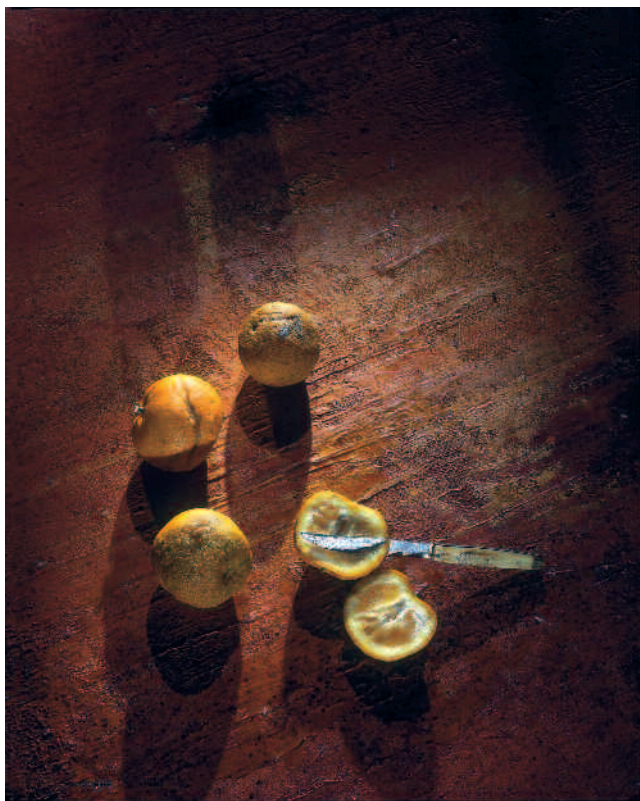


WNO



# Carmen

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Welcome to WNO's Spring Season. Love and Passion is the theme of this season and, without doubt, Bizet's *Carmen* is the opera which immediately springs to mind. It has everything – love, passion, obsession and even murder!

I am delighted to be reviving this production, with Patricia Bardon and Gwyn Hughes-Jones returning as the fated lovers Carmen and Don José. Welsh soprano Sarah Jane Davies makes her WNO debut as Micaëla, and David Soar makes his role debut as Escamillo. Frédéric Chaslin makes his company debut on the podium.

I am immensely grateful for the vital support given to this production and heartened that it comes from WNO's longest established group of supporters and from our newest.

The Friends of Welsh National Opera gave their support to *Wozzeck* last autumn and in an unprecedented move, they have also supported *Carmen* today. The Friends' unswerving loyalty and dedication to WNO is an inspiration to us and we are, as always, very appreciative.

I'd like to take this opportunity to extend my thanks to the members of the newly formed WNO Sponsors' Group. This is a new initiative that brings a group of businesses together in their support for WNO. I hope you will join me in thanking them and visit the Sponsors' Group page on the WNO website or at the back of this programme to review the members list in full.

A new production of Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, and a revival of Puccini's *Tosca* complete the Love and Passion trilogy this season – I hope you can come and see them – they're not to be missed!

Enjoy the performance.

Croeso i Dymor y Gwanwyn yn WNO. Cariad ac Angerdd yw thema'r tymor hwn ac, heb os, *Carmen*, gan Bizet yw'r opera a ddaw i'r meddwl ar unwaith. Mae ganddi bopeth – cariad, angerdd, obsesiwn a hyd yn oed llofruddiaeth!

Rwyf wrth fy modd yn ailgyflwyno'r cynhyrchiad hwn, gyda Patricia Bardon a Gwyn Hughes-Jones yn dychwelyd fel y cariadon anffortunos Carmen a Don José. Mae'r soprano o Gymru, Sarah Jane Davies yn perfformio am y tro cyntaf gyda WNO fel Micaëla, ac mae David Soar yn perfformio ei rôl gyntaf fel Escamillo. Frédéric Chaslin yn cyflwyno ei gwmni am y tro cyntaf ar y podium.

Rwy'n ddiolchgar iawn am y cymorth hanfodol a roddwyd i'r cynhyrchiad hwn ac rwyf yn cael fy nghalonogi ei fod wedi dod o gyfeiriad gr p cefnogwyr mwyaf hirsefydlog a newydd WNO.

Cefnogodd Cyfeillion Opera Cenedlaethol Cymru *Wozzeck* yn nhymor yr hydref y llynedd ac mewn cam digyffelyb, maent hefyd wedi cefnogi *Carmen* heddiw. Mae teyrngarwch ac ymroddiad y Cyfeillion i WNO yn ysbrydoliaeth i ni i gyd ac rydym, fel arfer, yn ei werthfawrogi'n fawr.

Hoffwn achub ar y cyfle hwn i ddiolch o galon i aelodau Gr p Noddwyr WNO sydd newydd gael ei ffurfio. Mae hon yn fenter newydd sy'n uno gr p o fusnesau trwy gefnogi WNO. Gobeithio y gwnewch chi ymuno gyda fi i ddiolch iddynt ac ymweld â thudalen Gr p y Noddwyr ar wefan WNO neu ar gefn y rhaglen hon i adolygu'r rhestr lawn o aelodau.

Mae cynhyrchiad newydd o *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, Mozart ac adfywiad o *Tosca* Puccini yn cwblhau'r triawd Cariad ac Angerdd y tymor hwn – gobeithio y gallwch ddod – maent yn werth eu gweld!

Mwynhewch y perfformiad!



John Fisher

Chief Executive & Artistic Director | Prif Weithredwr a Chyfarwyddwr Artistig

# Carmen



Opera in four acts by Georges Bizet

Text by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy based on a story by Prosper Mérimée

First performance at the Théâtre National de l'Opéra-Comique, Paris on 3 March 1875

First performance by Welsh National Opera of this production at the New Theatre, Cardiff on 15 February 1997

A co-production with Scottish Opera

Sung in French with English surtitles (and Welsh surtitles in Cardiff, Llandudno and Swansea)

Supported by the Friends of WNO and WNO Sponsors' Group

All performances start at 7.15pm unless otherwise stated

Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff	Saturday 27 February 2010 Tuesday 2 March 2010 Thursday 4 March 2010 Saturday 6 March 2010
Venue Cymru, Llandudno	Thursday 11 March 2010 Saturday 13 March 2010
Birmingham Hippodrome	Thursday 18 March 2010 Saturday 20 March 2010
The Mayflower, Southampton	Thursday 25 March 2010 Saturday 27 March 2010
Milton Keynes Theatre	Wednesday 31 March 2010
Theatre Royal Plymouth	Thursday 8 April 2010 Saturday 10 April 2010
Swansea Grand Theatre	7pm on Saturday 17 April 2010
The Bristol Hippodrome	Thursday 22 April 2010 Saturday 24 April 2010

# Cast

Moralès, *corporal* James Robinson-May

Micaëla, *peasant girl* Sarah-Jane Davies

Don José, *corporal* Gwyn Hughes Jones

Zuniga, *lieutenant* Henry Waddington

Carmen, *gypsy* Patricia Bardon

Frasquita, *gypsy* Joanne Boag

Mercédès, *gypsy* Carolyn Dobbin

Lillas Pastia / Guide Jasey Hall

Escamillo, *toreador* David Soar

Le Dancaïre, *smuggler* Philip Lloyd-Evans

Remendado, *smuggler* Huw Llywelyn

## Children:

Emma Bain, Joel Chapman, Stefan Dale, Alaw Medi Davies,  
Ben Hardie, Henry Murphy, Suzanne Murphy, Tia Peachey,  
Rhys Pinder, Guy Roberts, Callum Routley, Sara-Jane Waters

Chorus of cigarette girls, dragoons, gypsies, smugglers etc

Conductor **Frédéric Chaslin** (Until 10 April)  
**Peter Selwyn** (From 17 April)

Directors **Patrice Caurier and**  
**Moshe Leiser**

Revival Director **Caroline Chaney**

Set Designer **Christian Fenouillat**

Costume Designer **Agostino Cavalca**

Lighting Designer **Christophe Forey**

Lighting realised by **Benjamin Naylor**

Fight Director **Terry King**

Chorus Master **Stephen Harris**

Music Staff **James Southall**

Staff Director **Sarah Crisp**

Language Coach **Marianne Vidal**

Stage Manager **Jenni Price**

Production Manager **Richard Norton**

Scenery built and painted by Cardiff Theatrical Services Ltd.

Properties, costumes and wigs by Welsh National Opera

Make up provided by **MAC**

English surtitles by Simon Rees

Welsh surtitles by Mary Jones

The children appear by kind permission of the headteachers of Caerleon Comprehensive School, Caerleon; Moorland Primary School, Cardiff; Radyr Comprehensive, Cardiff; Stanwell School, Penarth; St Teilo's School, Cardiff; Tonypany Community College, Tonypany; Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Plasmawr, Cardiff; Ysgol Mynydd Bychan, Cardiff

The performance lasts approximately 3 hours

There is one interval after Act 2

# Contents

Plot Summary .....	6
Synopsis .....	8
Building a performing tradition: a composer's view of <i>Carmen</i> . . . . . Frédéric Chaslin in conversation with Simon Rees	12
<i>Carmen's Contradictions</i> .....	Max Loppert 16
Don José's Story . . . Extracts from Mérimée's <i>Carmen</i> , Chapter 3	22
Mérimée's Spanish Gypsies .....	30
The Gitana of Seville .....	George Borrow 34
Biographies .....	38
Orchestra and Chorus List .....	48
WNO More Information .....	50

## Introduction

Georges Bizet (1838-1875) set his opéra comique *Carmen* to a libretto by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy based on a novel by Prosper Mérimée, who had travelled in Spain and who based his story on tales he had heard there. Bizet had already written several operas, including the successful *Pearl Fishers* and the less successful *Djamileh*. He wrote *Carmen* for the Opéra-Comique, (where it was premièred on 3 March 1875) and provided it with the traditional spoken dialogue, which is used in this production. Later editors (after Bizet's death a few weeks after the première) supplied recitatives, converting *Carmen* into a grand opera, which is how it is often performed.

## Plot summary

Soldiers arrest the gypsy Carmen for assaulting a fellow-worker at the cigarette factory in Seville. She escapes by enthralling Don José, one of the soldiers guarding her. Don José is imprisoned. Later, at Lillas Pastia's bar, Carmen draws the attention of the bullfighter, Escamillo. When Don José is released, she persuades him to desert the army and join the band of smugglers. Don José, Carmen and the smugglers march through the night, and when they pause to rest, Carmen foretells her own death in the cards. Escamillo follows her, and he and Don José fight. In Seville, Carmen goes to the bullfight to watch her new lover, but Don José confronts her and kills her.

