

## OPERAS FOR MAY 2024

<b>May 1</b>	Tchaikovsky	The Enchantress
8	Donizetti	Lucrezia Borgia
15	Prokofiev	Love for Three Oranges
22	Mozart	The Magic Flute
29	Giordano	Fedora

### Opera Stories

**THE ENCHANTRESS** Pytor Tchaikovsky. Opera in 4 acts with libretto by Ippolit Shpazhinsky

**Roles:**

Prince Nikita Danilych Kurlyatev, the Grand Prince's deputy in Nizhny Novgorod – Mikhail Kiselev (baritone)

Princess Yevpraksiya Romanovna, his wife

Vera Borisenko (mezzo-soprano)

Prince Yuri, their son

Georgy Nelepp (tenor)

Mamyrov, an old deacon

Aleksey Korolev (bass)

Nenila, his sister, a lady-in-waiting to the Princess

Anna Matyyuchina (mezzo-soprano)

Ivan Zhuran, valet of the Prince

Mikhail Skazin (bass-baritone)

Natasha, nicknamed "Kuma", keeper of a wayside inn at a crossing of the Oka River, a young woman

The enchantress;

Foka, her uncle

Natalya Sokolova (soprano)

Polya, her friend

Anatoly Tikhonov (baritone)

Balakin, a guest from Nizhny Novgorod

Vera Gradova (soprano)

Potap, a merchant guest

Sergey Zladkopeztsev (tenor)

Lukash, a merchant guest

Leonid Khachaturov (bass-baritone)

Kichiga, a pugilist

Aleksey Usmanov (tenor)

Payisy, a vagabond in the guise of a monk

Geaddy Troytsky (bass)

Kudma, a sorcerer

Pavel Korobkov (character tenor)

Pavel Pontryagin (baritone)

The USSR Radio Large Chorus; Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra; Conductor — Samuil Samosud

**Place:** Central Russia. Time: the 15<sup>th</sup> century

**Synopsis**

**Act 1:** Guests flock to the house of the beautiful Natasha, nicknamed "Kuma", a keeper of a wayside inn at a crossing of the Oka River — the whole of Nizhny Novgorod rings with her famous courtesy and hospitality. The townsfolk gather here to make merry, have some wine and have a rest. That is why the wives of Nizhny Novgorod call her 'the enchantress' and have started a rumour that she is a witch who cast spells on other women's husbands. An old deacon Mamyrov also dislikes Natasha's life. The guests' revelry, the hostess's wealth, and her power over common people sicken him. At the deacon's instigation, Prince Kurlyatev, the Grand Prince's deputy in Nizhny Novgorod, comes to Natasha in order to drive the gathering away and demolish the inn. However the sly and pleasant hostess knows how to soothe a menacing visitor with her endearing words and tender look, and most of all with her beauty. The Prince gives in to her charm, lets her sit him down at the table, accepts a cup of expensive wine, and having drained his goblet gives Natasha a ring from his finger. Wishing to teach Mamyrov a lesson, Natasha advises the Prince to make the deacon dance with the jesters. Mamyrov cannot help but obey. The merrymaking at Kuma's place goes on.

**Act 2:** Princess Yevpraksiya, the Prince's spouse, is sad and lonely. She calls Mamyrov and asks him where her husband is. Taking vengeance on the Prince and Natasha for his humiliation, the deacon accuses them of intimate connection. The insulted Princess tries to hide her turmoil and offence before her son Yuri and, for a short while, she manages to

convince him that nothing bothers their family. In the meantime, Mamyrov sends Payisy, a vagabond in the guise of a monk, to the inn to watch over Kuma.

The Prince returns home and invites his wife to have a conversation about their son's future wedding, but instead the Princess changes the subject to speak of her husband's 'cheating' with a common woman. The Princess urges her spouse to remember his duty and threatens to complain to the elders of the Lavra. In response, the Prince threatens her with taking the veil. [Sending her to a convent].

A vengeful crowd rushes into the yard of the Prince's castle pursuing one of the Prince's people for excess and asking the young Prince Yuri, known for his equity to judge. Mamyrov demands that the rebels be punished. However Yuri takes the people's side. The Princess reproves her son for intruding in his father's affairs, while the monk Payisy arrives at that moment to tell the Princess that her husband, the Prince is at Kuma's place again. Giving way to her despair, the Princess tells Yuri about her husband's infidelity. Yuri swears to avenge his mother and kill Kuma.

**Act 3:** The older Prince Kurlyatev arrives at Kuma's inn and declares his feelings for her. First gently, then threatening, he sets out to seduce her, but Natasha would rather commit suicide than let the Prince take her as she says that she is in love with another. [Actually, with Prince Yuri, her would-be seducer's son]. Furious, Prince Kurlyatev leaves promising to have his way with her. As Natasha sees him off, she ponders on this unexpected misfortune and thinks of the one her heart belongs to — Prince Yuri. Soon her friend Polya appears to tell her that Prince Yuri has promised to kill his mother's rival in love and that he is already on his way, which means that Natasha needs to be protected. But the Natasha refuses her help - she will meet the young prince alone.

