

MARCELO ALVAREZ

20 YEARS
on the opera stage



CONSTANTINE ORBELIAN
St. Petersburg State Symphony Orchestra

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MARCELO ALVAREZ

This superb new recording celebrates a legendary artist now in his 20th year of distinguished operatic achievement.

MARCELO ALVAREZ, tenor

CONSTANTINE ORBELIAN

St. Petersburg State Symphony Orchestra

Giordano: Un dì all'azzurro spazio • Amor ti vieta

Leoncavallo: Che più mi resta • Testa adorata • Vesti la giubba • O mio piccolo tavolo -

Mascagni: Mamma, quell vino è generoso

Puccini: Non piangere, Liù • Nessun dorma • Ch'ella mi creda

Gomes: Quando nascesti tu - **Halévy:** Rachel quand du seigneur

Cilea: L'anima ho stanca - **Zandonai:** Giulietta, son io

Massenet: O Souverain

Total Playing Time: 54:38

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BELMOND
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The International
Music Festival
St. Petersburg Palaces

MARCELO ALVAREZ · 20 YEARS

1. Umberto Giordano: *Andrea Chénier* - Un di all'azzurro spazio (5:33)
2. Ruggero Leoncavallo: *Chatterton* - Che più mi resta (2:30)
3. Leoncavallo: *La Bohème* - Testa adorata (3:00)
4. Giordano: *Fedora* - Amor ti vieta (1:39)
5. Leoncavallo: *Pagliacci* - Vesti la giubba (3:32)
6. Leoncavallo: *Zaza* - O mio piccolo tavolo (5:05)
7. Pietro Mascagni: *Cavalleria rusticana* - Mamma, quell vino è generoso (3:44)
8. Giacomo Puccini: *Turandot* - Non piangere, Liù (2:27)
9. Puccini: *Turandot* - Nessun dorma (3:11)
10. Puccini: *La Fanciulla del West* – Ch'ella mi creda (2:09)
11. Antônio Carlos Gomes: *Lo Schiavo* - Quando nascesti tu (4:01)
12. Fromental Halévy: *La Juive* - Rachel quand du seigneur (5:51)
13. Francesco Cilea: *Adriana Lecouvreur* - L'anima ho stanca (1:59)
14. Riccardo Zandonai: *Giulietta e Romeo* – Giulietta, son io (4:40)
15. Jules Massenet: *Le Cid* - O Souverain (5:17)

Total Time: 54:38

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St. Petersburg State Symphony Orchestra

Una serata di grazia

This CD is released in celebration of the 20th anniversary of world-renowned tenor Marcelo Alvarez's operatic debut in June of 1994, as Almaviva in a production of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* in his native city of Cordoba in Argentina.

The inspiration for this recording was born of a sincere and deeply rooted appreciation of this great singer's artistry. In every singer's career, there are some performances that leave especially powerful impressions on the audience. In Italy, such an evening is called "una serata di grazia," meaning that the artist finds himself "graced" with the ability to fulfill all his artistic intentions to the highest degree – which in turn leaves the audience with the memory of something very special, perhaps even unforgettable. Such an event took place on December 4, 2012 at the Metropolitan Opera, where Alvarez was starring in performances of a new production of Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera*.

Even at the production's premiere, Alvarez's interpretation of the role of Riccar-

do marked one of the greatest successes of his career. But on this particular evening, something very special happened: something that I felt – as I watched the performance – could only be described as "magical." I said to myself, "I wonder if I'm the only one who is thinking this?" Yet, after the performance, I was happy to learn that friends and colleagues in attendance were similarly affected; they felt that they had been privileged to experience something so extraordinary that it could indeed only be called "una serata di grazia."

Among my colleagues present was conductor Constantine Orbelian, who has made many important recordings for Delos. Constantine approached me, obviously deeply moved by the performance he had just witnessed, and said to me, "We must make several recordings with Alvarez; this was one of the greatest performances I have seen in my many years of going to the opera." Then and there, the idea for this recording, and for Alvarez's association with Delos, was born.

The story of Alvarez's journey from Cordoba to the world's great stages is truly an inspiration to any singer or performer. Originally, he had no ambition at all to become a professional singer. It was his wife Patricia who first realized the extent and potential of his talent, and insisted that he study classical singing. After a period of lessons, he began to look for a chance to make his professional start. As is so often is the case, the young tenor's talent was not recognized in his own country. However, he did get the chance to sing for legendary tenor Giuseppe Di Stefano, who was in Buenos Aires to hear young singers. Di Stefano was so impressed with the young tenor that he said, in front of the audience, "You have good instincts; you remind me of myself when I was a young man." Turning to the other people present, Di Stefano went on to say, "This young man sings with his heart; he will have a great career," and urged Alvarez to move to Italy immediately. Another legendary tenor, Luciano Pavarotti, also heard the young Alvarez at an audition in Argentina, and invited him to attend his international voice competition in Philadelphia.

Within seven days of his arrival in Milan in 1995, Alvarez had won a vocal competition in Pavia, prompting an offer to debut with the Teatro La Fenice in Venice as Elvino in *La Sonnambula*. From there, his career developed with almost unparalleled speed. He was soon invited to make his debut appearances at the greatest theatres in the world, winning acclaim in Berlin, Paris, Barcelona, Vienna, Florence, Verona, Chicago, Hamburg, and Munich. In 1998, only three years after his European start, Alvarez made his debut at the Metropolitan Opera in a new production of *La Traviata*. This was followed by debuts at the Royal Opera Covent Garden in the title role of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, and at La Scala, as Carlo in *Linda di Chamounix*.

I first heard Marcelo Alvarez at a performance of *La Traviata* at Teatro La Fenice in Venice in 1996. I was, of course, immediately taken with the beauty of the voice as well as the nobility of his singing and phrasing. In the last act, in the final duet with the dying Violetta, I heard colors and a volume that hinted at the direction this voice could very

possibly grow into someday. After the performance, I called my business partner, Alan Green, from my hotel in Mestre and said, "This is not a light voice." Those few pages of music in the last Act made me think of what Alan calls "the coming attractions" that his future might bring. Indeed – even at the outset of his career – many people foresaw that Alvarez would become a dramatic tenor, and encouraged him to sing more dramatic repertoire. Famed laryngologist Dr. Maria Elena Berioli told him, "You have the vocal cords of a dramatic tenor, and you will sing all the spinto/dramatic roles one day." Dr. Berioli went on to counsel Alvarez to build his repertoire slowly as he developed from lyric roles into the more dramatic assignments she felt lay in his future. This was advice that Alvarez took very seriously, as the greatest danger for a young singer is to advance into more dramatic repertoire too quickly. The careers of many artists who have been unable to resist this temptation have been cut short.