## Cyflwyniad

Gosododd Georges Bizet (1838–1875) ei opéra comique, *Carmen*, ar libreto gan Henri Meilhac a Ludovic Halévy, â'r libreto hwnnw yn ei dro yn seiliedig ar nofel gan Prosper Mérimée, a oedd wedi teithio yn Sbaen ac wedi seilio ei stori ar hanesion a glywsai yno. Eisoës, roedd Bizet wedi ysgrifennu sawl opera, gan gynnwys *Pearl Fishers* a fu'n llwyddiant, a'r opera lai llwyddiannus, *Djamileh*. Ysgrifennwyd *Carmen* ganddo ar gyfer yr Opéra-Comique (lle bu'r perfformiad cyntaf ar 3 Mawrth 1875) a rhoddodd iddi'r ddialog lafar draddodiadol a gaiff ei defnyddio yn y cynhyrchiad hwn. Yn ddiweddarach (ar ôl marw Bizet rai wythnosau wedi'r perfformiad cyntaf) fe wnaeth golygyddion roi adroddganau yn yr opera, gan droi *Carmen* yn opera fawreddog, a dyna sut y caiff ei pherfformio gan amlaf.

## Crynodeb o'r Stori

Mae milwyr yn arestio Carmen y sipsi am ymosod ar gydweithwraig yn y ffatri sigarets yn Sevilla. Mae'n dianc trwy hudo Don José, un o'r milwyr sy'n ei gwarchod. Caiff Don José ei garcharu. Yn nes ymlaen, ym mar Lillas Pastia, mae Carmen yn denu sylw Escamillo, yr ymladdwr teirw. Pan gaiff Don José ei ryddhau, mae hi'n cael perswâd arno i gefnu ar y fyddin ac ymuno â chriw'r smyglwyr. Mae Don José, Carmen a'r smyglwyr yn gorymdeithio drwy'r nos ac wrth iddynt aros i orffwys, mae Carmen yn rhagweld ei marwolaeth hi ei hun yn y cardiau. Daw Escamillo ar ei hôl ac mae yntau a Don José yn ymladd. Yn Sevilla, aiff Carmen i wyllo ei chariad newydd yn ymladd y teirw, ond daw Don José wyneb yn wyneb â hi, ac mae'n ei lladd.

# Synopsis

## Act I

A square in Seville, between a tobacco factory and a military guard-post

Corporal Moralès and other soldiers are watching and commenting on the crowd of passers-by.

Micaëla, a country girl from José's home village, has come in search of him. Micaëla declines Moralès' invitation to wait for him and leaves.

José leads in the guard. Moralès tells José about his visitor.

Lieutenant Zuniga questions José about the girls who work in the tobacco factory. A bell sounds, signalling the break.

The cigarette-girls mock the inconstancy of love. The men look for their favourite, the gypsy Carmen.

Carmen refuses to promise that she will love any of them: love cannot be commanded. Carmen notices José who is ignoring her. When he sees Micaëla approaching, he hides a flower that Carmen threw at him.

Micaëla brings money, a kiss and a letter from his mother. The letter advises him to marry Micaëla.

A fight breaks out in the factory.

Zuniga orders José to find out what has happened. José arrests Carmen and reports that she fought with another woman in the factory and cut the woman's face.

Carmen refuses to say anything and sings insolently. Left with José guarding her she pretends to be a fellow Basque. When that does not work, she tells José that it is clear he is in love with her. Forbidden to speak, she sings that she will go with her new lover to Lillas Pastia's tavern. José agrees to help her escape, in return for her promise of love.

Zuniga returns with the warrant for Carmen's arrest, and orders José to take her away. José has untied her, and she knocks him over and escapes.



## Act 2

### Lillas Pastia's tavern

Carmen, Frasquita and Mercédès are singing a gypsy song. Zuniga attempts to flirt with Carmen. He tells her that José has recently been released, having been demoted and imprisoned for letting her escape. The crowd is heard saluting the bullfighter Escamillo as he arrives. He replies to Zuniga's toast with a vivid depiction of the Toreador's encounter in the bullring. He notices Carmen and suggests that he will wait for her to love him.

Zuniga interrupts to explain that he is leaving but will come back later. Carmen advises him not to.

The bandits, le Dancaïre and le Remendado join the gypsies Carmen, Mercédès and Frasquita and demand that they play their part in a smuggling operation.

Carmen refuses to leave immediately since she is in love. The others are perplexed and then mock her.

As he comes to find Carmen, José can be heard singing a folk-song.

Carmen tells José that she will pay her debt to him, and dance for him alone. The bugles sound, signalling that José must return to barracks. Carmen feels shame that she offered love to a man who then puts duty first. He tries to leave but, stung by her reproaches, stays to explain that he does love her. She calls on him to desert and join her and the other outlaws in freedom. José is determined to leave her but suddenly Zuniga enters and orders José to leave. José refuses and they fight. Carmen calls in le Remendado and le Dancaïre who disarm and humiliate the officer. José is forced to join the bandits.

## Act 3

### In the mountains

The smugglers, with José among them, pause to rest on their journey. Le Dancaïre and le Remendado go off to check that the coast is clear. Carmen and José have been quarrelling and now José asks her for their reconciliation. Carmen tries to tell him that he doesn't belong among her people and she would understand if he left and returned to his mother and his home.

She puts a distance between herself and him, believing that he will bring about her death. José becomes jealous.

Mercédès and Frasquita read their fortunes in the cards. Carmen can only find that her prediction is confirmed: death for herself and José.

Le Dancaïre returns and explains that the way is blocked by the customs: the three gypsies will each take on one of the customs officers.

Micaëla enters with a guide, looking for José. She calls on God to give her the courage to confront Carmen. There is a noise of gunfire, and she hides.

José shoots at and misses an intruder who reveals himself as Escamillo. Without realising whom he is addressing, the toreador explains that he has come to find Carmen, hearing that José has lost her affection. They fight.

The smugglers return and break up the fight. Escamillo invites them all to attend his bullfight in Seville: whoever loves him will be there. José, goaded by jealousy, threatens Carmen once more. Micaëla is discovered in hiding. She has come to remind José of his mother who is waiting in desperation for his return. Carmen also urges him to go back but José swears he will not leave. Micaëla reveals that his mother is on the point of death, longing to give him her pardon. José leaves with Micaëla. Escamillo's voice is heard in the distance.



## Act 4

### Outside the bullring in Seville

A crowd has gathered before the bullfight. Among them are Zuniga, Frasquita and Mercédès.

The procession arrives on its way to the bullring, acclaimed by the crowd. Escamillo and Carmen meet. She tells him that she loves him. The crowd enters the arena. Although Carmen has been warned by Mercédès and Frasquita to beware, she waits for José.

José implores her to come back to him, but she refuses to lie or compromise, and insists their love is over, despite all his threats, pleas and promises. Offstage, the crowd acclaims Escamillo's victories in the ring. José forces Carmen to declare her love for Escamillo. She throws away the ring José has given her. He kills her and gives himself up for arrest.

# Building a performing tradition: a composer's view of *Carmen*

Frédéric Chaslin in conversation with Simon Rees

SR What does the original description of *Carmen* as an 'opéra comique' mean?

FC I find the title 'comique' has more to do with the building for which *Carmen* was first written than with the opera itself. There isn't much humour in *Carmen*, apart from when Carmen teases the officer, or in the byplay between Frasquita, Mercédès, Dancaïro and Remendado. The whole genre called itself 'comique' to please the theatre management, so along with *Carmen* you have other works like *Pélleas et Mélisande* that were also given their premières at the Opéra Comique.

SR As an opéra comique, *Carmen* was written without recitatives, but after Bizet's death these were added. Do you prefer to use the spoken dialogue, as in this production?

FC I like the dialogues because they reduce the damage caused to Bizet's masterpiece by the less-than-inspired recitatives added later by Ernest Guiraud. Some people have called *Carmen* cheap and easy, but every melody is perfection in itself, and when you move to the recitative, you notice the loss of quality. Guiraud's recitatives might work in an opera of lesser quality, but in Bizet's *Carmen* every number is a 'hit', his inspiration was working at such a high level. *Carmen* was written with much greater inspiration even than *Pearl Fishers*, and although Bizet died shortly after completing it, it was complete, and not a fragment. There is no evidence that he wanted recitatives of any kind.

SR What made Bizet cast Carmen as a mezzo-soprano?

FC Carmen has to be a mezzo, according to the conventions of operatic casting, and it has to do with 19<sup>th</sup> century ideas of feminism. When you think of images of strong women in the 19<sup>th</sup> century you might think of the novelist Georges Sand, who dressed as a man, smoked cigars, joined the Freemasons and chose to express herself through what was seen as outrageously masculine behaviour. Such an individual would be shown in opera, with its stereotypical casting, as having a lower voice. Opera is a caricature of the real world, and the threatening, dominant female character

almost always has a mezzo or contralto voice in this convention: I can only think of one exception in a popular opera, and that is the Queen of Night in *The Magic Flute*. Micaëla is a fragile little girl, shy, trembling and scared. Therefore she is cast as a soprano in contrast to Carmen's powerful mezzo. Another great benefit of casting Carmen as a mezzo is that the blending of her voice with that of the tenor Don José gives an unusual effect: usually the lovers in an opera are soprano and tenor, so that this pairing of a lower voice with a higher one gives greater musical tension.

SR Did Bizet try to be accurate in his Spanish musical references?

FC I don't think French composers were accurate in their musical references before the French Exhibition Universelle in 1900, when there were exhibitions of Far Eastern culture which influenced Debussy – look at his use of gamelan-like effects. When Bizet wrote *Pearl Fishers*, set in Ceylon, the village dances are Provençal, Arlésienne, and only one little solo is vaguely oriental, a term that could mean anything from Arabic to Japanese. Nowadays, writing an opera set in Spain, a composer might research tunes from a specific area, but in Bizet's day, although Spain was closer and easy to study than the Orient, he did not do so. The Prelude to Act 4 is the most purely Spanish music in the opera, but the rest, though more accurate in *Carmen* than in *Pearl Fishers*, is hardly ethnomusicography. The feeling that we are in the south comes from Bizet's own origins as a man of Provence.

SR As a conductor, how do you bring out this southern feeling?

FC It's already there in the music: if the orchestra play what is written as best they can, it will have its effect. The choice of tempi is important, and the right amount of rubato, but this is also something that is there in the score. I have my own performing traditions which are not in Bizet's score, and these have to do with changes of tempi. For instance, in the Danse Bohémienne, I build an accelerando from beginning to end. It is one of those melodies that works at every possible tempo. Each time you have a new click of acceleration, you get more excitement from the music. In the Habanera, I also make a couple of tempo changes, taking the basic tempo slower than in the original Cuban dance that Bizet adapted. When the chorus enters, I raise the tempo. Bizet was like his contemporary Massenet, in that he wrote a lot of tempo and dynamic indications into the score. In the 20 years I have been conducting *Carmen*, I have made my own compilation of the tempi I liked. I've built my own tradition.

**SR** Has your experience as a composer affected your interpretation of *Carmen*?

**FC** It is a great help in that it takes me to the core of the score. I can avoid wasting time with details that aren't important. In solving problems of orchestration, or using instruments to get a certain colour, you are quicker as a composer in finding what the original composer had in mind. It gives me the freedom to take decisions about tempo and changes of orchestration (I add a mute to the trumpets in one particularly raucous chord) while at the same time giving me greater respect for the wishes of the composer. In this way one hopes to keep the will of the composer alive.

