

WNO



# Tosca

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BRITISH PORTS

Welcome to Welsh National Opera's Spring Season. In continuing this year's theme of 'Love & Passion', it would be difficult to think of many other operas which fit the bill as well as Puccini's *Tosca*.

All the elements are there in this revival of the brilliant WNO production – love, devotion, jealousy, misused power and political intrigue, all superbly captured in some of Puccini's greatest music. Portuguese soprano Elisabete Matos makes her WNO debut in the title role, and Welsh tenor Geraint Dodd returns to the company as her lover Cavaradossi. A great WNO favourite, Robert Hayward takes on the role of the villainous Baron Scarpia. WNO Music Director Lothar Koenigs returns to the podium.

I am delighted that Welsh National Opera's longest standing supporter, Associated British Ports, has provided significant sponsorship for this season's production of *Tosca*. Associated British Ports initiated their relationship with WNO over 23 years ago and their continued commitment and loyalty to the company is enormously appreciated by everyone.

This season we are also presenting a revival of *Carmen*, arguably the most intense, fiery and passionate opera in the repertoire and a new production of Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, another story of 'Love & Passion' – with a more exotic flavour – don't miss them!

Have an enjoyable evening.

Croeso i Dymor y Gwanwyn Opera Cenedlaethol Cymru. Wrth barhau â thema eleni sef 'Cariad ac Angerdd', byddai'n anodd meddwl am lawer o operâu mwy addas na *Tosca* Puccini.

Mae'r holl elfennau yno yn yr adfywiad hwn o gynhyrchiad gwych WNO – cariad, defosiwn, cenfigen, camddefnyddio pŵer a chynllwynio gwleidyddol, i gyd wedi ei gyfleu yn rhai o ddarnau cerddoriaeth gorau Puccini. Mae'r soprano o Bortiwgal, Elisabete Matos yn perfformio gyda WNO am y tro cyntaf yn y brif rôl, ac mae'r tenor o Gymru, Geraint Dodd, yn dychwelyd i'r cwm fel ei chariad, Cavaradossi. Mae ffefryn mawr gan y WNO, Robert Hayward, yn chwarae rôl y Barwn milain, Scarpia. Mae Cyfarwyddwr Cerddorol WNO, Lothar Koenigs, yn dychwelyd i'r podium.

Rwyf wrth fy modd bod cefnogwr mwyaf Opera Cenedlaethol Cymru, Porthladdoedd Cysylltiedig Prydain, wedi rhoi nawdd sylweddol ar gyfer cynhyrchiad y tymor hwn o *Tosca*. Cychwynnodd Porthladdoedd Cysylltiedig Prydain eu perthynas â WNO dros 23 o flynyddoedd yn ôl ac mae eu hymrwymiad parhaus a'u teyrngarwch yn cael ei werthfawrogi'n fawr gan bawb.

Y tymor hwn rydym hefyd yn cyflwyno adfywiad o *Carmen*, o bosibl yr opera ddwysaf, fwyaf tanllyd ac angerddol yn y repertoire a hefyd cynhyrchiad newydd o *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, gan Mozart, stori arall o Gariad ac Angerdd – gyda blas mwy lliwgar – cofiwch ddod i'w gweld!

Mwynhewch y noson.



John Fisher

Chief Executive & Artistic Director | Prif Weithredwr a Chyfarwyddwr Artistig

# Tosca



Opera in three acts by  
Giacomo Puccini

Text by Giuseppe Giacosa and  
Luigi Illica after the play by  
Victorien Sardou

First performance at the Teatro Costanzi,  
Rome, on 14 January, 1900

First performance of this production at  
the New Theatre, Cardiff on  
10 October 1992

Co-production between Welsh National Opera and the State Opera of  
South Australia

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

Sponsored by Associated British Ports

All performances start at 7.15pm unless otherwise stated

Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff	Wednesday 17 February 2010 4pm on Sunday 21 February 2010 Friday 26 February 2010 Wednesday 3 March 2010 Friday 5 March 2010
Venue Cymru, Llandudno	Wednesday 10 March 2010 Friday 12 March 2010
Birmingham Hippodrome	Wednesday 17 March 2010 Friday 19 March 2010
The Mayflower, Southampton	Wednesday 24 March 2010 Friday 26 March 2010
Milton Keynes Theatre	Tuesday 30 March 2010 Saturday 3 April 2010
Theatre Royal Plymouth	Wednesday 7 April 2010 Friday 9 April 2010
Swansea Grand Theatre	7pm on Friday 16 April 2010
The Bristol Hippodrome	Wednesday 21 April 2010 Friday 23 April 2010

# Cast

Cesare Angelotti     **Julian Close**  
*an escaped political prisoner*

Sacristan     **Henry Waddington**

Mario Cavaradossi     **Geraint Dodd**  
*a painter and republican*

Floria Tosca     **Elisabete Matos** (Until 26 March)  
*a celebrated prima donna*     **Alwyn Mellor** (From 30 March)

Baron Scarpia     **Robert Hayward** (ex 21 April)  
*Chief of Police in Rome*     **Simon Thorpe** (21 April)

Spoletta     **Cárthaigh Quill**  
*a police agent*

Sciarrone     **George Newton-Fitzgerald**  
*a gendarme*

Shepherd Boy     **Paula Bradbury**

Gaoler     **Jack O'Kelly**

Children:

Asha Fletcher-Peters, Hanä Fletcher-Peters, Nathan Frost,  
Ellen Garbutt, Mark Monaghan, Paul Monaghan, Iori Moore,  
Thomas Price, Morgan Rowberry-Iles, Emily Strangroom,  
Sam Thomas, Mitch Withers

Conductor	<b>Lothar Koenigs</b> (Until 26 March) <b>Simon Phillippo</b> (From 30 March)
Director	<b>Michael Blakemore</b>
Revival Director	<b>Benjamin Davis</b>
Designer	<b>Ashley Martin-Davis</b>
Lighting Designer	<b>Mark Henderson</b>
Lighting realised by	<b>Paul Woodfield</b>
Fight Director	<b>Terry King</b>
Chorus Master	<b>Stephen Harris</b>
Music Staff	<b>Stephen Wood</b>
Staff Director	<b>Amy Lane</b>
Language Coach	<b>Marco Canepa</b>
Stage Manager	<b>Liz Walker</b>
Production Manager	<b>Richard Norton</b>

Scenery built and painted by Cardiff Theatrical Services  
 Properties, costumes and wigs by Welsh National Opera  
 Scarpia's wig by Campbell Young  
 Sculpture by William Wroath  
 Make up provided by **MAC**

English surtitles by Simon Rees  
 Welsh surtitles by Mary Jones

Welsh National Opera wishes to express its gratitude to Casa Ricordi (Milan) for generosity in giving permission for WNO to perform the extra five bars in Act 1, and to include them in this programme. These bars were first reproduced in the vocal score published in 1995 by Ricordi and edited by Roger Parker.

Children appear by kind permission of the Headteachers of Cardiff High School, Cardiff; Cowbridge Comprehensive, Cowbridge; Evenlode Junior & Primary, Penarth; Stanwell School, Penarth; Westbourne School, Penarth

The performance lasts approximately 2 hours and 40 minutes  
 There will be intervals after Act 1 and Act 2

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## Introduction

*Tosca*, Puccini's fifth opera, was set in 1800 and first performed in 1900. Illica and Giacosa based their libretto on a five-act melodrama by Victorien Sardou, which was originally written as a vehicle for Sarah Bernhardt. Each act is set in a great Roman building: the Church of Sant'Andrea della Valle, the Palazzo Farnese and the Castel Sant'Angelo. This production refers closely to these settings, and to the original designs familiar from the famous poster, itself based on Bernhardt's interpretation of the spoken role. Unflatteringly described by Joseph Kernan as 'a shabby little shocker', *Tosca* is certainly a thriller, as well as being one of Puccini's greatest lyrical achievements, with 'Recondita armonia', 'Vissi d'arte' and 'E lucevan le stelle' three of his most beautiful arias.

## Plot summary

Angelotti, an escaped political prisoner, hides in the church where Cavaradossi is painting. Cavaradossi agrees to help him hide from Baron Scarpia, the police chief who is pursuing him. *Tosca*, in love with Cavaradossi, comes to the church and is angry to find that Cavaradossi has modelled his Magdalene on her rival, Marchesa Attavanti. Scarpia and his men search the church and find Angelotti's traces. Scarpia decides to catch both Cavaradossi and *Tosca*.

At the Palazzo Farnese, *Tosca* is entertaining the Queen of Naples and her court while Scarpia interrogates Cavaradossi about Angelotti's whereabouts. *Tosca* confronts Scarpia, and when Cavaradossi is tortured, she gives away the secret of Angelotti's hiding place. Cavaradossi learns that Scarpia's allies have been defeated at the Battle of Marengo, and rejoices at the victory. Scarpia sentences him to be shot at dawn. *Tosca* pleads for his release. Scarpia agrees to stage a fake execution in exchange for *Tosca's* favours. *Tosca* secures a written safe-conduct, and stabs Scarpia to death.

On the Castel Sant'Angelo, Cavaradossi awaits his execution. *Tosca* brings news that he will be released after a fake execution. The firing squad shoot Cavaradossi. After they have left *Tosca* discovers that her lover has been killed. Hearing the footsteps of her pursuers, who have discovered Scarpia's body, she leaps off the parapet to her death.

## Cyflwyniad

*Tosca* oedd pumed opera Puccini, a chafodd ei gosod ym 1800 a'i pherfformio gyntaf ym 1900. Seiliodd Illica a Giacosa eu libreto ar felodrama bum-act gan Victorien Sardou, a oedd wedi ei hysgrifennu'n wreiddiol fel cyfrwng ar gyfer Sarah Bernhardt. Mae pob act wedi ei gosod mewn adeilad Rhufeinig: Eglwys Sant'Andrea della Valle, y Palazzo Farnese a Castel Sant'Angelo. Mae'r cynhyrchiad hwn yn cyfeirio'n agos at y lleoliadau hyn ac at y dyluniadau gwreiddiol sy'n gyfarwydd o'r poster enwog, a oedd ei hun wedi ei seilio ar ddehongliad Bernhardt o'r cymeriad yn y ddrama. Disgrifiodd Joseph Kernan yr opera fel 'a shabby little shocker', ac mae *Tosca* yn sicr yn opera gyffrous, yn ogystal â bod yn un o lwyddiannau telynegol mwyaf Puccini, oherwydd mae'n cynnwys tair o'i ariâu mwyaf godidog, 'Recondita armonia', 'Vissi d'arte' ac 'E lucevan le stelle'.

