
I shall march under your flags.
Love, having turned my head
Now makes me a hero.

Ah, what happiness! Yes, my friends,
I shall march under your flags.
She, for whom I live and breathe,
has ennobled my vows with a smile.

And this sweet hope of happiness
agitates both my heart and mind.

What sweet destiny for my soul!
I have her flame of love, and also her hand!
Day of prosperity!
Here I am, enlisted.
Enlisted and engaged!

I solemnly promise!

Why should I labour
For what in the end
She will give me for nothing
If she be my friend?

While if she be not, why,
The wealth I might gain
For a time by my toil would
At last be in vain.

Till I die, then of fever
Or by lightning am struck,
Let me live by my wits
And trust to my luck.

My life lies before me,
The world is so wide:
Come, wishes, be horses;
This beggar shall ride!

I wish I had money.

IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA, Act 2 - "Cessa di più resistere"

ALMAVIVA

Cessa di più resistere, non cimentar mio sdegno.
Spezzato e' il gioco indegno di tanta crudeltà.
Della beltà dolente, d'un innocente amore
l'avaro tuo furore piu' non trionferà.

E tu, infelice vittima d'un reo poter tiranno,
sottratta al giogo barbaro, cangia in piacer l'affanno
e in sen d'un fido sposo gioisci in libertà.

Ah, il più lieto, il più felice
e' il mio cor de' cori amanti;
non fuggite, o lieti istanti della mia felicità.

L'ELISIR D'AMORE, Act 2 - "Una furtiva lagrima"

NEMORINO

Una furtiva lagrima negli occhi suoi spunto:
Quelle festose giovani invidiar sembro.
Che piu ceracando io vo? M'ama, lo vedo.

Un solo instante i palpiti del suo bel cor sentir!
I miei sospir, confondere per poco a' suoi sospir!
Cielo, si puo morir! Di piu non chiedo.

DON GIOVANNI, Act 2 Scene 10 (Nr 21) - "Il mio tesoro"

DON GIOVANNI

Il mio tesoro intanto
andate a consolar,
E del bel ciglio il pianto
cercate di asciugar.
Ditele che i suoi torti
a vendar io vado;
Che sol di stragi e morti
nunzio vogl'io tornar.

THE BARBER OF SEVILLE, Act 2 - "Cessa di più resistere"

ALMAVIVA

Stop resisting me – don't test my anger.
Outraged, I am broken by a game of such cruelty.
Your miserly fury shall never triumph
over the painful beauty of such innocent love.

Rejoice in liberty, unhappy victim of a guilty tyrant!
You are now free of oppression's yoke;
now you may dream of happier things
on the breast of a faithful husband.

Ah, what joyous rapture fills the depths
of my lover's heart.
May this happy moment never fade.

THE ELIXIR OF LOVE, Act 2 - "Una furtiva lagrima"

NEMORINO

I see a furtive tear in her eye;
she seems envious of those festive youths.
Need I search further? She loves me – I see it!

Oh, to feel her heartbeat, if only for an instant!
Oh, to feel my sighs as if they were her own!
Heavens, I could die; I cannot ask for more.

DON GIOVANNI, Act 2 Scene 10 (Nr 21) - "Il mio tesoro"

DON GIOVANNI

I now depart
to console my life's treasure,
seeking to dry the tears
in her lovely eyes.
Tell her that I go
to avenge the crimes against her,
and that I shall return, as from a massacre:
the lone messenger of justice done.

LES PÊCHEURS DE PERLES, Act 1 - "Je crois entendre encore"

NADIR

Je crois entendre encore
Caché sous les palmiers
Sa voix tendre et sonore
Comme un chant de ramiers.

Oh nuit enchanteresse divin ravissement
Oh souvenir charmant, folle ivresse, doux rêve!

Aux clartés des étoiles
Je crois encor la voir
Entr'ouvrir ses longs voiles
Aux vents tièdes du soir.

Oh nuit enchanteresse divin ravissement
Oh souvenir charmant folle ivresse, doux rêve!
Charmant souvenir!

WERTHER, Act 3 - "Pourquoi me réveiller"

WERTHER

Pourquoi me réveiller, ô souffle du printemps?
Pourquoi me réveiller
Sur mon front je sens tes caresses,
et pourtant bien proche est le temps
des orages et des tristesses!

