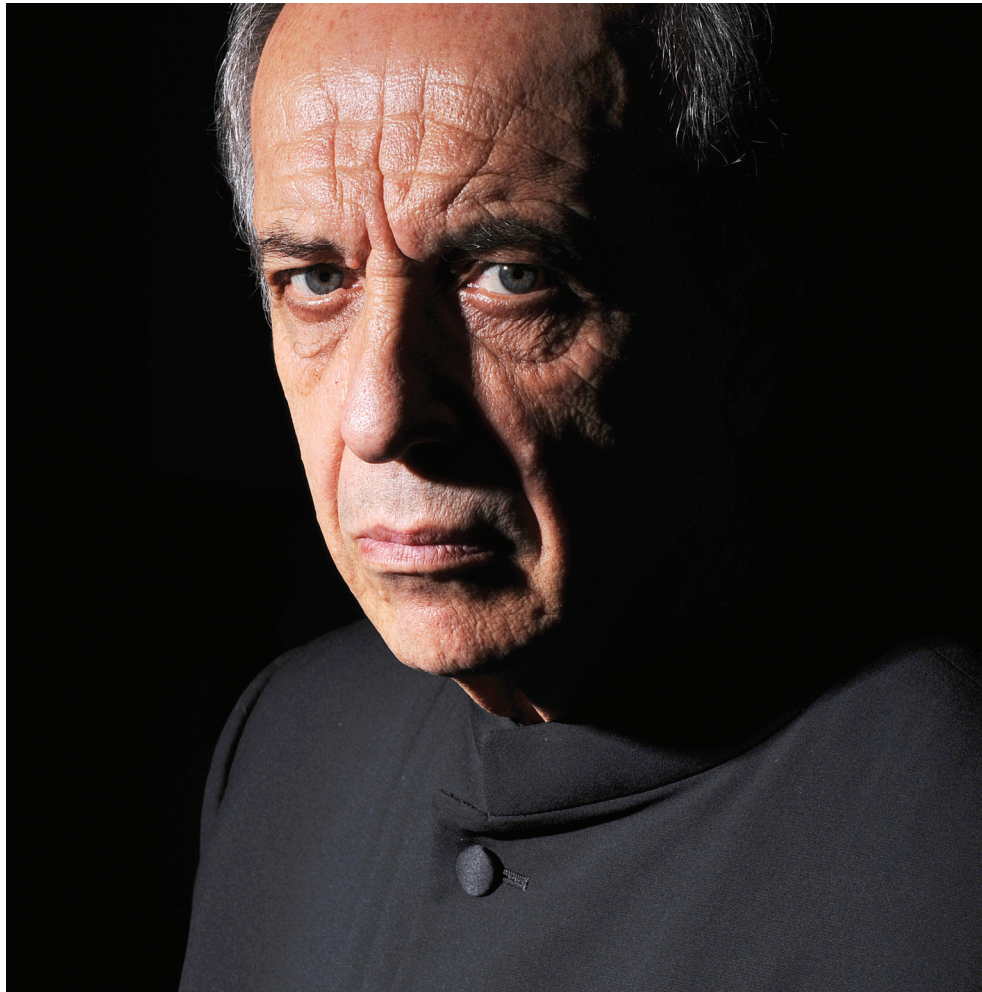


OPUS ARTE

A close-up portrait of an elderly man with white hair, smiling slightly, wearing a dark striped shirt with a white collar. The background is black.

LEO NUCCI
KINGS & COURTIERŠ
Great Verdi Arias



Leo Nucci

Photo: © Roberto Ricci

Kings & Courtiers Great Verdi Arias

Giuseppe Verdi 1813–1901

1	Cortigiani, vil razza dannata (from <i>Rigoletto</i>)	4.32
2	Il balen del suo sorriso (from <i>Il trovatore</i>)	3.06
3	Dio di Giuda (from <i>Nabucco</i>)	4.18
4	Dagli immortali vertici (from <i>Attila</i>)	3.58
5	Eccomi solo alfine – O vecchio cor, che batti (from <i>Il due Foscari</i>)	4.39
6	L'esule	8.03
7	Di Provenza il mar, il suol (from <i>La traviata</i>)	7.10
8	Falstaff's Notturmo (Instrumental)*	3.39
9	Tre preghiere	5.18
	La preghiera del poeta –	
	Sgombra, o gentil –	
	Invocazione a Maria Addolorata**	
10	In braccio alle dovizie (from <i>I vespri siciliani</i>)	6.35
11	Alzati, là tuo figlio – Eri tu che macchiavi quell'anima	7.12
	(from <i>Un ballo in maschera</i>)	
12	Per me giunto è il dì supremo – O Carlo, ascolta (from <i>Don Carlo</i>)	7.25
13	Mal per me che m'affidai (from <i>Macbeth</i>)	2.24

68.19

Leo Nucci *baritone*

Paolo Marcarini *piano* · **Pierantonio Cazzulani, Lino Pietrantoni** *violins*

Christian Serazzi *viola* · **Massimo Repellini** *cello* · **Marta Pettoni** *harp*

Arrangements by Paolo Marcarini

*Composed by Paolo Marcarini on Falstaff's themes

**Lyrics by Leo Nucci after Goethe

Leo Nucci

Born in Castiglione dei Pepoli (province of Bologna) in 1942, Leo Nucci studied with Mario Bigazzi and later with Giuseppe Marchesi in Bologna. In 1967, following several competition wins, he made his debut at the Teatro Sperimentale 'A. Belli' of Spoleto as Figaro in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. A decade later he reprised this role for his debut at the Teatro alla Scala in Milan.