Alvarez built his reputation by concentrating on roles such as the Duke in *Rigo-*

letto, Alfredo in *La Traviata* and Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*. But when – after his debut at the Berlin State Opera as Fenton in *Falstaff* – Maestro Claudio Abbado offered him the role of Adorno in *Simon Boccanegra* the following season, Alvarez declined; instead, he slowly added roles such as Faust, Des Grieux in *Manon*, Romeo in *Romeo et Juliette*, and Gennaro in *Lucrezia Borgia* to his repertoire. It was only after ten years of an international career that Alvarez felt he could allow himself to begin to expand into the heavier repertoire that many had urged him to sing earlier. One could say that the "secret" of Alvarez's career, aside from his obvious vocal gifts and musicality, has been his ability to plan his career carefully and sensibly, allowing for the natural development of his voice over time. It is such patience that now allows today's audiences to hear him in roles like Radames in *Aida*, Andrea Chenier, Manrico in *Il Trovatore*, Don Alvaro in *La Forza del Destino* – and enables him to look forward to his debut as Turridu and Canio in the current season, as well as his planned appearance as Dick Johnson in *La Fanciulla del West*, Calaf

in *Turandot*, and Des Grieux in *Manon Lescaut* in the future.

What better way to celebrate Marcelo Alvarez's twenty years onstage than with this recording under the superb guidance of Constantine Orbelian, featuring arias almost entirely new to the tenor's repertoire – thus allowing us to salute the first two decades of Alvarez's career while also giving us an exciting glimpse of what is yet to come.

— Bruce Zemsky (with Alan Green)
Artistic Managers of Marcelo Alvarez

This recording, while it treats the listener mostly to music of Italy's so-called "Verismo" movement, also includes two French arias that fall more into the "grand opera" tradition. Also heard is a touching aria in Italian by a now-obscure Brazilian composer (Gomes) from an opera that doesn't fall entirely into the Verismo category. But all three of these choice rarities were sung and recorded by the great tenors of the past – like Caruso – and are ripe for redis-

covery by modern opera audiences, hence their inclusion here. And who better to reintroduce them to the musical public than Marcelo Alvarez?

Verismo, loosely translatable as "reality," is the term applied to the late Romantic (some say post-Romantic) artistic movement that encompassed painting, literature and particularly opera towards the end of the nineteenth century. While it first emerged in Italy, it quickly spread across Europe – though the term is still mostly associated nowadays with Italian opera. Discarding the often lofty and elusive ideals of Romanticism, Verismo opera tended to concentrate on characters of lower class or of rustic origin, and treated more common, but potentially scandalous themes like sexual jealousy and violence. Said themes were often portrayed in sensational and melodramatic ways that were designed to titillate jaded audiences. While the Verismo movement is perhaps best exemplified by operas like Ruggero Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci* and Pietro Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana*, its most revered practitioner remains Giacomo Puccini.

In this sterling collection, Marcelo Alvarez – one of the supreme tenors of our time – explores both well-known arias by the above masters as well as a choice array of lesser-known pieces from their more obscure works. You'll also hear – possibly for the first time – thrilling pieces from several other nineteenth-century opera composers who were prominent in their day, but whose music has since fallen into comparative neglect. While this album hardly represents the entire range of Alvarez's operatic repertoire, we at Delos offer this album as a richly-deserved tribute to a legendary artist, now in his twentieth year of distinguished operatic achievement.

1. Giordano: *Andrea Chénier* - Un dì all'azzurro spazio (L'improvviso)

After several unsuccessful earlier operatic efforts, Umberto Giordano (1867-1948) finally produced his first smash hit, *Andrea Chénier*, in 1896. One reason the opera has remained in the repertoire is that it is a vocal showcase for the finest

tenors. The libretto was adapted from the actual life story of the noted French poet, André Chénier, who was executed during the French Revolution. The convoluted plot ends as the title hero and his beloved Maddalena, a deposed woman of the aristocracy, face the guillotine together. The aria "Un dì all'azzurro spazio" (also known as "L'improvviso") comes in Act I, when Maddalena – during a lavish ball – pesters a reluctant Andrea to improvise a poem. Finally, angered, he improvises an impassioned poem about the misery of the poor, before lashing out at the aristocratic "establishment."

Colpito qui m'avete
ov'io geloso
celo il più puro palpitare dell'anima.
Or vedrete, fanciulla, qual poema
è la parola "Amor,"
qui causa di scherno!

Un dì all'azzurro spazio
guardai profondo,
e ai prati col mi di viole,
pioveva l'oro il sole,
e folgorava d'oro il mondo;
pareva la Terra un immane tesoro,

e a lei serviva di scrigno,
il firmamento.
Su dalla terra a la mia fronte
veniva una càrezza viva, un bacio.
Gridai, vinto d'amor:
T'amo, tù che mi baci,
divinamente bella,
o patria mia!
E volli pien d'amore pregar!
Varcai d'una chiesa la soglia;
là un prete nelle nicchie dei santi
e de la Vergine, accumulava doni...
e al sordo orecchio
un tremulo vegliardo invano
chiedeva pane,
e invan stenddea la mano!
Varcai degli abituri l'uscio;
un uom vi calunniava bestemmiando
il suolo
che l'erario a pena sazia
e contro a Dio scagliava,
e contro a li uomini
le lagrime dei figli,
in cotanta miseria. La patrizia prole,
che fa?
Sol l'occhio vostro
esprime umanamente qui,
un guardo di pietà,
ond' io guardato ho a voi sì

come a un angelo.
E dissi:
Ecco la bellezza della vita!
Ma, poi, alle vostre parole,
un novello dolor,
m'ha còlto in pieno petto.
O giovinetta bella,
d'un poeta non disprezzate il detto:
Udite!
Non conoscete amor,
amor, divino dono, no lo schernir,
del mondo anima e vita è l'Amor!

