



Rediscovering, restoring, recording and performing  
the forgotten operatic heritage of the 19th century

## NEW RELEASE - MARCH 2019



### DONIZETTI *L'Ange de Nisida*

Opera in four acts

Joyce El-Khoury, David Junghoon Kim,  
Laurent Naouri, Vito Priante, Evgeny Stavinsky

Royal Opera Chorus & Orchestra of the Royal Opera  
House

Sir Mark Elder, conductor

**World Premiere**

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Sample track	Act III Scene 8: 'Je maudis cette alliance / Grâce ô Roi, pour cette offence' (3mins 02secs)

**Opera Rara presents, 179 years after it was written, the world premiere recording of a Donizetti 'lost' masterpiece, restored and brought thrillingly back to life. Written in 1839 for the Théâtre de la Renaissance in Paris, rehearsals started but the theatre went bankrupt and the opera was never performed – until 2018. Taken from two acclaimed concert performances at the Royal Opera House, *L'Ange de Nisida* is a fascinating and passionate drama, full of exciting vocal writing, composed by Donizetti near to the end of his life.**

Countess Sylvia de Linarès, <i>mistress to the King of Naples</i> .....	Joyce El-Khoury
Leone de Casaldi, <i>an exiled soldier</i> .....	David Junghoon Kim
Don Fernand d'Aragon, <i>King of Naples</i> .....	Vito Priante
Don Gaspar, <i>chamberlain to the King of Naples</i> .....	Laurent Naouri
The Monk / Father Superior .....	Evgeny Stavinsky

Royal Opera Chorus  
Orchestra of the Royal Opera House  
Sir Mark Elder, *conductor*  
Recorded live at Royal Opera House, London, on 18 and 21 July 2018



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**IN THE PRESS...** *about the Royal Opera House performances on 18 and 21 July 2018 from which the recording is produced.*

"The audiences at Covent Garden and the record-buying public are in for a treat."  
Richard Lawrence, **Gramophone**

"Opera Rara deserve praise and gratitude ... This was well worth waiting 178 years for."  
Brian David, **Opera Canada**

"Elder's mastery of the score was particularly evident in the extended quartet in the Act 2 finale and the mighty ensemble that closes Act 3. With the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House sharing the stage with the soloists and chorus, the variety and subtlety of Donizetti's instrumentation was revealed to the full, memorably so in the richly-textured string writing of the final scene." Yehuda Shapiro, **Opera**

"The orchestra was on top form, while there was not a single weak link among the soloists."  
Sam Smith, **MusicOMH**

"An angelic premiere worth waiting for." Nick Kimberley, **Evening Standard**

"Important Donizetti premiere splendidly performed. ... One hopes for a never-ending stream of revelation while in the meantime being unutterably grateful for *L'Ange*."  
Seen and Heard International, **Colin Clarke**

"With such luxury casting, including lusty contributions from the chorus of the Royal Opera, Donizetti's ensemble-writing sparkled.... Mark Elder is the first conductor ever to perform this abandoned piece, and on the strength of this performance, *L'Ange de Nisida* deserves a full staging". Amanda Holloway, **Critics Circle**

"*L'Ange de Nisida* is richly worthy of revival and its sterling qualities are honoured by Opera Rara's fine performance." Rupert Christiansen, **The Telegraph**

"Mark Elder's commitment and concentration were noteworthy. There was not the smallest motif in the choral or orchestral parts that was not carefully, lovingly gestured and nurtured. Both Chorus and Orchestra demonstrated an excellent appreciation of style and a feeling for the dramatic character of the piece, and Elder's energy was unflagging throughout the two and a half hours of music.... this was a tremendous performance which revealed a sure sense of bel canto idiom and a powerful tenor with plenty of penetrating presence.... we are indebted to Opera Rara for yet another 'first' and for their courage, commitment and stamina in pursuing the rare and vanished in this repertoire." Claire Seymour, **Opera Today**

"Having the chance to hear the premiere of a mature Donizetti opera does not come every day. ... I look forward to the recording immensely, but I am also hoping some enterprising company gives the premiere staging." Robert Hugill, **Planet Hugill**