**SR** Have orchestral instruments changed so much since Bizet's day that we need to take an 'early music' approach to *Carmen*?

**FC** There is not a big difference between today's orchestra and that of Bizet. The major changes in instrument construction, in particular the woodwinds and brass, had already happened by 1875. We have recordings of *Carmen* dating from 30 years or so after Bizet's death, and the sound is much the same as today. In terms of vocal sound there are differences, but these are mainly in the way the words are pronounced. The tempi of performances has not varied as much over the years as those in performances of Verdi, or even more of earlier operas, where there are more choices you can make, and less information in the score about the correct tempi. With Bizet the directions are clear.

**SR** What is the reason for *Carmen*'s phenomenal success, and what is its appeal to the first-time operagoer?

**FC** *Carmen* has all the ingredients of a great opera: intimacy and showiness. Today it would be a Broadway musical, as the music is charming and approachable. As a first opera, it is easier to approach than *Tosca*, and has more spectacle than *La traviata*. You get more for your money! *Turandot*, by contrast, is almost all spectacular, with very few intimate moments. To make a great opera you need a great story, and this is often forgotten by composers these days. For instance, with my librettist P H Fisher, I have chosen *Wuthering Heights* as the subject of my latest opera because it is one of the greatest stories ever. *Carmen* also has one of the greatest stories of them all.



# Carmen's Contradictions

Max Loppert

When in February 1997 Welsh National Opera first showed this evening's production, it caused massive rejoicing among the critics. Contrary to popular belief, opera reviewers enjoy a hit quite as much as the paying public, and there was no doubt that this was a hit. But the particular note of satisfaction sounded in more than one notice reflected the singularity of the achievement: a *Carmen* small in physical scale but wide-open in dramatic horizons and artistically rounded, a *Carmen* whose success was therefore of a particular kind. My own first experience of this latest WNO *Carmen*, three years ago, afforded me with one of the three, perhaps four 'all-through' productions of the opera in my three-and-a-half decades of international opera attendance; and as a result it set me thinking all over again about the exact nature of the opera itself, probably the most popular and loved of all and yet, for all that, always such a risky business to mount.

Of all the operas in the core repertory, indeed, *Carmen* shares with *Don Giovanni* the dubious honour of being the hardest to bring off. Like almost all of the truly revolutionary works in any art form, the ones that come along to change all

the rules, it is a mass of fruitful contradictions. For a start, it is a 'small-house' opera (written for the 1,100-seater Opéra-Comique in Paris, where in 1875 it was first performed) now played more often than not in theatres twice or thrice that size – not to mention all the conference centres, exhibition halls and arenas outdoor and in where the show has been bedecked with the lashings of spectacle (troupes of soldiers in elaborate parade formations, horses, donkeys, flamenco dance troupes) that Bizet and his librettists Meilhac and Halévy would have been astonished to see.

Then, in spite of its Spanish setting, it's a thoroughly French opera, full of Gallic wit, lightness and, even in the darkest moments, a detached attitude to musical and dramatic presentation, which has all too often been subjected either to Italian-operatic barnstorming or else to pseudo-Iberian dramatic posturing. This mirrors something of the central – and again, I would say, fruitful – contradiction between the work's form and its subject matter: an opera commissioned by the Opéra-Comique, a theatre with its own deeply conservative, set-in-stone dramatic traditions and its own formal requisites



(speech mixed with song, arias generally in the form of couplets), was based on a novella (1845), by Prosper Mérimée, that is a masterpiece of innovative neo-realism. But though it was Bizet himself who initially saw the possibility of turning Mérimée's *Carmen* into an opera (and who then insisted on doing so in the face of ever-enlarging opposition), and though at notable points phrases from the novella find their exact counterpart in those of the opera, the tone of the former (coolly distanced in description of savage events and emotions, pointfully economical in every utterance) and that of the latter (brushed – to the point of genius – with Parisian wit and sharpness of diction) are very

different. In my view the libretto is one of the finest of all operatic texts – we know that Bizet more than once forcefully intervened in its shaping, and each time vastly for the better; but this has not stopped several *Carmen* producers in recent decades (e.g. Peter Brook) from attempting a 'return to Mérimée', in the sincere but (I would submit) misguided belief that this provides a way to purge the work of its supposed opéra-comique dilutions and softenings and thereby to expose its supposed 'true nature'. (Today's numerous *Carmen* updatings, some markedly more successful than others, tend to be undertaken with the same goal in mind; likewise those productions that seek, Mérimée-



Mérimée as a young man, from a study by Deveria

minded, to train the spotlight away from Carmen and onto the downfall of Don José.)

And yet another fruitful contradiction: *Carmen* is a work of strictest logic and steadiest unfolding which nevertheless opens in one dramatic mode, comedy, and closes in another, tragedy. Or, to put it another way: *Carmen* opens in the opéra-comique past and closes in the verismo future. But underlying this extraordinary multifacetedness and Chinese-box unexpectedness is, I believe, the source of both the opera's limitless fascination – that which places it among the central, 'necessary', eternally self-renewing works of western

art – and its extraordinary difficulty of realisation in actual performance. In every respect Bizet here depicts a graphically detailed journey from the familiar into the unfamiliar, from the known into the unknown, from bourgeois security into that state of 'alternative existence' without safety nets which the opera's heroine represents – 'la liberté' is what she calls it, and what she lives (and dies) by. During the rehearsal period of the 1875 première, the extent of the opera's revolutionary unknownness became clear (to the chorus, for instance, who for the first time were being asked to act rather than stand in ranked formation with eyes

glued to the conductor). This caused almost the entire Opéra-Comique équipe, from its director Du Locle (one of Verdi's librettists for *Don Carlos*, and previously a Bizet champion who seems to have loathed everything about *Carmen*) downwards, to exhibit signs of naked terror – though superficially it was the work's shocking aspects that provoked this: the immediately-established mood of what the latest French Bizet biographer, Rémy Stricker, calls 'réalisme ludique', playful realism, the uninhibited demeanour of the cigarette factory workers, the gypsy brazenness of the heroine, the violence of the ending, and the sheer improbability of all this taking place in the demure, family-values-imbued Opéra-Comique auditorium. The adjective in common currency was 'scabrous'; only the original *Carmen* and *Don José*, Galli-Marié and Lhérie, held firm alongside the embattled but magnificently undaunted Bizet. The opera's disastrous first night is famous in opera history, as is the root-and-branch incomprehension of the Paris critics in responding to it (this was, alas, one of the less glorious episodes in the annals of operatic criticism). Given the work's subsequent world-wide vindication, one may still be dismayed at its initial rejection

– and the possibility, strong if unproved, that this was the direct cause of the composer's death, at the age of 36, on the day of the 33rd performance. Given the nature of the work, I personally remain entirely unsurprised.

This journey into the unknown happens in the action, which opens upon a minutely detailed, one-day-just-like-another Seville street scene, and which later moves to a deserted mountain pass before returning to a Seville street scene (but now how transformed!). It happens in parallel in the musical language, which uses as its raw material the 'received' Parisian operatic idioms of Bizet's day, adds elements intriguingly personal and original to Bizet, and then compounds it all into something unfailingly new, fresh, and apposite to the unfolding drama. What I mean by the 'received language' is the traces of influences, almost always perfectly digested, that the music displays of Mozart (who was Bizet's household god), Gounod (not just the amply phrased lyricism of Micaëla's aria and duet with José but the sock-it-to-'em march rhythms of Escamillo), and the Boïeldieu-Auber-Ambroise Thomas opéra-comique inheritance (the charming encounters with Moralès and

Micaëla, the wit and verve of the quintet). The personal elements may be said to include Verdian directness of statement – in Paris at the time it was not intellectually fashionable, or even proper, to thrill to the passion of *Rigoletto* and *Il trovatore* in the way Bizet admits to doing. (In, for instance, an 1859 letter in which he praises Verdi for his 'wonderful bursts of passion. His passion is brutal, it is true, but that is better than having no passion at all.' By contrast, he found the later, broader and more international Verdi of *Don Carlos* little to his taste.)

Another personal element is the opera's exoticism, which here means its Iberian tints, vocal and rhythmic. Exoticism was by no means unknown in French music of this period (witness the Styrian solo for Mignon in Thomas' opera of that name);

the originality lies in Bizet's disconcertingly un-obvious approach to it – he unfailingly employs it not solely to suggest 'atmosphere', and beyond that the seductive appeal of Carmen herself, but to insinuate threats to bourgeois morality, the undermining of moral norms, the departure for new worlds. And finally there is the blunt forcefulness of the finale, sometimes cruelly hammered in by rhythmic repetition, in which (according to the Bizet scholar Winton Dean) he 'interpreted the clash of character with an intensity of vision rare in any age and almost unknown among his contemporaries with the exception of Verdi'. Without *Carmen*, Puccini is unimaginable.

Yet what is achieved in sum is the familiar become unfamiliar: an enchanted yet profoundly



unsettling flow of one thing into another, of one musical element superseding and changing the audience's viewpoint of another, and yet of no element being sacrificed, wasted or mislaid in the mixture. Opéra-comique, for instance, is not abandoned as the tone of the drama darkens; in Act 3, as a contrast and follow-on to the rugged minor-key opening, the gypsy female trio of Carmen, Frasquita and Mercédès lead the ensemble 'Quant au douanier c'est notre affaire' in a way that momentarily – and again, for some, disconcertingly – revives a delicious Parisian comic sparkle. (Interestingly, in Francesco Rosi's *Carmen* film of the mid-1980s, serious-minded and distinctive, this number could not be accommodated in the director's chosen style and is the one major excision from the score.) To my mind *Carmen* deals at its core with the creation of a state of 'otherness', of the non-rational, a state which attracts and then destroys the single character in the opera least well suited to its pursuit (which is what makes this an endlessly modern opera, one which Shakespeare-like appeals to philosophers as well as groundlings). And Bizet's most startling achievement is to draw this 'otherness', this operatic terra incognita, directly

out of the musical terra firma in which the work seems to start.

This, then, is the opera that everyone thinks they know backwards but that contains at its heart one of the medium's most profound expressions of the unknowable, of mystery in its strictest sense. This, therefore, is quintessentially my idea of fruitful contradiction in *Carmen* – and also the basic reason why in my view it is so damnably resistant to complete realisation in the theatre. The graphic vividness of Bizet's scene-setting, the sharp-pointed yet laconic brilliance of his orchestral writing provide a powerful temptation to enlargement of the mise-en-scène, to aggrandisement of the scale of passer-by activity in the opening, the show-stoppers of Act 2, the craggy chasm of Act 3; yet immediately the danger, to which so many 'big house' *Carmens* fall prey, becomes that of distracting the audience from the exhilarating and terrifying journey – philosophical, moral and spiritual – on which the opera is taking them. In *Carmen*, for this reason, small is more than usually beautiful.