You have struck me here,
where I, jealous,
hide my soul's purest pulse.
Now, young Lady, you will see
what a poem the word "Love" is:
Here, a cause for ridicule

One day, deep in thought,
I looked to the blue spaces,
And to the violet-strewn fields,
the sun's gold rained down –
illuminating the gold of the earth;
the Earth seemed a vast treasure,
and the skies served as a coffin to her.
To my face there came from the earth,
a vibrant caress, a kiss.

Overwhelmed by love, I shouted,
I love you who kisses me:
My divinely beautiful homeland!
And I wanted to pray with great love!
I passed through a church's door,
where a priest, in the alcove of the
saints
and of the Virgin, was gathering gifts.
And to his deaf ear,
a trembling old man begged
in vain for bread,
and in vain reached out his hand.
I entered a workman's hovel,
where a man was blaspheming:
swearing at the earth
that barely fills the treasury,
swearing against God
and against men;
at the tears of his children
in such misery; the patrician offspring;
what can they do?
Here, only your eye
expresses humanely.
A look of pity, as I looked at you;
you, like an angel.
And I said:
Here's life's beauty!
But then, at your words,
A new sadness

has seized my heart.
Oh beautiful young lady,
don't demean a poet's words.
Listen!
You don't know love.
Love's a divine gift; don't ridicule it;
the life and soul of the world is love!

2. Leoncavallo: *Chatterton* - Che più mi resta

Ruggero Leoncavallo (1857-1919), one of the leading lights of the Verismo movement, composed *Chatterton* – his first attempt at an opera – in 1876, soon after he graduated from the Naples Conservatory; its first production didn't happen until 1896. In keeping with the archetypal Romantic-era ideal of the doomed poet, the plot is drawn from a play that was in turn based on the true story of the brilliant English youth, Thomas Chatterton, who committed suicide at the age of eighteen. The opera, despite later revisions, was never successful in its day, and – save perhaps for this aria – remains practically unknown today. “Che più mi resta” is the despair-

ing poet's outcry in Act II that all that remains to him in life is his art.

Che più mi resta!
Tu sola a me rimani o Poesia.
Veste di Nesso ch'io non so strappar.
Quel po' che resta de la vita mia
sino il rantolo estremo ti vo' dar!
L'ultimo canto de la mente stanca
o dea severa a te senvolerà.
E canterò codesta neve bianca
come il sudario che m'avvolgerà,
che m'avvolgerà!!

What else is there for me!
Oh Poetry, only you remain mine.
That vest of Nessus that I cannot
tear off.
What little remains of my life
I give to you, until death's final gasp!
The last lyric from a weary mind,
Oh, stern goddess, will fly to you.
And I'll sing of this white snow
as the shroud
which will envelop me!

3. Leoncavallo: *La Bohème* - Testa adorata

Leoncavallo composed the "other" *La Bohème* (premiered in 1897) at about the same time Giacomo Puccini wrote his like-titled opera; both works were based on a "novel," *Scènes de la vie de bohème* (actually a loosely-connected series of stories) by Henri Murger. While the original stories – about Paris's "Bohemian" scene – are somewhat romanticized and lighthearted, both composers chose to emphasize the more tragic aspects of the work. Despite Leoncavallo's most excellent music, his version was soon eclipsed by Puccini's treatment, and has since been only rarely performed. Marcello's aria, "Testa adorata," comes towards the end of Act III, as he bitterly bewails his loss after his lover, Musetta – weary of the impoverished Bohemian life – has left him for a wealthy man.

Musetta! O gioia della mia dimora!
È dunque ver che lungi ora sei tu?
È dunque ver che t'ho scacciata
or ora,

e che sul cor non ti terrò
mai più?

Testa adorata, più non tornerai
lieta sul mio guancialetto a riposar!
Bianche manine ch'io sul cor scaldai,
più il labbro mio non vi potrà baciare!
Gaie canzoni dei giorni d'amore
la vostra eco lontana già fuggì.
La stanza è muta e il vedovo mio cor
piange nel tedio quei perduti dì!
Quei perduti dì!

Musetta! O joy of my abode!
Can it be true that now you are far
away?
Can it be true that I drove you away
just now,
and I will never again hold you
to my heart?

Will you never return, happy again,
to rest that adored head on my pillow?
My lips will nevermore kiss the
little white hands
that I warmed on my heart.
The distant echo of your voice has
already fled
the merry songs of those days of love.

In the tedium of our silent room
my bereaved heart weeps for those
lost days!

4. Giordano: *Fedora* - Amor ti vieta

Although Giordano is best known for *Andrea Chénier*, his next effort, *Fedora* (1898), was also a great success in its time. But, despite the respect of musicologists and some very attractive music, it remains far less frequently performed today. In this complex tale of jealousy-inspired murder, a mistaken motive, fateful accusation, helpless romance and final suicide by poison, Princess Fedora ends up falling in love with Count Ipanov, her fiancé's killer – after learning that the alleged murder was in fact an act of self-defense. The short aria "Amor ti vieta" comes in Act II, where the two meet, and Ipanov declares his love for her.

Amor ti vieta di non amar:
la mano tua lieve che mi respinge,
cerca la stretta della mia man;
la tua pupilla esprime:

T'amo! se il labbro dice:
Non t'amerò!

Love itself forbids the denial of your
love:

your gentle hand pushes me away,
yet also seeks my hand's pressure;
your eyes say: "I love you!"
But your lips form the words:
"I shall not love you."

5. Leoncavallo: *Pagliacci* - Vesti La Giubba

Leoncavallo's *Bohème* may have fallen into neglect, but *Pagliacci*, his dramatically gripping "play within a play," has kept his name alive. Cast in two brief acts, the work is usually paired with another short opera, most often Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana*. Canio, directing an itinerant troupe of actors, suspects that his wife, Nedda, is having an affair. "Vesti la giubba," one of the most iconic of spinto tenor arias, is Canio's heart-rending outpouring as he sings that he must don his clown's costume and make his audience laugh – even though he is weeping within at his wife's infidelity.