## Crynodeb o'r Stori

Carcharor sydd wedi dianc yw Angelotti, ac mae'n cuddio yn yr eglwys lle mae Cavaradossi yn peintio darlun. Mae Cavaradossi yn cytuno i'w helpu i guddio rhag y Barwn Scarpia, pennaeth yr heddlu sy'n chwilio amdano. Mae Tosca yn caru Cavaradossi. Mae hi'n dod i'r eglwys, ac mae'n ddig wrth weld bod Cavaradossi wedi defnyddio'i phrif elyn, Marchesa Attavanti, fel patrwm ar gyfer ei lun o'r Forwyn Fair. Daw Scarpia a'i ddynion i chwilio yn yr eglwys ac maen nhw'n gweld olion bod Angelotti wedi bod yno. Mae Scarpia yn penderfynu dal Cavaradossi a Tosca.

Yn y Palazzo Farnese, mae Tosca yn difyrru Brenhines Naples a'i llys tra mae Scarpia yn holi Cavaradossi yngl n ag Angelotti. Mae Tosca yn wynebu Scarpia, ond pan gaiff Cavaradossi ei boenydio, mae hi'n ildio ac yn dweud wrtho ble mae Angelotti yn cuddio. Mae Cavaradossi yn clywed bod cynghreiriaid Scarpia wedi eu trechu ym Mrwydr Marengo, ac mae'n falch o glywed y newyddion. Mae Scarpia yn gorchymyn iddo gael ei saethu pan ddaw'r wawr, ac mae Tosca yn erfyn am ei ryddhau. Mae Scarpia yn cytuno i drefnu dienyddiad ffug os bydd Tosca yn fodlon bod yn gariad iddo. Mae hi'n llwyddo i gael llythyr sy'n caniatáu rhyddhau Cavaradossi, ac mae'n trywanu Scarpia yn ei galon a'i ladd.

Yn Castel Sant'Angelo, mae Cavaradossi yn disgwyl am awr ei ddienyddio. Daw Tosca ato â'r newyddion ei fod i gael ei ryddhau ar ôl y dienyddio ffug. Mae'r milwyr yn saethu Cavaradossi, ond ar ôl iddyn nhw adael mae Tosca yn gweld ei fod yn wir wedi ei ladd. Mae hi'n clywed s n traed y milwyr yn dod ar ei hôl, gan eu bod erbyn hyn wedi darganfod corff marw Scarpia, ac mae Tosca yn neidio o fur y Castell i'w marwolaeth.

# Synopsis

Rome, 1800

## Act 1

### Inside the church of Sant'Andrea della Valle

Angelotti, the former consul of the Parthenopean Republic of Naples, has escaped from the Castel Sant'Angelo having been imprisoned there by the Royalists loyal to the Queen of Naples under her police chief, Baron Scarpia. Angelotti's sister, the Marchesa Attavanti, has helped him to escape and take refuge in her family chapel, where she has hidden a disguise for his further escape. Mario Cavaradossi, a painter, is working on a picture of Mary Magdalene, modelled on a woman the Sacristan recognises as a recent visitor to the chapel, the Marchesa herself. Cavaradossi compares the beauty of the Marchesa with that of his beloved, the operatic soprano Floria Tosca. Angelotti comes out of his hiding-place and recognises Cavaradossi as an old friend. Cavaradossi promises to help him escape, but is interrupted by Tosca calling his name from outside the church. Angelotti hides again, and Tosca comes in, full of jealousy at the rumours she has been hearing, and of suspicion because the door was locked. Cavaradossi calms her fears, and together they sing of their love for one another. They plan to meet that evening, and Tosca goes. Cavaradossi is helping Angelotti plan his escape from Rome when a cannon-shot interrupts them: it is a signal that Angelotti has been found missing from the Castel Sant'Angelo. Cavaradossi decides to hide Angelotti in his own villa outside Rome.

No sooner have they gone than the Sacristan returns with the news (false, as it turns out) that Napoleon has been defeated. He is surprised to find Cavaradossi has gone. Preparations begin for the solemn Te Deum in celebration of the Royalist victory over the French and the Republicans, but Scarpia's sudden arrival brings them to a halt. Scarpia discovers a fan near Cavaradossi's painting equipment, and the Attavanti coat of arms on it proves that Angelotti has been hiding in the church. The Sacristan tells him that Cavaradossi's food-basket is now empty, indicating that the painter must have helped the fugitive to escape. Tosca returns to tell Cavaradossi that a new engagement, to sing a cantata for the Queen of Naples at the Palazzo Farnese as part of the victory celebrations, will prevent her from meeting him that evening. Her



Victorien Sardou (1831–1908)

jealousy is aroused again by his absence from the church. Scarpia builds on this by showing her the Marchesa's fan, and tricks her into believing that Cavaradossi is betraying her. She sets off for his villa, where she fears she will find him with her rival. Spoletta, Scarpia's agent, secretly follows her there. As the *Te Deum* begins, Scarpia has a sudden flash of inspiration: he will send Cavaradossi to his death on the gallows, and at the same time force Tosca to submit to him.

## Act 2

### Scarpia's apartments in the Palazzo Farnese

Scarpia sits at his supper and relishes the thought of his plan. A gavotte is being played elsewhere in the palace, where the Queen's celebrations are in full swing. Scarpia's agents bring Cavaradossi in for questioning, but he denies any knowledge of Angelotti's whereabouts. While Scarpia proceeds with his interrogation, Tosca is heard singing her cantata. Scarpia, getting nowhere with the painter, slams the window shut and blocks out the sound of the music. Tosca soon arrives in response to Scarpia's note that he has sent her earlier. Cavaradossi is taken into the adjoining room and

tortured severely to make him betray Angelotti's hiding-place. Tosca cannot bear the sound of his cries of agony, and tells Scarpia that Angelotti is hiding in the well in the garden of Cavaradossi's villa. Scarpia orders the torture to cease, and Cavaradossi is brought in suffering terribly from his wounds. But news arrives of Napoleon's victory at Marengo, and Cavaradossi revives enough to express his joy. This is enough to sign his death-warrant, and he is taken away for execution. Tosca begs Scarpia for mercy, and Spoletta brings more news: Angelotti has been found, but at the moment of his arrest he killed himself. Scarpia tells Tosca that it will soon be her lover's turn to die, unless she is prepared to exchange her favours for his life. Tosca agrees to the bargain, and Scarpia tells Spoletta to arrange a mock-execution, but uses a secret message to indicate that the execution should in fact take place. Spoletta goes. Scarpia signs a warrant for a safe-conduct for Tosca and Cavaradossi, but as he turns to embrace her she seizes a knife from the supper-table, and stabs him to death.

## Act 3

### The Platform of the Castel Sant'Angelo

An hour before dawn, a shepherd boy is heard singing in the distance. Cavaradossi is brought up from his cell, and turns his last thoughts to Tosca. She arrives, having left the Palace undetected, and tells him how she has arranged a fake execution and killed Scarpia. He must feign death at the fusillade, and lie there until she comes to tell him that it is safe to go. They dream of their future happiness together. The soldiers appear on the platform and hold the execution. After the firing-party has left, Tosca tells Cavaradossi to rise, but he does not answer her. To her horror, she realises that he is dead and she has been betrayed. She hears Scarpia's men pursuing her: they have found his body. Spoletta and the soldiers rush onto the platform to arrest her, but she climbs the parapet and leaps to her death.

# Tosca impressions

Lothar Koenigs interviewed by Simon Rees

**SR** When did you first encounter *Tosca*?

**LK** My first encounter with *Tosca* was in Münster in 1994. I was working there at the theatre as First Kapellmeister, and assisted on the production of *Tosca* for the general music director.

**SR** *Tosca* has an exciting score, with thrilling moments and moments of great lyricism. What do you think is the most effective part of the opera?

**LK** *Tosca* has many magnificent moments. For me the Te Deum in Act 1 and the whole of Act 2 are of special fascination: the second act has music of almost unbearable tension.

**SR** The role of *Tosca* is a famous challenge for any soprano, with a great aria in the second act, 'Vissi d'arte'. How will you approach conducting this aria?

**LK** It is always a great challenge for the conductor and the musicians of the orchestra to accompany this aria with the utmost flexibility so that the singer performing the role of *Tosca* can interpret this aria with the greatest possible freedom.

**SR** *Scarpia* is one of opera's greatest villains – but is there more to him than that?

**LK** He is a man who is absolutely fascinated and obsessed by the diva.

**SR** *Cavaradossi* is given two wonderful arias, each beginning very quietly and building to a climax. What do you think of Puccini's technique in writing these arias?

**LK** Puccini completely captures the moment and the mood of the painter in both of *Cavaradossi*'s arias. In the first one he creates a palette of real colours for the listener, and in the second a sense of infinite loneliness and abandonment.

**SR** How does Puccini's genius emerge in the orchestral score?

**LK** For me, in addition to *Tosca*, *Cavaradossi* and *Scarpia* there is another protagonist, the orchestra. The spectrum through which Puccini blends his orchestral sound is extraordinarily widely drawn. Bearing in mind Puccini's style and taste, we can still recognise a certain tendency throughout his work to let the strings alone carry the great expressive cantilena of the music through

the whole five-octave gamut of their range. This is what gives the melody that Puccinian sentiment which makes some people turn their noses up and moves others to tears. This technique of string writing is used rather differently in *Tosca*. It is no longer used throughout, but serves as a means of intensification. The magnificent cantabile melody is presented with a luscious, beautiful sound.

**SR** How does Puccini distinguish the different voices of the orchestra?

**LK** His use of the middle voices – violas, clarinets, horns – is remarkable in its variety. Despite the undeniable musical attractiveness of the lyrical moments in *Tosca* it is the dramatic action that dominates, expressed in particular in

musical dialogues of great tension. The composer gives the orchestra the role of illustration and commentary. The orchestra itself creates the medium in which the singing voices are embedded, only sometimes in cantabile style, and mostly declamatory.