Demain dans le vallon viendra le voyageur
se souvenant de ma gloire première.
Et ses yeux vainement chercheront ma splendeur.
Ils ne trouveront plus que deuil et que misère!

Hélas! Pourquoi me réveiller, ô souffle du printemps?

DER ROSENKAVALIER, Act 1 - "Di rigori armato il seno"

ITALIENISCHER SÄNGER

Di rigori armato il seno
Contro amor mi ribellai,
Ma fui vinto in un baleno
In mirar due vaghi rai.
Ma fui vinto in un baleno
Ah! In mirar due vaghi rai.
Ahi! che resiste puoco
A stral di fuoco
Cor di gelo di fuoco a stral.

THE PEARLFISHERS, Act 1 - "Je crois entendre encore"

NADIR

I believe I can still hear your voice,
tender and sonorous;
hidden, like the song of a dove,
beneath the palms.

Oh night enchantress! Divine rapture!
Oh memories of delight; delirious intoxication ... sweet
dream!

I believe I can still see you
in the clear starlight,
amid the warm night breeze's
long veils.

Oh night enchantress! Divine rapture!
Oh memories of delight; delirious intoxication ... sweet
dream!
Entrancing reverie!

WERTHER, Act 3 - "Pourquoi me réveiller"

WERTHER

All my soul is here! Oh breath of Spring,
why do you awaken me?
I sense your caresses on my brow,
even as storms and sorrows draw near.
Why awaken me, Oh breath of Spring?

Tomorrow, remembering my former glory,
the traveler will come to the valley.
His eyes, in vain, will seek my splendor,
but find only grief and misery.

Alas! Why do you awaken me, oh breath of Spring?

DER ROSENKAVALIER, Act 1 - "Di rigori armato il seno"

ITALIAN SINGER

My breast was armed with severity,
and I rebelled against love.
But I was vanquished
by the flash of two lovely eyes
But I was vanquished
Ah! by the flash of two lovely eyes
Ah, how to resist – however feebly –
such arrows of fire
that only a heart of ice can withstand?

LA BOHÈME, Act 1 - "Che gelida manina"

RODOLFO

Che gelida manina, se la lasci riscaldar.
Cercar che giova? Al buio non si trova.
Ma per fortuna è una notte di luna,
e qui la luna l'abbiamo vicina.
Aspetti, signorina, le dirò con due parole
chi son, e che faccio, come vivo. Vuole?
Chi son? Sono un poeta.
Che cosa faccio? Scrivo.
E come vivo? Vivo.
In povertà mia lieta scialo da gran signore
rime ed inni d'amore.
Per sogni e per chimere e per castelli in aria,
l'anima ho milionaria.
Talor dal mio forziere ruban tutti i gioielli
due ladri, gli occhi belli.
V'entrar con voi pur ora, ed i miei sogni usati
e i bei sogni miei, tosto si dileguar!
Ma il furto non m'accorra,
poichè, poichè v'ha preso stanza la speranza!
Or che mi conoscete,
parlate voi, deh! Parlate. Chi siete?
Vi piaccia dir!

RIGOLETTO, Act 3 - "La donna è mobile"

DUCA DI MANTOVA

La donna è mobile qual piuma al vento,
Muta d'accento e di pensiero.
Sempre un'amabile, leggiadro viso,
In pianto o in riso, è menzognero.

È sempre misero chi a lei s'affida,
Chi le confida mal cauto il cuore!
Pur mai non sentesi
felice appieno
Chi su quel seno
non liba amore!

LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR, Act 3, Scene 3 - Nr 14 -
"Fra poco a me ricovero"

EDGARDO

Tombe degli avi miei, l'ultimo avanzo
d'una stirpe infelice.-deh! raccogliete voi.
Cessò dell'ira-il breve foco;
sul nemico acciaio abbandonar mi vo'.
Per me la vita-è orrendo peso!
L'universo intero è un deserto per me-senza Lucia!...

Di faci tuttavia-splende il castello!
Ah! Scarsa fu la notte al tripudio!
Ingrata donna!
Mentre io me struggo- in disperato pianto,
tu ridi, esulti accanto-al felice consorte!
Tu delle gioie in seno,-lo della morte!