Max Loppert © 2000

# Don José's Story

## Extracts from Mérimée's *Carmen*, Chapter 3

I was born (he said) at Elizondo, in the valley of Baztan. I am called Don José Lizarrabengoa... I am Basque and of old Christian stock. I take the title 'Don' by right: if I were in Elizondo, I would show you my family tree on a piece of parchment. I was intended for the church, but I profited little from the studies I was made to do. I was too fond of playing pelota; it was to be my downfall. When we Navarros play pelota, we forget everything else. One day when I had won a game, a boy from the Alava picked a quarrel with me; we took out our *maquillas*<sup>1</sup>, and I was the winner once more. But I was obliged to leave the country.

I met up with some dragoons and enlisted in the Almanza cavalry regiment. The men from our mountains get on quick in the army. I was soon a corporal, with the promise of being promoted quartermaster. Then, to my misfortune, I was sent to guard the tobacco factory in Seville... When they are on duty, Spaniards play cards or go to sleep; like a true Navarro, I always tried to occupy myself. I was making a chain out of brass wire to hold my firing-pin. Suddenly my comrades said: 'There's the bell ringing; the girls will be going back to work.'

...While the others went to watch, I stayed on my bench near the door. I was young then, and I didn't think girls were pretty unless they had blue skirts and plaits falling to their shoulders.<sup>2</sup> What's more, Andalusian girls scared me: I wasn't used to their ways. They were always jeering and never talked a word of sense. I was getting on with my chain when I heard some townspeople say: 'There's the little gypsy.' I looked up and saw her. It was a Friday and I shall never forget it. I saw this Carmen...

She had on a very short red skirt, which revealed white silk stockings with more than one hole in them. Her tiny red morocco shoes were tied with flame-coloured ribbons. She wore her mantilla down to show off her shoulders and a large bouquet of acacia-blossom in the opening of her blouse. She had another acacia-flower in the corner of her mouth, and she walked down the street wiggling her hips like some filly from a stable in Cordoba. Where I come from, everybody would have had to cross themselves at the sight of a woman dressed like that. In Seville the men all made some gallant remark about her body, and she replied to each one of them with a sideways glance, hand on hip,

brazenly like the true gypsy she was. At first she held no charm for me and I went back to my work. She, however, in the manner of women and cats who do not come when they are called but only when they are not called, stopped in front of me and spoke:

'My friend,' she said in the Andalusian way, 'will you give me your chain for the keys of my strong-box?'

'It's to hold my firing-pin,' I replied.

'Your firing-pin!' she cried, laughing. 'Ah, the señor is making lace. That's why he needs pins!'

Everyone around us began to laugh, and I felt myself blushing and unable to think of anything to reply.

'Then, my heart,' she continued, 'make me seven ells of black lace for a mantilla, pinner-up of my soul.'

And taking the acacia flower from her mouth, she flicked it at



me with a movement of her thumb and it struck me right between the eyes. Señor, it was like a bullet hitting me....I didn't know where to put myself. I stood there as stiff as a board. When she'd gone off into the factory, I saw that the acacia had fallen on the ground between my feet. I don't know what came over me but, without my comrades noticing, I picked up the flower and hid it carefully in my vest. That was my first big mistake!

(After Carmen is arrested following a brawl in the tobacco factory, she persuades José to let her escape as he is leading her to prison. For this offence, he is put in jail himself and demoted. Following his release, he makes an assignation with Carmen in the house of an old gypsy woman.)

The moment we were alone, she began to dance and to laugh like a madwoman, singing:  
'You are my rom, I am your romi.'<sup>3</sup>

I was standing in the middle of the room, my arms full of everything she had bought, not knowing where to put things down. She hurled the lot on the floor and flung herself round my neck, saying:

'I pay my debts, I pay my debts! That's the law of the Calli.'

Ah, señor. That day, that day! When I think back to it, I forget tomorrow.

...We spent the whole day together, eating, drinking, and other things. When she had eaten some of the sweets like a six-year-old child, she stuffed handfuls of them into the old woman's water-jar. 'It'll make water-ice,' she said. She smashed yermas by hurling them against the wall,' so the flies will leave us in peace.' She got up to every kind of turn or trick. I said that I wanted to see her dance, but where could we find castanets? At once she took the old woman's only plate, broke it in pieces, and there she was dancing the romalis, clacking the pieces of earthenware together as well as if she had castanets of ebony or ivory. Life with that girl was not dull, I can tell you. Evening came, and I heard our drums beating retreat.

'I have to go back to barracks for roll-call,' I told her.

'To barracks?' she said scornfully; 'Are you then some negro slave, being led around by a ring through your nose? You act like a canary as well as look like one.'<sup>4</sup> Go on then, you chicken.' I stayed, resigning myself to being put in the guardroom. In the morning she spoke first about our parting.



'Listen, Joselito,' she said, 'have I paid you? By our laws I owed you nothing as you're a payllo; but you are handsome, and you've pleased me. We are quits. Good day.'

I asked her when I would see her again.

'When you are less foolish,' she replied, laughing.

Then, in a more serious tone: 'Do you know, my boy, that I think I love you a little. But it can't last. Dog and wolf do not make a good home together for long. Perhaps, if you adopted the law of Egypt, I should like to become your romi. But this is being stupid: that cannot be. Bah! My child, believe me, you're well rid of me. You've

met the devil, yes, the devil; he's not always black and he hasn't wrung your neck. I'm dressed in wool, but I'm no sheep.<sup>5</sup> Go and light a candle to your majari;<sup>6</sup> she's earned it. So once more farewell. Don't think any more about Carmencita, or she'll marry you off to a widow with a wooden leg.'

[But more stormy assignations with Carmen follow. At one of them, José, in a fit of jealousy, kills one of the officers who has been paying court to Carmen.]

'My child,' Carmen said to me, 'you must do something. Now that the king is giving you neither rice nor dried cod<sup>7</sup> any longer, you must think how to

earn your living. You are too stupid to be a pick-pocket, but you're agile and strong; if you've the heart for it, get away to the coast and become a smuggler. Didn't I promise to get you hanged? That's better than being shot. Besides, if you know how to go about it, you'll live like a prince so long as the Minones<sup>8</sup> and the coastguards don't get their hands on your collar.'

It was in this charming manner that this devil of a girl outlined the new career for which she intended me - to tell the truth, the only one left to me now that I had incurred the death penalty. Need I tell you, señor, that she persuaded me without much trouble? I thought this risky outlaw's life would bind me to her more closely. From now on I thought her love for me was sure. I'd often heard about those smugglers who roamed Andalusia, mounted on good horses, pistol in hand, with a mistress sharing their saddle. I already saw myself trotting up hill and down dale with the pretty gypsy girl behind me. When I spoke to her about this, she split her sides laughing, and told me there was nothing so fine as a night spent in camp when each rom slept with his romi in their little tent - a blanket stretched over three hoops. 'If I always stay in the mountains,' I said to her, 'I can be

sure of you! Up there, there'll be no lieutenant to share you with.'

'Ah, you're jealous,' she replied. 'So much the worse for you. How can you be so stupid? Don't you see that I love you, because I've never asked you for money?'

When she spoke like that, I wanted to strangle her.

[José's dreams are soon shattered and Carmen's long absences on 'gypsy business' fuel his jealousy.]

At the time that I had been in hiding in Granada, there were bullfights that Carmen went to. On her return, she spoke a great deal about a very talented picador called Lucas. She knew the name of his horse and the cost of his embroidered tunic. I didn't take all this in. Juanito, my one remaining comrade, told me several days later that he had seen Carmen with Lucas at a Zucatin merchant's house. I started to get worried. I asked Carmen how and why she had got to know the picador.

'He's a fellow,' she said, 'with whom one can do business....we must have his money, or, since he's a good rider and a brave man, we could have him in our band. Several of our men are dead, you need to replace them. Take him with you.'

'I want nothing to do with his money or with him,' I replied, 'and I forbid you to speak of him.'

'Take care,' she said to me, 'When I'm forbidden to do something, it soon gets done!'

[Later, Carmen makes another visit to Cordoba.]

...A peasant told me there was a bullfight in Cordoba. Hearing this, my blood boiled and I set off for the bullring. I had Lucas pointed out to me and I spied Carmen on a bench by the barrier. One minute was enough to confirm my suspicions. Lucas, with the first bull, acted the gallant as I had expected. He snatched the cockade<sup>9</sup> from the bull and brought it to Carmen, who straightaway pinned it in her hair. The bull took it upon

himself to avenge me. Lucas was up-ended: his horse fell on him, the bull fell on them both. I looked for Carmen but she was no longer in her seat.

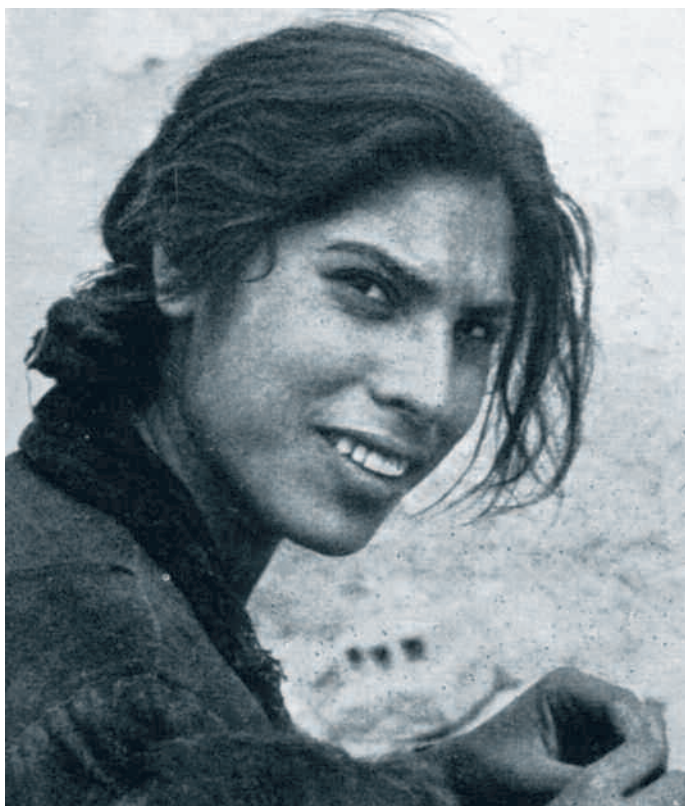
[José manages to catch up with Carmen.]

'Listen, I'll forget everything. I won't talk about it at all. But swear to me one thing: that you'll follow me to America and live quietly there.'

'No,' she said sulkily, 'I won't go to America. I'm fine here.'

'That's because you're near Lucas; but think about it – if he recovers, he'll never be the same man again. Yet why am I bothering about him? I'm tired of killing all your lovers: it's you I should kill!'





She stared at me with her wild look and said:

'I have always thought that you would kill me. The first time I saw you, I had just met a priest at the door of my house; and tonight, leaving Cordoba, didn't you see anything? A hare crossed the road between your horse's feet. It's decreed.'

'Carmencita,' I demanded, 'don't you love me any more?'

[José leaves Carmen briefly to try to persuade a priest to say Mass for 'a soul that may soon be before its Maker'. But he cannot bring himself to confess before the service and runs back to Carmen.]