**SR** Puccini was strongly influenced by Wagner. Do you find that he uses a leitmotiv technique in *Tosca*?

**LK** Throughout the whole of *Tosca* there are striking motifs to which a meaning can be very clearly assigned. In most cases the reference is direct, bound up with the immediate action. Puccini never used the leitmotiv technique pedantically, and it was certainly not his intention to develop them systematically as Wagner did in the *Ring*.



# Self Examination

## Michael Blakemore talks to himself about *Tosca*

Q. This production of *Tosca* is your first opera. How come?

A. In the past I've avoided opera because I wasn't really certain I was equipped to do it. Though I love music, I can't read it, and my enthusiasms are far from comprehensive. Like many Australians who had a childhood in the 'thirties, I was introduced to classical music through the themes that used to top and tail radio programmes — *The Nutcracker Suite* for the ABC Children's Hour, those galloping orchestral finales from Brahms that wound up Georges Edwards dramas on 2UW. Later I was further educated — to use the word

loosely — by lush movie scores from people like Max Steiner and Erich Wolfgang Korngold, stolen so often from Puccini. Perhaps that's why I felt comfortable making my operatic debut with *Tosca*.

Q. Weren't you alarmed, though, by its over-familiarity; that string of Top-of-the-Pops arias that everybody knows backwards?

A. Fortunately my ignorance saved me. I was like a Director who gets *Hamlet* through the post and thinks it's a new play. I knew *Tosca* from recordings but I'd never seen a production. It wasn't therefore an old war horse; it was an amazing



The Execution of Emperor Maximilian, by Edouard Manet

opportunity to explore through music and staging, dramatic situations of a size and boldness no playwright or librettist would have the nerve to offer today.

Q. But isn't *Tosca* melodramatic?

A. Of course it is. Gloriously so! If you examine the story with a cold eye it certainly tests your credulity, but in performance it's been realised with such rapture that the cold eye soon mists over. Or should. Didn't Puccini say: 'I want to make people weep; therein lies everything'. He wants to annihilate our detachment, to make us forget mind and live for a while on the plane of feeling. I can understand people of a certain temperament resisting this pressure, even disapproving of it. But that's the journey he offers us and it's a thrilling one.

Q. What about the inconsistencies and improbabilities of the plot?

A. Nothing compared to, say, a movie like *The Big Sleep*, which we can all still enjoy. Not even Raymond Chandler fully understood his own plot, but it's so well made by Howard Hughes and so well played by Bogart and Bacall that it doesn't matter. The power of the telling suspends disbelief.

Q. Should Scarpia be simply a brute, or is it better if he's insidiously attractive?

A. Power is frequently erotic and in the first Act Scarpia's behaviour to Tosca has a certain hypnotic courtesy, with marked Shakespearean overtones – Iago and Othello self-evidently but there is also a suggestion of Richard III's wooing of Lady Anne. However in Act II, when he's making Tosca an offer she can't refuse, all disguises are dropped. He glories in his baseness and Tosca's agony only adds spice to his lust.

Q. Will you be paying attention to all those detailed stage directions in the libretto?

A. Paying close attention. Certainly! It's no accident that film music has borrowed so much from Puccini. No other composer more dexterously underscores action or provides such powerful entrances and exits. To disregard the stage directions which the music amplifies and indeed exists for, seems to me plain negligent. This, of course, is not the same thing as a slavish or pedantic obedience to everything that's written down.

Q. There have been productions which have updated the story to Fascist Italy. Is this a good idea?

A. I can see how it might pay off in the second act. And indeed



Palazzo Farnese, Rome

how it might be a corrective to the somewhat steamy and exotic view of cruelty that the audiences of 1900 were happy to indulge in. After the horrors of two world wars I hope we know better. 'The banality of evil' was a phrase that was famously applied to Adolf Eichmann, but it's not remotely apt for the majestic villainy of Scarpia. Probably *Tosca* would be a more correct work if it was. However, I don't see how a 1940s version can really do justice to the romantic intensity of Acts I and III.

I think with Puccini you have to have an uncarping acceptance of his emotional world even at its most deviant. In the case of this *Tosca* we've set it, I suppose, at the turn of two centuries. The sets and costumes will invoke 1799, not just because of the

mention of Napoleon and the battle of Marengo, but because the story loses much of its force if it doesn't allow for the revolutionary fervour which swept over Europe in advance of the French armies or the anti-clericalism that went with it. However, this historical placing will be filtered through the sensibilities of 1899, because this is where the opera resides artistically, where, if you like, its soul is. Remember those Aubrey Beardsley drawings of people in 18th century dress? Nothing could be further in spirit from the Neo-classical, although you recognise at a glance the historical reference. We want this production to live in two centuries at once — three centuries if you count our own.

Michael Blakemore © 1994

# Rome

Jonathan Keates

Judged by any standards, Puccini's *Tosca* is one of the most theatrically effective of all operas. Art and morality are more than satisfied by the violent deaths of all three principal characters, and there is no point in the drama at which the audience finds itself shuffling its feet with impatience or allowing concentration to wander. The story is thrilling and passionate without the least touch of melodramatic absurdity, the motivations — Tosca's irrational jealousy, Scarpia's lust, Cavaradossi's republican sympathies — are all entirely convincing, and the alternations of pace within the work's overall dramatic structure brilliantly sustained.

Some at least of this unassailable sturdiness, resisting all the high-minded sneers of Puccini's critics, is due to the opera's firm grounding in authenticity both of place and time. *Tosca* was after all the composer's first major response to the challenges of Italian verismo, the search for artistic truth through a selective use of sensationalised 'slices of life'. It was only fitting that he should go to extraordinary lengths to establish the reality of background details, such as the pitch of Roman church bells, the exact song that might be

sung by a shepherd boy, and the order of the procession which forms the background to Scarpia's baleful gloating at the end of Act I.

More significantly, Puccini had the advantage of being able to discuss the libretto with Victorien Sardou, writer of the original play on which the opera is based. A great deal of mud has been gratuitously flung at Parisian boulevard drama and more particularly at Sardou as its most accomplished exemplar. Bernard Shaw, with more than a touch of envy, may have jibed at what he called 'Sardoodledom' with its slick, heartlessly professional theatricality, but there was no denying the French playwright's hold over his audience, and the development of modern dramatic technique is inconceivable without his achievement.

Even if *La Tosca*, first produced at the Théâtre de la Porte Saint-Martin in 1887, was blatantly devised as a vehicle for the talents of Sarah Bernhardt and soon became notorious for the number of its features supposedly plagiarized from other dramatists, Sardou had taken enormous pains to establish historical accuracy in creating a context for his central trio of characters, and Puccini was later to be impressed, in their

conversations, by this capacity for focusing on precise detail.

In a France which seemed to have bungled its destiny as a great power in the spectacular debacle of the Franco-Prussian War, the Napoleonic period held a special allure, and none of Bonaparte's military exploits more perfectly embodied the Gallic ideals of panache and élan than the battle of Marengo, fought and won on 14th June 1800. The fact is, however, that this crucial victory against the main Austrian army of northern Italy was little more than a brilliant piece of fudging, a success based ironically on Napoleon's serious misjudgments as to the size and tactics of the force he was attacking.

Marengo (the famous chicken dish, incidentally, was a similar piece of on-the-spot improvisation by a regimental cook) effectively destroyed all the hopes of Austria's Italian allies, led by King Ferdinand of Naples and Pope Pius VII, that the French could be driven out after four anarchic years which they had mainly spent in subverting established governments and looting churches and convents of their art treasures. The great *Te Deum* procession at Sant'Andrea della Valle which furnishes the superb climax to Act I of *Tosca*

is an outburst of political hubris, a perfect correlative to Scarpia's expression of his untrammelled power which culminates in the deliberately outrageous '*Tosca, mi fai dimenticare Iddio!*'

Both Cavaradossi and Angelotti are identified with this apparent defeat of the liberal cause, the former as a French sympathiser who greets the news of Marengo, brought by Sciarrone in Act II, with a jubilant '*Vittoria, vittoria!*', the latter as 'the Consul of the ill-fated Roman Republic'. Proclaimed in February, 1798, the republic had indeed been a disaster, but not in such a way as to make its leaders bonafide revolutionary heroes of the sort represented by Garibaldi, Mazzini and the other great protagonists of the struggle for Italian national unity which was to follow Napoleon's fall.

Supposedly the various republics set up by the invading French with the support of local Jacobins throughout Italy represented the people. 'The revolution is really made on their behalf, to improve their condition, to relieve their poverty and promote their happiness' ran the official line, as expressed by one Milanese ex-aristocrat. The trouble was that nobody was quite sure who 'the people' really were. Should

they be confined to the hardworking and educated, or might they include landless peasantry who could subsequently grow too volatile under the influence of overmuch freedom?

France viewed these new governments in an altogether more cynical light, as a source of money and supplies to sustain its struggle against the allied military opposition of England, Austria and Russia. In this spirit the Roman Republic was established by the simple expedient of sending General Berthier to Rome at the head of a French force with orders to turn out the Pope and occupy the city. So as to give full diplomatic respectability to what was in essence an invasion of the States of the Church, two convenient pretexts for Berthier's advance into the Papal domains were swiftly produced. One was the shooting by a Roman gendarme of the French general Duphot, a personal friend of the ambassador Joseph Bonaparte, and the other was the still unavenged murder a few years previously of a junior diplomat named Hugon de Bassville.

With the monumental tactlessness characteristic of the Jacobins in their dealings with foreign powers, Bassville had brazened his way into

various pontifical government offices and the chancelleries of the most influential foreign embassies waving a fistful of demands and threatening an attack by the French fleet, known to be somewhere in Italian waters, should these not be met. The Roman mob, conservative as Romans notoriously are and generally sympathetic to the Pope and his ministers, grew increasingly edgy at the presence of the bumptious young secretary and his revolutionary myrmidons with their bullying gospel of liberty, and finally erupted with angry stone-throwing as Bassville drove down the Corso in an open carriage waving a tricolor. Watched by his horrified wife and children, he was dragged onto the street, hunted into a courtyard and repeatedly stabbed. The much-admired neo-classical poet Vincenzo Monti seized on the exultant mood of the bloodthirsty populace to compose a satirical mini-epic entitled *La Bassvilliana*.

