



Richard Strauss

Der Rosenkavalier



This broadcast of *Der Rosenkavalier* marked both a new arrival and a return that would prove to be a farewell. Georg Solti had burst onto the international musical scene the year before with his recording of Wagner's *Das Rheingold* for Decca. Although Solti's career had started in the 1930s, and continued after the war with posts at the Bavarian State Opera and in Frankfurt, it was the recording of *Das Rheingold* that made him globally known. *Der Rosenkavalier* was an auspicious choice for his Covent Garden opera debut since he had worked with Richard Strauss while in Munich after the war. Critics were impressed, praising 'a rich orchestral performance that was full of dramatic élan' as well as his 'fluent, transparent, refined and rhythmically strong' conducting. The Covent Garden management also liked what they saw (and heard) persuading him to become music director of the company in 1961, a post he held for 10 years. Solti is widely credited with turning Covent Garden from a middle ranking to a top tier opera house where all the international stars wanted to perform.

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, singing the Marschallin, was returning to Covent Garden after an absence of six years. Schwarzkopf had sung a wide variety of roles at Covent Garden while a member of the company between 1947 and 1953, including Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier*. Schwarzkopf became an international superstar based in Vienna during the 1950s and appeared in numerous recordings for EMI, including a well-received *Der Rosenkavalier* under Herbert von Karajan. Schwarzkopf became the greatest Marschallin of her day, combining a truly beautiful voice with the required pathos and attention to detail. This live broadcast finds her with several years of experience already in the role, and preserves her wonderful ability to shape her voice to give added meaning to the text. Peter Heyworth, writing in *The Observer*, believed this 'prodigiously accomplished' singer to be the only one fit 'to don the illustrious mantle of Lotte Lehmann.' Although she would return to London many times in the concert hall, and the recording studio, she never again sang at Covent Garden after these performances of *Der Rosenkavalier*.

Yugoslavian soprano Sena Jurinac sings Octavian. She made her debut at Covent Garden the previous season, singing *Madama Butterfly*, but had appeared regularly at Glyndebourne since 1951. She was a notable interpreter of Richard Strauss, making the first commercial recording of the Four Last Songs for EMI in 1951, and later becoming a famed Ariadne and Marschallin. Heyworth thought Jurinac gave 'the performance of the evening' offering the audience 'a glorious voice, gloriously used, musical style and sensibility to psychological detail.' It was a performance, he thought, 'whose fame will surely live for years to come.'

Hanny Steffek, who sings Sophie, was born in Poland but spent the vast majority of her career at the Vienna Staatsoper specialising in the operas of Mozart and Strauss. She can be heard as Despina in the EMI recording of *Così fan tutte* under Karl Böhm. This run of *Der Rosenkavalier* was her only appearance at Covent Garden, though she returned to the UK in 1965 when the Bavarian State Opera brought another of her signature roles, Christine in Strauss's *Intermezzo*, to the Edinburgh Festival.

German bass Kurt Böhme is Baron Ochs. Böhme was better known in Britain for his Wagnerian bass roles (Hagen and Hunding), but during his more than fifty-year career he actually sang quite a wide variety of roles. Mozart and Strauss may have formed the heart of his repertoire, but his versatile voice graced operas by Auber, Orff, Lortzing, Egk, and many others. He would return frequently to Covent Garden until 1967.



PACO 142
CDs 1 & 2 of 3

strauss

der rosenkavalier

elisabeth schwarzkopf
sena jurinac
kurt böhme
ronald lewis
hanny steffek
judith pierce
raymond nilsson
monica sinclair
kenneth macdonald
rhydderch davies
david tree
john dobson
leonard law

covent garden opera orchestra and chorus
conducted by georg solti

live broadcast performance, 7 december 1959



CD 1 R. STRAUSS Der Rosenkavalier

ACT ONE

- 1 Einleitung (3:42)
- 2 Wie du warst! Wie du bist! (3:11)
- 3 Du bist mein Bub' (4:28)
- 4 Marie Theres'! ... Octavian! (7:31)
- 5 Selbstverständlich empfängt mich (8:11)
- 6 Hat sie schon einmal mit einem Kavalier (8:43)
- 7 Drei arme adelige Waisen (2:57)
- 8 Di rigori armato (2:18)
- 9 Als Morgengabe (3:13)
- 10 Mein lieber Hippolyte (3:39)
- 11 Da geht er hin, der aufgeblasene (5:14)
- 12 Ach, du bist wieder da! (6:06)
- 13 Die Zeit, die ist ein sonderbar Ding (6:52)
- 14 Quinquin, Er soll jetzt gehn (4:12)
- 15 Ich hab' ihn nicht einmal geküsst (4:10)

CD 2 ACT TWO

- 1 Ein ernster Tag, ein großer Tag! (5:22)
- 2 Mir ist die Ehre widerfahren (7:54)
- 3 Ich kenn' ihn schon recht wohl (4:17)
- 4 Ich präsentiere Euer Gnaden (5:21)
- 5 Ganz meine Maßen! (4:37)
- 6 Wird Sie das Mannsbild da heiraten (3:26)
- 7 Mit Ihren Augen voller Tränen (3:57)
- 8 Eh bien, Mamsell (4:06)
- 9 Mord! Mord! Mein Blut! (4:08)
- 10 Sieht ihn nicht an (5:15)
- 11 Da lieg' ich! (6:15)
- 12 Luft da! (5:08)