Finally, the actual betrayal plays itself out before an unsuspecting audience, ending when Canio murders both Nedda and her lover onstage.

Recitar!
Mentre preso dal delirio,
non so più quel che dico,
e quel che faccio!
Eppur è d'uopo, sforzati!
Bah!

Sei tu forse un uom?
Tu se' Pagliaccio!

Vesti la giubba e la faccia infarina.
La gente paga, e rider vuole qua.
E se Arlecchin t'invola Colombina,
ridi, Pagliaccio,
e ognun applaudirà!
Tramuta in lazzi lo spasmo ed il pianto
in una smorfia il singhiozzo il dolor,
Ah!
Ridi, Pagliaccio,
sul tuo amore infranto!
Ridi del duol, che t'avvelena il cor!

Act!
While in such delirium,
I no longer know what I'm saying,
or what I'm doing!

And yet I must make an effort!
Bah!
Aren't you a man?
You're a clown!

So don your costume and powder your face.
People pay to come here,
and they want to laugh.
And if Harlequin steals your Colum-
bina,
laugh, clown, so the crowd will cheer!
Turn your anguish and tears into jest,
your agony and sobs into a funny face
– Ah!
Laugh, clown,
at your broken love!
Laugh at the misery that poisons your
heart!

6. Leoncavallo: *Zaza* - Oh mio piccolo
tavolo

Leoncavallo's comic opera *Zaza*, while
heard only rarely nowadays, enjoyed
greater success during the composer's life-
time than any of his other operas save for
Pagliacci. The plot revolves mostly around

protagonist Milio's affair with French mu-
sic hall singer Zaza, who investigates a
report that he was seeing another wom-
an (actually, his wife). In Milio's Act III
aria, "O mio piccolo tavolo," He sings to
his cluttered desk, encumbered (like his
heart) with despair and confusion as he
resolves to break off the affair.

Oh mio piccolo tavolo ingombrato
sì come è ingombro di sgomento il
cuore!
Domani a Saint-Etienne sarò tornato
l'ultima volta ... a salutar l'amore!
Come dirle ch'io parto? oh come fare
a lasciarla? A mentire? Il labbro mio
come le giurerà di ritornare
mentre che il cuore le darà l'addio?

Mai più, Zazà, raggiar vedrò
da gli occhi tuoi la fiamma de l'amor!
E mormorar piu non t'udrò
calde parole, stretta sul mio cor.
Oh baci, oh nostre tenere ebbrezze,
notti incantate, lunghe carezze
sereni dì!
Il nostro amore è naufragato,
e ci ha travolti l'onda del fato!
Tutto finì!

Oh, my little table, cluttered –
just like my heart – with despair!
Tomorrow I'll return to Saint-Etienne
to greet love for the last time.
How can I tell her I'm leaving? Oh, how
can I leave her? And lie to her?
How can my lips swear to return
even as my heart says goodbye?

Nevermore, Zazà, will I see
your eyes glow with love's flame,
or hear you murmur ardent words
close to my heart.
Oh kisses, oh our tender bliss,
enchanted nights, constant caresses,
serene days!
Our love has foundered
under the waves of fate!
It is no more!

7. Mascagni: *Cavalleria Rusticana* -
Mamma, quell vino è generoso

Pietro Mascagni (1863-1945) scored a
public sensation in 1890 with his sin-
gle-act *Cavalleria Rusticana*, credited by
many as signaling the birth of the Ver-
ismo movement in opera. It's a paragon

of the Verismo repertoire, and remains
his most popular work – well known
by virtue of its frequent double-bill
pairing with Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci* in
performance. The hero Turridu, having
returned home after military service to
find his beloved has married another,
quickly becomes embroiled in a jealou-
sy-ridden "love-quadrangle," including
the vengeful seduction of young San-
tuzza, whom he has promised to marry.
"Mamma, quel vino è generoso," coming
after Turridu has been challenged to a
duel to the death, is his anxiety-ridden
plea to his mother to bless him and also
be a good mother to Santuzza, should he
not return. He then goes out to die at the
hand of his rival.

Mamma,
quel vino è generoso, e certo
oggi troppi bicchieri
ne ho tracannati.
Vado fuori all'aperto.
Ma prima voglio
che mi benedite
come quel giorno
che partii soldato.
E poi ... mamma ... sentite...

S'io ... non tornassi ...
Voi dovrete fare
da madre a Santa,
ch'io le avea giurato
di condurla all'altare.

Oh! nulla!
È il vino che mi ha suggerito!
Per me pregate Iddio!
Un bacio, mamma...
Un altro bacio ... addio!

Mother,
that wine is strong, and I know
that I have drunk
too many glasses today.
I'm going out for some fresh air.
But first I ask
you to bless me,
as you did on that day
when I went away to be a soldier.
And ... mother ... listen ...
If I ... don't come back ...
You must be
a mother to Santa,
whom I have promised
to take to the altar.

Oh, no reason!

It must be the wine!
Pray to God for me!
A kiss, mother!
Another kiss... farewell!

8. Puccini: *Turandot* – Non piangere,
Liù

Giacomo Puccini's (1858 -1924) *Turandot* – his dramatic tale of a cold and ruthless Chinese princess – remained unfinished at the time of the composer's death in 1924. Despite Puccini's wishes that the opera be completed by Riccardo Zandonai, it was eventually finished by Franco Alfano, based on the composer's sketches. In this, the first of the album's pair of arias from *Turandot*, the servant girl Liù has been secretly in love with the "Unknown Prince" (Calàf, the male lead) ever since he had smiled at her years before in happier times. In Act I, she weeps as she begs him not to risk death by attempting to answer Turandot's test of answering three riddles, for which any wrong answer will cost her suitor his head. In "Non piangere, Liù," Calàf tenderly tells her not to cry,

and bids her to remain loyal to Timur,
his elderly father, should he not pass
Turandot's riddle test. Liù later commits
suicide rather than reveal the true name
of her beloved "Unknown Prince" under
torture.