The murder subsequently proved a rallying cause for both political extremes in Rome, and Bassville became something of a martyr for local Jacobins. When Berthier and his troops arrived on 9th February, 1798, however, they found far fewer of these sympathisers than expected, and watched in



Hariclea Darclée, who created the role of Tosca in 1900

amazement as the Romans packed the churches to pray for divine intercession. A liberty tree with the customary Phrygian bonnet was set up on the Capitol, the noble murderers of Julius Caesar were invoked with florid Gallic oratory and Pope Pius VI, a frail and crippled old man, was bundled unceremoniously into a coach and dispatched to the French town of Valence where he died the following year.

The republic which Angelotti purports to represent in Sardou's drama might have made itself more genuinely

popular had it not been so nakedly dedicated to dismantling the ancient edifice of piety and ritual observance built up over more than a thousand years of papal rule. The Roman Jacobins were mere puppets in the hands of the greedy French, who pillaged the city of countless works of art and seem to have viewed Rome as a vast antique market in which looters and speculators of all kinds could fill their pockets. Convents and monasteries were closed and their communities told to go out and marry. The sole benefit conferred by the new republican

Castel Sant'Angelo,  
Rome



regime was on the Jewish community, emancipated from its dismal ghetto by the Tiber, but even this was resented by the majority of Romans.

When the flimsy government was overthrown in the summer of 1799, it was through sheer pressure of events rather than by a popular uprising of the kind which had taken place in the country districts further south, where the swashbuckling Calabrian Cardinal Ruffo had placed himself at the head of a ragtag-and-bobtail peasant army known as the Congregation of the Holy Faith, the Sanfedisti. Ruffo's patrons in this enterprise were King Ferdinand and Queen Maria Carolina of Naples. The former was an overgrown child whose pleasures included food-throwing at parties and ostentatious breaking of wind. His wife, together with her English lover Admiral Acton, was the effective ruler of the Neapolitan kingdom.

One of Empress Maria Theresa's remarkable brood of children, which included the future Joseph II of Austria, Peter Leopold the reforming Grand Duke of Tuscany and Queen Marie Antoinette of France, Maria Carolina was the driving force behind the recapture of Naples from the republicans, finally achieved by an English

fleet under the command of Horatio Nelson. Egged on by the Queen and his mistress Lady Hamilton, the admiral dealt out summary execution among the Jacobins, as an Austro-Russian army reestablished church government in the papal states.

Maria Carolina is one of several characters who appear in Sardou's play, but are almost entirely dispensed with in Illica and Giacosa's libretto for Puccini. Ostensibly this is a pity, since her larger-than-life presence on the political stage of the Napoleonic era, a sort of Carabosse or Wicked Stepmother of reaction and obscurantism, must have been a gift to an operatic musical imagination. One thinks immediately of what a wonderfully malevolent mezzo role Verdi might have devised for her.

In the original drama, however, she is simply present in order to enrich the context surrounding Tosca as a performing artist. It is unnecessary within the opera's altogether tighter structure, which reduces a cast of 23 to nine, to do more than allude to her (historically inauthentic) visit to Rome on the eve of Marengo. The fact that the cantata performance is heard rather than seen, as it is in the play, merely serves to intensify the already powerful sense of

lustful impatience emanating from the figure of Scarpia.

Puccini's name is seldom directly linked with the politics of his time in the way that Verdi's so frequently is, and it would obviously be a trifle far-fetched to label *Tosca* a political opera. Nevertheless it is hard not to feel that the mingled atmosphere of critical disapproval and popular enthusiasm surrounding its first performances owed something to the sinister foreshadowing of contemporary history in a plot grounded in the troubled Italy of a century earlier. By 1900 the hopes raised by the great events of the Risorgimento were well and truly dashed and the nation was plunged into near-anarchy as the collapsing economy produced riots in the larger cities like Turin and Milan, as well as in hard-hit agricultural areas of the south.

What Illica and Giacosa created from Sardou's boulevard drama was a neatly designed presentation of three different but entirely credible responses to the ebb and flow of politics. Cavaradossi becomes a classic case of the artist as interested bystander whom an ever closer involvement with the dissident cause ultimately destroys, while Scarpia sounds the ruthless accents of official repression and corruption. As for *Tosca*, hovering so majestically between the establishment and its enemies for the sake of a life in art, she too is forced to make a final terrifying choice. Perhaps the most successful paradox of the opera is that each of them, however firmly rooted in a 'bygone', 'period' world, should sing to us so convincingly of issues which know no restrictions of time or place.

Jonathan Keates © 1992



Palazzo Farnese in an 18th century etching by Giuseppe Vasi

# Tosca's Rome

Simon Rees

The Rome of *Tosca* is enclosed in a neat isosceles triangle, whose narrow base is a line between the church of Sant'Andrea della Valle and the Palazzo Farnese, and whose apex is the Castel Sant'Angelo. The triangle lies between the crook in the Tiber and the Piazza Navona, and can be walked in half an hour, leaving time for an espresso.

**Sant'Andrea della Valle.** This great church at the southern end of what is now the Corso del Rinascimento is crowned by the second largest Roman dome after St Peter's. It was begun in 1591 by Fra Francesco Grimaldi, and completed by Carlo Maderno. The façade is a marvellous piece of flamboyant Baroque dating from 1665, designed by Carlo Rainaldi. Inside, the impression is of golden light pouring through the high windows onto a gilt interior, airy and spacious with a high barrel-vaulted nave. Behind the altar, an apse closes the end of the church, decorated by Domenichino who was said to have tried to kill his rival Giovanni Lanfranco for the commission to fresco the church. Lanfranco survived, to paint an extravagant Glory of Paradise inside the dome.

There is no Attavanti Chapel – this was one of Victorien Sardou's inventions. And you would look in vain for a Mary Magdalene by Cavaradossi. However, there are several noteworthy chapels, enclosed by gilded gates and railings, the first on the south side by Carlo Fontana, with green marble columns, and the second, the Cappella Strozzi, designed in the style of Michelangelo with reproductions of several of his statues. The chapels on the north side contain frescos by Passignano, altarpieces by Giovanni de' Vecchi and Francesco Manno, and sculptures by Christoforo Stati and Pietro Bernini. There is no particular candidate for the statue of the Madonna at whose feet Angelotti finds the key to the chapel, or for the gigantic crucifix shown on the set: you (like the set designer, Ashley Martin-Davis) will just have to use your imagination.

**Palazzo Farnese.** The home of the French Embassy since 1635, the Palazzo Farnese is unfortunately not open to the public, unless you happen to be French and in need of a new passport. A previous written application may secure an appointment for a visit. The Palazzo is known as *Il dado* – the die – from its cubic form

Interior of  
Sant'Andrea  
della Valle, Rome



and monumental solidity. Its façade, by Antonio di Sangallo with a cornice and central window by Michelangelo, dominates the Piazza Farnese. The whole building gives an impression of imposing power and political might, appropriate in the temporary residence of Baron Scarpia.

The Palazzo Farnese was begun in 1517 for Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, who became Pope Paul III in 1534. The Farnese family were not Roman at all, but Parmigiani, rulers of the Duchy of Parma from 1545 to 1731. They owned land across the Tiber in Trastevere, where the Villa Farnesina alla Lungara still stands. The original plan was for a bridge to be built across the Tiber, connecting the gardens at the rear of the Palazzo with the Trastevere home, but only one arch was built. The Palazzo was completed in 1589 by Giacomo della Porta.

The inner courtyard (where Tosca performs, off-stage, to the Queen of Naples and her court) is square, arcaded with five arches to a side. The ground floor is austere pilastered in the Doric style, with a cornice of metopes and triglyphs. On the Ionic first floor, swags alternate with masks and roundels with the Farnese lilies. Whereas the two lower storeys were designed by Sangallo, the

Corinthian upper storey is by Michelangelo.

Inside, where opera-goers might expect to find Baron Scarpia's apartment complete with en-suite torture chamber, there are magnificently-decorated halls, reception rooms, salons, and the vaulted gallery with its frescoes by Annibale Carracci, showing scenes from Greek mythology above walls of gilded stucco framing more frescoes and statues. In other rooms, the doorcases and fireplaces are made of figured marble, while the friezes display more stucco relief-work on any spare wall-space not already made over to frescoes.

Along with the Borghese Cembalo, the grand staircase at Palazzo Ruspoli, and the great doorway of the Sciarra Colonna, the 'Dado' has always been judged one of the four marvels of Renaissance Rome. Today, restored to its former glory, and used for the purpose it has served for the past four centuries, it is as splendid as ever.

**Castel Sant'Angelo.** The last great monument celebrated in *Tosca* is the former Mausoleum of the Emperor Hadrian, converted into a Papal fortress and later used as a military prison. Hadrian began work on a mausoleum for his family in AD130, and after his death it was completed in AD139 by Antoninus Pius. At that time it

was an enormous conical structure standing on a colonnaded drum. A great spiral ramp, still in use, led up through the inside of the mausoleum to the chamber where the funeral urns of Hadrian's family were housed.

In AD271 the mausoleum was fortified and incorporated into the Aurelian Wall as part of Rome's defences. In AD590, the archangel Michael made an appearance above the castle, giving it its present name, and inspiring the huge statue which the Flemish sculptor Pieter Verschaffelt raised on the parapet. The castle was modified again by Pope Boniface IX in 1390, and linked to the Vatican in 1493 by Alexander VI who also drove a staircase through the width of the entire building, destroying some of the earlier Roman structures.

In 1527 the castle stood up to the assault by Charles V and the Imperial forces during the sack of Rome. Fifteen years later Pope Paul III built a set of fine apartments surrounding a grand reception room, the Sala Paolina, frescoed by Perin del Vaga and Pellegrino Tibaldi in a style which gives the illusion of courtiers coming and going through the painted doors.

Further fortifications were built in 1557, but from that time on the castle had few modifications, only changing its use with the collapse of the Pope's temporal power at the unification of Italy, when it became a barracks and a military prison.

Nowadays the Castel Sant'Angelo is one of Rome's greatest tourist attractions: the panorama from the tower gives the best view of St Peter's, and a 360-degree prospect of the entire city. Anyone attempting to imitate Tosca's leap from the battlements, however, would find that, yet again, Sardou's imagination stepped in the way of topographical realism. It is impossible to get a clear drop of more than a dozen feet or so, and the jump in the recent filmed production was – quite simply – faked. But we must thank Sardou for prompting Puccini to create, at the top of the castle, not only one of the great moments of musical melodrama, but also one of the greatest musical vistas of any opera – sunrise over the rooftops of Rome, with the shepherd singing and the church bells pealing as the first rays touch the archangel's sword.