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"The Royal Opera and Opera Rara have unquestionably done it proud. Mark Elder conducts with passion and elan, and the singing is consistently exciting. Vito Priante's outstanding Fernand is all preening sensuality and fiery, if hypocritical authority, while Joyce El-Khoury's ravishing Sylvia combines vulnerability with tremendous dignity. David Junghoon Kim sings Leone's high-lying arias with superb ease, and Laurent Naouri makes an engagingly funny Gaspar. Mark Elder and an outstanding cast prove that this once abandoned opera is more than a curiosity." Tim Ashley, **The Guardian**

"...thoroughly satisfying performance." Alexander Campbell, **Classical Source**

"*L'Ange de Nisida* is a beautifully constructed piece which made for a thoroughly enjoyable evening, as well as being a real advertisement for the little-known genre of opera semiseria. Let's hope someone stages it soon." David Karlin, **Bachtrack**

"The Opera Rara recording based on these performances will certainly be a worthwhile addition to the Donizetti discography." David Nice, **The Art Desk**

## L'ANGE DE NISIDA

In July 2018, Opera Rara – in their fourth collaboration with the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden – presented the world première of Donizetti's *L'Ange de Nisida*, under the baton of its Artistic Director Sir Mark Elder.

*L'Ange de Nisida* was due to be among Donizetti's first operas to be premiered in Paris after the composer's move to the French capital in 1838. The project had to be abandoned, though, when the commissioning theatre, the Théâtre de la Renaissance, went bankrupt. Although Donizetti would later use portions of its score in *La Favorite* and in *Don Pasquale*. *L'Ange de Nisida* was long deemed too fragmentary to be capable of reconstruction. However, opinions were changed in 2009 thanks to extensive research in the Paris archives by the Italian scholar Candida Mantica and, over the last 10 years, the 800-page score has been restored. As Roger Parker, Répertoire Consultant to Opera Rara, explains, "L'Ange de Nisida will make people think about Donizetti's late style in a different way. It will rewrite how we think about him as a composer, in particular about the breadth of his musical inspiration."



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## **OPERA RARA**

Opera Rara's mission is to rediscover, restore, record and perform the lost operatic heritage of the 19th century.

Opera Rara has a catalogue of over 100 recordings, including 57 complete operas, available worldwide via CD or digital download.

Since Sir Mark Elder's appointment as Artistic Director in 2011, the company has enjoyed unprecedented artistic success with recordings of Offenbach's *Fantasio*, Gounod's *La Colombe*, Donizetti's *Linda di Chamounix*, *Maria di Rohan*, *Rita*, *Belisario* and the critically acclaimed *Les Martyrs*. *Fantasio* and *Les Martyrs* have both won best 'CD (complete opera)' at the International Opera Awards in 2015 and 2016 respectively. Other recent releases include Bellini's first opera, *Adelson e Salvini*, Donizetti's *Le Duc d'Albe* and Leoncavallo's *Zazà*.

Opera Rara discovers and works with the best young talent as well as established artists. A young Renée Fleming made her first full-length operatic recording with Opera Rara. Bruce Ford made most of his recordings on the label, artists including Lucy Crowe, Carmen Giannattasio, Sarah Connolly, Michael Spyres, Joyce El-Khoury, Ermonela Jaho, Daniela Barcellona, Colin Lee, Katarina Karnéus, Angela Meade, Erin Morley, Christopher Maltman and Christopher Purves have all worked on recent Opera Rara projects.

Future plans include the recording of Puccini's first opera, *le Willis*, in its original one act-version, with the London Philharmonic Orchestra (release: Autumn 2019) and a studio recording of Donizetti's *Il Paria*, with Albina Shagimuratova (release: Spring 2020), marking the return of the Russian coloratura soprano on the Opera Rara label.

## **SIR MARK ELDER CH. CBE** Opera Rara Artistic Director

Described by both The Sunday Times and BBC Music Magazine as "*a born-again Donizettian*", Sir Mark Elder made his first recording for Opera Rara - Donizetti's *Dom Sébastien, roi de Portugal* - in 2005 and made a further three recordings with the company before accepting the title of Artistic Director in April 2011.