Having put out the lights and left the door unlocked, Natasha waits for her killer's coming and soon hears his footsteps. Yuri comes with his valet Zhuran. Looking for Kuma, they enter her bedroom. Struck by the woman's beauty, Yuri is unable to deliver a fatal blow and drops his dagger. Natasha tells him that she was slandered - the Prince Kurlyatev will never possess her and she make a declaration of love to him, Prince Yuri. Her sincerity, defencelessness and the power of passion awake a reciprocal feeling in the young prince's heart.

The young couple decides to flee the town as they know that they do not belong here.

**Act 4:** Prince Yuri makes ready for escape while Natasha waits for him in the woods. This is where she meets the Princess, Yuri's mother and her rival in love disguised as a wanderer. She has come with a poison for the enchantress that she has obtained from a medicine man.

The Princess gives Natasha a scoop of poisoned water and disappears. Prince Yuri enters; the lovers must hurry away. But Natasha is already feeling the effects of the poison and is unable to walk. She gets weaker and dies in Yuri's arms. Yuri is in despair; he does not realise what has happened. His mother, the Princess appears and confesses what she has done saying that she could not allow the union of the young prince and the enchantress nor could she tolerate her husband's passion for her. The Princess orders her servants to throw Natasha's body into the river. The inconsolable young prince curses his fate. He will never be happy again. His father, Prince Kurlyatev has tracked down the runaways arrives and tells his son to return Natasha to him. Yuri says that she is dead. The Prince does not believe him and stabs his son in a fit of anger. A tempest begins. Left alone, Prince Kurlyatev realises too late what he has done. Horrible visions haunt him. There is blood everywhere. Unable to withstand his torments, the Prince drops unconscious to the ground.

**Lucrezia Borgia** is a melodramatic opera in a prologue and two acts by Gaetano Donizetti. Felice Romani wrote the Italian libretto after the play *Lucrezia Borgia* by Victor Hugo, in its turn after the legend of Lucrezia Borgia. *Lucrezia Borgia* was first performed on 26 December 1833 at La Scala, Milan.

**Cast**

Lucrezia	Joan Sutherland
Gennaro	Giacomo Aragall
Orsini	Marylin Horne
Alfonso	Ingvar Wixell
Liverotto	Graham Clark
Gazella	Lieuwe Visser
Petrucci	John Bröcheler
Vitellozzo	Piero de Palma
Gubetta	Richard van Allan
Astolfo	Nicolo Zaccaria

London Opera Chorus & National Philharmonic Orchestra Conductor Richard Bonyngne

**Synopsis****Prologue**

A terrace of the Grimani Palace in Venice. Gennaro, a young soldier of fortune, comes out to take the night air, accompanied by his friends, Orsini, Gazella, Petrucci, Vitellozzo and Liverotto, and by a mysterious figure whom they believe a Spanish nobleman, but who is really Gubetta, an agent of Lucrezia Borgia. On the morrow they are all to join an embassy to Ferrara, to the court of Lucrezia and her husband, Alfonso d'Este.

The mere mention of her name causes a shudder among them, for each has some cause to fear her. Orsini relates how, when Gennaro had saved his life in battle, they swore eternal friendship, but had no sooner done so than an old man appeared, prophesying that they would live and die together, and warning them to shun the Borgia. The friends return to the festivities. Gennaro, who had gone to sleep rather than listen to Orsini's tale, is left alone.

A gondola approaches, and a masked woman - Lucrezia Borgia - steps on to the terrace.

Gubetta warns her that she is in foreign territory, where she will have no protection from insults should her identity be discovered. But she bids him leave her, and is soon so preoccupied with the sleeping Gennaro that she does not notice two masked figures - her husband, Alfonso, and his henchman, Rustighello- lurking in the background. Alfonso suspects her of being in love with Gennaro, and learns with satisfaction that the young man is about to visit Ferrara.

Gennaro awakes, and is overwhelmed by the beauty of the woman before him. He declares there is only one woman he loves more: his mother, whom he has never seen. He tells how he grew up in the belief that he was the son of a Neapolitan fisherman, until one day a stranger equipped him with horse and weapons, and gave him a letter from his mother, warning him that for her safety and his, he must never seek to know her identity.

Pages now appear with torches, and before Lucrezia can withdraw or replace her mask, she is recognised by Orsini. He and his friends surround her, each declaring how she has been responsible for the death of a near relative. To Gennaro's increasingly distraught enquiries as to her identity, they eventually reply: 'It is the Borgia!' He recoils in horror.

**Act One: Scene 1:** A piazza in Ferrara. Rustighello tells the Duke that Gennaro has taken up lodgings opposite the ducal palace. Alfonso anticipates his approaching revenge.

Gennaro's companions rally him on his loss of spirits since his encounter with Lucrezia, but the reaction they provoke is more violent than they intended. Seeing the name 'Borgia' on her escutcheon on the facade of the palace, he draws a dagger and hacks away the first letter, leaving the word 'orgia'. Dismayed at the possible outcome of such an unwise jest. The friends disperse.

Two cloaked figures appear. They are Astolfo and Rustighello, each in search of Gennaro, one sent by Lucrezia, the other by Alfonso. Rustighello, summoning his followers, through superiority of numbers forces Astolfo to vacate the field. He breaks open the door of Gennaro's lodgings.