Simon Rees ©

# Noises Off

## Mosco Carner

Act II represents, from a dramatic and musical point of view, a unique tour de force in which Puccini ventured to the very limits of operatic realism, without failing in his task as musician. Admittedly, 'naked truth' rears its ugly head in Cavaradossi's torture scene, in Scarpia's frenzied shouts of lust and the hoarse ejaculations of his death agony. Yet these and other things must be accepted as part of the veristic creed and on balance they do not seem to weigh too heavily if seen against the total of real music which this act contains. Moreover, Puccini always remains within the emotional key of the action and cannot be accused of such crass stylistic aberrations as Strauss was guilty of in the Viennese waltzes introduced into the closing scenes of *Salome* and *Elektra*.

Few operas contain an act as remorseless in its mounting tension as Act II of *Tosca*, which has five great scenes, each representing a further vicious turn of the screw. The first scene begins quietly showing Scarpia at the Palazzo Farnese sitting at

his table and taking his meal. His thoughts are revealed in the orchestra, which in turn quotes the themes of 'Firm Purpose', 'Tosca', 'Angelotti' and 'Cavaradossi'. The first indication that festivities are in progress in another part of the palace, festivities in celebration of the Austrian victory over the French, comes in the *Tempo di Gavotta* offstage and momentarily breaking up the oppressive atmosphere. This is followed by Scarpia's aria in which, after the first hints given in Act I, he now fully discloses himself as the satyr he is.

Cavaradossi's arrival opens the second scene, the peculiar effect of which lies in the fact that two entirely different worlds are simultaneously suggested in the music. There is the painful interrogation on the stage, proceeding to one of Puccini's ominous march themes (scored for low flutes and basses, pizz., Ex. 1) and there is the singing, offstage, of the festive cantata heard through the open window. Dramatic contrast could not be stronger.

Ex. 1



Like the *Tempo di Gavotta*, the *Cantata* is an apt pastiche — originally Puccini here intended to use some of Paisiello's own music — and Tosca, who takes part in it, shows her mettle as a famous singer in the dramatic flourishes reaching up to C in alt, which the composer has given her.

The third great scene begins with Tosca's entry, the orchestra giving eloquent expression to her troubled state of mind.

After Cavaradossi has been led into the torture chamber Scarpia tries to worm a confession out of Tosca, which he does to rocking, barcarole-like music; but being unsuccessful he presently utters a veiled threat, at which point Puccini introduces the first of his torture themes, one which almost conjures up the image of 'a fillet of steel encircling his temples' and gradually tightening (Ex. 2).

#### Ex. 2



#### Ex. 3

*ff* *>*

Ah! più non pos-so! Ah! — che orror! — Ah! — ces - sa - te il mar -

-tir! è trop- po sof-frir! Ah, non posso più, ah! non posso più!

The first climax is reached in Tosca's agonized cry 'Non è vero!' with its violent wrench from D minor to C minor. And so the tension is gradually built up until it reaches explosion-point in Tosca's great phrase: 'Ah! Più non posso!', with its tremendous octave-leaps, downwards from C and B flat in alt (Ex. 3). Her defences now having broken down, she betrays Angelotti's hiding-place, a scene in which Puccini makes masterly use of pauses. Suspense grows again when Sciarrone enters with the startling news of Napoleon's victory, inspiring Puccini to a trio in the heroic vein in which Cavaradossi reveals himself as an ardent revolutionary. This comes rather unexpectedly since Puccini, unlike Sardou, had scarcely vouchsafed us a hint in previous scenes that the painter entertained such strong political views. And sticklers for dramatic verisimilitude are bound to stumble over the fact that Cavaradossi, who a moment or two before was brought in from the torture chamber in a state of utter exhaustion, should suddenly find the strength to break, 'with great enthusiasm', into a paean of liberty, and in the process deliver himself of a high B flat and some high A flats. This is about the only instance in Act II where operatic convention gets

the better of Puccini the dramatic realist.

The fourth scene, centring on the infamous bargain, is musically the richest of the act, and contains the aforementioned arias of Scarpia and Tosca and the latter's arioso 'Mi vedi supplice' in E flat minor: Puccini was aware that operatic laws demanded more lyrical music after the grim alarms of the preceding scenes. Passing mention may be made of one of those minor dramatic strokes so characteristic of this opera. At the moment when Scarpia can no longer contain his desire for Tosca and is about to proceed from persuasion to physical action, the ominous sound of distant drum-rolls is heard, the indication that the gallows is being erected for Cavaradossi. This not only serves to bring Scarpia's vile attempt to a sudden halt but, equally important, his explanation to Tosca of the significance of these drum-rolls strikes terror into her heart and so prepares the mood for her ensuing 'Vissi d'arte'. This detail of the drums is absent from the corresponding scene in Sardou.

The fifth and last scene must be accounted as among the most macabre in opera. The nerve-tautening atmosphere is caught by one of Puccini's finest inventions in a tragic vein, the

whole ten-bar phrase being played by the first violins on the G string and muted (Ex. 4). Its continuation (Ex. 5) marks the precise moment at which, noticing the knife on Scarpia's table, Tosca conceives the idea of his murder. It is a pity that afterwards Puccini lapses into mere bruitism, instead of developing these motives for the actual stabbing of Scarpia. What follows is all mime, the return of F sharp minor melody (Ex. 4) accompanying Tosca's washing of her hands, adjusting her hair before the mirror, taking the safe-conduct from the dead man's hand and so forth. (But significantly Puccini omits Sardou's detail of Tosca cleaning

the stain of blood on her dress.) As she proceeds to perform the religious ceremony, the orchestra, in revealing her thoughts, softly recalls Scarpia's 'Lust' (Ex. 6) and Cavaradossi's 'Love' (Ex. 7). The act closes on the 'Scarpia' motive (Ex. 8), which steals in imperceptibly, now ending in the minor and suggesting in its peculiar scoring a spectre rising above the stage. And how well calculated is Puccini's last touch — another drum-roll in the distance as a portent of the tragedy that is still to come! Altogether, this last scene is a classical instance of his ability to extract a maximum of effect from a minimum of means.

Ex. 4



Ex. 5



Ex. 6



Ex. 7

Andante sostenuto

Qual occhio al mon - do può star di pa - ro all'arden - te

oc - chio tuo ne - ro — ?

Ex. 8

Andante molto sost.

*ff*

*tutta forza*

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# Great Toscas of the Past

## Chris Ball

The eponymous heroines of *La Wally* (1892), *Iris* (1898) and *Tosca* (1900) were all created by the Romanian soprano, Hariclea Darclee (1860-1939). Clearly Darclee was well-versed in the verismo school, although her repertoire was wide-ranging. Her initial successes followed performances as Marguerite (*Faust*) and Juliette (*Roméo et Juliette*), and she was successful in the bel-canto operas of Bellini and Donizetti: she was 'considered by the Italians to be vocally similar to Lilli Lehmann.' Despite these apparent vocal accomplishments — although Darclee is listed in Bauer as making a few recordings in Milan in 1904, including two titles from *Tosca*, no catalogue numbers appear and I have never read any reviews of the records if they were issued. It would appear that it was her elegance, beauty and abilities as an actress that made her the obvious choice for the creation of *Tosca*. 'Darclee is thought to have made De Marchi's engagement as Cavaradossi a condition of her own acceptance, and so important was her co-operation that Puccini did not hesitate for long.' It was widely known that De Marchi and Darclee had been lovers for several years, and no doubt this relationship

added to the realism of their portrayals.

Contrary to popular belief Darclee did not create the tradition of including a cane, a plumed hat or a bouquet of flowers as adjuncts to her costume. 'The carrying of a cane and flowers is demanded by Sardou in his stage direction,' which had been followed by Sarah Bernhardt.

Unfortunately contemporary newspaper reports of the Rome première, which took place on 14 January, 1900, seem to concentrate on the effects of the bomb-scare, who among the musical cognoscenti were (or were not) present, etc and there are only the briefest references, if any, to the principal performers. Following her retirement in 1918, Darclee did teach, and according to Gina Cigna (a notable dramatic soprano whose repertoire extended from *Norma* to *Turandot*), 'she had a gigantic personality', whatever that may mean! Stella Roman, a fellow Romanian soprano, provides some insight as follows: '... [Darclee] taught me the value of every word and phrase, and revealed to me how deeply she had delved into the psyche of every character she had sung.'

In July 1900, Milka Ternina (1863-1941), the great Croatian

soprano, introduced *Tosca* at Covent Garden. Herman Klein wrote in the *Sunday Times*: 'I had memories of Bernhardt in Sardou's play and was fain to ask, 'Is this a subject for an opera, much less a part for Ternina?' The greater was my surprise therefore when the answer came....the impression that Ternina made was simply thrilling.'

Klein, who was a noted vocal critic, seems to be concentrating on the dramatic side of the role, yet Ternina's purely vocal abilities seem, from reading contemporary criticisms, to have been of the highest order, but frustratingly she made no recordings.

In February 1901, Ternina created *Tosca* in New York, but the opera was not taken on tour that autumn because she was unavailable. Ternina's successor in America was Emma Eames, and in her autobiography, *Some Memories and Reflections*, she describes how Maurice Grau, the Manager of the Metropolitan, asked her to choose a new role: 'and I told him that I was fired with a desire to sing *Tosca*; that I had heard the great Ternina in the role of the jealous prima donna and could not wait to feel the melting phrases of that elemental, emotional heroine in my throat. [Grau] threw up his hands in despair and explained:

But why choose another failure?... An opera with a torture scene, a murder, a shooting and a suicide! Not even you could make the public like it. But I insisted, and in the end he capitulated and consented to my singing it!'

Eames studied with Mathilde Marchesi in Paris between 1886 and 1888, and it is therefore quite possible, as Eames claims, that she saw Bernhardt's first performance of the Sardou play (November 1887) and the thrill of that night remained with her. '[Bernhardt] had gripped her audience even when her back was turned. And this is an accomplishment not to be lightly scorned. It proves that one has risen above mere gesture and expression and is holding one's audience with the power of thought.'