As well as a continuing focus on *bel canto*, Sir Mark's tenure as Artistic Director has seen Opera Rara renew its interest in 19<sup>th</sup> century French repertoire, with the UK première and release of Offenbach's *Fantasio*, which went on to win the CD (Complete Opera) category at the 2015 International Opera Awards, and Gounod's 1860 opéra-comique, *La Colombe* (ORC53), with the Hallé. The release of *Le Duc d'Albe* (ORC54) marked Elder's 8<sup>th</sup> Donizetti title for the company following *Les Martyrs* (ORC52) which was awarded the 2016 International Opera Award for CD (Complete Opera).

In addition to his activities with Opera Rara, Sir Mark is Music Director of the Hallé and Principal Artist of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. He is also a frequent guest of the world's most prominent opera houses including the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; the Metropolitan Opera in New York; Opéra national de Paris; the Bayreuth Festival; and Glyndebourne Festival Opera.

Sir Mark Elder was knighted in 2008, was awarded a CBE in 1989 and created a Companion of Honour in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2017. He won an Olivier Award in 1991 for his outstanding work at ENO and in May 2006 he was named Conductor of the Year by the Royal Philharmonic Society. He was awarded Honorary Membership of the Royal Philharmonic Society in 2011.



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## **JOYCE EL-KHOURY**

### **SOPRANO**

Lebanese-Canadian soprano Joyce El-Khoury studied at the University of Ottawa, the Academy of Vocal Arts, Philadelphia, and the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artists Development Program, New York. Opera engagements include Imogene (*Il pirata*) for Opéra National de Bordeaux and in St Gallen, Violetta for Glyndebourne Festival, Welsh National Opera, Dutch National Opera, Savonlinna Opera Festival and Canadian Opera Company, Léila (*Les Pêcheurs de perles*) in Bordeaux, Maria Stuarda for Seattle Opera, Desdemona (*Otello*) for Castleon Festival, Musetta (*La bohème*) for Teatro Real, Bavarian State Opera, Canadian Opera Company and Dutch National Opera, Mimì (*La bohème*) for the Canadian Opera Company, Micaëla (*Carmen*) for Santa Fe Opera and Rosalinde (*Die Fledermaus*) for Vancouver Opera.

Concert engagements include an appearance with the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, Beethoven's *Missa solemnis* with Munich Philharmonic Orchestra and Lorin Maazel, the title role in *Rusalka* at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw with James Gaffigan, Pauline (Donizetti's *Les Martyrs*) at the Southbank Centre with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Mark Elder, Antonia (Donizetti's *Belisario*) at the Barbican, Rossini's *Stabat Mater* with Orchestre de Paris and Jésus López Cobos and galas with Juan Diego Flórez at the Beiteddine Festival with the NDR Symphony Orchestra. Her recordings include *Les Martyrs*, *Belisario* and *Écho* for Opera Rara.

## **DAVID JUNGHOOON KIM**

### **TENOR**

Korean tenor David Junghoon Kim was a member of the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme 2015–17, singing roles including Ballad Seller (*Il tabarro*), Arturo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Ruiz (Il trovatore), Flavio (Norma), Nathanaël (Les Contes d'Hoffmann), Lamplighter (*Manon Lescaut*), Italian Singer (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Gastone de Letorières (*La traviata*), Augustin Moser (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*), Count of Lerma (*Don Carlo*) and Pong (*Turandot*).

Kim studied at the Seoul National University. His professional engagements include Rodolfo (*La bohème*) in Seoul and an Independence Commemoration Concert with Myung-Whun Chung at Sejong Art Centre and, more recently, Alfredo Germont (*La traviata*) for Cologne Opera and Roméo (*Roméo et Juliette*) for Grange Park Opera.

Competition successes include first prize in the Voci Verdiane competition in Busseto, third prize in the International Singing Competition in Seoul, first prize and the Plácido Domingo Prize in the Francisco Viñas competition in Barcelona, reaching the semi-final in the Concours de Reine Elizabeth in Brussels, Prince Rainier III Voice Master Prize in the Concours Monte-Carlo and first prize and Audience Prize in the Toulouse International Singing Competition.