Non piangere, Liù
se in un lontano giorno
io t'ho sorriso
per quel sorriso,
dolce mia fanciulla
m'ascolta:
Il tuo signore
sarà, domani,
forse, solo al mondo.
Non lo lasciar...
portalo via con te.
Dell'esilio,
addolcisca lui le strade.
Questo ... questo,
o mia piccola povera
al tuo piccolo cuore
che non cade
chiede colui
che non sorride più.

Don't weep, Liù,
If, on a day long past,

I smiled at you,
for that smile's sake,
my sweet girl,
hear me:
Your lord will be,
perhaps tomorrow,
alone in the world.
Don't leave him behind;
Take him with you.
In his exile,
you ease his journey.
This... this...
oh my poor Liù,
of your humble,
yet faithful heart...
asks he who no longer smiles!

9. Puccini: *Turandot* – Nessun dorma

One of the most popular tenor arias in all
of opera, "Nessun dorma" comes in Act
III of *Turandot*, after Calàf has correctly
answered all three of Princess Turandot's
riddles, thereby winning her hand in marriage.
Turandot, however, reneges on her
promise to marry the successful suitor
and resolves to execute him anyway, unless
she fails to discover his true name by

dawn the next day. Calàf – confident that nobody will reveal his identity to her – sings ecstatically of his imminent victory.

Nessun dorma! Nessun dorma!

Tu pure, O Principessa,
nella tua fredda stanza,
guardi le stelle
che tremano d'amore
e di speranza.

Ma il mio mistero è chiuso in me,
il nome mio nessun saprà!

No, no, sulla tua bocca lo dirò
quando la luce splenderà!

Ed il mio bacio scioglierà il silenzio
che ti fa mia!

Dilegua, o notte!

Tramontate, stelle!

Tramontate, stelle!

All'alba vincerò!

Vincerò, vincerò!

Nobody will sleep!

Nobody will sleep!

Even you, o Princess,
in your frigid chamber,
gaze at the stars,

that shiver with love and with hope.

But I hide my secret within me,

and no one shall know my name.

No, no,

I will tell it upon your mouth
when the light shines.

And my kiss will melt
the silence that makes you mine!

Vanish, o night!

Fade, stars! Fade, stars!

At sunrise, I will win!

I will win! I will win!

10. Puccini: *La Fanciulla del West* -
Ch'ella mi creda

Puccini's *La Fanciulla del West* (The Girl of the Golden West) is arguably the first-ever "spaghetti western" – or at least the first serious operatic treatment of life in the American "wild west," tales of which were all the rage in Europe when it was composed in 1910. Musically, the opera is a beautifully crafted masterpiece – though its insipid plot and lack of show-stopping dramatic moments have relegated it to subordinate status among Puccini's mature works. Still, it contains many attractive moments for the lead tenor, Dick Johnson (AKA Ramirez, the

notorious bandit), who – after his declaration of love to heroine Minnie once she has learned his true identity – resolves to change his ways and live an honest life for her sake. “Ch’ella mi creda” comes in Act III, as Johnson – about to be hanged by enraged miners – begs them to tell Minnie that he is free and far away... before Minnie arrives with a six-gun and rescues him; they then ride off to make a new life together.

Ch’ella mi creda libero e lontano,
sopra una nuova via di redenzione!
Aspetterà ch’io torni
e passeranno i giorni,
ed io non tornerò.
Minnie, della mia vita mio solo fiore,
Minnie, che m’hai voluto tanto bene!
Ah! Tu della mia vita mio solo fior!

Let her believe I’m free and far away,
headed for a new life of redemption!
She’ll wait for my return,
and the days will pass,
and I won’t come back.
Minnie, the only flower of my life,
Minnie, you who have loved me so much!
Ah! You, the only flower of my life!

11. Gomes: *Lo Schiavo* - Quando nascesti tu

The Brazilian Antônio Carlos Gomes (1836-1896) enjoyed the distinction of being the first composer from the New World to achieve success in Europe. He burst upon the scene between the leading Italian masters Verdi (who called him a “true musical genius”) and Puccini, and was pegged as a composer to watch following the acclaimed premiere of his *Il Guarany*. But *Lo Schiavo* (the slave) fell afoul of Italian censors, who were still wary of operas with themes of liberation and class conflict, forcing him to return to Brazil to stage its premiere in Rio de Janeiro. “Quando nascesti tu” comes in Act II, as the hero Americo, the son of a Brazilian aristocrat, sings of his love for the enslaved Indian girl Ilara.

All’istante partir di qui vorrei,
ma non poss’io.
L’ importuna insistenza e insiem lo
scherno
sopportar perchè?
Ah! No! Si parta. A questa dura prova
regger non so!

Che tento ? Al padre mio
di rimaner promisi.
l' attenderò!

Ei qui verrà... Delle mie pene il premio
sarà la man d'Ilàra,
chè un' altra amar non so!

Quando nascesti tu nasceano i fior
che il ciel baciò:
E in me sorgeva insieme quel amor
che mi beò!
E fin d' allora
ardente il cor
sull'ali d'or
a te volò!
Quando nascesti tu nasceva il sole -
che ti irradiò:
Ed il soave olir delle viole
t' addormentò!
Così nell'estasi
fra' baci miei,
la ti vorrei
addormentar:

Sogni di gloria,
Oro e trofei,
Tutto disprezzerei
Sol di poterti amar!

Quando nascesti tu nasceva il sole!
Nasceva il sole!

I would leave right now,
but I cannot.
Why should I endure
both persistent demands and scorn?
Ah! No! We shall part. I cannot bear
this bitter ordeal.

What am I saying? I promised
my father that I would stay.
I'll wait for him!

He shall come here; for my tribulations,
the hand of Ilàra will be the reward,
for none other can I love.

When you were born,
so were the flowers that heaven kissed:
And suddenly an enthralling love
arose within me!
And at that moment,
my ardent heart
flew out to you
on golden wings!
When you were born,
the sun was born
that bathed you in its rays:

And the sweet scent of violets
lulled you to sleep!
Just so, with ecstatic kisses,
would I bring you to slumber:
Dreams of glory,
gold and trophies:
I would scorn them all,
if only I could love you!

When you were born, the sun was
born!
The sun was born!