While I was away, she had unpicked the hem of her dress to pull out some lead. Now she was standing in front of a table looking into a pot full of water into which she had just thrown

the molten lead. She was so intent on her magic that at first she did not notice my return. From time to time she picked up a piece of the lead and with a sad expression pointed it in all directions; then she sang one of those magic songs with which the gypsies invoke Maria Padilla,<sup>10</sup> the mistress of Don Pedro, who was, it is said, the bari Crallisa', or the great queen of the gypsies...

'You want to kill me, I can plainly see that,' she said. 'It is decreed, but you will not make me yield...I could just as well tell you some lie, but I do not wish to take the trouble. All is finished between us. As my rom, you have the right to kill your romi, but Carmen will always be free. Calli she was born, Calli she will die.'

...I threw myself at her feet, I took her hands, I moistened them with my tears. I recalled to her all the happy moments we had spent together. I offered to remain a bandit to please her. Everything, señor, everything. I offered her everything, if only she would love me again! She said to me: 'To love you again is impossible. I do not wish to live with you.'

Rage seized me, I drew my knife. I wanted her to be afraid and to beg for mercy, but this woman was a demon.

'For the last time,' I cried, 'will you stay with me?'

'No, no, no,' she said, stamping her foot. And from her finger she pulled a ring that I had given her and threw it into the bushes.

I stabbed her twice...She fell at the second blow without a sound. It's as if I can still see her big black eyes staring at me; then they turned cloudy and closed over.

Translation © Mike Ashman 1983

#### Mérimée's footnotes

- 1 Maquillas - iron staves
- 2 Everyday costume of the peasants from Navarre and other Basque provinces.
- 3 Rom - husband. Romi - wife.
- 4 Spanish soldiers wore yellow uniforms.
- 5 Me dicas vriarda de jorpoi, bus ne sino braco - I may wear wool, but I am no sheep. Gypsy proverb.
- 6 Majari - Mary, the Mother of Christ.
- 7 Merliza - Spanish army rations.
- 8 Minones - free corps, mercenaries.
- 9 La cocarda, la divisa - knot of ribbons in the colours of the bull's owner. The knot was stuck into the bull's shoulder and it was regarded as the height of gallantry to snatch it from the animal and present it to a lady.
- 10 Maria Padilla was accused of bewitching the king Don Pedro. A popular tale relates how she presented his wife, the Bourbon Queen, Blanche, with a belt in the form of a golden snake. This caused the king such repugnance that he rejected the queen from that time on.

# Mérimée's Spanish Gypsies

Spain is one of those countries where large numbers of those nomads who are scattered throughout Europe, and are known by such names as Gypsies, Bohemiens, Gitanos and Zigeuner, may still be found today. Most of them inhabit, or rather roam, the provinces of the south and east – Andalusia, Extramadura, and the kingdom of Murcia. A fair number of them live in Catalonia, often crossing over into France, where they can be seen at any of our southern fairs. Usually the men make a living as horse dealers, horse doctors, or mule clippers; they supplement this work by occupations such as repairing saucepans and copper utensils, to say nothing of smuggling and other illicit activities. The women tell fortunes, beg, and deal in all sorts of drugs, innocuous and otherwise.

The physical characteristics of the race are easier to recognise than to describe, yet once you have seen one, you could spot a Gypsy in a crowd of a thousand faces. It is above all in the cast and expression of their features that they differ from the indigenous peoples of the same country. Their complexion is very swarthy, always darker than that of the people among whom they live: hence the name *Calé*, blacks, by which they often refer to themselves. Their eyes have a pronounced slant and are almond-shaped, very dark, and fringed with long thick eyelashes. Their expression can best be compared to that of a wild beast. It expresses both boldness and timidity, and in this respect their eyes faithfully reflect the character of the people, wily, daring, but, like Panurge, 'naturally fearful of blows.'



For the most part the men are muscular, slim, and lithe; I cannot recall ever having seen one who was running to fat. In Germany the Gypsy girls are often very pretty, but beauty is a truly rare attribute among the gitanas of Spain. While they are still very young, their ugliness may not be unattractive; but once they have borne children they become positively repulsive. The filthiness of both sexes has to be seen to be believed. Picture yourself the most unkempt, the greasiest, and the dustiest mane imaginable, and you will still find it hard to conceive of the state of a Gypsy matron's hair unless you have seen the reality. In some of the large towns in Andalusia a few of the girls are rather more attractive than the rest, and take greater care of their personal appearance. Girls of this kind earn money by performing dances very similar to those it is forbidden to perform in public at our Shrovetide carnivals.

Mr Borrow, an English missionary and the author of two extremely interesting works on the Spanish Gypsies, whom he was sent by the Bible Society to convert, assures us that it is unheard of for a Gypsy woman to show any partiality towards a man not of her race. It seems to me that his praise for their

chastity is somewhat exaggerated. In the first place, what Ovid wrote of the ugly girl can also be said of most Gypsy women: *Casta quam nemo rogavit* [any girl is chaste if she's never been asked]. As for the pretty ones, they are like all Spanish women – difficult to please when it comes to choosing a lover. Not only must he be attractive to them; he must also be worthy of them...

One remarkable feature of the Gypsy character is their indifference to religion. Not that they are unbelievers or sceptics: they have never professed atheism. On the contrary, they adopt the religion of the country in which they happen to find themselves; but they change it whenever they change their homeland. The superstitions which, among primitive peoples, replace religious feelings are equally alien to them. How, indeed, could superstition exist among a people used to living by the credulity of others?...

I have said that most Gypsy women engage in fortune-telling. They make an excellent job of it. But their major source of income is in the sale of charms and love philtres. Not only do they sell toads' feet to secure inconstant hearts, and powdered lodestone that will



make even the most obdurate fall in love; but, if need be, they will utter powerful spells to oblige the Devil to come to their aid....

Despite their poverty and the feeling of antipathy they inspire, Gypsies are held in some regard by uneducated folk, a fact of which they are extremely proud. They regard

themselves as a race endowed with superior intelligence, and cordially despise the nation that gives them hospitality....

The history of the Gypsies is still a matter for conjecture. It is known that the first few isolated bands appeared in eastern Europe towards the beginning of the 15th century.

But no one can say where they came from or why they came to Europe; and, strangest of all, no one knows how it came about that their numbers soon increased so prodigiously in several countries so far apart. The Gypsies themselves have preserved no tradition as to their origin, and although most of them talk of Egypt as their original homeland, they are merely repeating an old tale that others have told about them since time immemorial.

Most of the orientalist who have studied the language of the Gypsies believe that they originally came from India. It does indeed seem that a number of roots and many of the grammatical forms of Romany can also be found in the languages derived from Sanscrit. Understandably, the Gypsies have adopted many foreign words in the course of their long wanderings.... Today there are almost as many different Romany dialects as there are separate bands of their race. Everywhere they speak the language of their adopted country in preference to their own, which they seldom use except in order to communicate freely in front of strangers. If one compares the dialect of the German Gypsies with that of their Spanish kinsmen, who for centuries have been cut off from contact with

those in Germany, one can identify a very large number of words common to both. But everywhere, though to varying extents, the original language has undergone significant changes through contact with the more developed languages these nomads have been obliged to use – German in the one case, and Spanish in the other, have so modified the basic Romany that it would be impossible for a Gypsy from the Black Forest to have a conversation with one of his brothers from Andalusia, although they would only need to exchange a few sentences to recognise that they were both speaking a dialect of the same language....

[Mérimée gives more information about vocabulary, numerals and Gypsy slang.]

This should be more than sufficient to give readers of *Carmen* an idea of my studies in the field of Romany. I shall finish with an appropriate proverb: En retudi panda nasti abela macha. A closed mouth, no fly can enter.

Prosper Mérimée, *Carmen*, chapter 4 (added to the 1847 edition), translated by Nicholas Jotcham. Reprinted from *The World's Classics, Carmen and Other Stories* by kind permission of the publishers, Oxford University Press.

# The Gitana of Seville

George Borrow

A very singular kind of women are the Gitanas, far more remarkable in most points than their husbands, in whose pursuits of low cheating and petty robbery there is little capable of exciting much interest; but if there be one being in the world who, more than another, deserves the title of sorceress (and where do you find a word of greater romance and more thrilling interest?), it is the Gypsy female in the prime and vigour of her age and ripeness of her understanding - the Gypsy wife, the mother of two or three children. Mention to me a point of devilry with which that woman is not acquainted. She can at any time, when it suits her, show herself as expert a jockey as her husband, and he appears to advantage in no other character, and is only eloquent when descanting on the merits of some particular animal; but she can do much more: she is a prophetess, though she believes not in prophesy; she is a physician, though she will not taste her own philtres; she is a procuress, though she is not to be procured; she is a singer of obscene songs, though she will suffer no obscene hand to touch her; and though no one is more tenacious of the little she possesses, she is a cutpurse and a shoplifter wherever opportunity shall offer.

In all times, since we have known anything of these women, they have been addicted to and famous for fortune-telling: indeed, it is their only ostensible means of livelihood, though they have various others which they pursue more secretly. Where and how they first learned the practice we know not; they may have brought it with them from the East, or they may have adopted it, which is less likely, after their arrival in Europe. Chiromancy, from the most remote periods, has been practised in all countries. Neither do we know, whether in this practice they were ever guided by fixed and certain rules; the probability, however, is, that they were not, and that they never followed it but as a means of fraud and robbery; certainly, amongst all the professors of this art that ever existed, no people are more adapted by nature to turn it to account than these females, call them by whatever name you will, Gitanas, Ziganas, Gypsies, or Bohemians; their forms, their features, the expression of their countenances are ever wild and Sibylline, frequently beautiful, but never vulgar. Observe, for example, the Gitana, even her of Seville... She is of the middle stature, neither strongly nor slightly

built, and yet her every movement denotes agility and vigour. As she stands erect before you, she appears like a falcon about to soar, and you are almost tempted to believe that the power of volition is hers, and were you to stretch forth your hand to seize her, she would spring above the rooftops like a bird. Her face is oval, and her features are regular but somewhat hard and coarse, for she was born amongst rocks in a thicket, and she has been wind-beaten and sun-scorched for many a year, even like her parents before her; there is many a speck upon her cheek, and perhaps a scar, but no dimples of love; and her brow is wrinkled over, though she is yet young. Her complexion is more than dark, for it is almost that of a mulatto; and her hair, which hangs in long locks on either side of her face, is black as coal, and coarse as the tail of a horse, from which it seems to have been gathered.

There is no female eye in Seville can support the glance of hers, – so fierce and penetrating, and yet so artful and sly, is the expression of their dark orbs; her mouth is fine and almost delicate, and there is not a queen on the proudest throne between Madrid and Moscow who might not and would not envy the white and even rows of teeth which adorn it, which

seem not of pearl but of the purest elephant's bone of Multan....Huge rings of false gold dangle from wide slits in the lobes of her ears; her nether garments are rags, and her feet are encased in hempen sandals. Such is the wandering Gitana, such is the witch-wife of Multan, who has come to spae the fortune of the Sevillian countess and her daughters.