**Scene 2:** A room in the palace. When Alfonso hears that Gennaro has been apprehended, he orders Rustighello to fetch two decanters of wine, one of silver and the other of gold, and to hold them in readiness in the adjoining room. He warns him not to try the gold decanter, since it contains the poisoned wine of the Borgias.

Lucrezia enters in fury, demanding that Alfonso apprehend and put to death whoever has dared to deface her crest. Calmly Alfonso replies that her wishes are already half anticipated, and he gives his word that the culprit will be killed.

Lucrezia is aghast, as the prisoner is led in, to recognise Gennaro, and even more distressed when he confesses his guilt.

She asks Alfonso for a few words in private, and pleads for mercy. When he accuses her of loving Gennaro, she vehemently protests her innocence, and switches from pleas to threats. But Alfonso remains adamant, merely allowing her to choose whether Gennaro shall die by the sword or by poison. In desperation, she chooses poison.

Gennaro is brought back and Alfonso suavely tells him that he has yielded to Lucrezia's pleas to set him free. Surprised and encouraged by such clemency, Gennaro reveals that he had once saved the life of Alfonso's father in battle. Alfonso feigns gratitude, and offers him monetary reward and an appointment in the forces of Ferrara. Gennaro refuses both, since he has given his allegiance to Venice. Alfonso then suggests that they share a parting glass of wine, and, summoning Rustighello with the two decanters, he forces Lucrezia to pour from the silver decanter for himself, and from the gold for Gennaro.

No sooner is Lucrezia left alone with Gennaro than she tells him he is poisoned, and, producing a small phial of antidote, bids him drink. Although uncertain whether or not this is further treachery, Gennaro does as he is told, and Lucrezia just has time to thrust him through a secret door before Alfonso returns, summoned by Rustighello.

**Act Two: Scene 1:** A courtyard leading to Gennaro's lodgings. Despite his recent feelings of revulsion for Lucrezia, Gennaro's initial sentiments are gaining the upper hand once more, and he admits that he can no longer conceal from himself the love he feels for her.

Rustighello and his followers come to arrest him again, but before they can do so, they overhear a conversation in which Orsini dissuades him from leaving Ferrara immediately by promising to bear him company the following morning, after they have attended a banquet which is to be given that evening by the Princess Negroni.

As they depart together, Rustighello restrains his followers, telling them that they have now no need to detain Gennaro. Lucrezia, in the belief that the young man has left Ferrara, has organised this banquet at the Princess Negroni's in order to be revenged on his companions. By attending it, Gennaro is going to his death, and the Duke will thus have gained his objective.

**Scene 2:** The Princess Negroni's banquet. The festivities are at their height when Gubetta creates a diversion by mocking Orsini, who is about to sing a drinking-song he has composed. Daggers are drawn, and the banquet breaks up in confusion.

As soon as the ladies have left, Gubetta allows himself to be placated, and suggests that they all drink to renewed friendship. A cup-bearer brings fresh glasses, Gennaro remarks to Orsini that Gubetta has tossed the contents of his glass over his shoulder, but Orsini is too intent on his drinking-song to pay attention. As all join in the chorus of each verse of Orsini's song they are interrupted by an off-stage chorus, chanting from the service for the dead. The lights go out, and all the doors are found to be locked.

Panic gives way to cold horror as Lucrezia Borgia appears. They have all been poisoned, she tells them, and five coffins await them. But Gennaro steps forward and declares that she has miscalculated: a sixth will be needed. In consternation, Lucrezia has her armed followers lead the other five victims away, and again tries to force the antidote upon Gennaro. But when he learns that there is only enough left for one, he insists that they must all die together – and Lucrezia first of all. He takes a dagger and is about to stab her when, in desperation, she declares that he, too, is a Borgia. She reveals that she is his mother-the unknown mother he

had so worshipped - and pleads with him to save himself. But he prefers to die, his resolution reinforced by the sounds of the death-agonies of his friends.

Alfonso, believing himself the master-mind who has outwitted even the treacherous Borgia, comes to gloat over his revenge. But Lucrezia rounds on him, declaring that Gennaro was her son. At the height of her anguish she collapses and falls dead upon Gennaro's body.

**The Love for Three Oranges. L'amour des trois oranges**, Op. 33, is a 1921 satirical French-language opera by Sergei Prokofiev. He wrote his own libretto, basing it on the Italian play *L'amore delle tre melerance*, or *The Love for Three Oranges* (Russian: Любовь к трём апельсинам *Lyubov k tryom apyelsinam*) by Carlo Gozzi, and conducted the premiere, which took place at the Auditorium Theatre in Chicago on 30 December 1921.

**History:** Composition: The opera resulted from a commission during Prokofiev's first visit to the United States in 1918. After well-received concerts of his works in Chicago, including his First Symphony, Prokofiev was approached by the director of the Chicago Opera Association, Cleofonte Campanini, to write an opera.