Nucci has since sung regularly at La Scala, and in 2007 he marked his 30-year career at this theatre with a concert that was recorded and subsequently released on DVD ('Leo Nucci: Trent'anni alla Scala', produced by C Major). In 1979 he made his debut at the Staatsoper in Vienna (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) and the following year he debuted at the Metropolitan Opera in New York (*Un ballo in maschera*), thereafter participating in several new productions and gala concerts. His debut at London's Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, was in 1978 with *Luisa Miller*, an engagement which led to a close and ongoing relationship with the company. Nucci also sang at the Arena di Verona for 31 years, participating in more than 100 performances during his time there.

The role of Rigoletto is among Nucci's most acclaimed, with a total of more than 500 official performances as well as nine CD recordings and various productions for DVD. For La Scala he has recorded *Don Carlo*, *Aida* (twice), *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Il trovatore*, *Otello*, *Tosca* and *Gianni Schicchi*, conducted by Claudio Abbado, Riccardo Chailly, Riccardo Muti, Lorin Maazel and Sir Georg Solti, among others; for the Met recordings include *Un ballo in maschera*, *La forza del destino*, *L'elisir d'amore* and *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Other prestigious conductors under whose direction Nucci has recorded include Herbert von Karajan, James Levine, Zubin Mehta, Carlo Maria Giulini, Giuseppe Patanè, Nello Santi, Bruno Bartoletti and Daniel Oren.

Nucci has also appeared in two opera films (*Macbeth*, directed by Claude d'Anna and presented at Cannes in 1987, and *Il barbiere di Siviglia*) and is the dedicatee of Achille Mascheroni's book *Leo Nucci, un baritono per caso* (Azzali: Parma), released in 2009.

Leo Nucci

Né à Castiglione dei Pepoli (dans la province de Bologne) en 1942, Leo Nucci a étudié avec Mario Bigazzi puis Giuseppe Marchesi à Bologne. En 1967, après avoir remporté plusieurs concours de chant, il a fait ses débuts au Teatro Sperimentale A. Belli de Spolète en incarnant Figaro dans *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Une décennie plus tard, il reprend ce rôle pour ses débuts au Théâtre de La Scala de Milan.

Depuis, Nucci a régulièrement chanté à La Scala et, en 2007, il a fêté ses trente ans de carrière dans ce théâtre en donnant un concert gravé sur le vif plus publié en DVD ("Leo Nucci : trent'anni alla Scala", produit par C Major). Il a débuté au Staatsoper de Vienne (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) en 1979, et au Metropolitan Opera de New York (*Un ballo in maschera*) l'année suivante, puis a participé à plusieurs nouvelles productions et concerts de gala. Il a fait sa première apparition au Royal Opera House de Londres en 1978 dans *Luisa Miller*, engagement qui l'a amené à entretenir une relation étroite et suivie avec la compagnie. Nucci a également chanté aux Arènes de Vérone pendant trente-et-un ans, et a participé à plus de cent représentations là-bas.

Rigoletto figure parmi les rôles les plus appréciés de Nucci : plus de cinq cent représentations officielles au total, neuf disques et diverses productions publiées sur DVD. Pour La Scala, il a gravé *Don Carlo*, *Aida* (deux fois), *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Il trovatore*, *Otello*, *Tosca* et *Gianni Schicchi*, avec divers chefs tels Claudio Abbado, Riccardo Chailly, Riccardo Muti, Lorin Maazel et Sir Georg Solti entre autres. Pour le Met, il a gravé *Un ballo in maschera*, *La forza del destino*, *L'elisir d'amore* et *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Il a également collaboré

avec d'autres chefs prestigieux comme Herbert von Karajan, James Levine, Zubin Mehta, Carlo Maria Giulini, Giuseppe Patanè, Nello Santi, Bruno Bartoletti et Daniel Oren.

Nucci est également apparu dans deux versions filmées d'opéra (*Macbeth*, dirigé par Claude d'Anna et présenté à Cannes en 1987, et *Il barbiere di Siviglia*). Achille Marcheroni lui a consacré un ouvrage, *Leo Nucci, un baritono per caso* (Azzali, Parme), paru en 2009.

Leo Nucci

Leo Nucci wurde 1942 in Castiglione dei Pepoli in der Provinz Bologna geboren. Er studierte bei Mario Bigazzi und später bei Giuseppe Marchesi in Bologna. 1967 debütierte er nach mehreren Wettbewerbsgewinnen am Teatro Sperimentale „A. Belli“ in Spoleto als Figaro in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Ein Jahrzehnt später verkörperte er bei seinem Debüt an der Mailänder Scala erneut diese Rolle.

Nucci hat seitdem regelmäßig an der Scala gesungen, und 2007 feierte er seine dreißig-jährige Karriere an diesem Theater mit einem Konzert, das aufgezeichnet und dann als DVD veröffentlicht wurde („Leo Nucci: Trent'anni alla Scala“, produziert von C Major). 1979 fand sein Debüt an der Wiener Staatsoper statt (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), und im folgenden Jahr debütierte er an der Metropolitan Opera in New York (*Un ballo in maschera*), wonach er an mehreren neuen Produktionen und Galakonzerten teilnahm. Sein Debüt am Londoner Royal Opera House in Covent Garden fand 1978 mit *Luisa Miller* statt, es war ein Engagement, das zu einer engen und dauerhaften Beziehung mit der Kompanie führte. Nucci sang außerdem 31 Jahre lang immer wieder in der Arena di Verona, während seiner Zeit dort wirkte er bei mehr als hundert Aufführungen mit.