It is still more difficult to say what is the peculiar dress of the Gitanas; they wear not the large red cloaks and immense bonnets of coarse beaver which distinguish their sisters in England; they have no other headgear than a handkerchief, which is occasionally resorted to as a defence against the severity of the weather; their hair is sometimes confined by a comb, but more frequently is permitted to stray dishevelled down their shoulders; they are fond of large ear-rings, whether of gold, silver, or metal, resembling in this respect the poissardes of France. There is little to distinguish them from the Spanish women save the absence of the mantilla, which they never carry. Females of fashion not unfrequently take pleasure in dressing à la Gitana, as it is called; but this female Gypsy fashion, like that of the men, is more properly the fashion of Andalusia, the principal characteristic of which

is the saya, which is exceedingly short, with many rows of flounces...

The following passages are extracted from a Spanish work, [Historia de los Gitanos, by J. M -, published at Barcelona in the year 1832] and cannot be out of place here, as they relate to those matters to which we have devoted this chapter.

...The Gitanos have an olive complexion and very marked physiognomy; their cheeks are prominent, their lips thick, their eyes vivid and black; their hair is long, black and coarse, and their teeth very white. The general expression of their physiognomy is a compound of pride, slavishness, and cunning. They are, for the most part, of good stature, well formed, and support with facility fatigue and every kind of hardship. When they discuss any matter, or speak among themselves, whether in Catalan, in Castilian, or in Germania, which is their own peculiar jargon, they always make use of much gesticulation, which contributes to give to their conversation and to the vivacity of their physiognomy a certain expression, still more penetrating and characteristic....

'The Gitana is distinguished by the same complexion, and

almost the same features. In her frame she is as well formed, and as flexible as the Gitano.

Condemned to suffer the same privations and wants, her countenance, when her interest does not oblige her to dissemble her feelings, presents the same aspect of melancholy, and shows besides, with more energy, the rancorous passions of which the female heart is susceptible. Free in her actions, her carriage, and her pursuits, she speaks, vociferates, and makes more gestures than the Gitano, and, in imitation of him, her arms are in continual motion, to give more expression to the imagery with which she accompanies her discourse; her whole body contributes to her gesture, and to increase its force; endeavouring by these means to sharpen the effect of language in itself insufficient; and her vivid and disordered imagination is displayed in her appearance and attitude.

'When she turns her hand to any species of labour, her hurried action, the disorder of her hair, which is scarcely subjected by a little comb, and her propensity to irritation, show how little she loves toil, and her disgust for any continued occupation.

'In her disputes, the air of menace and high passion, the

flow of words, and the facility with which she provokes and despises danger, indicate manners half barbarous, and ignorance of other means of defence. Finally, both in males and females, their physical constitution, colour, agility, and flexibility, reveal to us a caste sprung from a burning clime, and devoted to all those exercises which contribute to evolve bodily vigour, and certain mental faculties....

'The dress of the Gitanas is very varied: the young girls, or those who are in tolerably easy circumstances, wear a black bodice laced up with a string, and adjusted to their figures, and contrasting with the scarlet-coloured saya, which only covers a part of the leg; their shoes are cut very low, and are adorned with little buckles of silver; the breast, and the upper part of the bodice, are covered either with a white

handkerchief, or one of some vivid colour; and on the head is worn another handkerchief, tied beneath the chin, one of the ends of which falls on the shoulder, in the manner of a hood. When the cold or the heat permit, the Gitana removes the hood, without untying the knots, and exhibits her long and shining tresses restrained by a comb. The old women, and the very poor, dress in the same manner, save that their habiliments are more coarse and the colours less in harmony. Amongst them misery appears beneath the most revolting aspect; whilst the poorest Gitano preserves a certain deportment which would make his aspect supportable, if his unquiet and ferocious glance did not inspire us with aversion.'

George Borrow, *The Zincali, an account of the Gypsies of Spain*.





Frédéric Chaslin

## Frédéric Chaslin Conductor (Until 10 April)

Frédéric Chaslin was born in Paris and studied at Paris Conservatoire and Salzburg Mozarteum. In 1989 he became assistant to Daniel Barenboim in Bayreuth and Paris, and in 1991 he was Pierre Boulez's assistant at the Ensemble Intercontemporain. In the same period he became Music Director of the Opera in Rouen. His operatic and symphonic career has taken him to the biggest houses and festivals. He has conducted more than 110 performances at Vienna State Opera. He has been a regular guest at the Metropolitan Opera, New York since 2002; Munich State Opera since 2003; Berlin Deutsche Oper since 1997. His operatic repertoire covers more than 120 works in French, Italian, German, Russian and English. His Italian career

started in 1994 at La Fenice with *Les contes d'Hoffmann* followed by *La Sonnambula* and *La Juive*. He has also conducted in Genova, Parma, Rome, Milan and Trieste. Since 2004 he has been a regular guest of the Orchestra della Toscana in Firenze, performing as conductor and solo pianist (Beethoven *5th Piano Concerto*, January 2009). He will make his La Scala debut in October 2010 with a symphonic concert as well as his Bologna Teatro Comunale debut in April 2010. Frederic is also a composer and has already written five operas. The latest one, *Wuthering Heights* is critically acclaimed and has been recorded in Valencia with the Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus and international soloists. He published a book, *Music in Every Sense*, about the difficult communication of modern music with the contemporary audience.



Peter Selwyn

## Peter Selwyn Conductor (From 17 April)

Born in London, Peter Selwyn read Modern Languages at Cambridge then studied piano with Geoffrey Pratley and Michael Dussek at Royal Academy of Music, and conducting with David Parry. In the UK he has worked on the music staff of both the Royal Opera House and ENO. He is co-founder and Artistic Director of the Internationales Kammermusik Festival Nürnberg, for whom he has conducted *The Rape of Lucretia*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *Noye's Fludde*, *Dido and Aeneas*, *The Soldier's Tale* and the première of *das babylonxperiment* by Matthew King. He is also a Professor at the Royal College of Music. He spent six years in Germany where he worked as Kapellmeister and Head of Music at Staatstheater Nürnberg, conducting a wide repertoire from Gluck and Mozart to Verdi and Puccini. During his



Patrice Caurier



Moshe Leiser



Caroline Chaney

time there he worked for three seasons as musical assistant at the Bayreuth Festival and as guest at the Hamburg State Opera. Other opera conducting highlights include *Romeo et Juliette* (Opera North); *Jenůfa*, *La Cenerentola* (ETO); *Hänsel und Gretel* (Opera Holland Park); *A Little Night Music* (Stadttheater Fürth); *Madama Butterfly*, *Die Zauberflöte* (European Chamber Opera); *Don Giovanni* (Pimlico Opera); world premières including Jonathan Dove's *Hear Our Voice* (London; Nürnberg; Prague State Opera); operas by Alec Roth, David Knotts and Todd Macneal for ENO's Baylis Programme (London; Australia). Future plans include Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Nürnberg); première of *Schau nicht zurück*, *Orfeo* (Internationale Gluck Festspiele); a nationwide tour of Scott Joplin's *Treemonisha* (Pegasus Opera).

## Patrice Caurier and Moshe Leiser Directors

Patrice Caurier (born in Paris) and Moshe Leiser (born in Antwerp) met in 1982 and decided to work together as opera directors. Their first work was Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Opéra de Lyon). Since then, they have staged more than 60 opera productions in various theatres around the world. Productions include *Fidelio*, *Leonore*, *Orpheus and Eurydice*, *Iphigénie en Tauride*, *Carmen*, *Mazepa* (TMA Achievement in Opera award winner), *La traviata* (Welsh National Opera); *Werther*, *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Iphigénie en Tauride*, *La traviata*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Mahagonny* (Opéra de Lausanne); *Dialogues des Carmélites*, *L'enfant et les sortilèges*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Ariane et Barbe-bleue*, *Les Fiançailles au Couvent* (Opéra de Lyon); *Rusalka*, *Salome*, *Iphigénie en Tauride*,

*L'incoronazione di Poppea*, *Jenůfa* (Spoleto Festival USA); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Opera North); *La belle Hélène*, *Carmen* (Scottish Opera); a cycle of Gluck operas (Opéra du Rhin); *Wozzeck*, *Hamlet*, *Pelléas et Mélisande*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, *Don Carlo* (Grand Théâtre de Genève); *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, *Jenůfa* (New Israeli Opera); *Les Troyens*, *Benvenuto Cellini* (Berlioz Festival); *Fidelio*, *Armide*, *La clemenza di Tito* (Théâtre des Champs-Élysées); *La Cenerentola*, *Il turco in Italia*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Hänsel und Gretel*, *Madama Butterfly* (ROH); *Eugene Onegin* (Kirov Opera, St Petersburg; Théâtre du Châtelet); *Madama Butterfly*, *Hamlet* (Gran Teatro del Liceu).

## Caroline Chaney Revival Director

Born in Manchester, Caroline has worked as a staff director for WNO since 1991 and has assisted on over 35



Christian Fenouillat

productions. During that time she has directed *La bohème* six times for the national tour and for the Hong Kong Arts Festival, *Madam Butterfly*, *The Magic Flute*, *Eugene Onegin* and two different productions of *The Marriage of Figaro*. She has also collaborated on movement with director Mike Ashman on *Pag and Cav* for Scottish Opera Go Round and Walton's *Facade* for the St Donat's Festival. Her career has included stage management, puppetry, acting, floor management for the BBC, and company management for WNO and Glyndebourne.

### Christian Fenouillat Set Designer

Studied architecture in Grenoble and began working as a stage designer in 1975. His opera designs include *Fidelio*, *Carmen*, *Orphée et Eurydice*, *La traviata*, *The Merry Widow* and *Mazepa* for WNO; *Armide* and *La clemenza di Tito* at the

Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris; *Wozzeck*, Thomas' *Hamlet*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Das Rhinegold*, *Die Valkyrie*, *Siegfried*, *Didon et Enée*, *Götterdämmerung*, *Don Carlo* and *Pelléas et Mélisande* for Opéra de Genève; *Mahagonny*, *Le Nez* and *La traviata* for Opéra de Lausanne; *Jenůfa* for the Spoleto Festival USA; *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue* and *Roméo et Juliette* for Opéra de Lyon; *Hamlet* for Liceu; *Lucia di Lammermoor* for Opéra de Lyon and Chicago; *Simon Boccanegra* for Opéra de Nancy; *La Cenerentola* and *Madame Butterfly* for the Royal Opera House; *Il barbiere di Siviglia* for Théâtre de l'Odéon, Lyon and *Eugene Onegin* at the Mariinsky Opera and Châtelet Paris. Other credits have included an award winning production of *Pelléas et Mélisande* at the Théâtre National de Bruxelles; *La chair empoisonnée* at the Théâtre de la Ville, Paris; and plays by Lorca, Pirandello, Strindberg, Bond and Synge.