LA BOHÈME, Act 1 - "Che gelida manina"

RODOLFO

How cold your little hand is; here, let me warm it for you.
It's no use looking for it here in the dark.
But what luck ... it is a moonlit night,
and here, the moon is near to us.
Wait, miss – if you like, I will tell you in two words
who I am, what I do, and how I live.
Who am I? A poet.
What do I do? I write.
How do I live? I live.
Though poor, I happily squander
rhymes and songs of love like a prince.
For dreams and visions and castles in the air,
I have the soul of a millionaire.
But two thieves – eyes of such beauty –
now rob my safe's jewels.
They entered with you just now,
and my lovely dreams of habit
have suddenly vanished.
But the theft does not anger me,
for hope has been left in their place.
Now that you know me, you speak –
Ah, speak! Who are you?
Say you will!

RIGOLETTO, Act 3 - "La donna è mobile"

DUKE OF MANTOVA

Woman moves like a feather in the wind,
changing her accents and her thoughts.
Ever the sweet, pretty face:
but, in tears or laughter, she is a liar.

He who trusts her; who confides in her
his aching, unwary heart is always miserable.
Who, on her bosom, does not drink love?
Yet one never feels fully happy.
Woman moves like a feather in the wind,
Changing her accents and her thoughts.

LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR, Act 3, Scene 3 - Nr 14 -
"Fra poco a me ricovero"

EDGARDO

Ah, ancestral tombs, receive me:
the last of an ill-fated lineage.
My anger's flash is extinguished;
I now abandon myself to the enemy's sword.
Life is a horrendous burden.
Without Lucia, the entire universe is a desert,

though the torches still shine as they light the castle.
Ah, ungrateful woman, how fleeting
was the night of jubilation.
While I languish in tearful desperation,
you laugh merrily at the side of your lucky husband
as your very joy kills me.

continues on next page

Fra poco a me ricovero-darà negletto avello...
Una pietosa lagrima-non scenderà su quello!
Ah! Fin degli estinti, ah, misero!
Manca il conforto a me!
Tu pur, tu pur dimentica-que marmo dispregiato:
Mai non passarvi, o barbara,-del tuo consorte a lato;
Ah! Rispetta almen le ceneri-di chi moria per te.
Mai non passarvi, tu lo dimentica,
rispetta almeno chi muore per te.
O barbara! lo moro per te.

EUGENE ONEGIN, Act 2 - "Kuda, kuda..."

LENSKY

Kuda, kuda, kuda vvi udalilis,
Vyesnhi mayei zlati yednyi?

Shto dyen griedushchi menyе gatahvit?
Yevo moi vzor naprasnah lahvhit:
V glubokai thmye taitse on!
Nyet nuzhdhi: prav zabwi zakon!

Padu li ya, strieloi pranzionnhi,
Ih mima pralyetit ana,
Vsio blaga; bdyenih u sna
Prikhodit chas apredjelyonnyhi.
Blaguhslyaven i dyenhi zabot,
Blaguhslyaven i thmwi prikhot!

Blyeznyat zautra luch dyennitsi,
I zaigrayet yarkhai dyenh,
A ya, bwits maozhet, ya grabnitshi
Saidu v tainstvyennuyu syenhi!
I pamyets yunuhvo poeta
Paglotyit myedlennaya Lyeta.
Zabudyet mir menyа; no thi!
Thi! Olhga....

Skazhi, pridyosh li, dyeva krasathi,
Sliezu pralith nad rannyi urnai
I dumath: on menyа lyubil!
On mne yedinai pasvitil
Rassvyet pechalhnyi zhizni burnai!

Akh, Olhga, ya tyebia lyubil,
Tyebie yedinai pahsviuhitil
Rassvyet pechalhnyi zhizni burnai.
Akh, Olhga, ya tyebia lyubil!

Syerdechni drugh, zhelanni drugh,
Pridji, pridji!
Zhelanni drugh, pridji, ya tvoi suprug!
Pridji: ya tvoi suprug!
Pridji!...Pridji!...
Ya zhdu tyebyа, zhelannhi drugh,
Pridji, pridji, ya tvoi suprug!

Kuda, kuda, kuda vvi udalilis
Zlati yednyi mayei vyesnhi?

Shelter me soon, neglected tomb.
No tear of pity will fall on you!
Ah, misery! Not even in death
will I find comfort.
As you, oh cruel one, forget this lowly marble,
never pass by it at your husband's side.
Respect, at least, the remains of he who gave his life for
you.
Oh, savage one, I die for you!

EUGENE ONEGIN, Act 2 - "Kuda, kuda..."