Die Rolle des Rigoletto gehört zu Nuccis beliebtesten; er kann auf mehr als 500 offizielle Aufführungen sowie neun CD-Aufnahmen und verschiedene DVD-Produktionen zurückblicken. Für La Scala hat er *Don Carlo*, *Aida* (zweimal), *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Il trovatore*, *Otello*, *Tosca* und *Gianni Schicchi* aufgenommen, unter anderem unter dem Dirigat von Claudio Abbado, Riccardo Chailly, Riccardo Muti, Lorin Maazel und Sir Georg Solti; seine Aufnahmen für die Metropolitan Opera umfassen *Un ballo in maschera*, *La forza del destino*, *L'elisir d'amore* und *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Weitere prestigeträchtige Dirigenten, unter denen Nucci Aufnahmen gemacht hat, umfassen Herbert von Karajan, James Levine, Zubin Mehta, Carlo Maria Giulini, Giuseppe Patanè, Nello Santi, Bruno Bartoletti und Daniel Oren.

Nucci ist außerdem in zwei Opernfilmen aufgetreten (*Macbeth*, bei dem Claude d'Anna Regie führte, und der 1987 in Cannes präsentiert wurde, sowie *Il barbiere di Siviglia*) und ihm ist Achille Mascheronis Buch *Leo Nucci, un baritono per caso* (Azzali: Parma) gewidmet, das 2009 veröffentlicht wurde.

Leo Nucci sings Verdi

Admired as one of the great baritones of our time, Leo Nucci's wide repertory has made a feature of the roles written for his type of voice by Giuseppe Verdi. The greatest Italian musical dramatist of the 19th century focused considerable attention on the baritone, offering his original performers – who included such legendary names as Giorgio Ronconi, Felice Varesi, Leone Giraltoni, Filippo Coletti and the Frenchman Victor Maurel – supreme challenges as well as supreme opportunities. Leo Nucci has continued the tradition they established. On this album he performs some of the highlights of the Verdian repertoire with a distinctive, chamber-scale accompaniment provided by Paolo Marcarini and his ensemble.

Verdi's baritone parts cover a huge range of emotion. Arguably unique in his complexity, the jester Rigoletto turns his anger on the vicious courtiers of his employer the Duke of Mantua in 'Cortigiani, vil razza dannata'. In his very next opera, however, Verdi created a vividly contrasting baritone role in the Count of Luna in *Il trovatore*, who voices his love for Leonora in 'Il balen'.

In the aria 'Dio di Giuda', composed to librettist Temistocle Solera's text for *Nabucco*, the stricken king of Babylon prays to the God of Judah and his mind is restored, while in the aria 'Dagli immortali vertici' from *Attila* (again by Solera), the 5th-century Roman general Ezio, charged with fighting the invading Huns, wishes that Rome's former days of glory could return. In *I due Foscari*, the aged Doge of Venice, Francesco Foscari, finds himself powerless to prevent the exile of his son, Jacopo; in his aria 'O vecchio cor' he wishes his heart were as cold as the tomb.

Nucci and Marcarini then leave the operatic realm to present a song – 'L'esule' (The Exile), composed to another text by Solera. There follows the familiar *La traviata*, where Giorgio Germont tries to comfort his broken-hearted son with thoughts of his tranquil home in 'Di Provenza il mar, il suol'. Next comes the midpoint of the album, where we encounter the legendary leading character from the last of Verdi's three Shakespearean operas, in a moonlit interlude: *Falstaff's Notturmo*.

At this point the artists present a different tribute in the form of more of Verdi's more intimate expressions – songs intended for the salon or domestic context. Setting a text by Nicola Sole, *La preghiera del poeta* is the first of what they have arranged as 'three prayers'; the second sets words by the leading Italian novelist of the period, Alessandro Manzoni, whose death moved Verdi to complete his *Messa da Requiem*. The third is 'Deh, pietoso, o addolorata', a setting of Luigi Balestra's translation of a text from Goethe's *Faust*, Gretchen's prayer to an image of the Mater Dolorosa.

In 'In braccio alle dovizie' in *I vespri siciliani*, yet another father, Monforte, contemplates a letter from a Sicilian woman he once abducted, and who in revenge separated him from his son.

Friendship, or its termination, motivates several characters. In *Un ballo in maschera*, Renato decides that his former friend Riccardo must take the blame for his wife's apparent infidelity in 'Eri tu', while at the moment of his death in *Don Carlo*, the Spanish prince's friend Posa clasps him to his bosom in 'Per me giunto'.

The first of Verdi's three Shakespearean masterpieces, *Macbeth* shows the Scottish king dying in the knowledge that he is accused, as he laments in 'Mal per me che m'affidai' – which brings the recital to a powerful close.

George Hall

Leo Nucci chante Verdi

Reconnu comme l'un des plus grands barytons de notre époque, Leo Nucci possède un vaste répertoire et s'est spécialisé dans les rôles écrits par Giuseppe Verdi pour ce type de voix. Le plus grand compositeur de drames musicaux italiens du XIX^e siècle accorda une attention considérable aux voix de baryton, offrant à ses tout premiers interprètes – parmi lesquels figurent des noms légendaires tels que Giorgio Ronconi, Felice Varesi, Leone Giraldoni, Filippo Coletti, et le Français Victor Maurel – de suprêmes défis comme de splendides opportunités. Leo Nucci perpétue cette tradition. Il interprète ici quelques-unes des plus belles pages du répertoire verdien avec le singulier accompagnement d'un effectif chambriste dispensé par l'ensemble de Paolo Marcarini.