Covent Garden Opera Orchestra & Chorus *Georg Solti*

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO
PACO 142

XR remastering by Andrew Rose

Cover artwork based on a photograph
of Elisabeth Schwartzkopf and Sena
Jurinac in Der Rosenkavalier

BBC Broadcast recording
Covent Garden Opera, London
7 December 1959

Total duration: 3hr 16:56

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PRISTINE
AUDIO



Richard Strauss

Der Rosenkavalier



COVENT GARDEN'S "Der Rosenkavalier," which has begun to look dowdy and has been known to be dull, had a new infusion of life last night when it was sung in German, for the first time since the war, and cast with three stars of international status (with stalls at two and a half guineas) in a sold-out house.

There is a new and even fussier production by Hans Busch in which every waiter is also a waltzer. But the sets are mostly the same, Georg Solti conducted, getting stirring playing from the orchestra, but little of the right silky sheen. The success of the evening was Kurt Boehme as Baron Ochs, portly and gleeful, with a touch of Margaret Rutherford here and there.

Sena Jurinac is a beautifully studied Octavia, wonderfully true in feeling and poise. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, singing if not quite at her best, at least often with meltingly beautiful inflections, looked young and pretty—beyond what is perhaps wanted. Some of her phrasing was angelic, but this is much more the Dresden figurine, the superb soubrette than the conception of the Marschallin, which lingers from the days of Lotte Lehmann...

Philip Hope-Wallace, The Guardian, 5 December 1959

A LITTLE vulgar, not a little gross, too clever by half, quite decidedly "unprogressive," and, worst of all, preposterously successful, "Rosenkavalier" is to some people unendurable and unforgivable. Yet how right the broad operatic public is to have taken it, warts and all, to its heart. It may not be a great score, yet for all that it contrives by the skin of its teeth to be a great opera, and two things make it so. It has in the first place a unique and unmistakable atmosphere. Open the score at any page and the haunting aura of that Viennese never-never land, at once sensuous and nostalgic, lightheaded and melancholy, and shot through with ironic awareness of its own ambivalence, assails the nostrils, as distinctively as the air of "Tristan" or "Falstaff." That in itself is a mark of genius, for it is the rarest of achievements.

And then thanks in part to the inspiration of Hofmannsthal's wonderfully sensitive libretto, Strauss gave the world no fewer than three of the richest characters of the operatic stage. It is just this richness of character, set against so distinctive a backcloth of place and mood, that makes an all-star performance, such as Covent Garden assembled for the opera's revival on Friday, so beguiling a prospect.

Of all present-day singers Elisabeth Schwarzkopf would seem by far the best equipped to don the illustrious mantle of Lotte Lehmann in the role of the Marschallin, for she is a prodigiously accomplished singer with ability to draw a remarkable variety of colour and expression from her voice. Here for once is "the young and beautiful woman of thirty-two" that Strauss called for; and then Mme Schwarzkopf does not make the mistake of asking us to take her little adventure with Oktavian too seriously.

Peter Heyworth, The Observer, 6 December 1959

Producer's Note

The source recording used for this release was a very well preserved taped copy of the BBC FM broadcast. Despite its age, dropouts were very infrequent throughout most of the recording and sound quality was excellent. I was able to further improve on this with XR remastering and Ambient Stereo processing. I chose to retain the BBC announcement at the end of the opera, which was all that survives. Andrew Rose



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CD 3 of 3

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CD 3 R. STRAUSS Der Rosenkavalier

ACT THREE

- 1 Einleitung (5:20)
- 2 Haben Euer Gnaden noch (3:47)
- 3 Nein, nein! I trink' kein Wein (4:51)
- 4 Die schöne Musik! (4:17)
- 5 Da und da und da und da! (9:15)
- 6 Bin glücklich über Maßen (10:44)
- 7 Leupold, wir gehn! (1:52)
- 8 Mein Gott, es war nicht mehr als (7:22)
- 9 Marie Theres'! ... Hab' mir's gelobt (6:55)
- 10 Spür' nur dich (8:23)

CAST

Feldmarschallin Fürstin Werdenberg - Elisabeth Schwarzkopf
Baron Ochs auf Lerchenau - Kurt Böhme
Octavian, a young nobleman - Sena Jurinac
Herr von Faninal, a merchant, newly ennobled - Ronald Lewis
Sophie, his daughter - Hanny Steffek
Mistress Marianne Leitmetzerin, her duenna - Judith Pierce
Valzacchi, an intriguer - Raymond Nilsson
Annina, his partner - Monica Sinclair
An Italian Singer - Kenneth MacDonald
A Police Inspector - Rhydderch Davies
Majordomo to the Princess - David Tree
Majordomo to Faninal - John Dobson
A Landlord - David Tree
An Attorney - Rhydderch Davies
Leopold, Baron Ochs's bodyservant - Leonard Law

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