Agostino Cavalca

### Agostino Cavalca Costume Designer

Born Genoa and studied there at the Accademia delle Belle Arti. Opera designs with Moshe Leiser and Patrice Caurier include *Fidelio*, *Carmen*, *La traviata*, *The Merry Widow* and *Mazepa* for WNO; *La belle Hélène* for Scottish Opera; *La clemenza di Tito*, *Fidelio* and *Leonore* for the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées; *Mahagonny* and *Leonore* for the Théâtre Municipal de Lausanne; *Hamlet*, *Les fiançailles au couvent*; *Der Rosenkavalier* and *Das Rhinegold* for the Grand Théâtre de Genève; *Ariane et Barbe-bleue* for Opéra de Lyon. Other projects include *The Threepenny Opera* for the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord in Paris and Mozart's *Die Schuldigkeit des ersten Gebots*, Weber's *Euryanthe*; *Le Comte Ory* for Aix-en-Provence; *Hamlet* for Liceu; *Lucia di Lammermoor* for Opéra de Lyon and Chicago and *Pelléas et Mélisande* in Geneva.



Christophe Forey

## Christophe Forey Lighting Designer

Christophe Forey has designed lighting for a wide range of dance, opera and theatre productions. With Moshe Leiser and Patrice Caurier he has designed *Carmen*, *Fidelio*, *Orpheus and Eurydice*, *Leonore*, *La traviata*, *The Merry Widow* and *Mazepa* for WNO; *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Pelléas et Mélisande*, *Der Ring des Nibelungen* and *Don Carlo* at Geneva; *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*, *Leonore* and *The Nose* at Lausanne; *Wozzeck* and *Jenůfa* at Spoleto Festival; *Ariane et Barbe-bleue* and *Lucia de Lammermoor* at Lyons Opera; *Hamlet*, *La Cenerentola* and *Madama Butterfly* at the Royal Opera House. He has also worked with Günther Krämer (*Ariadne auf Naxos*); Lucinda Childs (*Orfeo* and *The Miraculous Mandarin* by Bartok); Silviu Purcarete (*Parsifal* at Scottish Opera and WNO); Bruno Boëglin (Bernard-Marie Koltès' *Roberto Zucco* in Paris and on tour).



Patricia Bardon

## Terry King Fight Director

Has worked extensively as a fight arranger in theatre, television and opera. Work includes *Otello*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Don Giovanni*, *Carmen*, *Wozzeck*, *Mazepa* and *Tristan and Isolde* for WNO; *Fool for Love*, *Murderers*, *King Lear*, *The Sea* for the National Theatre; *Hamlet*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Pericles*, *Richard III*, *Julius Caesar*, *Henry V*, *Coriolanus*, *Romeo and Juliet* for RSC; *Edmund*, *Oleanna*, *The Recruiting Officer* for the Royal Court; *Porgy and Bess* for Glyndebourne Opera and ROH; *Carmen* and *Wozzeck* for ENO. TV work includes *A Kind of Innocence*, *Fell Tiger*, *East Enders*, *Casualty*, *Measure for Measure*, *Fatal Inversion* (BBC) and *The Bill* (Thames).

## Patricia Bardon Carmen

Irish-born mezzo-soprano Patricia Bardon studied at the College of Music, Dublin with distinguished singer

and teacher Veronica Dunne. She came to early prominence as the youngest ever prize winner at the Cardiff Singer of the World competition. Since then she has performed in the world's leading opera houses including Covent Garden, Metropolitan Opera, Paris Opera, La Scala, Glyndebourne, and in Berlin, Munich, Hamburg, Vienna, San Francisco, Chicago, LA, Amsterdam, Madrid, Barcelona, Trieste, Florence and Venice. Known for her interpretations of Handel and *bel canto*, she also enjoys success singing Wagner, Verdi, Mahler and French repertoire. Recent highlights include title role in Saariaho's *Adriana Mater* under Esa-Pekka Salonen (Opéra National de Paris) and the *Adriana Mater Suite* with the New York Philharmonic; Washington National Opera debut in *Tamerlano*; concert performance of *La Donna del Lago* (Edinburgh Festival); Vienna debut in



Joanne Boag

*Partenope*, all to critical acclaim. In 2009 she was nominated for an Olivier Award for her outstanding achievements in three London productions: *Baba the Turk* *The Rake's Progress* (Covent Garden), *Rosmira Partenope* and *Maurya* in *Vaughan Williams' Riders to the Sea* (ENO). She has worked with many great conductors including Mehta, Abbado, Mackerras, Haitink, Davis, Eschenbach, Christie, Jacobs, Rousset and Dohnani, among others. Future performances include *Erda* in the new *Ring* (Metropolitan Opera); *Azucena* *Il trovatore* (WNO); *Octavia* (Oslo); *Rinaldo* (Cologne); roles in *Santa Fe*, *Barcelona* and *Vienna*.

### Joanne Boag Frasquita

Scottish born Joanne Boag trained at NOS and RSAMD. She graduated from RSAMD with a BMus (Hons), a Masters in Performance with distinction and a Masters in Opera with distinction, under

tuition of Patricia Hay. Joanne is an experienced oratorio soloist and recitalist. Performances include Haydn's *Harmoniemesse*, conductor Nicholas Kraemer; Scottish première of Liszt's *Christus*; soprano soloist in Haydn's *Nelson Mass* (Edinburgh Festival); Poulenc's *Gloria* with Chorus and Orchestra of WNO, recital with pianist Michael Pollock (St David's Hall, Cardiff); opera gala with RSNO (Barony Hall, Glasgow); performed with Malcom Martineau and Patricia McMahon (Usher Hall, Edinburgh); recital tour of Trossachs National Park (Scottish Opera). Opera engagements include *La Bergere L'enfant et les Sortilèges*, *Helena* *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Nannetta Falstaff*, *Mélisande Pélleas et Mélisande* (Alexander Gibson Opera School); *Alinda/Cupid Giasone* (Early Opera Company). During 2007/2008, Joanne was an



Sarah-Jane Davies

Associate Artist with WNO, where she performed *Clorinda Cinderella*, *Nannetta Falstaff*, *Sandman/Dew Fairy Hansel and Gretel*, *Giunone Le nozze de Teti e Peleo*. Recent engagements include Essential Scottish Opera tour; Arbate *Mitridate* (WNO); *Drusilla The Coronation of Poppea* (Early Opera Company); title role *Katya Kabanova* (Scottish Opera on tour).

### Sarah-Jane Davies Micaëla

Sarah-Jane Davies was born and educated in Wales and is a graduate of the RCM studying with Lillian Watson. She was a member of the ENO Young Singers Programme and represented Wales in BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition, 2007. She was 2003 London Young Welsh Singer of the Year and 2003 MOSCA Young Welsh Singer of the Year. Opera experience includes *Pamina* / 1st



Carolyn Dobbin

Lady *The Magic Flute*, Romilda *Xerxes*, Angel *Jephtha*, Crobyle in Massenet's *Thaïs* at the Barbican, Dunyasha in Prokofiev's *War and Peace* for BBC Proms, all with ENO. Other roles include Contessa *Le nozze di Figaro* and Fiordiligi *Così fan tutte* for Garsington Opera and Opera Holland Park; *Agrippina* for London Handel Festival; Miss Jessel *The Turn of the Screw*.

Sarah-Jane's concert appearances include Mendelssohn *Elijah*; Mozart *Exsultate Jubilate* and *Requiem*; Handel *Messiah*; Brahms *Requiem*; Bach *Magnificat*; recitals at Aldeburgh, Eton College, a St David's Day concert attended by HRH Prince Andrew, St David's Hall, Cardiff, Bordeaux and in London.

Recent engagements include Countess, Servilia *La clemenza di Tito*, Pamina, High Priestess for ENO; First Lady *Die Zauberflöte* for Nationale Reisopera; Belinda *Dido and Aeneas* with SCO at Edinburgh International Festival; Strauss' *Four Last Songs*

in Brecon; Vivaldi *Gloria* with Kings College Choir and Academy of Ancient Music at RAH; Berlioz's *Les nuits d'été* for Les Azuriales Opera; *Elijah* with the Orchestra of Opera North. Future engagements include Flower maiden *Parsifal* for ENO.

### Carolyn Dobbin Mercédès

Carrickfergus born mezzo-soprano Carolyn Dobbin trained at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama and on the Young Artists Programme of Opera Theatre Company. Companies she has worked with include English Touring Opera, Garsington Opera, Mid-Wales Opera, Opera Della Luna, Opera Holland Park, English National Opera, the Opera Group and Raymond Gubbay Ltd. Carolyn performed Janáček's *The Diary of One Who Disappeared* at the Bath International Festival 2009 with Paul Nilon and Joanna MacGregor, *Messiah* at the Royal

Albert Hall and made her debut with Orquesta Sinfónica de Radio Televisión Española singing the Mozart *Requiem*. Her broadcasts include Dorabella *Così fan tutte* for BBC Radio 3 and recordings include Lynne Plowman's *Cries Like Silence* with the London Mozart Players. Carolyn is a WNO Associate Artist and the recipient of the WNO Chris Ball Bursary and the Sir John Moores Award. During 2010 for WNO she will sing Mercédès *Carmen* and Second Lady *The Magic Flute*, and will cover the title role *Carmen*, The Composer *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Maddalena *Rigoletto* and Magdalene *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. Recent engagements include Bradamante *Alcina* and Teodora *Flavio* for ETO. Future plans include Maddalena *Rigoletto* for Grange Park Opera in 2011.



Jasey Hall

## Jasey Hall

### Lillas Pastia / Guide

Jasey studied singing at the Royal Northern College of Music. He is a full time member of the Chorus of WNO and has sung many roles for the main house and several roles for WNO MAX, working with young people in the community. Most recently he sang the lead role of Bobby in *Sweetness and Badness*, an opera commissioned by WNO MAX and promoting awareness of rail safety. He has previously worked as a children's entertainer, which included stilt walking, balloon modelling, fire breathing, unicycling, fire juggling and playing the ukulele and tuba, though not all at the same time. He has been known to write and perform his own songs for the Friends of WNO.



Gwyn Hughes Jones

## Gwyn Hughes Jones

### Don José

Gwyn Hughes Jones hails from Llanbedrgoch, Anglesey. He made his professional operatic debut in 1995 with Welsh National Opera as Ismaele *Nabucco* conducted by Carlo Rizzi. Other roles for WNO include Duke *Rigoletto*, Rodolfo *La bohème*, Nemorino *The Elixir of Love*, title role in Gounod's *Faust*, Pinkerton *Madam Butterfly* and Don José. Other UK roles include Pinkerton, Macduff *Macbeth* (Royal Opera House); Lensky *Eugene Onegin*, Rinuccio *Gianni Schicchi*, Rodolfo, Pinkerton (ENO). Roles abroad include Ismaele, Camille de Rossillon *The Merry Widow* (Opéra National de Paris); title role *Werther* (Opéra National de Lyon); Fenton *Falstaff* (La Monnaie); Rodolfo, Don José (Norwegian National Opera); Don José (Music Theatre Trondheim); Pinkerton (Festival Lirico

Internacional de San Lorenzo de El Escorial, Spain); Fenton, Pinkerton, Rodolfo (Lyric Opera of Chicago); Rodolfo, Ismaele (San Francisco Opera); Ismaele, Fenton, (Metropolitan Opera); Ernesto *Don Pasquale* (Florida Grand Opera); Rodolfo (Santa Fe Opera); Cavaradossi *Tosca* (Los Angeles Opera).