Les rôles de baryton chez Verdi couvrent une grande palette d'émotions. Personnage d'une complexité absolument unique, le bouffon Rigoletto dirige sa colère contre les courtisans vicieux de son employeur, le Duc de Mantoue, dans l'air « Cortigiani, vil razza dannata ». Dans l'opéra suivant, toutefois, Verdi crée un rôle de baryton radicalement différent avec le comte de Luna dans *Il trovatore*, qui chante son amour pour Leonora dans « Il balen ».

Dans l'air « Dio di Giuda », le roi déchu de Babylone prie le Dieu de Judée et retrouve ses esprits, tandis que dans l'aria « Dagli immortali vertici » tiré d'*Attila* (à nouveau sur un livret de Solera), le général romain Ezio, qui vécut au V^e siècle, chargé de lutter contre les envahisseurs huns, souhaite retrouver la Rome glorieuse d'antan. Dans *I due Foscari*, le vieux Doge de Venise, Francesco Foscari, ne peut empêcher l'exil de son fils Jacopo ; dans son aria « O vecchio cor », il désire que son cœur fût aussi glacial qu'un tombeau.

Nucci et Marcarini délaissent ensuite le royaume de l'opéra pour présenter une chanson – *L'esule* (L'exil), composé sur un autre texte de Solera. Puis nous retrouvons la célèbre *Traviata*, où Giorgio Germont tente de consoler son fils, dont le cœur est brisé par un chagrin d'amour, en évoquant sa paisible demeure dans « Di Provenza il mar, il suol ». Nous touchons au milieu de l'album avec le légendaire personnage principal du dernier des trois opéras verdiens fondés sur Shakespeare, dans un interlude au clair de lune : le *Notturmo* de Falstaff.

Ensuite, les artistes proposent un hommage d'un autre genre avec d'autres pièces verdiennes plus intimes – des chansons destinées au salon ou à un contexte familial. *La preghiera del poeta*, sur un texte de Nicola Sole, est la première des trois pièces qu'ils ont arrangées comme « trois prières » ; la deuxième est composée sur la prose du principal écrivain italien d'alors, Alessandro Manzoni, dont la mort incita Verdi à achever sa *Messe de Requiem*. La troisième, « Deh, pietoso, o addolorata », met en musique la traduction que fit Luigi Balestra d'un extrait de *Faust* de Goethe, la prière de Gretchen contemplant une image de la vierge.

Dans « In braccio alle dovizie » tiré de *I vespri siciliani*, un autre père, Monforte, contemple la lettre d'une sicilienne qu'il a enlevée autrefois et qui, pour se venger, le sépare de son fils.

L'amitié, ou la fin d'une amitié, est un élément moteur chez plusieurs personnages de Verdi. Dans *Un ballo in maschera*, Renato décrète que son ancien ami Riccardo est responsable de l'apparente infidélité de sa femme dans « Eri tu » ; dans *Don Carlo*, le marquis de Posa, au moment de mourir, serre son ami l'infant d'Espagne contre son sein dans « Per me giunto ».

Le premier des trois chefs-d'œuvre verdiens fondés sur Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, présente un roi écossais mourant, conscient qu'il est maudit, comme il le déplore dans « Mal per me che m'affidai » – suprême conclusion de ce récital.

George Hall

Leo Nucci singt Verdi

Leo Nucci wird als einer der bedeutendsten Baritone unserer Zeit verehrt. In seinem breiten Repertoire finden sich viele Rollen, die Verdi für seine Stimmlage schrieb. Der größte italienische Musikdramatiker des 19. Jahrhunderts widmete den Baritonem erhebliche Aufmerksamkeit und bot damaligen Interpreten – darunter so legendäre Namen wie Giorgio Ronconi, Felice Varesi, Leone Giraldoni, Filippo Coletti und Victor Maurel (ein Franzose) – sowohl größte Herausforderungen als auch größte Chancen. Leo Nucci hat die von ihnen begründete Tradition fortgesetzt. Auf dieser Album singt er mit der einzigartigen, kammermusikalischen Begleitung des Ensembles von Paolo Marcarini einige Glanznummern des Verdi-Repertoires.

Verdis Baritonrollen erstrecken sich über ein großes emotionales Spektrum. In seiner Vielschichtigkeit wohl einzigartig, macht der Narr Rigoletto in „Cortigiani, vil razza dannata“ seinem Zorn über die boshafte Höflinge seines Herrn, des Grafen von Mantua, Luft. In der direkt danach entstandenen Oper *Il trovatore* allerdings schuf Verdi mit dem Grafen von Luna, der in „Il balen del suo sorriso“ seiner Liebe zu Leonora Ausdruck verleiht, eine Baritonrolle, die sich lebhaft von Rigoletto unterscheidet.

In der zu einem Text des Librettisten Temistocle Solera komponierten Arie „Dio di Giuda“ aus *Nabucco* betet der wahnsinnige König von Babylon zum Gott der Juden, woraufhin sein Geist geheilt wird, während sich in der Arie „Dagli immortali vertici“ aus *Attila* (das Libretto stammt ebenfalls von Solera) der römische General Ezio aus dem fünften Jahrhundert, der die einfallenden Hunnen zurückschlagen soll, wünscht, die vergangenen ruhmreichen Tage Roms mögen zurückkehren. In *I due Foscari* muss Francesco Foscari, der alternde Doge von Venedig, ohnmächtig zusehen, wie sein Sohn Jacopo ins Exil verbannt wird; in seiner Arie „O vecchio cor“ wünscht er sich ein Herz, so kalt wie das Grab.