Conveniently the composer had already drafted a libretto during his voyage to America, one based on Gozzi's Italian play in mock commedia dell'arte style (itself an adaptation of Giambattista Basile's fairy tale). He had done so using Vsevolod Meyerhold's Russian translation of the Gozzi and had injected a dose of Surrealism into the commedia dell'arte mix. But Russian would have been unacceptable to an American audience, and Prokofiev's English was scanty, so, with possible help from soprano Vera Janacopoulos, he settled on French.

**Performance:** Prokofiev conducted the premiere, which took place at the Auditorium Theatre in Chicago on 30 December 1921. Initial criticism was harsh. "It left many of our best people dazed and wondering"; "Russian jazz with Bolshevik trimmings"; and "The work is intended, one learns, to poke fun. As far as I am able to discern, it pokes fun chiefly at those who paid money for it". However, one newspaperman and author gave it an enthusiastic review. Ben Hecht wrote: "There is nothing difficult about this music, unless you are unfortunate enough to be a music critic. But to the untutored ear there is a charming capriciousness about the sounds from the orchestra".

Five years after the premiere, in 1926, the French opera received its first production in Russian, in Petrograd.

*L'amour des trois oranges* was not performed again in the United States until 1949 when the New York City Opera resurrected it. As staged by Vladimir Rosing and conducted by Laszlo Halasz, the production was successful. *Life* magazine featured it in a colour photo spread. The New York City Opera mounted a touring company of the production, and the opera was again staged in New York for three successive seasons.

Memorably a 1988 production by Richard Jones for Opera North, later seen at English National Opera, New York City Opera and elsewhere, used "scratch'n'sniff" cards handed out to the audience, suggesting various scents matching events in the staging (gunshots, Truffaldino's "wind", the aroma of oranges).

The work has entered the standard repertory, with regular stagings on both sides of the Atlantic and at least a dozen complete recordings, six of them videos, to its credit.

**Cast:**

The King of Clubs:	Bruce Martin
The Prince:	John MacMaster
Clarissa, the King's niece:	Deborah Humble
Leandro, the PM:	Teddy Tahu Rhodes
Truffaldino:	William Ferguson
Pantaloon:	Warwick Fyfe
Chelio, a sorcerer:	Jud Arthur
Fata Morgana, a sorceress:	Elizabeth Whitehouse
3 Princesses – Linetta,	Wendy Dawn Thompson,
Nicoletta,	Sally-Anne Russell,
Ninetta:	Ali McGregor
The Cook:	Arend Baumann
Farfarello:	Richard Alexander
Smeraldina:	Catherine Carby
Master of Ceremonies:	Graeme Macfarlane
Herald:	Tim Dufore
The Opera Australia Chorus & the Australian Opera & Ballet Orchestra	
Conductor: Richard Hickox.	

**Synopsis:**

**Prologue:** Four groups of impatient theatre fans argue over the kind of show they want to see – tragedy, comedy, romance, or farce. A fifth group of spectators, the Eccentrics, interrupts them to announce the performance of the main event: “The Love for Three Oranges.”

**Act one:** The Prince has hypochondria. A chorus of doctors tells the beleaguered King of Clubs about his son's imaginary sickness, which includes a deep depression that keeps him from laughing. The King asks his jester Truffaldino to organize a party to cheer up the Prince. In the underworld, the evil witch Fata Morgana beats the noble magician Chelio three times in a card game, robbing him of his powers to protect the King. Meanwhile, the King's niece Clarissa and the scheming prime minister Leander conspire to kill the Prince and take over the throne. Fata Morgana's servant Smeraldina joins their plot and explains that with Fata Morgana around at Truffaldino's party, the Prince will never laugh, thereby prolonging his sickness.

**Act two:** Truffaldino drags the Prince to the party, but he refuses to laugh at the bizarre performances. When Truffaldino notices Fata Morgana there and tries to throw her out, she stumbles and falls on the ground. Suddenly, the Prince starts to laugh at her mishap, and soon everybody is cracking up. Fata Morgana is so furious that she curses the Prince, making him fall obsessively in love with three oranges. The King begs him to stay and look after the kingdom, but the Prince instead sets out with Truffaldino on a quest to find his beloved fruit.

**Act three:** A demon named Farfarello blows the Prince and Truffaldino all the way to the hiding place of the oranges: the castle of Creonta, a giant sorceress and cook. At the castle, the Prince and Truffaldino distract Creonta with a ribbon from Chelio and steal the three oranges. As the two wander back through the desert, the Prince falls asleep and a thirsty Truffaldino opens two of the now-humongous oranges, disobeying Chelio's directions not to open them unless there is water nearby. Inside each one is a princess who dies of thirst right away; Truffaldino runs off in terror. The Prince wakes up and finds the princess Ninetta inside the third orange, and they profess their love for each other. The Eccentrics in the audience prevent another tragedy by sending over a bucket of water to the Prince, and he saves Ninetta from her own deadly thirst. The second the Prince leaves to get Ninetta new

clothes from the royal castle, however, Smeraldina attacks Ninetta and turns her into a rat. When the Prince returns to introduce his love to the court, he is horrified to find Smeraldina in her place, but the King insists that the Prince honor his word and marry her.