Eames describes in some detail the preparations for a charity performance of *Tosca* in Paris, probably in 1904, prior to which she had lunch with Bernhardt, and Sardou and Puccini both attended the rehearsals. Puccini suggested that Eames 'hold each of the last high notes at the end of ... 'Vissi d'arte' ... as long as I possibly could. I told him that, to my mind, to hold three notes as long as possible and at the top of my voice seemed more like shouting than singing, and that, as it was my custom always to make but one

climax and only one, he could choose which of the three notes he wished me to hold. He was much amused and, having faith in my ability, gave me my head! A typical example of prima donna modesty!

'Sardou's suggestion at rehearsals was one of which all ambitious Scarpias should take note – namely that in the great scene before Tosca stabs him, Scarpia should never touch her, but instead hover over her wholly evil, almost vulture-like. He also showed me how to stab Scarpia with the most dramatic effect and get away from him before he fell! Alas, Eames does not elaborate, but even allowing for a certain amount of literary licence, her direct contact and involvement with the composer and dramatist are invaluable.

Mary Garden (1874–1967), the famous Scottish soprano and creator of Mélisande describes in her autobiography, '...a detail of my impersonation of Tosca that came to me in a flash of improvisation...It concerns the candles in the second act. You see, most singers are hypnotised from the start by the idea of putting the candles beside the body of Scarpia. At that particular performance it suddenly dawned on me that there was a better way of doing it. I, Tosca, never had that in mind, the thought of putting

the candles down beside him. I blew them out on the table and went over to blow out the other two, the two that, without my knowing it then, were destined to be put down on the floor beside the body of the man I had just stabbed. I began to blow them out too, when all of a sudden, I, Tosca, seemed to say to herself, "Why not place them beside him? That will be better." And you saw by my actions what I meant. I took one candle up and then the other and I went over and placed them there. It was a sudden impulse to do it; it wasn't at all in the *mise en scène* of the opera... How I enjoyed adding that unexpected little touch! I just said to myself as the moment came, "Tonight this is what you must do!" I had not planned it at all. I knew, or Tosca knew, that was the way it had to be – that night, anyway.'

Remaining with Act 2, which provides Tosca with a range of emotions depicting, *inter alia*, loathing, ardour, jealousy and petulance, one of the most famous and publicised effects was created by Maria Jeritza who sang 'Vissi d'arte' from a prone position. Reading accounts of the rehearsal makes one question whether the effect was really accidental or intentional. Initially it seemed to be spontaneous, but gradually as it remained part of

Emma Eam  
Tosca





Jeritza's impersonation, it lost its naturalness and efficacy. Both Lotte Lehmann and Geraldine Farrar were highly critical. It is no secret that there was a Lehmann-Jeritza feud, and professional jealousy may well have been involved as Farrar 'was surprised by the questionable flaunting of a well-cushioned and obvious posterior.'

Before her first appearance in *Tosca*, Farrar had coached with Sarah Bernhardt, 'if one could call her enthusiastic interest such... I greatly admired the composition of her first act where a huge Gothic chair, placed well down to the centre of the stage, allowed a variety of plastic movements and made more of a languishing appeal in the duet of the two lovers, in their ardent embrace, as well as a picturesque frame for my slender form.' Farrar explained of course that Bernhardt's injured knee meant that she could not stand erect without rest, and hence the chair.

Passing over Emmy Destinn, Dame Joan Hammond, Magda Olivero (who, incredibly, made her Metropolitan debut as *Tosca* aged 63 in 1975), Ljuba Welitsch and indeed practically

every other soprano who has essayed the title role, the name of Maria Callas remains synonymous with the opera.

Callas' dramatic intensity and subtlety as a singer/actress are clearly attested to in recordings, contemporary reviews of her performances and the invaluable, if imperfect, TV broadcast of Act 2 of the justly famous Zeffirelli production in February 1964. Callas' *Tosca* was deeply in love with Cavaradossi, and nowhere is this better expressed than in her reactions to Scarpia during the great confrontation in Act 2, where her silent reactions are, if possible, more expressive than her sung phrases.

Callas may not have had the advantage or privilege of direct contact with Puccini, Sardou or Bernhardt as some of her predecessors did, but as a unique, communicative artist, she created a detailed and individual characterisation which pays and repays detailed study.

'Vissi d'arte, vissi d'amore' sings *Tosca* in her great prayer in Act 2: does art come before love? Callas provides the answer uniquely.

Chris Ball © 1992



Lothar Koenigs

## Lothar Koenigs Conductor (Until 26 March)

Lothar Koenigs is Music Director of Welsh National Opera. Born in Aachen, Lothar studied piano and conducting at Cologne Conservatory. As a student he conducted several times at Tanglewood Festival. Positions include First Guest Conductor, Orquesta Sinfonica de Chile; Kapellmeister in several German opera houses; General Music Director, Osnabrück until 2003.

Engagements include *La bohème*, *Carmen*, *Eugene Onegin*, *The Magic Flute* (Hamburg State Opera); Italian première Giorgio Battistelli's *Prova d'Orchestra* (Rome Opera), *Turandot* (Sassari), *Katya Kabanova* (Teatro La Fenice Venice); *Wozzeck*, Janáček trilogy (*Jenůfa*, *Katya Kabanova*, *Makropoulos Case*), *Lohengrin* (Opéra de Lyon); led Henze's *Elegy for Young Lovers* (Ancona); *Don Giovanni* (Dresden); *Idomeneo* (Cologne); *Der Freischütz* (Semperoper Dresden); *Khovanshchina* (WNO; Bayerische Staatsoper); *Jenůfa* (La Scala); *Don Giovanni* (Vienna State Opera); *Tosca* (Teatro Sao Carlos Lisbon); led

Beethoven Orchester Bonn, Orchestre Philharmonique de Luxembourg, Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra Tokyo, Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, Radio Orchestra Saarbrücken, RAI Orchestra Turin, DSO Berlin, Orchestra dell'Accademia di Santa Cecilia Rome, Rotterdam Philharmonic; at request of composer, conducted music by Luciano Berio with Orchestra Sinfonica de Sao Paulo; conducted Orchestra dell'Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome), RAI Orchestra (Turin), Radio Symphony Orchestra Berlin; toured with Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra and Ben Heppner (Wagner programme); debut with Wiener Symphoniker (Bregenz Festival); concerts with RAI Orchestra in Milan, Dresden Philharmoniker in Verona; Krenek's *Karl V* (Bregenz Festival). Recent engagements include *Salome*, *Wozzeck* (WNO); *Katya Kabanova* (Cologne); *Don Giovanni* (Metropolitan Opera); concerts at Teatro Massimo Palermo; *Elektra* (La Monnaie). Future engagements include *Wozzeck* (Bayerische Staatsoper); *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (WNO).



Simon Phillippo

## Simon Phillippo Conductor (From 30 March)

Simon Phillippo studied at the Royal Academy of Music and Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge, where he completed his PhD in 2000. Following a year at the National Opera Studio, Simon was appointed to the music staff at Welsh National Opera, where he has conducted *Rigoletto*, *Madama Butterfly*, *The Magic Flute*, *The Barber of Seville*, *Chorus!*, *The Elixir of Love*, and *La Bohème*. He has also been chorus master for many WNO productions, including *Jephtha* and *The Sacrifice*, and for WNO recordings of *Jenůfa* and *Katya Kabanova*. Simon has conducted the Mozart Festival Orchestra at Cadogan Hall, London, and St George's Hall, Bradford; and he conducted the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Albert Hall in performances of *Madam Butterfly* in 2007 and *Tosca* in 2008. Simon was runner-up in the prestigious Leeds Conductors Competition in the summer of 2009, leading to further conducting engagements in Europe and the UK. He



Michael Blakemore

recently worked with the Brandon Hill Chamber Orchestra, and will conduct concerts with the RPO later this year.

### Michael Blakemore Director

Michael Blakemore became the first director to win a Tony award for the musical *Kiss Me Kate* and the play *Copenhagen* in the same year, 2000. For *Kiss Me Kate* he also won the Drama Desk and Outer Critics awards. Michael was Associate Director at National Theatre where productions included *The National Health*, *Long Day's Journey into Night*, *The Front Page*, *Macbeth*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *Plunder after the Fall*, *Copenhagen*. Elsewhere *Privates on Parade* for RSC; *Tosca* for WNO; *Don's Party*, *Widower's Houses* for Royal Court; Fryan's *Make and Break* at Lyric Hammersmith Theatre, where he was Resident Director and Haymarket; *Mr Peter's Connections* by Arthur Miller at Almeida Theatre. Other West End successes are *A Day in the Death of Joe Egg*, *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, *Forget-Me-Not*,



Benjamin Davis

*Design for Living*, *Knuckle*, *Separate Tables*, *All My Sons*, *Noises Off*, *Benefactors*, *Lettice and Lovage*, *Uncle Vanya*, *The Sisters Rosenweig*. On Broadway his many productions include three musicals, the Tony award-winning *City of Angels*; *The Life*, voted best musical of 1997 by the Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle and Drama League; *Kiss Me Kate* which received 12 Tony nominations. He also directed *Death Defying Acts*, three one act plays by David Mamet, Elaine May and Woody Allen. He has written and directed two films, *A Personal History of the Australian Surf* (Standard Film Award 1982) and *Country Life*. His novel *Next Season* (Simon and Shuster 1968) has been reissued in paperback. More recently Michael has directed *Democracy* (New York and London); *Embers* starring Jeremy Irons (London); *Deuce* and *Is He Dead?* (Broadway); *Afterlife* (National Theatre, London).

### Benjamin Davis Revival Director

Ben studied in the UK, France and Brazil. After teaching for six years he joined WNO in 2001 as a

staff director, has worked on over 20 productions for the company and now lives in Cardiff. He has also worked as staff director at ROH, Covent Garden and Canadian Opera Company, Toronto. Ben's own opera directing work includes: *Il tabarro*, *Suor Angelica* and *Gianni Schicchi* for Opera Zuid in the Netherlands; *Al Gran Sole Carico d'Amore* as associate director with Katie Mitchell for the Salzburg Festival; a mixed media staging of Britten's song cycle *Les Illuminations* for Cardiff International Dance Festival with National Dance Company Wales (Diversions) and productions of *Il tabarro* and *Star-Cross'd Lovers* for Welsh National Opera. Ben has also formed a close association with the work of director Richard Jones, directing revivals of his landmark, award-winning productions for WNO: *Hansel and Gretel*, *The Queen of Spades* and *Wozzeck*. Further revival directing credits include *Tosca* and *The Magic Flute* for WNO and staging's of *Rigoletto*, *La traviata*, *Carmen* and *Jephtha* at Birmingham Symphony Hall. In summer 2011 Ben will direct *Così fan tutte*, his first new production for WNO.