Nucci und Marcarini verlassen kurz die Opernwelt, um ein Lied zu präsentieren – „L'esule“ (Das Exil), welches zu einem weiteren Text Soleras komponiert wurde. Dann versucht in der berühmten Oper *La traviata* Giorgio Germont das gebrochene Herz seines Sohnes in „Di Provenza il mar, il suol“ mit Gedanken an die friedliche Heimat zu trösten. Als nächstes treffen wir auf den legendären Protagonisten der letzten der insgesamt drei Shakespeare'schen Opern Verdis; ein mondbeschienenes Intermezzo, welches den Mittelpunkt dieses Albums darstellt: Falstaffs „Notturmo“.

An dieser Stelle widmen sich die Künstler erneut dieser anderen, persönlicheren Seite Verdis und präsentieren drei weitere Lieder, die für Salons oder einen häuslichen Kontext bestimmt waren. Die Vertonung des Nicola-Sole-Textes *La preghiera del poeta* (Das Gebet des Dichters) ist das erste von „Drei Gebeten“, die Nucci und Marcarini arrangiert haben; das zweite vertont Worte des zu Verdis Zeiten führenden italienischen Schriftstellers Alessandro Manzoni, dessen Tod den Komponisten so ergriff, dass er seine *Messa da Requiem* fertigstellte und sie ihm widmete. Das dritte, „Deh, pietoso, o addolorata“, eine Vertonung von Luigi Balestras Übersetzung von Goethes *Faust*, stellt Gretchens Gebet zu einem Heiligenbild der Schmerzensmutter dar.

In „In braccio alle dovizie“ aus *I vespri siciliani* sinniert ein weiterer Vater, Monforte, über den Brief einer Sizilianerin, die er einst entführte, und die ihn aus Rache darüber von seinem Sohn trennte.

Mehrere Figuren werden von Freundschaft – oder dem Ende einer Freundschaft – motiviert. In „Eri tu“ aus *Un ballo in maschera* beschließt Renato, dass sein einstiger Freund Riccardo die Schuld an der offensichtlichen Untreue seiner Frau tragen müsse, während in „Per me giunto“ in *Don Carlos* der sterbende Rodrigue von Posa, der Freund des spanischen Prinzen, diesen im Moment seines Todes an seine Brust drückt.

Das erste von Verdis drei Shakespeare-Meisterwerken, *Macbeth*, zeigt den sterbenden schottischen König in dem Wissen, er sei verflucht, so dass er klagt: „Mal per me che m’affidai“. Dies bringt das Rezital zu einem kraftvollen Schluss.

George Hall

Italian Opera Chamber Ensemble

The Italian Opera Chamber Ensemble, formerly called Salotto '800, was founded by Leo Nucci and pianist Paolo Marcarini. Dedicated to arranging famous works and to the rediscovery of little-known repertoire, the ensemble enjoys a busy concert schedule, appearing alongside Leo Nucci in prestigious venues in Italy (Teatro Bellini in Catania; San Carlo in Naples; Teatro dell’Opera in Rome; Teatro Comunale in Bologna; Teatro Regio in Parma; Teatro Grande in Brescia; Teatro alla Scala in Milan), France (National Theatre of Lille; Salle Gaveau in Monaco), Germany (Herkulesaal in Munich; Bonn), Switzerland (Swiss Italian Radio Festival in Solothurn), Croatia (‘Vatroslav Lisinski’ Concert Hall in Zagreb) and Chile (Teatro Municipal in Santiago; Viña del Mar).

The ensemble’s repertoire is primarily founded on opera, taking in some of the greatest arias (many of which derive from the most famous Italian operas) as well as those pertaining to the 19th-century chamber tradition. Among their recordings (all of which feature Nucci) are ‘Il Concerto della Scala’, comprising arias, chamber and operatic arias; ‘Il baritono ideale’, a selection of the great operatic solos for baritone; and ‘Omaggio a C.A. Bixio’, a tribute to one of Italy’s most popular 20th-century songwriters. Other acclaimed singers with whom they have worked include Katia Ricciarelli, Christian Johansson, Mariella Devia, Cecilia Gasdia and Daniela Dessì.

Rosenblatt Recitals

Rosenblatt Recitals is the only major operatic recital series in the world. Since its foundation by Ian Rosenblatt in 2000, it has presented over 130 concerts, featuring many of the leading opera singers of our times. It has also given debuts to many artists who have gone on to enjoy acclaimed international careers. *Rosenblatt Recitals* was conceived to celebrate the art of singing, and to give singers an opportunity to demonstrate their skills – to move, thrill and amaze – and also to explore rarely-heard repertoire or music not normally associated with them in their operatic careers.

Outside the formal presentation of lieder and song, and apart from the occasional ‘celebrity concert’, there was, until *Rosenblatt Recitals*, no permanent platform for the great opera singers of today to present their art directly to an audience, other than in costume and make-up on the operatic stage. *Rosenblatt Recitals* created such a platform, exploiting the immediacy and intimacy of renowned London concert halls.

In the course of the series, *Rosenblatt Recitals* has presented singers from all over the globe – from the majority of European countries, from China and Japan in the East to Finland and Russia in the North, from the African continent, and, of course, from the USA. Many recitalists have been or become world superstars, and some have now retired – but all of them, in their *Rosenblatt Recital*, whether in concert or in the studio, have given something unique and unrepeatably, and this essence is surely captured in these recordings, available for the first time on Opus Arte.