**Act four:** Chelio confronts Fata Morgana about her schemes, and the Eccentrics break the fourth wall again to trap her, clearing Chelio a path to save the day. The Prince's impending marriage to Smeraldina is upended when Ninetta, now a giant rat, appears on the Princess' throne. Luckily, Chelio swoops in and returns Ninetta to her human form. The King, suddenly understanding the plot against him, sentences Smeraldina, Clarissa, and Leander to death – but out of nowhere, Fata Morgana appears and helps the traitors escape. After a collective shrug, the royal court celebrates the newly reunited Prince and Princess.

**The Magic Flute** (German: *Die Zauberflöte* K. 620), is an opera in two acts by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart to a German libretto by Emanuel Schikaneder. The work is in the form of a Singspiel, a popular form during the time it was written that included both singing and spoken dialogue. The work premiered on 30 September 1791 at Schikaneder's theatre, the Freihaus-Theater auf der Wieden in Vienna, just two months before the composer's premature death. Still a staple of the opera repertory, its popularity was reflected by two immediate sequels, Peter Winter's *Das Labyrinth oder Der Kampf mit den Elementen. Der Zauberflöte zweyter Theil* (1798) and a fragmentary libretto by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe titled *The Magic Flute Part Two*.

The allegorical plot was influenced by Schikaneder and Mozart's interest in Freemasonry and concerns the initiation of Prince Tamino. Enlisted by the Queen of the Night to rescue her daughter Pamina from the high priest Sarastro, Tamino comes to admire the high ideals of Sarastro. He and Pamina both join Sarastro's community, while the Queen and her allies are vanquished.

### **Composition**

The opera was the culmination of a period of increasing involvement by Mozart with Schikaneder's theatrical troupe, which since 1789 had been the resident company at the Theater auf der Wieden. Mozart was a close friend of one of the singer-composers of the troupe, tenor Benedikt Schack (the first Tamino), and had contributed to the compositions of the troupe, which were often collaboratively written. Mozart's participation increased with his contributions to the 1790 collaborative opera *Der Stein der Weisen* (*The Philosopher's Stone*), including the duet ("Nun liebes Weibchen", K. 625/592a) among other passages. Like *The Magic Flute*, *Der Stein der Weisen* was a fairy-tale opera and can be considered a kind of precursor; it employed much the same cast in similar roles.

The libretto for *The Magic Flute*, written by Schikaneder, is thought by scholars to be based on many sources. Some works of literature current in Vienna in Schikaneder's day that may have served as sources include the medieval romance *Yvain* by Chrétien de Troyes, the novel *Life of Sethos* by Jean Terrasson, and the essay "On the mysteries of the Egyptians" by Ignaz von Born. The libretto is also a natural continuation of a series of fairy tale operas produced at the time by Schikaneder's troupe, including an adaptation of Sophie Seyler's Singspiel *Oberon* as well as *Der Stein der Weisen*. Especially for the role of Papageno, the libretto draws on the Hanswurst tradition of the Viennese popular theatre. Many scholars also acknowledge an influence of Freemasonry.

It appears that in this opera two references to Antonio Salieri's music are included. The first is that the Papageno–Papagena duet is similar to the Cucuzze cavatina in Salieri's *Prima la musica e poi le parole*. Both are centred around musical-textual playfulness with humorous bird-like utterances of pseudo-Italian words. The *Magic Flute* also echoes Salieri's music in that Papageno's whistle is based on a motif borrowed from Salieri's *Concerto for Clavicembalo in B-flat major*.

### Roles

Tamino	tenor	Jerry Hadley
Papageno	bass-baritone	Thomas Allen,
Pamina	soprano	Barbara Hendricks,
The Queen of the Night	coloratura soprano	June Anderson,
Sarastro	bass	Robert Lloyd,
Three ladies	2 sopranos	Petra Maria Schnitzer; Gabriele Sima,
	mezzo-soprano	Julia Bernheimer
Monostatos	baritone	Helmut Wildhaber,
Three boys	treble	Daniel Ison
	alto	Nathan Watts
	mezzo-soprano	John Dawson
Speaker of the temple	bass-baritone	Gottfreid Hornik,
First Priest	tenor	Peter Svensson
First armoured man		Peter Svensson
Second Priest	bass	Gottfried Hornik,
Third Priest	speaking role	Gottfried Hornik
Second armoured man	bass	Alastair Miles,
Papagena	soprano	Ulrike Steinsky,

Scottish Chamber Orchestra & Chorus: Conductor: Sir Charles Mackerras

**Act 1: Scene 1:** A rough, rocky landscape. Tamino, a handsome prince lost in a distant land, is pursued by a serpent and asks the gods to save him (aria: "Zu Hilfe! Zu Hilfe!" / Help! Help!, segued into trio "Stirb, Ungeheuer, durch uns're Macht!" / Die, monster, by our might!). He faints, and three ladies, attendants of the Queen of the Night, appear and kill the serpent. They find the unconscious prince extremely attractive, and each of them tries to persuade the other two to leave her alone with him. After arguing, they reluctantly decide to leave together.