LENSKY

Where, ah where have you gone,
Oh Spring of my golden days?

What does the future hold for me?
Shrouded in deep darkness,
my eye seeks it in vain.
No matter; fate's decree is just.

Will its arrow fly past me?
Or, pierced by it, will I fall?
So be it; both sleeping and waking
are predestined.
Blessed be the tumultuous day,
and the arrival of darkness.

Dawn's flash will soon break,
and the bright day will prevail.
But I, perhaps entombed,
will descend into the mysterious shadow
as the memory of the young poet
is swallowed by Lethe's dark waters.
The world will forget me –
But, Olga, will you?

Tell me, lovely maiden, will you come
and shed tears over my untimely tomb,
and think, "He loved me,
and devoted to me
the gloomy dawn of a troubled life?"

For, Olga, I did love you;
to you alone I devoted
the dim sunrise of my sad life.
Oh, Olga, I did love you!

Oh my darling, beloved companion,
Come, come!
Beloved companion, come to your husband!
Come, to your husband!
Come, come!
I am waiting for you, beloved companion,
come, come; to your husband!

Where, ah where have you gone,
Oh Spring of my golden days?

L'ARLESIANA, Act 2 - "Lamento di Federico"

FEDERICO

È la solita storia del pastore...
Il povero ragazzo-voleva raccontarla e s'addormi.
C'è nel sonno l'oblio. Come l'invidio!
Anch'io vorrei dormir così,
nel sonno almen l'oblio trovar!
La pace sol cercando io vo'.
Vorrei poter tutto scordar!
Ma ogni sforzo e vano.
Davanti ho sempre di lei-il dolce sembiante.
La pace tolta-e solo a me.
Perche degg'io tanto penar?
Lei! sempre lei mi parla ancor!
Fatale vision, mi lascia!
Mi fai tanto male, Ahime!

**DAS LAND DES LÄCHELNS, Act 2 - "Dein ist mein
ganzes Herz!"**

SOU CHONG

Dein ist mein ganzes Herz!
Wo du nicht bist, kann ich nicht sein.
So, wie die Blume welkt
wenn sie nicht küsst der Sonnenschein!
Dein ist mein schönstes Lied,
weil es allein aus der Liebe erblüht.
Sag mir noch einmal, mein einzig Lieb,
oh sag noch einmal mir: Ich hab dich Lieb!

Wohin ich immer gehe
ich fühle deine Nähe.
Ich möchte deinen Atem trinken
und betend dir zu Füßen sinken,
dir, dir allein! Wie wunderbar
ist dein leuchtendes Haar!
Traumschön und sehnsuchtsbang
ist dein strahlender Blick!
Hör ich der Stimme Klang,
ist es so wie Musik.

L'ARLESIANA, Act 2 - "Lamento di Federico"

FEDERICO

As in the usual story of the shepherd –
The poor boy wanted to tell it, but fell asleep.
He knows sleep's oblivion. How I envy him!
I, too, want to sleep:
to sleep is to at least forget!
Peace is all I seek;
everything forgotten.
Yet my efforts are futile.
I will always see her sweet face before me.
Peace is taken from me.
Why must I suffer such pain?
She, always she, speaks to me.
Leave me, oh fatal vision;
How you have wounded me! Alas!

**THE LAND OF SMILES, Act 2 - "Dein ist mein ganzes
Herz!"**

SOU CHONG

My whole heart is yours!
I cannot go where you are not –
like the flower that withers,
unkissed by sunshine.
You are my most beautiful song,
inspired by your love alone.
Tell me again, my only love,
that you love me, too.

Wherever I go,
I feel you near.
I want to drink your breath,
And sink, in prayer, at your feet.
You, you alone! How wondrous
is your glowing hair!
Your radiant gaze is dreamy
And full of longing!
Your voice is music
to my ears.

Michael Spyres invites you to visit his website
www.michaelspyres.com for literal, singable translations.

MICHAEL SPYRES

Michael Spyres was born in Mansfield, Missouri, where he grew up in a family of musicians. He began his studies in the USA, and continued at the Vienna Conservatory in Austria. He was a Young Artist with Opera Theatre Saint Louis, where he made his major stage operatic debut in a touring production as Rodolfo in Puccini's *La Bohème*. Prior to his international breakthrough, he also performed such operatic roles as Guglielmo in Donizetti's *Viva la mamma*, Lindoro in Rossini's *L'italiana in Algeri* and Hoffmann in Offen-



bach's *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* as well as oratorio works like Händel's *Messiah*, Bach's *Weihnachtssoratorium* and Mozart's *Requiem*.