Ashley Martin-Davis

## Ashley Martin-Davis Designer

Ashley Martin-Davis studied at Central School of Art & Design and Motley Theatre Design School. He has designed internationally for theatre and opera.

Work in opera includes *The Gondoliers* (English National Opera), *The Ring Cycle*, (Opera Amazonas, Manaus, Brazil); *Cavalleria rusticana* and *Pagliacci* (Dallas Opera); *Capriccio* and *Daphne* (New York City Opera); *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *Ascanio in Alba* (Buxton Festival Opera); *The Elixir of Love* (Santa Fe Opera).

Theatre work includes *The Tempest* (Manchester Royal Exchange); *The Clean House* (Sheffield Studio); *5/11* and *The Gondoliers* (Chichester Festival Theatre); *Seven Doors*, *Three Women* and a *Piano Tuner* and *I Caught My Death in Venice* (Chichester Minerva Theatre); *Three Women* and a *Piano Tuner* and *Sunday Father* (Hampstead Theatre); *Tartuffe*, *The Winter's Tale* (National Theatre); *Scaramouche Jones* (Dublin Festival and UK tour).

Future work includes *Orlando Paladino* for Theater an der Wien.



Mark Henderson

## Mark Henderson Lighting Designer

Mark was the recipient of the 1992, 1995, 2000 and 2002 Laurence Olivier Awards for Lighting Design and in 2006 won a TONY award for *The History Boys* on Broadway.

Mark received a Welsh BAFTA for his work on the televised opening of Wales Millennium Centre. He has over 30 years' experience as a Lighting Designer and has designed extensively for all the major theatre, opera and dance companies in the UK and has lit over 50 West End productions. Broadway and West End credits include *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, *The Iceman Cometh*, *The Judas Kiss*, *Copenhagen*, *Democracy*, *Hamlet*, *The History Boys*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Les Parents Terribles*, *The Real Thing*, *Rowan Atkinson in Revue*. West End credits include *The Sound of Music*, *Marguerite*, *Grease is the Word*, *Amy's View*, *Our House*, *Up for Grabs*, *On An Average Day*, *Tonight's the Night*, *West Side Story*, *Spend Spend Spend*, *Neville's Island*, *Follies*, *Mutiny*, *Passion*, *A Few Good Men*, *As You Desire Me*. Other productions include *Sunset Boulevard*, *French*

and *Saunders Live*, *Eddie Izzard*. Opera and dance credits include productions for ENO, Royal Opera House, Welsh National Opera, Opera North, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Hong Kong Festival, The Royal Ballet, Rambert Dance and London Contemporary Dance Theatre. Television and film productions include *The Tall Guy*, *Rowan Atkinson in Boston*, *Under Milk Wood*, *Choir of the Year* for the BBC. Mark is an Associate and Lighting Consultant to the Royal National Theatre in London and Lighting Advisor to the Almeida Theatre.

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Paula Bradbury

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## Paula Bradbury Shepherd Boy

Born Saddleworth, studied Dance and Drama at Grange Arts Centre and Music at Welsh College of Music and Drama and Royal Northern College of Music. Winner of the Kodály Prize, Mabel Linwood Christopher Prize and Northern Musician's Recital Competition. Joined WNO in 1992 where roles include *Shepherd Boy Tosca* (recorded for Opus Television), *Page Rigoletto* (recorded for Teldec), *Noémie*



Julian Close

*Cendrillon*, Countess Ceprano *Rigoletto* (recorded for Opus Television), 1<sup>st</sup> Cretan Woman *Idomeneo*, Gretel Squire *Parsifal*, Gretel *Hansel and Gretel*, 4<sup>th</sup> Minister and Girl *The Doctor of Myddfai* (recorded for Collins Classics) and Marzelline *Leonore* in *Oporto*, Portugal. Paula has also performed *Ellen Lakme*, *La bohème* for Opera Box and London City Opera (open air in Malta) and *Suor Genoveva* for Opera Femina. Paula has been a project leader for WNO MAX creating the *Katerina* chorus and touring primary and secondary schools. Paula has also studied on the Certificate course in Touch Therapy and Movement Education. Concert work includes Creation for Voices for Hospices (Salford Cathedral), Chester Cathedral and with Northern Symphony Orchestra and recitals for Saddleworth Festival, Royal Northern College of Music, Cardiff City of Culture and Opera Box.

## Julian Close Angelotti

Julian Close was born in Cheshire. He gained a Doctorate in Applied

Physics at the University of Leeds and studied at the Royal Northern College of Music. Julian has appeared with WNO, ENO, Scottish Opera, Opera North, Mid-Wales Opera, Lyric Opera Dublin, Opera Project, and Wexford, Buxton, Northampton, Longborough and Iford Festivals and The Royal Albert Hall in a wide range of roles including Wotan, Fafner, Hunding, Hagen *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, Titirel *Parsifal*, Pogner *Die Meistersinger*, Colonna *Rienzi*, Dosifey *Khovanschina*, Vodnik *Rusalka*, Commendatore *Don Giovanni*, Grand Inquisitor *Don Carlos*, Pistol *Falstaff*, Sarastro and Sprecher *Die Zauberflöte*, Dr Bartolo *Le nozze di Figaro*, Count Walter *Luisa Miller*, Nilakantha *Lakme*, Méphistophélès *Faust*, Zuniga *Carmen*, Mayor *Jenůfa*, Collatinus *The Rape of Lucretia*, Timur *Turandot*, Colline *La bohème*, Don Basilio *Il barbière di Siviglia*, Ferrando *Il trovatore*, Bonze *Madam Butterfly*, Luther and Crespel *Les contes d'Hoffmann*, Sparafucile *Rigoletto*, Ramfis *Aida*, Loredano *I due foscari*, Nourabad *The Pearl Fishers* and Prince



Geraint Dodd

Boland *Fierrabras*. He has performed concerts across the UK and USA including *Les Noces* at the Barbican, London and the Lincoln Center, New York. Recently Black Bob / Tom *The Little Sweep* (Aldeburgh), Monteverdi's *Vespers* and Hercules and Charon in Handel's *Alceste* for the English Bach Festival. Engagements in 2010 include Truffaldino *Ariadne auf Naxos* (WNO); Bonze (Opera Project); King Marke *Tristan und Isolde* (concert performance with Northern Wagner Orchestra); Verdi *Requiem* (Fakenham Choral Society).

## Geraint Dodd Cavaradossi

Geraint was born in Rhosllanerchrugog, North Wales and studied at the RNCM in Manchester. Operatic roles include Cavaradossi *Tosca*, Pinkerton *Madam Butterfly*, Duke *Rigoletto*, Don José *Carmen* and Macduff *Macbeth* (WNO); Canio *Pagliacci* (Opera North; Opera Holland Park); Florestan *Fidelio*, Nadir *The Pearl Fishers*, title role in Massenet's *Werther* and Rodolfo *La bohème* (ETO); Turiddu *Cavalleria rusticana*



Robert Hayward



Elisabete Matos

(Raymond Gubbay); Calaf *Turandot* and Radames *Aida* (Mid Wales Opera). Geraint has worked with many leading conductors including Owain Arwel Hughes, David Lloyd Jones, Wilfred Boettcher and Stanislaw Skrowaczewski in works such as Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*, Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, Verdi's *Requiem* and Handel's *Messiah*. He made his concert debut in Europe with the Orquestre de Sinfonica Portuguesa in a performance of Beethoven's *9th Symphony* (Lisbon). Recent concert engagements include Verdi's *Requiem* (Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool) and Gounod's *Messe Solennelle De Sainte Cecile* (National Concert Hall, Dublin). Geraint is a frequent soloist in operatic galas with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in concert halls throughout Britain, promoted by Raymond Gubbay. Recent engagements include Canio *Pagliacci* for ENO and Beethoven's *9th Symphony* at St David's Hall, Cardiff conducted by Sir Charles Mackerras.

## Robert Hayward Scarpia (ex 21 April)

Robert Hayward studied at GSMD and NOS and joined Glyndebourne Touring Opera, making his debut as title role *Don Giovanni* in 1986.

Subsequent roles include Figaro/Count *Le nozze di Figaro*, title roles *Don Giovanni* and *Eugene Onegin*, Marcello *La bohème*, Mandryka *Arabella*, Tomsy *The Queen of Spades*, Escamillo *Carmen*, Sharpless *Madam Butterfly*, Golaud *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Jokanaan *Salome*, Germont *La traviata*, High Priest *Samson and Delila*, Nick Shadow *The Rake's Progress*, Ford *Falstaff*, Pizarro *Leonore*, Scarpia *Tosca*, Iago *Otello*, Dr Schön *Lulu*, Amfortas *Parsifal*.

He has appeared with ENO, WNO, ROH, Opera North, Scottish Opera, Glyndebourne Festival and Touring Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Minnesota Opera, Cincinnati Opera, San Diego Opera, New Israeli Opera, Stuttgart Opera and Bayerische Staatsoper. Recent engagements include Wotan/Wanderer *The Ring*, Jokanaan and revival of *Lulu* (ENO); title

role *Il prigioniero* (Frankfurt Opera); title role *Saul* (Opera North); title role *The Flying Dutchman*, title role *Mazepa*, Kurwenal *Tristan and Isolde*, Jokanaan (WNO); Simone *Florentine Tragedy*, Telramund *Lohengrin*, Mandryka (Frankfurt Opera); title role *Macbeth*, *Falstaff* (Opera North).

Future engagements include Baron Prus *The Makropoulos Case* (Opéra de Nantes); Telramund and title role *Bluebeard's Castle* (Frankfurt Opera); Telramund (ENO); Pizarro (WNO).