Tamino wakes up, and is surprised to find himself still alive and the serpent dead. Papageno enters dressed as a bird. He describes his life as a bird-catcher, complaining he has no wife or girlfriend (aria: "Der Vogelfänger bin ich ja" / The birdcatcher am I indeed). Tamino introduces himself to Papageno, thinking Papageno killed the serpent. Papageno happily takes the credit – claiming he strangled it with his bare hands. The three ladies suddenly reappear and instead of giving Papageno wine, cake and figs, they give him water and a stone, and padlock his mouth closed as a warning not to lie. They give Tamino a portrait of the Queen of the Night's daughter Pamina, with whom Tamino falls instantly in love (aria: "Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön" / This portrait is enchantingly beautiful).

The ladies return and tell Tamino that Pamina has been captured by Sarastro, whom they describe as a powerful, evil demon. Tamino vows to rescue Pamina. The Queen of the Night appears and promises Tamino that Pamina will be his if he rescues her from Sarastro



(Recitative: "O zittre nicht, mein lieber Sohn" / Oh, tremble not, my dear son! – and aria: "Du, Du, Du wirst sie zu befreien gehen / You will go to free her). The Queen and the ladies leave and Papageno can only hum to bemoan the padlock on his mouth. (Quintet: "Hm! Hm! Hm! Hm!"). The ladies return and remove the padlock with a warning not to lie any more. They give Tamino a magic flute which has the power to change sorrow into joy, and Papageno magic bells for protection, telling him to go with Tamino. The ladies tell of three boys who will guide Tamino and Papageno to Sarastro's temple. Together Tamino and Papageno set forth.

**Scene 2:** A room in Sarastro's palace. Pamina is dragged in by Sarastro's slaves, having tried to escape. Monostatos, a blackamoor and chief of the slaves, orders them to chain her and leave her alone with him. Papageno, sent ahead by Tamino to help find Pamina, enters (Trio: "Du feines Täubchen, nur herein!" / Just come in, you fine little dove!). Monostatos and Papageno are each terrified by the other's strange appearance and both flee, each thinking the other is the devil. Papageno returns and announces to Pamina that her mother has sent Tamino to save her. Pamina rejoices to hear that Tamino is in love with her. She offers sympathy and hope to Papageno, who longs for a wife. Together they reflect on the joys and sacred value of marital love (duet: "Bei Männern welche Liebe fühlen" / In men, who feel love).

**Finale. Scene 3:** A grove in front of a temple. The three boys lead Tamino to Sarastro's temple, promising that if he remains patient, wise and steadfast, he will succeed in rescuing Pamina (Quartet: "Zum Ziele führt dich diese Bahn" / This path leads you to your goal). Tamino approaches the right-hand entrance (the Temple of Reason) and is denied access by voices from within. The same happens when he goes to the entrance on the left (the Temple of Nature). But from the entrance in the middle (the Temple of Wisdom), a senior priest appears. (The priest is referred to as "The Speaker" in the libretto, but his role is sung.) He tells Tamino that Sarastro is benevolent, not evil, and that he should not trust the Queen of the Night. With a hidden male chorus, he promises that Tamino's confusion will be lifted when he approaches the temple in a spirit of friendship, and that Pamina is alive. Tamino plays his magic flute. Animals appear and dance, enraptured, to his music. Tamino hears Papageno's pipes sounding offstage, and hurries off to find him (aria: "Wie stark ist nicht dein Zauberton" / How strong is thy magic tone).

Papageno and Pamina enter, searching for Tamino (trio: "Schnelle Füße, rascher Mut" / Swift steps, ready courage). They are recaptured by Monostatos and his slaves. Papageno plays his magic bells, causing Monostatos and his slaves to dance off the stage, mesmerised by the beauty of the music (chorus: "Das klinget so herrlich" / That sounds so splendid). Papageno and Pamina hear the sound of Sarastro's retinue approaching. Papageno is frightened and asks Pamina what they should say. She answers that they must tell the truth. Sarastro enters, with a crowd of followers. (chorus: "Es lebe Sarastro!" / Long live Sarastro!) Pamina falls at Sarastro's feet and confesses that she tried to escape because Monostatos had forced his attentions on her. Sarastro receives her kindly and assures her that he wishes only for her happiness, but he refuses to return her to her mother, whom he describes as a proud, headstrong woman, and a bad influence on those around her. Pamina, he says, must be guided by a man.

Monostatos brings in Tamino. The two lovers see one another for the first time and embrace, causing indignation among Sarastro's followers. Monostatos tells Sarastro that he caught

Papageno and Pamina trying to escape, and demands a reward. Sarastro ironically "rewards" Monostatos with a beating and sends him away. He announces that Tamino and Pamina must both undergo trials to be purified. The priests declare that virtue and righteousness will sanctify life and make mortals like gods ("Wenn Tugend und Gerechtigkeit" / If virtue and justice).

**Act 2: Scene 1:** A grove of palms: The council of priests of Isis and Osiris, headed by Sarastro, enters to the sound of a solemn march. Sarastro tells the priests that Tamino is ready to undergo the ordeals that will lead to enlightenment. He invokes the gods Isis and Osiris, asking them to protect Tamino and Pamina (Aria and chorus: "O Isis und Osiris / O Isis and Osiris").