After his debut at Teatro San Carlo of Naples in 2006 as Jaquino in Beethoven's *Fidelio*, Spyres performed the role of Alberto from Rossini's *La Gazzetta* at the Bad Wildbad Rossini Festival and toured Japan as Alfredo in Verdi's *La Traviata*. He returned to Bad Wildbad in July 2008 for his role debut as Rossini's *Otello*.

For the 2008/2009 season, Michael Spyres became a member of the Deutsche Oper Berlin, where he performed roles such as Tamino in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* and Steuermann in Wagner's *Der fliegende Holländer*. Other important engagements in 2008/2009 were his UK debut in London as Fernand in a concert performance of *La Favorite*, Duca in a production of *Rigoletto* for Springfield (Missouri), an opera

gala concert in the Tchaikovsky Conservatory Moscow, his debut at the Teatro alla Scala di Milano as Belfiore in Rossini's *Il viaggio a Reims* as well as the role of Raoul in the uncut version of Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots* for the SummerScape Festival in New York.

Important engagements of the 2009/2010 season were the title role in Bernstein's *Candide* for his debut with the Vlaamse Opera in Ghent and Antwerp, a new production of

Britten's *Billy Budd* (role of Novice) for Bilbao, his debut with Opera Ireland as Roméo in Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*, Néocle in Rossini's *Le siège de Corinthe* in concert performances at the Wildbad Rossini Festival as well as Tybalt in *Roméo et Juliette* for the Salzburg Festival 2010. In May 2010, Spyres performed the role of Ozia in Mozart's *Betulia Liberata* with Riccardo Muti at the Salzburg Whitsun Festival and subsequently at the Ravenna Festival.

Roles in 2010/2011 included Tamino in a new production of *Die Zauberflöte* at the Opéra de Wallonie in Liège, the title role in the first modern staged performances of Mazzoni's *Antigono* in Lisbon, Gianetto in Rossini's *La gazza ladra* for Semperoper Dresden, Ramiro in Rossini's *La Cenerentola* for the Teatro Comunale di Bologna and Arnold in Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* at the Caramoor Festival, conducted by Will Crutchfield. Under the baton of Riccardo Muti, he participated in a series of concert performances of Verdi's *Otello* with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. These concerts also led to his debut at Carnegie Hall in New York. Also on the concert platform, he could be heard recently in Schumann's *Faust Szenen* with the American Symphony Orchestra and at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow for an aria concert.

During the 2011/2012 season he returns to La Scala di Milano as Rodrigo in Rossini's *La donna del lago* (conducted by Roberto Abbado), taking part in a concert tour with the London Symphony Orchestra and John Eliot Gardiner, singing Beethoven's *9th Symphony* in London, Munich and Hamburg. He also sings *Candide* in his debut at the Opera di Roma, his first Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Minnesota Opera, Masaniello in Auber's *La Muette de Portici* in Paris (Opéra Comique in co-production with La Monnaie in Brussels) and Berlioz' *Requiem* with John Eliot Gardiner at the St Denis Festival.

Among his numerous engagements after the 2011/2012 season are the title role in Berlioz' *La damnation de Faust* at Vlaamse Opera, directed by Terry Gilliam, *Missa Solemnis* and Beethoven's *9th Symphony* at New York's Carnegie Hall and in Orange County, also with John Eliot Gardiner, and Rodrigo in Rossini's *La donna del lago* for his debut at Royal Opera Covent Garden in London in 2013.

Other Michael Spyres recordings include Rossini's *La Gazzetta*, *Otello* and *Le siège de Corinthe* (Naxos). Rossini's *Otello* from Bad Wildbad will also be released on DVD.

CONSTANTINE ORBELIAN

“**Constantine Orbelian** stands astride two great societies, and finds and promotes synergistic harmony from the best of each.” (*Fanfare*) For almost 20 years the brilliant American pianist /conductor has been a central figure in Russia’s musical life. Music Director of the Moscow Chamber Orchestra and the Philharmonia of Russia, Orbelian is also a frequent guest conductor with other illustrious Russian orchestras. He tours with American stars in Russian music centers, and Russian stars in North American music centers, and extends these splendid collaborations to tours in Europe, UK, Japan, Korea, and other music capitals throughout the world.