12. Halévy: *La Juive* – Rachel, quand du
seigneur

Fromental Halévy's (1799-1862) *La Juive*
(The Jewess) was one of the nineteenth
century's most admired operas, seen by
some as an early plea for religious toleration.
Loosely based on actual Medieval history,
it tells the tale of Eleazar, an Italian Jewish
goldsmith who had been banished by his
nemesis, Count Brogni. By an ironic twist
of fate, Eleazar had found and raised the
Count's lost infant daughter as Rachel, his
own child. Brogni – now a Cardinal – unknowingly has

her imprisoned and condemned to death
for her affair with a Christian nobleman.
In his Act IV aria, "Rachel, quand du
seigneur," Eleazar laments that he has only
wanted Rachel's happiness, but has instead
caused her condemnation – before giving
voice to his determination to save her by
revealing her true identity.

Rachel, quand du Seigneur
la grâce tutélaire
à mes tremblantes mains confia
ton berceau,
j'avais à ton bonheur
voué ma vie entière.
Et c'est moi qui te livre au bourreau!
J'avais à ton bonheur
voué ma vie entière,
et c'est moi qui te livre au bourreau,

Mais j'entends une voix qui me crie:
Sauvez-moi de la mort qui m'attend!
Je suis jeune et je tiens à la vie,
ô mon père épargnez votre enfant,
je suis jeune et je tiens à la vie;
ô mon père, ô mon père,
épargnez votre enfant!

Ah! Rachel, quand du Seigneur (etc.)

Rachel, when the Lord's saving grace
entrusted your cradle into my hands,
I made your happiness
the avowed aim of my whole life
and it is I who am sending you
to your execution!

But I can hear a voice calling to me:
save me from the death which awaits
me!
I am young and I cling to life!
O my father, spare your child!

13. Cilea: *Adriana Lecouvreur* - *L'anima
ho stanca*

Francesco Cilea (1866-1950) composed quite a few operas, but only two of them – *L'arlesiana* and *Adriana Lecouvreur* – remain on the fringes of today's active repertoire. The latter is loosely based on an actual historical figure, the eighteenth-century French actress Adrienne Lecouvreur, though much of the complex plot's action is entirely fictional. While chock-full of wonderful music, the work has long been disparaged by critics for both its confusing

libretto and the heroine's preposterous, "death-by-poisoned-violets" demise – leading some to call it the least realistic opera of the Verismo genre. Still, tenors can't resist (among others) the Act II aria "*L'anima ho stanca*," in which hero Maurizio acknowledges his indebtedness to the Princess de Bouillon (who loves him), but tells her that his faded love for her will become "a tender memory" in his heart.

*L'anima ho stanca, e la meta è lontana:
Non aggiungete la rampogna vana
all'ansia che m'accora.
Assai vi debbo; ah!
Ma se amor cadrà memore affetto in
core,
in cor mi fiorirà!*

My heart is tired, and distant is my goal:
Do not add pointless rebukes
to the anguish that plagues me.
I owe you much, ah!
But if love dies, then a tender memory
will grow in my heart.

14. Zandonai: *Giulietta e Romeo* – Giulietta, son io

Riccardo Zandonai (1883-1944) was hailed by Ricordi, the publisher of his operas, as “Puccini’s heir” – yet today, most of his music is forgotten. While his dramatic style was, indeed, similar to that of his illustrious predecessor, his musical language incorporated some of the more accessible aspects of 20th-Century music (i.e., whiffs of Debussy and R. Strauss) and his juicy orchestrations often projected greater dramatic and emotional weight than his vocal parts. His *Giulietta e Romeo* is, of course, another operatic treatment of the famous Shakespeare play. “Giulietta, son io” is Romeo’s heartbroken lament as he stands at the tomb of the Capulets, before Giulietta revives to join her lover in their final duet of impassioned doom.

Giulietta, son io, io, non mi vedi?
Io che non piango più,
io che t’imploro,
io che vengo a cader morto ai tuoi piedi
perchè beato e disperato moro senza
di te,

anima mia.

Così, Giulietta.

Ma le fredde mani or sui capelli tuoi
voglio posare,
voglio posare un cor sopra il tuo core
e la bocca che il pianto ha lacerato,
vuol la tua bocca, la tua bocca, amore.
Ah! Come, dimmi, ti potrò invocare,
con quale nome più soave santo?
Ah! Come, dimmi, ti saprò destare,
con qual grido,
con qual dolce pianto,
con quale ardente bacio, anima mia?
Giulietta mia, Giulietta mia, Giulietta!
Oh! morta! morta! Dannato me!
Son io, son io, Romeo... ohimè!

Giulietta, it is I, I – can’t you see me?
I who weep no more, I who beg you,
I who come to die at your feet,
because without you, my love,
I die blessed and in despair.
Like this, Giulietta.

But I want to touch your hair with my
chilled hands,
I want to place my heart against yours
– and my lips, that have been torn by
tears,
want your lips, your lips, my love.

Ah! Tell me, how else can I call you,
with what more sweet and blessed
name?

Ah! tell me, how can I wake you,
with what cry, with what soft lament,
with what ardent kiss, my beloved?
My Giulietta, my Giulietta, Giulietta!
Oh! dead! dead! I am wretched!
It is I, it is I, Romeo... Alas!

15. Massenet: *Le Cid* - O Souverain

The remarkably prolific Jules Massenet (1842-1912) was a prominent and highly influential figure on the French late-Romantic scene. Quite a few of his nearly three dozen operas enjoyed widespread success, though only *Werther* and *Manon* have retained a consistent toe-hold in the modern repertory. Some interest in *Le Cid*, first staged in 1885, has recently been revived, with several notable productions in recent seasons after nearly a century of neglect. Set in 11th-century Spain, during the height of the Moorish wars, "O Souverain, o Juge, o Père" is hero Rodrigue's fervent Act III prayer on the eve of battle against

an overwhelming Moorish army, before leading his forces to victory.

Ah! tout est bien fini.
Mon beau rêve de gloire,
mes rêves de bonheur
s'envolent à jamais!
Tu m'as pris mon amour,
tu me prends la victoire,
Seigneur, je me soumets!

O Souverain, O Juge, O Pere,
toujour viole, present toujours

Je t'adorais au temps prospere,
et te benis aux sombres jours.
Je vais ou ta loi me reclame
libre de tous regrets humains.