## Elisabete Matos Floria Tosca (Until 26 March)

Born in Braga (Portugal), Elisabete Matos studied singing and violin at the local conservatory and concluded her vocal studies in Madrid. After winning prizes in several singing competitions (*Belvedere* a.o.) she started her career with lyrical roles such as Pamina *The Magic Flute* and Countess *The Marriage of Figaro*. Her first engagements were followed by many debuts worldwide including Donna Elvira *Don Giovanni* and Alice *Falstaff* (Hamburg).



Alwyn Mellor



George Newton-Fitzgerald

Staatsoper); *Divinas palabras* alongside Plácido Domingo (Teatro Real Madrid); Donna Elvira, Mimi *La bohème* (Teatro Sao Carlos Lisbon). She then moved into the German and Italian lyric spinto repertoire including *Dolly Sly* (Washington; Teatro Regio, Torino and Nice); *Chimène Le Cid* (Seville; Washington); Elsa, Sieglinde, Katya Kabanova (Gran Teatro del Liceu); *Elisabetta Don Carlo*, *Amelia Simone Boccagnegra* (Madrid); *Tosca* (Palermo, Rome, Macerata, La Fenice Venice); *Madame Lidoine Carmelites* (Teatro alla Scala Milano); *Amelia Un ballo in maschera* (Naples); *Abigaille* (Toulon). Recent engagements include Senta *The Flying Dutchman*, *Turandot*, *Gioconda*, *Santuzza Cavalleria rusticana*, *Elisabeth Tannhäuser*. Elisabete has been working with notable conductors such as Barenboim, Mehti, Maazel, Muti and Gergiev amongst others. Present and future engagements include *Gioconda* (Tokyo); *Salome* (Lisbon); Senta (Madrid); Minnie *La fanciulla del West* (Metropolitan Opera) amongst many others.

## Alwyn Mellor Floria Tosca (From 30 March)

Born in Lancashire, Alwyn Mellor began her career at WNO, with whom she has enjoyed a fruitful collaboration in a wide range of roles. She has sung three seasons at Santa Fe Opera and other companies with whom she has appeared include the Canadian Opera Company, English National Opera, English Touring Opera, Glyndebourne Touring Opera, Opera Ireland and Opera North. Her current repertoire includes Adalgisa *Norma*, title role *La Wally*, *Santuzza Cavalleria rusticana*, Elettra *Idomeneo*, Ariadne *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Chrysothemis *Elektra*, Senta *Der fliegende Holländer* and Venus *Tannhäuser*.

In concert, she has appeared with orchestras including the BBC Concert Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, CBSO, the Hallé, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Manchester Camerata, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, as well as

internationally with the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra di Padova e del Veneto, Orchestre National de Lyon, Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg, Orchestre Symphonique et Lyrique de Nancy, Orquesta Simfónica de Barcelona, Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra and the Orquesta Sinfónica de Galicia.

Future engagements include Minnie *La fanciulla del West*, Sieglinde *Die Walküre* (Opera North); Isolde *Tristan und Isolde* (Grange Park Opera); Brünnhilde *Die Walküre* (Longborough Festival Opera); Ortlinde *Die Walküre* (Royal Opera House). In 2013 she sings Brünnhilde in Seattle Opera's bicentenary cycles of *Der Ring des Nibelungen*.

## George Newton-Fitzgerald Sciarrone

George Newton-Fitzgerald studied at the Birmingham Conservatoire graduating with a 1st class degree. Upon leaving he joined the cast of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat* playing the role of Reuben / Butler,



Jack O'Kelly

and on occasions, Jacob. Operatic roles include Dick Deadeye / Carpenter *HMS Pinafore* for D'Oyly Carte Opera Company; Herman *Les contes d'Hoffmann* and Count Ceprano *Rigoletto* for Mid-Wales-Opera; Baron Zeta *The Merry Widow* for Columbia Artistes; Marullo *Rigoletto* for European Chamber Opera; Aeneas *Dido and Aeneas* for the Ukraine State Opera. George is a member of WNO's chorus where roles have included Uncle Yakuside *Madama Butterfly*, Old Gypsy *Il trovatore*, Flora's Servant / The Messenger *La traviata* and Wig-Maker *Ariadne auf Naxos*. He has also worked with Chris de Burgh as his principal backing singer, both in the studio and on tour.

## Jack O'Kelly

### Gaoler

Jack O'Kelly is from County Carlow in Ireland. He studied with Veronica Dunne in Dublin, and won Best Male Voice in The Golden Voice of Ireland Competition. Jack's operatic debut was with Opera Theatre Company as Guglielmo *Così fan tutte*. In 1988 he sang Masetto *Don Giovanni* for Dublin Grand Opera. He has worked in oratorio and on the concert



Cárthaigh Quill

platform with the RTE orchestras and was a member of the RTE Chamber Choir before joining the WNO Chorus in 1988 where roles include Alessio *La sonnambula*, Baron Douphol *La traviata*, Man in Crowd *Tornrak*, José Castro *La fanciulla del West*, Marullo *Rigoletto*, Minister *Iphigénie en Tauride*, Silvano *Un ballo in maschera*, Gaoler *Tosca*, Registrar *Madam Butterfly*, Custom House Sergeant *La bohème*, Narumov *The Queen of Spades*, 2nd Nazarene *Salome*, Woodsman *Don Carlos*, Officer *The Barber of Seville* and Monterone *Rigoletto*.

## Cárthaigh Quill

### Spoletta

Born in Dublin, Ireland, Cárthaigh studied under Emmanuel Lawler at Dublin's DIT Conservatory of Music. He then moved to the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama where he studied with Eric Roberts and Angela Livingstone. Upon completing his studies at RWCMD Cárthaigh was awarded a place at the National Opera Studio. Roles include Monostatos *The Magic Flute*, The Mayor (Cover) *Albert Herring* with BYO; Rinuccio *Gianni Schicchi*



Simon Thorpe

and Mozart in Rimsky-Korsakov's *Mozart and Salieri* for Northern Ireland Opera Fringe; Rodolfo *La bohème* for the inaugural Glashule Festival Opera in Dublin. As a concert performer Cárthaigh has sung all over Wales and also in Italy, Switzerland, America, England and Ireland and has appeared on radio and television singing solo work. Cárthaigh has won many prizes including the O'Mara Cup for male voice at The Siemens Feis Ceoil and the Sir Geraint Evans bursary at RWCMD. Cárthaigh enjoys the support of Chris Ball, The Irish Arts Council and The Musicians Benevolent Fund.

## Simon Thorpe

### Scarpia (21 April)

Born in Tasmania, Simon Thorpe studied at the Guildhall School of Music, where he was awarded the Harold Rosenthal Prize. He spent a year at the National Opera Studio. A finalist in the Kathleen Ferrier Competition, he now studies with Robert Dean. Engagements include Escamillo *Carmen*, Pacheco *Inés de Castro* (Scottish Opera); Zurga *Les pêcheurs de perles*, Alfio *Cavalleria rusticana*



Henry Waddington

(Dorset Opera); Zurga, Lescaut *Manon Lescaut*, Sharpless *Madama Butterfly* (Opera Holland Park); Escamillo, Giorgio Germont *La traviata* (ETO); Donald *Billy Budd*, Belcore *The Elixir of Love*, Foreman *Jenůfa*, Marcello *La bohème*, Ford *Falstaff* (WNO); Duke *Roméo et Juliette*, Kuligin *Katya Kabanova*, Sharpless, Marullo *Rigoletto* (Opera North); Guglielmo *Le Villi* (Chelsea Opera Group); Sharpless, Scarpia *Tosca* (Lyric Opera, Dublin); Dr Falke *Die Fledermaus* (London Lyric Opera); *Eternal Light: A Requiem* (Rambert Dance Company). International engagements include *The Steward Flight*, Roucher *Andrea Chénier* (State Opera of South Australia); The Forester *The Cunning Little Vixen*, Private Willis *Iolanthe*, Montano *Otello* (Opera Australia); Sharpless (Singapore Lyric Opera); Ankarström *Un ballo in maschera* (Cork Opera 2005). Recordings include *Second Mate* / Arthur Jones *Billy Budd* with Kent Nagano and the Hallé (Erato). Future engagements include Giorgio Germont *La traviata* (Opéra Nomade).

## Henry Waddington Sacristan

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 *The Barber of Seville*, Bartolo *The Marriage of 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**

David Adams  
Lowri Porter  
Simon Lewis  
Martin Kegelmann  
Robert Tonkin  
Susan Plessner  
Jane Atkinson  
Peter Lilley  
Mathias Maurer  
Emma Menzies  
Catherine Hings  
Laurence Kempton

## **Second Violin**

Antony Tarlton  
Donald McNaught  
Ann Jones  
Gillian Bradley  
Emma Waller  
Luke Roskams  
Marilyn Shewring  
Jane West  
Deborah Neath  
James Slater

## **Viola**

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

## **Cello**

Benedict Rogerson /  
Jonathan Ayling /  
Rosie Biss  
Christopher Hodges  
Arthur Davies  
Simon Davison  
Alexandra Robinson  
Dewi Watkins

## **Double Bass**

Mikeal Price  
Mary Condliffe  
Simon Phillips  
Ian Hall

## **Flute**

Jonathan Burgess  
Nicola Dowton  
Barbara Brown

## **Piccolo**

Barbara Brown  
Nicola Dowton

## **Oboe**

Sasha Calin /  
Stephen Hudson  
David Probert

## **Cor Anglais**

Gillian Taylor

## **Clarinet**

Leslie Craven  
Jane Calderbank /  
Daniel Rye /  
Katie Lockhart

## **Bass Clarinet**

Jane Calderbank /  
Daniel Rye /  
Katie Lockhart

## **Bassoon**

Stephen Marsden  
Claire Gainford

## **Contra Bassoon**

Christopher Vale

## **Horn**

Angus West  
Donald Clist  
David Shillaw  
James Mildred

## **Trumpet**

Dean Wright  
Martin McHale  
Robert Johnston

## **Trombone**

Roger Cutts  
John Hendy

## **Bass Trombone**

Alan Swain  
Ian Fasham /  
Martyn Hunter

## **Timpani**

Patrick King

## **Percussion**

Andrew Cookson  
Jonathan Helm  
Philip Girling

## **Harp**

Katherine Thomas

## **Celeste / Organ**

Stephen Wood

# 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