**Scene 2:** The courtyard of the Temple of Ordeal: Tamino and Papageno are led in by two priests for the first trial. The two priests advise Tamino and Papageno of the dangers ahead of them, warn them of women's wiles and swear them to silence (Duet: "Bewahret euch von Weibertücken" / Keep yourselves from women's tricks). The three ladies appear and remind Tamino and Papageno of what the Queen has said about Sarastro, trying to tempt them into speaking. (Quintet: "Wie, wie, wie" / How, how, how) Papageno cannot resist answering the ladies, but Tamino remains aloof, angrily instructing Papageno not to listen to the ladies' threats and to keep quiet. Seeing that Tamino will not speak to them, the ladies withdraw in confusion. The Speaker and a priest return and lead Tamino and Papageno away.

**Scene 3:** A garden: Pamina is asleep. Monostatos creeps in and ogles her. (Aria: "Alles fühlt der Liebe Freuden" / All feel the joys of love) He is about to kiss her, when the Queen of the Night appears. Monostatos hides. Waking, Pamina tells her that Tamino is joining Sarastro's brotherhood and that she is thinking of accompanying him. The Queen is not pleased. She explains that her husband, the previous owner of the temple, on his deathbed gave the ownership to Sarastro instead of to her, rendering the Queen powerless (this is in the original libretto, but is usually omitted from modern productions.) She gives Pamina a dagger, ordering her to kill Sarastro with it and threatening to disown her if she does not. (Aria: "Der Hölle Rache kocht in meinem Herzen" / Hell's vengeance boils in my heart). She leaves. Monostatos returns and tries to force Pamina's love by threatening to reveal the Queen's plot, but Sarastro enters and drives him off. Pamina begs Sarastro to forgive her mother and he reassures her that revenge and cruelty have no place in his domain (Aria: "In diesen heil'gen Hallen" / Within these sacred halls).

**Scene 4:** A hall in the Temple of Ordeal: Tamino and Papageno are led in by priests, who remind them that they must remain silent. Papageno complains of thirst. An old woman enters and offers Papageno a cup of water. He drinks and teasingly asks whether she has a boyfriend. She replies that she does and that his name is Papageno. She disappears as Papageno asks for her name, and the three boys bring in food, the magic flute, and the bells, sent from Sarastro (Trio: "Seid uns zum zweiten Mal willkommen" / We welcome you a second time). Tamino begins to play the flute, which summons Pamina. She tries to speak with him, but Tamino, bound by his vow of silence, cannot answer her, and Pamina begins to believe that he no longer loves her. (Aria: "Ach, ich fühl's, es ist verschwunden" / Oh, I feel it, it is gone) She leaves in despair.

**Scene 5:** The pyramids: The priests celebrate Tamino's successes so far, and pray that he will succeed and become worthy of their order (Chorus: "O Isis und Osiris" / O Isis and Osiris). Pamina is brought in and Sarastro instructs Pamina and Tamino to bid each other farewell

before the greater trials ahead, alarming them by describing it as their "final farewell". (Trio: Sarastro, Pamina, Tamino – "Soll ich dich, Teurer, nicht mehr sehn?" / Shall I see you no more, dear one? — Note: In order to preserve the continuity of Pamina's suicidal feelings, this trio is sometimes performed earlier in act 2, preceding or immediately following Sarastro's aria "O Isis und Osiris".) They exit and Papageno enters. The priests grant his request for a glass of wine and he expresses his desire for a wife. (Aria: "Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen" / A girl or a woman). The elderly woman reappears and warns him that unless he immediately promises to marry her, he will be imprisoned forever. When Papageno promises to love her faithfully (muttering that he will only do this until something better comes along), she is transformed into the young and pretty Papagena. Papageno rushes to embrace her, but the priests drive him back, telling him that he is not yet worthy of her.

**Finale. Scene 6:** A garden: The three boys hail the dawn. They observe Pamina, who is contemplating suicide because she believes Tamino has abandoned her. The boys restrain her and reassure her of Tamino's love. (Quartet: "Bald prangt, den Morgen zu verkünden" / To herald the morning, soon will shine). The scene changes without a break, leading into scene 7.

**Scene 7:** At the Mountains of Ordeal: (One mountain has a waterfall, the other emits fire.) Two men in armour lead Tamino in. They promise enlightenment to those who successfully overcome the fear of death ("Der, welcher wandert diese Strasse voll Beschwerden" / He who walks this path weighed down with cares – sung to a Baroque chorale prelude, inspired by Martin Luther's hymn "Ach Gott, vom Himmel sieh darein" / Oh God, look down from heaven[h][40]). Tamino declares that he is ready to be tested. Pamina calls to him from offstage. The men in armour assure him that the trial by silence is over and he is free to speak with her. Pamina enters and declares her intention to undergo the remaining trials with him. She hands him the magic flute to help them through the trials ("Tamino mein, o welch ein Glück! / Oh, what luck, my Tamino!"). Protected by the music of the magic flute, they pass unscathed through fire and water. Offstage, the priests hail their triumph and invite the couple to enter the temple. The scene changes without a break, leading into scene 8.