O Souverain, O Juge, O Pere,
ta seul image est dans mon ame
que je remet entre tes mains.

O firmament, azur, lumiere,
esprits d'en haut penche sur moi
c'est le soldat qui desespere
mais la chretien garde sa foi.

Tu peux venir, tu peux paraitre

aurore du jour eternal.

O Souverain, O Juge, O Pere,
le serviteur d'un juste maitre
répond sans crainte a ton appel.

O Souverain, O Juge, O pere!

Ah, so it is now finally done,
my sweet dream of glory
and my dream of happiness
have gone away forever.
You take away my love,
you take away my victory.
Lord, I submit myself to you

Oh Sovereign Lord, My Judge, My
Father;
ever veiled, but always present

I loved you in good times,
and I bless you on somber days.
I will follow your law,
free of human remorse.

Oh Sovereign Lord, My Judge, My
Father;
none but your image
will I place in your hands

Oh heaven above, so blue, so bright.
Oh bright spirits soaring above me,
this soldier may be in anguish,
but this Christian's faith will endure.

You may come, you may appear to me
on that eternal day.

Oh Sovereign Lord, My Judge, My
Father;
as a servant of a just master,
Fearless, I will obey your call.

Oh Sovereign Lord, My Judge, My
Father!

- Notes by Lindsay Koob

MARCELO ALVAREZ is internationally recognized as one of the most important tenors of this era and has been acclaimed at virtually all the great opera houses of the world including the Metropolitan Opera, Teatro alla Scala, Royal Opera Covent Garden, Opera National de Paris Bastille, Bavarian State Opera, Munich, Vienna State Op-

era, and the Teatro Colon, Buenos Aires. After establishing his international reputation in lyric roles such as the Duke in *Rigoletto*, Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and the title roles in *Werther*, *Romeo et Juliette* and *Faust*, in recent seasons he has received the highest praise for his performances of the lirico spinto repertoire in roles including Manrico in *Il Trovatore*, Rodolfo in *Luisa Miller*, Riccardo in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Cavaradossi in *Tosca*, Don Jose in *Carmen*, Radames in *Aida*, Maurizio in *Adriana Lecouvreur* and the title role in *Andrea Chenier*.

Born in Cordoba, Argentina, Alvarez first began to study classical music when already in his twenties and established as a successful businessman. After making the decision to pursue a career in opera, Alvarez sold his business, left Argentina and arrived in Italy in 1995. He made his Italian debut in 1995 at Teatro la Fenice in Venice as Elvino in *La Sonnambula*, and – within the short span of the next two and a half years – rose to international prominence. He sang his first performances of the Duke in *Rigoletto*

at the Teatro Giuseppe Verdi in Trieste, made his French stage debut in Toulouse in June of 1997, and his Arena di Verona Debut in August 1997 in the same role. Alvarez was also heard as Alfredo in *La Traviata* at the Hamburg State Opera, the Teatro Carlo Felice in Genoa, the Teatro La Fenice in Venice and made his Spanish debut as Tonio in *La Fille du Regiment* in Bilbao. In the spring of 1997 at the Teatro Carlo Felice in Genoa, Alvarez sang his first performances of the title role of Massenet's *Werther* at the Teatro Carlo Felice in Genoa, and made his debut as Arturo in *I Puritani* at the Teatro Comunale in Bologna to tumultuous acclaim.

The 1997/98 season was especially important, as it marked several significant debuts; *Rigoletto* in Buenos Aires, *Werther* in Brussels, *Linda di Chamounix* at the Teatro Alla Scala, as well as with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment in London, and *Falstaff* at the Berlin State Opera, in a new production conducted by Claudio Abbado. Alvarez made his first appearances with the Royal Opera, Covent Garden

(in Baden-Baden and at the Royal Albert Hall), the Vienna State Opera, and the Paris Opera in *La Traviata*. He subsequently made his North American debut in November of 1998 in the Metropolitan Opera's new production of *Traviata*, conducted by James Levine and directed by Franco Zeffirelli; he also starred in two other new stagings of *Traviata*: at the Deutsche Oper Berlin and at the Teatro Comunale in Florence.

In the first decade of his international career, Alvarez was heard predominantly in the lyric tenor repertoire, and became especially identified with roles such as the Duke, Alfredo, and Edgar-do in *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Special mention must also be made of the title role in Massenet's *Werther*, which he sang in new productions in Vienna, London and Munich as well as in many other theaters. His special affinity for the French repertoire led to many other debuts. Des Grieux in *Manon* entered his repertoire at the San Carlo in Naples, after which he partnered Renee Fleming in the opera at both the Paris Opera and at the Metropolitan Opera.

He sang Faust in 2000, and Romeo in *Romeo et Juliette* in 2004, both in new productions at the Bavarian State Opera in Munich. Alvarez made his actual Covent Garden debut in the title role of Offenbach's *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* in 2000.

In 2003, Alvarez sang his first Rodolfo in *Luisa Miller*: a production that can be seen as his entrance into the lirico-spinto repertoire. The same year he sang his first Rodolfo in *La Boheme* at the Teatro alla Scala, followed by his debut as Riccardo in *Un Ballo in Maschera* at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden in 2005. The following year he sang his first Manrico in *Il Trovatore* at the Teatro Regio in Parma, and immediately thereafter his first Cavaradossi in the Royal Opera's new production of *Tosca* (also starring Angela Gheorghiu and Bryn Terfel) under the baton of Antonio Pappano. Don Jose in *Carmen* entered his repertoire in Toulouse in 2007. He went on to sing these roles all over the world; Rodolfo in *La Boheme* in Paris, London, New York, Zurich, Verona; Rodolfo in *Luisa Miller* for

his debuts in Madrid and Valencia as well as at La Scala in Milan; Manrico in London, Zurich, New York, Verona, and Milan; Cavaradossi in Berlin, Verona, Rome, New York, Munich and Milan; Riccardo in *Ballo* in Paris, Madrid, Berlin, Milan and Zurich; *Carmen* in Florence, London, New York and at the Chorges D'Orange as well as the Arena di Verona.