1 Cortigiani, vil razza dannata (Rigoletto)

Cortigiani, vil razza dannata,
per qual prezzo vendeste il mio bene?
A voi nulla per l'oro sconviene,
ma mia figlia è impagabil tesoro.
La rendete... o, se pur disarmata,
questa man per voi fora cruenta;
nulla in terra più l'uomo paventa,
se dei figli difende l'onore.
Quella porta, assassini, m'aprite!
La porta, la porta, assassini, m'aprite.

Ah! voi tutti a me contro venite!
Tutti contro me!
Ah! Ebben, piango. Marullo, signore,
tu ch'hai l'alma gentil come il core,
dimmi tu, dove l'hanno nascosta?
Marullo, signore, dimmi tu dove l'hanno nascosta?
È là... non è vero?... È là?...
non è vero?... è là?... non è vero?
Tu taci!... ohimè!
Miei signori, perdono, pietate!
Al vegliardo la figlia ridate!
Ridonarla a voi nulla ora costa,
tutto al mondo tal figlia è per me.
Signori, perdono, ecc.

Francesco Maria Piave 1810–1876

2 Il balen del suo sorriso (Conte)

Il balen del suo sorriso
d'una stella vince il raggio!
Il fulgor del suo bel viso
novo infonde a me coraggio.
Ah! l'amor, l'amore ond'ardo
le favelli in mio favor!
Sperda il sol d'un suo sguardo
la tempesta del mio cor.
Ah! l'amor, l'amore ond'ardo, ecc.

*Salvatore Cammarano 1801–1852 /
Leone Emanuele Bardare 1820–1874*

3 Dio di Giuda (Nabucco)

Dio di Giuda!... l'ara, il tempio
a Te sacro, sorgeranno...
Deh! mi toglia a tanto affanno
e i miei riti struggerò.
Tu m'ascolti!
Già dell'empio rischiarata
è l'egra mente! Ah!
Dio verace, onnipossente,
adorarti ognor saprò! ecc.

Temistocle Solera 1815–1878

4 Dagli immortali vertici (Ezio)

Dagli immortali vertici
belli di gloria, un giorno,
l'ombre degli avi, ah, sorgano
solo un istante intorno!
Di là vittrice l'aquila
per l'orbe il vol spiegò...
Roma nel vil cadavere
chi ravvisare o può?

Temistocle Solera

Courtiers, vile, damnable rabble

Courtiers, vile, damnable rabble,
how much were you paid for my treasure?
There's nothing you won't do for money,
but my daughter is beyond any price.
Give her back... or this hand, though unarmed,
will prove a dread weapon indeed.
A man will fear nothing on earth
when defending his children's honour.
Assassins, open that door!
The door, the door, assassins, open it.

Ah! You're all against me!
All against me!
Then I'll weep. Marullo, my lord,
you whose soul is as gentle as your heart,
tell me, where have they hidden her?
Marullo, my lord, tell me, where have they
hidden her?
She's in there... isn't she?
isn't that so?... in there?... isn't that so?
You don't answer... Alas!
My lords, forgive me, have pity!
Give an old man back his daughter!
To give her back can cost you nothing now,
but to me my daughter is everything.
Lords, forgive me, etc.

The flash of her smile

The flash of her smile
is brighter than starlight!
The fire in her beautiful face
instils fresh courage in me.
Ah! let the love with which I burn
speak to her in my favour!
Let the sunlight in her gaze
calm the storm within my heart.
Ah! let the love with which I burn, etc.

God of Judah

God of Judah!... the altar, the temple
sacred to Thee shall rise up again...
Oh, save me from such dire anguish
and I will destroy my rites.
Thou art listening to me!
The unbeliever's sick mind
has cleared already! Ah!
True and omnipotent God,
I will worship Thee for ever! etc.

Ah, from the splendid immortal

Ah, from the splendid immortal
peaks of former glory
let the spirits of our ancestors
arise for but a moment around us!
From there the conquering eagle
took its flight through the world...
Who now can recognise Rome
in this abject corpse?

5 O vecchio cor, che batti (Doge)

Eccomi solo affine...
Solol... e lo sono io forse?
Dove de'Dieci non penetra l'occhio?...
Ogni mio detto o gesto,
Il pensiero perfìn m'è osservato!...
Prence e padre qui sono sventurato!...

O vecchio cor, che batti
come a' prim'anni in seno,
fossi tu freddo almeno
come l'avel t'avrà;
ma cor di padre sei,
vedi languire un figlio;
piangi pur tu, se il ciglio
più lagrime non ha.

Francesco Maria Piave

6 L'esule

Vedi! la bianca luna
splende sui colli;
la notturna brezza
scorre leggera ad increspare il vago
grembo del queto lago.
Perché, perché sol io
nell'ora più tranquilla e più soave
muto e pensoso mi starò?
Qui tutto è gioia; il ciel, la terra
di natura sorridono all'incanto.
L'esule solo è condannato al pianto.

Ed io pure fra l'aure native
palpitava d'ignoto piacer.
Oh, del tempo felice ancor vive
la memoria nel caldo pensier.
Corsi lande, deserti, foreste,
vidi luoghi olezzanti di fior;
m'aggirai fra le danze e le feste,
ma compagno ebbi sempre il dolor.

Or che mi resta?... togliere alla vita
quella forza che misero mi fa.
Deh, vieni, vieni, o morte, a chi t'invita
e l'alma ai primi gaudi tornerà.