**Scene 8:** A garden with a tree: Papageno despairs at having lost Papagena and decides to hang himself (Aria/Quartet: "Papagena! Papagena! Papagena! Weibchen, Täubchen, meine Schöne" / Papagena! Papagena! Papagena! Dear woman, dear dove, my beauty) He hesitates, counting to three, but more and more slowly. The three boys appear and stop him. They remind him he can play his magic bells to summon Papagena. She appears and, united, the happy couple stutter in astonishment and make bird-like courting sounds at each other. They plan their future and dream of the many children they will have together (Duet: "Pa... pa... pa..."). The scenes change without a break, leading into scene 9.

**Scene 9:** A rocky landscape outside the temple; night: Monostatos appears with the Queen of the Night and her three ladies. They plot to destroy the temple ("Nur stille, stille" / Just quiet, quiet) and the Queen confirms her promise to give Pamina to Monostatos, but suddenly, with thunder and lightning, they are cast out into eternal night. The scene changes without a break, leading into scene 10.

**Scene 10:** The Temple of the Sun: Sarastro announces the sun's triumph over the night and the fraudulent power of hypocrites. The chorus hails the newly consecrated Tamino and Pamina, and gives thanks to Isis and Osiris.

## **Fedora**                      **Giordano**

Fedora is an opera in three acts by Umberto Giordano to an Italian libretto by Arturo Colautti, based on the play *Fédora* by Victorien Sardou. Along with *Andrea Chénier* and *Siberia*, it is one of the most notable works of Giordano.

It was first performed at the Teatro Lirico in Milan on 17 November 1898 conducted by the composer with Gemma Bellincioni creating the role of Fedora, and Enrico Caruso as her lover, Loris Ipanov.

### **Roles**

Princess Fedora Romazov	soprano	Magda Olivero
Count Loris Ipanov	tenor	Mario del Monaco
Countess Olga Sukarev	soprano	Lucia Cappellino
De Siriex, a diplomat	baritone	Tito Gobbi
Desirè, a servant	tenor	Athos Cesarini
Dimitri, a groom	soprano	Kiri te Kanawa
Grech, a police inspector	bass	Silvio Maionoca
Lorek, a surgeon	baritone	Leonardo Monreale
Cirillo, a coachman	baritone	Peter Binder
Baron Rouvel	tenor	Piero de Palma
Borov, a doctor	baritone	Virgilio Carbonari
Boleslao Lazinski,	a pianist	Pascal Rogé

Orchestra & Chorus of the Monte Carlo National Opera Conductor Lamberto Gardelli

### **Synopsis**

**Act 1:** St. Petersburg, 1881. A winter's night in the palace of Count Vladimir Andrejevich Princess Fedora, who is to marry the Count the following day, arrives and sings of her love for him, unaware that the dissolute Count has betrayed her with another woman. The sound of sleigh-bells is heard, and the Count is brought in mortally wounded. Doctors and a priest are summoned, and the servants are questioned. It is proposed that Count Loris Ipanov, a suspected Nihilist sympathizer, was probably the assassin. De Siriex (a diplomat), and Grech (a police inspector) plan an investigation. Fedora swears on the jewelled Byzantine cross she is wearing that Count Andrejevich's death will be avenged.

**Act 2:** Paris. Fedora has followed Loris Ipanov there to avenge her fiancé's death. There is a reception at Fedora's house. Boleslao Lazinski, a virtuoso pianist is playing for the party-goers. Ipanov arrives and declares his love for Fedora. She tells him that she is returning to Russia the following day. Loris is desperate because he has been exiled from Russia and cannot follow her. He confesses to Fedora that it was he who had killed Count Vladimir. Fedora asks him to return after the reception is over to tell her the whole story. When she is alone, Fedora writes a letter to the chief of the Imperial Police in Russia accusing Ipanov of Count Vladimir's murder. Loris returns and confesses that he killed Count Vladimir because he had discovered that he and his wife were lovers. The night of the homicide, Ipanov had discovered them together. Vladimir shot at Ipanov and wounded him. Ipanov returned fire, killing Vladimir. Fedora realizes that she has fallen in love with Ipanov, and that he killed not for political ends, but to defend his honour. They embrace and she convinces him to spend the night with her.

**Act 3** The Bernese Oberland in Switzerland. Loris and Fedora are now lovers and living in her villa. With them is her friend, Countess Olga Sukarev. De Siriex arrives to invite Olga on a bicycle ride. He tells Fedora that as a result of the letter she had written to the police chief, Loris's brother, Valeriano, was arrested for being part of the plot to murder Count Andrejevich and imprisoned in a fortress on the Neva river. One night the river flooded and the young man was drowned. When Loris's mother heard the news, she collapsed and died. Fedora is anguished – she has been the cause of two deaths. Loris receives a letter from a friend in Russia who tells him of the deaths of his mother and brother and that the cause was a woman living in Paris who had written a letter denouncing him to the police. Fedora confesses to Loris that she had written the letter and begs his forgiveness. When he initially refuses and curses her, Fedora swallows poison which she had hidden in the Byzantine cross she always wore around her neck. Loris begs the doctor to save her, but it is too late. Fedora dies in Loris's arms.