Orbelian’s appointment in 1991 as Music Director of the Moscow Chamber Orchestra was a breakthrough event: he is the first American ever to become music director of an ensemble in Russia. This “American in Moscow” is well known as a tireless champion of Russian-American cultural exchange and international ambassadorship through his worldwide tours. In January, 2004, President Putin awarded Orbelian the coveted title “Honored Artist of Russia,” a title never before bestowed on a non-Russian citizen.

“Orbelian has star quality, and his orchestra plays with passion and precision,” *The Audio Critic* wrote of his acclaimed series of over 30 recordings on Delos. Among his recent concert and televised appearances are collaborations with stars Renée Fleming and Dmitri Hvorostovsky, and with Van Cliburn in Cliburn’s sentimental return to Moscow. *Opera News* calls Orbelian “the singer’s dream collaborator,” and commented that he conducts vocal repertoire “with the sensitivity of a lieder pianist.” Orbelian’s frequent collaborations with Hvorostovsky include repertoire from their Delos recordings “Where Are You, My Brothers?” and “Moscow Nights,” featured on many tours and telecasts, including historic live telecasts from Moscow’s Red Square.

Recently Orbelian has turned to film to create more of his unique American/Russian collaborations. His first film production, “The Glory of Russia, *Sights and Sounds of St. Petersburg*,” was filmed in St. Petersburg’s most glorious palaces, and stars Renée Fleming and Dmitri Hvorostovsky in opera scenes and arias. The film is in some ways a culmination of Orbelian’s efforts in St. Petersburg, since he is founder and Music Director of the annual Palaces of St. Petersburg International Music Festival. In the course of the film, Fleming leads the audience on a delightful mini-tour of St. Petersburg, between the opera scenes she performs with Hvorostovsky, Orbelian and the State Hermitage Orchestra.

Born in San Francisco to Russian and Armenian emigré parents, Constantine Orbelian made his debut as a piano prodigy with the San Francisco Symphony at the age of 11. After graduating from Juilliard in New York, he embarked on a career as a piano virtuoso that included appearances with major symphony orchestras throughout the U.S., U.K., Europe, and Russia. His recording of the Khachaturian piano concerto with conductor Neeme Järvi won “Best Concerto Recording of the Year” award in the United Kingdom.

From his 1995 performance at the 50th Anniversary Celebrations of the United Nations in San Francisco, to his 2004 performance at the U.S. State Department commemorating 70 years of diplomatic relations between Washington and Moscow, that he conducts vocal repertoire “with the sensitivity of a lieder pianist.” Orbelian’s frequent collaborations with Hvorostovsky include repertoire from their Delos recordings “Where Are You, My Brothers?” and “Moscow Nights,” featured on many tours and telecasts, including historic live telecasts from Moscow’s Red Square.

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A Fool For Love

tenor arias

Michael Spyres, tenor

1. Donizetti: *La fille du régiment*: "Ah! mes amis...Pour mon âme" (4:08)
2. Stravinsky: *The Rake's Progress*: "Here I stand" (2:43)
3. Rossini: *Il barbiere di Siviglia*: "Cessa di più resistere" (7:44)
4. Donizetti: *L'elisir d'amore*: "Una furtiva lagrima" (4:34)
5. Mozart: *Don Giovanni*: "Il mio tesoro" (4:25)
6. Bizet: *Les pêcheurs de perles*: "Je crois entendre encore" (4:22)
7. Massenet: *Werther*: "Pourquoi me réveiller" (2:54)
8. Strauss: *Der Rosenkavalier*: "Di rigori armato il seno" (3:17)
9. Puccini: *La Bohème*: "Che gelida manina" (4:41)
10. Verdi: *Rigoletto*: "La donna è mobile" (2:15)
11. Donizetti: *Lucia di Lammermoor*: "Fra poco a me ricovero" (7:29)
12. Tchaikovsky: *Eugene Onegin*: "Kuda, kuda..." (6:16)
13. Cilea: *L'Arlesiana*: "È la solita storia..." (4:22)
14. Encore: Lehár: *Das Land des Lächelns*: "Dein ist mein ganzes Herz" (3:45)

Total Playing Time: 63:04

Constantine Orbelian, conductor

Moscow Chamber Orchestra of the Pavel Slobodkin Center for the Arts



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