Oh, che allor le patrie sponde
non saranno a me vietate;
fra quell'aure, su quell'onde
nudo spirito volerò;
bacerò le guance amate
della cara genitrice
ed il pianto all'infelice
non veduto tergerò.

Temistocle Solera

O aged heart

Here I am, alone at last...
Alone!... Yet am I really so?
Where does the eye of the Ten not reach?...
My every word or movement,
Even my thoughts are spied upon!...
As both prince and father, I am wretched here!...

O aged heart, you who still beat
in my breast as you did in my youth,
if only you were cold,
as when the grave will take you;
but you are a father's heart,
and you see your son suffering;
go ahead and weep, then, if my eyes
have no more tears to shed.

The exile

See, the white moon
is gleaming above the hills;
The deep and lovely waters
of the tranquil lake ripple
in the gentle night-time breeze.
Why, oh why, must I alone
stand silent, lost in thought,
at this stillest, most peaceful hour?
Here, all is joy; heaven and earth
smile upon the charms of nature.
Only the exile is condemned to weep.

And yet once I trembled with unknown pleasure
at the caress of my native airs.
Oh, the memory of that happy time
still lives in the warmth of my thoughts.
I have journeyed over heathland, through wild
places and forests,
seen meadows fragrant with flowers,
walked where others danced and feasted,
but always with grief by my side.

What now is left to me?... I must take from life
the strength that brings me naught but pain.
Ah, death, come to one who welcomes you
and my soul will return to its joys of old.

Oh, for then the shores of my homeland
will no longer be denied me;
in those breezes, above those waves
I shall fly, my spirit set free from its body;
I shall kiss the beloved cheeks
of my dear mother,
and, unseen, shall dry
her tears of grief.

7 Di Provenza il mar, il suol (Germont)

Di Provenza il mar, il suol
chi dal cor ti cancellò?
Al natio fulgente sol
qual destino ti furò?
Oh, rammenta pur nel duol
ch'ivi gioia a te brillò;
e che pace colà sol
su te splendere ancor può.
Dio mi guidò!
Ah! il tuo vecchio genitor
tu non sai quanto soffrì.
Te lontano, di squallor
il suo tetto si copri,
ma se alfin ti trovò ancor,
se in me speme non fallì,
se la voce dell'onor
in te appien non ammutì,
Dio m'esaudì!

Francesco Maria Piave

Tre preghiere

9 La preghiera del poeta

Del tuo celeste foco, eterno Iddio,
un core accendi ché di te si allieti.
Tu veggi, tu consacra il verso mio
perché non manchi a generosa meta.
Dal dubbio salva e dal codardo oblio
la fede e l'arpa de l'umil poeta.
Tu fa che il trovi de la morte il gelo
la man su l'arpa e la pupilla al cielo.

Nicola Sole 1821–1859

10 Sgombra, o gentil

Sgombra, o gentil, dall'ansia
mente i terrestri ardori;
leva all'Eterno un candido
pensier d'offerta, e muori:
fuor della vita è il termine
del lungo tuo martir.

Alessandro Manzoni 1785–1873

11 Invocazione a Maria Addolorata

Deh, pietoso, o Addolorata,
china il guardo a me peccatore;
tu, che la spada hai fitta in core,
volgi gl'occhi desolata al morente tuo figliuol.
Quelle occhiate, i pensier vanno
lassù al padre e son preghiera
che soccorre il nostro affanno.
E che a me squarcin le viscere
i peccati miei terreni!
Il tormento che ho nel petto
chi placare potrà mai?
Il mio cuor non sa che vuol!
Ah! tu sola il sai, tu sol!
Ah, perché io peccatore,
nella morte sia salvato,
deh! pietosa al mio pregare
china il guardo, oh! Addolorata!

*Leo Nucci b.1942,
after Goethe*

The sea, the hills of Provence

The sea, the hills of Provence,
who effaced them from your heart?
What destiny took you away
from the sunny land of your birth?
Oh, remember in your sorrow
what joy warmed you there;
and that only there
can your soul find peace again.
God brought me here!
Ah! You cannot know
how your old father has suffered.
With you away
his house is clouded with sorrow.
But at last I have found you,
if my hope has not been in vain.
If the voice of honour is not wholly stilled in you.
But I have found you again.
God has answered my prayer!

The poet's prayer

With your celestial fire, eternal God,
light up a heart that rejoices in you.
See and consecrate my lines
that they fail not in their generous purpose.
Save the faith and the harp of the humble poet
from doubt and cowardly oblivion.
Have the chill of death find him
with his hand on his harp, his eyes on heaven.

Dismiss, o gentle maiden

Dismiss, o gentle maiden, earthly
passions from your tormented mind;
raise to the Eternal a sincere
thought of sacrifice, and die:
beyond life lies the end
of your long suffering.

Invocation to Our Lady of Sorrows

Our Lady of Sorrows,
turn your merciful gaze on me, a sinner;
you, who have a sword in your heart,
turn your eyes, in despair, upon your dying son.
Your gaze, your thoughts rise
up to the father and are the prayer
that gives succour to our torment.
And may my earthly sins
tear my innards from me!
Who will ever be able to ease
the pain in my breast?
My heart knows not what it wants!
Ah! You alone know that, you alone!
Ah, in order that I, a sinner,
be redeemed in death,
ah, turn your merciful gaze
on my prayer, Our Lady of Sorrows!