## **LAURENT NAOURI**

### **BASS**

Laurent Naouri sings for the world's leading opera companies in a broad repertory of around forty roles. His notable engagements include the four villains (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*) in Paris, Madrid, Orange, Zürich, Milan, Barcelona, Munich and for the Metropolitan Opera, New York, Golaud (*Pelléas et Mélisande*) for Paris Opéra, Teatro Real, the Liceu, in Berlin and Glasgow and for the Salzburg and Aix-en-Provence festivals, Count Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*) in Aix-en-Provence and Tokyo, Verdi's Sir John Falstaff for Opéra de Lyon, Santa Fe and for Glyndebourne Festival, Pandolfe (*Cendrillon*) for the Liceu and the Metropolitan Opera, Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*) for the Metropolitan Opera, Giorgio Germont (*La traviata*) in



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Santa Fe, Tokyo and Dallas and Méphistophélès (*La Damnation de Faust*) and Ruprecht (*The Fiery Angel*) for Opéra de Lyon.

Naouri has also sung in contemporary opera, including Vautrin in the world premiere of Luca Francesconi's *Trompe la Mort* for Paris Opéra. He appears widely in concert, including appearances with the Monteverdi Choir and Orchestra and Sir John Eliot Gardiner at the BBC Proms and Edinburgh Festival.

## **VITO PRIANTE**

### **BARITONE**

Priante was born in Naples in 1979 and studied German and French literature before making his professional debut in 2002 as Uberto (*La serva padrona*) in Florence. He has since performed throughout Europe and the USA, for opera companies, festivals and venues including La Scala, Milan, Bavarian State Opera, Vienna State Opera, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Los Angeles Opera, the BBC Proms and the Salzburg Festival. His repertory includes Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro* and *Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Leporello (*Don Giovanni*), Alidoro (*La Cenerentola*), Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*), Prosdócimo (*Il turco in Italia*) and Belcore (*L'elisir d'amore*).

Priante is in demand as a concert artist with engagements including *Betulia liberata*, *Messiah* and Mozart's Requiem under Riccardo Muti, Haydn's Stabat Mater at the Salzburg Festival and *Armida* with the Concertgebouw. His recordings include, on DVD, *Le nozze di Figaro* (2012 Glyndebourne Festival), *Flaminio* (Arthus Musik) and *Motezuma* (Dynamic), and on CD *Floridante* (Archiv), *Alcina* (Archiv) and *Pietro il grande* (Dynamic).

## **EVGENY STAVINSKY**

### **BASS**

Russian bass Evgeny Stavinsky graduated from the Moscow Academy of Choral Art, and was a prize-winner in the Riccardo Zandonai International Competition in 2003 and 2009. He became a member of Kolobov Novaya Opera Theatre of Moscow in 2007, his roles for the company including Thoas (*Iphigénie en Tauride*), Ruslan (*Ruslan and Lyudmila*), Pimen (*Boris Godunov*), Prince Gremin (Eugene Onegin), Malyuta-Skuratov (The Tsar's Bride), Prince of Galich (*Prince Igor*), Méphistophélès (*Faust*), King Heinrich (*Lohengrin*), King Marke (*Tristan und Isolde*) and La Roche (*Capriccio*). Engagements elsewhere include Raimondo Bidebent (*Lucia di Lammermoor*) for Teatro Comunale di Bologna, Oroveso (*Norma*) for Teatro Massimo di Palermo, Méphistophélès for Hungarian State Opera, Padre Guardiano (*La forza del destino*) for Theater Basel and Don Basilio (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) for the Mariinsky Theatre, St Petersburg. Stavinsky has performed in Novaya Opera's gala concerts Parade of Basses and Baritones and *Viva Verdi!*, and in the staged productions *Bravissimo! Rossini* and *This is Opera!*. He has sung with orchestras including the National Philharmonic Orchestra of Russia and the Russian National Orchestra, and is a conductor of Dubna Symphony Orchestra.