His extensive concert repertoire includes Verdi's *Requiem* and Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* and he has appeared with many orchestras worldwide. He is also an accomplished recitalist. Recent highlights include Don José (Norwegian National Opera); Rodolfo (WNO); a recital at the Musashino Civic Cultural Hall in Tokyo; opera galas at the Barbican, Glasgow Royal Concert Hall and Waterfront Hall, Belfast.

This season Gwyn will sing Calaf *Turandot* (ENO); Duke (WNO).



Philip Lloyd-Evans

## Philip Lloyd-Evans Le Dancaïre

Philip Lloyd-Evans studied at University of East Anglia and Royal Academy of Music. He has performed over 30 roles for WNO including Prince Yeletsy *The Queen of Spades*, Ping *Turandot*, Dancaïre *Carmen*, Sid *La Fanciulla del West*, Cappadocian *Salome*, Sailor / Helmsman *Tristan and Isolde*, Yakuside *Madam Butterfly*, Wigmaker *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Father / Sandman *Hansel and Gretel*, Novice's Friend *Billy Budd*, Wagner *Faust*, Second Yeoman *The Yeomen of the Guard*, Silvano *Un ballo in maschera*, Thierry / 2nd Commissionaire *The Carmelites*, Counsel *Trial by Jury*, Fiorello *The Barber of Seville*, Dikoy / Kudriash *Katerina* (Ruth Byrchmore), First Minister *The Doctor of Myddfai* (Sir Peter Maxwell Davies), Scythian Man *Iphigénie en Tauride*, Herald *Otello*, Marquis of Obigny *La traviata*. Recordings include



Huw Llywelyn

roles in *The Yeomen of the Guard* and *HMS Pinafore* (Telarc), *Osud Janáček* (EMI), Ping *Turandot* for the S4C series of animated operas, and Wagner *Faust* for Channel Four. Philip is also a member of the teaching staff at Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama.

## Huw Llywelyn Remendado

Huw Llywelyn is from Bethel, Gwynedd. In June 2007 he graduated with distinction from the Benjamin Britten International Opera School at Royal College of Music, where he was a scholar supported by the Yvonne Wells Award. During his studies, Huw won many prestigious awards and scholarships including the Wingate Foundation, James Pantyfedwen Scholarship, Susan Chilcott Award and the Wessex Glyndebourne Award. He has also enjoyed great success in competitions including the 2005 Eryri a'r Cyffiniau National Eisteddfod

where he won in a number of categories including the Osborne Roberts Award. In June 2007 he was also a finalist in the Stuart Burrows International Voice Competition. Huw performs regularly at concerts and recitals throughout the UK and abroad. Highlights include performing at London Welsh Festival of Male Voice Choirs at the Royal Albert Hall. Operatic roles include Nerone *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (BBIOS); Nemorino *L'elisir d'amore*, Thaddeus *The Bohemian Girl* (Opera South); False Witness *St Matthew Passion*, Der Hirt *Tristan und Isolde* (understudy), Peasant Leader *Eugene Onegin* and title role *Albert Herring* (understudy) (Glyndebourne Festival Opera). Huw joined the Chorus of WNO in 2008, where roles include Third Jew *Salome* and Parpignol *La bohème*.



James Robinson-May

## James Robinson-May Moralès

James studied opera at Royal Academy of Music and National Opera Studio. Since graduating he has sung in the choruses of Royal Opera, Glyndebourne and Savoy Opera. Principal roles with British Youth Opera include Bartolo *Le nozze di Figaro*, Badger / Priest *The Cunning Little Vixen* and Don Alfonso *Così fan tutte* and with Opera East Productions, roles of Frère Philippe *The Wandering Scholar* and Leporello *Don Giovanni*. James joined WNO's Chorus in January 2006 where roles have included Sciarrone *Tosca*, Alcindoro *La bohème*, Imperial Commissioner *Madam Butterfly*, Herald *Otello*, Mayor *Jenůfa* and soloist *Carbon 12 – A Choral Symphony*. His ongoing studies are generously supported by Chris Ball.



David Soar

## David Soar Escamillo

David studied organ and singing at Royal Academy of Music. After working as a freelance organist, singer and conductor, he joined the Chorus of WNO, where roles included Captain / Zaretsky *Eugene Onegin*, Doctor Grenvil *La traviata*, Berstrand *Iolanta*, Sarastro *The Magic Flute*. After studying at the National Opera Studio David returned to WNO where he is currently an Associate Artist supported by the Chris Ball bursary and first recipient of the Parry Family Bursary. Roles for WNO include Colline *La bohème*, Zuniga *Carmen*, Bonze *Madam Butterfly*, Brander *The Damnation of Faust*, Bass *The Seven Deadly Sins*, Ferrando *Il trovatore*, Alidoro *La Cenerentola*, The King *Aida*, Lodovico *Otello*, Surin *The Queen of Spades*, title role *The Marriage of Figaro*, Doctor Grenvil, First Apprentice / Doctor *Wozzeck*.

Roles elsewhere include Banquo *Macbeth*, Zaccaria *Nabucco*, Alvisé Badoero *La Gioconda* (Opera Holland Park); Donner *Das Rheingold* (Lucerne Festival); Alfonso d'Este *Lucrezia Borgia* (Buxton Festival).

Concert repertoire includes Handel's *Messiah*, *Creation*, *Elijah*; Mozart's and Brahms' *Requiem*; Beethoven's *Symphony No 9* and *Missa Solemnis*; Verdi's *Requiem*; Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* and *The Apostles*; Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*; Stanford's *Songs of the Fleet*; Bach's *Mass in B minor*, *St John Passion*, *St Matthew Passion*, *Christmas Oratorio* and numerous cantatas including *Ich habe genug* for solo bass. Future plans include *Nightwatchman Die Meistersinger* for WNO, his ROH debut as Quinault *Adriana Lecouvreur* and *Le Duc Romeo and Juliette* (Salzburg Festival).



Henry Waddington

## Henry Waddington Zuniga

Henry Waddington studied at Royal Northern College of Music with Barbara Robotham, and made his operatic debut there as Bottom *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

He joined Glyndebourne Touring Opera in 1992, performing The Madhouse Keeper *The Rake's Progress*, a role he repeated with Glyndebourne Festival. Other engagements include Monstrous Messenger / Joe Shady in Birtwistle's *The Second Mrs Kong* (GTO; Glyndebourne Festival); Stage Hand *The Makropoulos Case*, Antonio *The Marriage of Figaro*, Graf Lamoral *Arabella*, Major Domo *Capriccio*, Quince *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Valens *Theodora*, Don Fernando *Fidelio*, Christus in Bach's *St Matthew Passion* (Glyndebourne Festival); Colline *La bohème*, Publio *La clemenza di Tito*,

Valens, Don Magnifico *La Cenerentola*, Don Alfonso *Così fan tutte* (GTO); Fiorello *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Sacristan *Tosca* (ROH); title role *Falstaff*, First Workman *Wozzeck*, Colline, Sacristan, Police Commissar *Der Rosenkavalier*, Geronimo *The Secret Marriage*, Cyrus *Croesus*, Frère Laurent *Roméo et Juliette*, Bottom (Opera North); Count Horn *Un ballo in maschera*, Don Basilio *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Bartolo *Le nozze di Figaro*, First Nazarene *Salome* (WNO); Trojan Soldier *The Trojans*, Pallante *Agrippina* (ENO); Soligni *Three Sisters*, Plutone *Orfeo*, Brander *La damnation de Faust*, Dieu infernale / Oracle *Alceste*, Quince (La Monnaie); Quince (Gran Teatre del Liceu; Teatro Real); Buralicchio *L'equivoco stravagante*, Don Magnifico (Garsington Opera); Leporello *Don Giovanni* (Grange Park Opera).

Future plans include Zuniga *Carmen* (ROH); *Love for Three Oranges*, Sacristan (Grange

Park); Lt Ratcliffe *Billy Budd* (Netherlands Opera); Kothner *Die Meistersinger* (Glyndebourne).

# Orchestra of WELSH NATIONAL OPERA

**Leader** David Adams

**Assistant Leader** Simon Lewis

## **First Violin**

Simon Lewis  
Lowri Porter  
Martin Kegelmann  
Robert Tonkin  
Susan Plessner  
Peter Lilley  
Mathias Maurer  
Emma Menzies  
Jane Atkinson  
James Slater  
Jane West

## **Second Violin**

Antony Tarlton  
Donald McNaught  
Ann Jones  
Luke Roskams  
Marilyn Shewring  
Gillian Bradley  
Deborah Neath  
Christiana Mavron  
Justine Tomlinson

## **Viola**

Philip Heyman  
Cédric David  
Barry Friend  
Stephen Lloyd  
Louise Brodrick  
Audrey Barr  
Ross Cohen

## **Cello**

Martin Johnson /  
Rosie Biss  
Christopher Hodges  
Arthur Davies  
Simon Davison  
Alexandra Robinson  
Dewi Watkins

## **Double Bass**

Benjamin Russell  
Mikeal Price  
Mary Condliffe  
Simon Phillips

## **Flute**

Jonathan Burgess  
Nicola Dowton

## **Piccolo**

Nicola Dowton

## **Oboe**

Daniel Bates /  
Matthew Jones

## **Cor Anglais**

David Probert

## **Clarinet**

Leslie Craven  
Alastair Logan /  
Hannah Morgan

## **Bassoon**

Stephen Marsden  
Christopher Vale

## **Horn**

Angus West  
Donald Clist  
David Shillaw  
James Mildred

## **Trumpet**

Dean Wright  
Martin McHale

## **Trombone**

Roger Cutts  
John Hendy

## **Bass Trombone**

Alan Swain

## **Timpani**

Patrick King

## **Percussion**

Jonathan Helm  
Philip Girling  
Andrew Cookson

## **Harp**

Katherine Thomas

# Chorus of WELSH NATIONAL OPERA

**Chorus Master** Stephen Harris

## **Sopranos**

Meriel Andrew  
Anitra Blaxhall  
Paula Bradbury  
Megan Llewellyn Dorke  
Claire Hampton  
Fiona Harrison  
Rosie Hay  
Samantha Hay  
Emma Mary Llewellyn  
Laura Pooley

## **Mezzos**

Amanda Baldwin  
Neda Bizzarri  
Alison Dunne  
Jessica Handley Greaves  
Helen Greenaway  
Dorothy Hood  
Sian Meinir  
Anne Morgan  
Nicola Morgan  
Sarah Pope

## **Tenors**

Simon Buttle  
Michael Clifton-Thompson  
Simon Curtis  
Paul Gyton  
Philip Lloyd Holtam  
Howard Kirk  
Huw Llywelyn  
Gareth Lloyd  
Philip Pooley  
Carthaigh Quill

## **Basses**

Julian Boyce  
Laurence Cole  
Jasey Hall  
Martin Lloyd  
Philip Lloyd-Evans  
Alastair Moore  
George Newton-Fitzgerald  
Jack O'Kelly  
James Robinson-May  
Stephen Wells

## **Extra Chorus**

### **Bass**

Gareth Rhys-Davies