12 In braccio alle dovizie (Monforte)

In braccio alle dovizie,
nel seno degli onor,
un vuoto immenso, orribile
regnava nel mio cor! ecc.
D'un avvenir beato
splende il sorriso a me,
se viver mi fia dato,
figlio, viver vicino a te!
L'odio invano a me lo toglie,
vincerà quel fero cor,
sì, nel fulgor di queste soglie,
cor paterno, immenso amor.
Sì, lo vinca amore del genitor, sì!
Ah! in braccio alle dovizie, ecc.
O figlio, o figlio! lo son beato
se viver mi fia dato vicino a te!

*Eugène Scribe 1791–1861 /
Charles Duveyrier 1803–1866*

13 Eri tu che macchiavi quell'anima (Renato)

Alzati, là tuo figlio
a te concedo riveder. Nell'ombra
e nel silenzio, là,
il tuo rossore e l'onta mia nascondi.
Non è su lei, nel suo
fragile petto che colpì degg'io.
Altro, ben altro sangue a terger dessi l'offesa!
Il sangue tuo!
E lo trarrà il pugnale
dallo sleal tuo core:
delle lagrime mie vendicator!

Eri tu che macchiavi quell'anima,
la delizia dell'anima mia;
che m'affidi e d'un tratto esecrabile
l'universo avveleni per me!
Traditor! che compensi in tal guisa
dell'amico tuo primo la fé!
O dolcezze perdute! O memorie
d'un amplesso che l'essere india!
Quando Amelia si bella, sì candida
sul mio seno brillava d'amor!
È finita – non siede che l'odio
e la morte nel vedovo cor!
O dolcezze perdute, o speranze d'amor!
Antonio Somma 1809–1864

14 Per me giunto è il di supremo (Rodrigo)

Per me giunto è il di supremo,
no, mai più ci rivedrem;
ci congiunga Iddio nel ciel,
Ei che premia i suoi fedel'.
Sul tuo ciglio il pianto io miro;
lagrimar così perché?
No, fa cor, no, fa cor,
l'estremo spiro lieto è
a chi morrà per te.
No, fa cor, ecc.

Cradled in luxury

Cradled in luxury,
cosseted by prestige,
a limitless, gaping void
was yet paramount in my heart, etc.
A future filled with the promise
of joy now opens before me,
if fate will allow me
your companionship, my son!
Hatred cannot keep him from me,
his wild heart shall be tamed
in the splendour of this court
by immeasurable paternal love.
Yes, his father's love will win him over!
Cradled in luxury, etc.
My son, my son! I shall be happy
if I have your companionship!

You it was who stained that soul

Arise; there is your son,
I permit you to see him. In the darkness
and the silence, there,
hide your blushes and my shame.
It is not she, nor her breast
that I must strike.
Another's blood must wash away the sin!
Your blood!
and my dagger,
avenger of my tears,
shall draw it from your traitor's heart!

You it was who stained that soul;
which was the joy of my own,
who inspired my trust, then loathsomely
poisoned all life for me.
Traitor, who in such a way regarded
the faith of your dearest friend!
Oh sweetness, lost; o memory
of a heavenly embrace,
when Amelia, in her pure beauty,
lay on my breast, in the warmth of love!
All is finished – now only hate
and death live in my widowed heart!
Oh, sweetness lost, oh, hope of love!

For me the last day has come

For me the last day has come,
no, we shall never see each other again;
may God reunite us in heaven,
He who rewards the faithful.
I see tears in your eyes;
why do you weep so?
No, take heart, take heart,
the last breath is happy
of him who will die for you.
No, take heart, etc.

O Carlo, ascolta, la madre
t'aspetta a San Giusto doman;
tutto ella sa.
Ah! la terra mi manca!
Carlo mio, a me porgi la man!
Io morirò ma lieto in core,
ché potei così serbar
alla Spagna un salvatore!
Ah! di me non ti scordar!
Di me non ti scordar!
Regnare tu dovevi,
ed io morir per te.
Ah! io morirò ecc.
Ah! la terra mi manca...
la mano a me, a me...
Ah! salva la Fiandra –
Carlo, addio... ah! ah!

*Joseph Méry 1797–1866 /
Camille du Locle 1832–1903*

15 Mal per me che m'affidai (Macbeth)

Mal per me che m'affidai
ne' presagi dell'inferno!
Tutto il sangue ch'io versai
grida in faccia dell'Eterno!
Sulla fronte maledetta
sfolgorò la sua vendetta!
Muio al cielo al mondo in ira,
vil corona!... e sol per te!

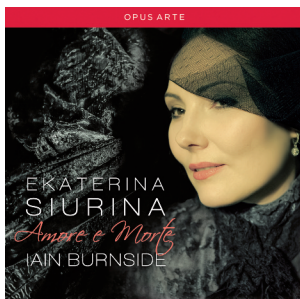
*Francesco Maria Piave /
Andrea Maffei 1798–1885*

Carlos, listen, your mother
will be waiting for you at San Yuste tomorrow;
she knows everything.
Oh, I am weakening!
Carlos, give me your hand!
I shall die, but happily,
for so I have been able
to preserve a saviour for Spain!
Ah, do not forget me!
Do not forget me!
You were destined to reign
and I to die for you.
Ah, I shall die etc.
Ah! the ground is giving way under me...
give me... me... your hand...
Oh, save Flanders –
Carlos, farewell... ah... ah!

I was wrong to place my trust

I was wrong to place my trust
in the prophecies of hell!
All the blood I have shed
cries out in the face of the Eternal!
He has blasted his vengeance
upon my cursed brow!
I die, hated by heaven and by the world,
vile crown!... and all because of you!

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