His exploration of the spinto repertoire continued in 2009 with his assumptions of the roles of Maurizio in *Adriana Lecouvreur* in Turin and the title role in *Andrea Chenier* in Paris. In 2010, Alvarez sang his first Radames in *Aida* in a new production at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden under Nicola Luisotti and staged by Sir David McVicar. He made two further debuts with the Opera de Paris at the Opera Bastille, appearing as Don Alvaro in *La Forza del Destino* in 2011 and as Enzo in *La Gioconda* in 2013.

Highlights of recent seasons have included new productions of *Tosca*, *Un Ballo in Maschera* and *Il Trovatore* at

the Metropolitan Opera, *Andrea Chenier* (also at the Met), *Aida* in a new production in Paris, and *La Gioconda* at the Deutsche Oper Berlin. He has appeared at La Scala in a new production in each of the past seasons. These have included *Luisa Miller*, *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *Tosca* and *Il Trovatore*. In July of 2014 he made his debut at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, in two performances of *Tosca*. He also appeared in St. Petersburg in a solo operatic concert, as well as in Moscow in a concert dedicated to the Tango.

In the current season, Alvarez will sing his first Canio in *Pagliacci* in Monte Carlo, followed by new productions of *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci* at the Metropolitan Opera, in which he will sing both Turridu and Canio. Alvarez returns to Paris for new productions of *Tosca* and *Adriana Lecouvreur*, and will also perform *Tosca* in Berlin and Sao Paulo.

Marcelo Alvarez has been heard throughout Europe in solo concert in cities including Berlin, Rome, Moscow,

Athens, Frankfurt, and at the Choregies D'Orange. Marcelo Alvarez's first solo CD, "Bel Canto" on Sony Classics, was issued in the autumn of 1998, and since then he has recorded three other solo discs for Sony: a disc devoted to the Argentine Tango by Carlos Gardel, "French Opera Arias" and "The Tenor's Passion," a collection of some of the most popular operatic arias, as well as a disc of Verdi arias for Decca. Alvarez can also be heard in the complete recording (and DVD) of *Manon* with Renée Fleming, recorded live at the Opera de la Bastille in Paris. He can be seen in several other DVDs, such as *La Boheme* from the Teatro alla Scala, *Tosca* from L'Arena Di Verona and the Metropolitan Opera, *Rigoletto* from Covent Garden and from the Liceo in Barcelona, *Lucia di Lammemoor* from Naples, *Werther* from the Vienna State Opera, *Adriana Lecouvreur* from Genoa, and *Un Ballo in Maschera* from Madrid.

"CONSTANTINE ORBELIAN stands astride two great societies, and finds and promotes synergistic harmony from the

best of each." (*Fanfare*) For over 20 years the brilliant American pianist/conductor has been a central figure in Russia's musical life — as Music Director of the Moscow Chamber Orchestra and the Philharmonia of Russia, and as frequent guest conductor with other illustrious Russian orchestras. In 2013 he also became Chief Conductor of the Kaunas City Symphony Orchestra. He tours with American stars in Russian and European music centers, and with Russian stars in North American music centers, and extends these splendid collaborations to tours in Europe, UK, Japan, Korea, and other music capitals throughout the world.

Orbelian's appointment in 1991 as Music Director of the Moscow Chamber Orchestra was a breakthrough event: he is the first American ever to become music director of an ensemble in Russia. This "American in Moscow" is well known as a tireless champion of Russian-American cultural exchange and international ambassadorship through his worldwide tours. In January 2004, President Putin awarded Orbelian the coveted title "Honored Artist of Russia," a title never

before bestowed on a non-Russian citizen. In May 2010, Orbelian led the opening Ceremonial Concert for the Cultural Olympics in Sochi, Russia — the first event setting the stage for Russia's hosting of the Olympic Games in 2014. In 2012, Orbelian was awarded the Russian Order of Friendship (ROF) Medal, the highest Russian award bestowed on non-Russians whose work contributes to the betterment of relations with the Russian Federation and its people.

"Orbelian has star quality, and his orchestra plays with passion and precision," *The Audio Critic* wrote of his acclaimed series of over 30 recordings on Delos. Among his recent concert and televised appearances are collaborations with stars Renée Fleming and Dmitri Hvorostovsky, and with Van Cliburn in Cliburn's sentimental return to Moscow, the great pianist's last performance. *Opera News* calls Orbelian "the singer's dream collaborator," and commented that he conducts vocal repertoire "with the sensitivity of a lieder pianist." Orbelian's frequent collaborations with Hvorostovsky include repertoire from their Delos recordings

"Where Are You, My Brothers?" and "Moscow Nights," featured on many tours and telecasts. On several occasions he has conducted historic live telecasts from Moscow's Red Square, the latest of which took place on June 19, 2013, with Hvorostovsky and Anna Netrebko.

Recently Orbelian has turned to film to create more of his unique American/Russian collaborations. His first film production, "Renée Fleming and Dmitri Hvorostovsky: *An Odyssey in St. Petersburg*," was filmed in St. Petersburg's most glorious palaces, and features the two superstars in opera scenes and arias. The film is in some ways a culmination of Orbelian's efforts in St. Petersburg, since he is founder and Music Director of the annual Palaces of St. Petersburg International Music Festival.

Born in San Francisco to Russian and Armenian emigré parents, Constantine Orbelian made his debut as a piano prodigy with the San Francisco Symphony at the age of 11. After graduating from Juilliard in New York, he embarked on a career as a piano virtuoso that included appearances with major symphony orchestras

throughout the U.S., U.K., Europe, and Russia. His recording of the Khachaturian piano concerto with conductor Neeme Järvi won “Best Concerto Recording of the Year” award in the United Kingdom.

From his 1995 performance at the 50th Anniversary Celebrations of the United Nations in San Francisco, to his 2004 performance at the U.S. State Department commemorating 70 years of diplomatic relations between Washington and Moscow, and a repeat State Department appearance in 2007, all with the Moscow Chamber Orchestra, Orbelian continues to use his artistic eminence in the cause of international goodwill. He and his orchestras also participate in cultural enrichment programs for young people, both in Russia and the U.S. In 2001 Orbelian was awarded the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, an award given to immigrants, or children of immigrants, who have made outstanding contributions to the United States.

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