

presents

UW SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
with
UW OPERA THEATER
David Alexander Rahbee, *conductor*

December 5, 2014

7:30 PM

MEANY THEATER

PROGRAM

FOUNTAINS OF ROME (1916) OTTORINO RESPIGHI (1879-1936)

- I. *The Fountain of Valle Giulia at Dawn (La fontana di Valle Giulia all'Alba)*
- II. *The Triton Fountain at Morn (La fontana del Tritone al mattino)*
- III. *The Fountain of Trevi at Mid-day (La fontana di Trevi al meriggio)*
- IV. *The Villa Medici Fountain at Sunset (La fontana di Villa Medici al tramonto)*

— SHORT PAUSE —

GIANNI SCHICCHI (1917-18) (concert performance) GIACOMO PUCCINI (1858-1924)

CAST

GIANNI SCHICCHI PATRICK BORROR
LAURETTA KATRINA DEININGER
RINUCCIO ANTHONY JAMES
ZITA DAKOTA MILLER
LA CIESCA EMERALD LESSLEY
MARCO ANDREW LARSON
NELLA BRIANNA VALENCIA
GHERARDO JOSEPH MURIELLO
GHERARDINO DENNA GOOD-MOJAB
SIMONE CHRISTOPHER KOULDUKIS
BETTO DI SIGNA CRAIG GRAYSON
MAESTRO SPINELLOCCIO NICHOLAS VARELA
AMANTIO DI NICOLAO NICHOLAS VARELA
GUCCIO ANTHONY LONGORIA
PINELLINO THOMAS HARPER

Conductor David Alexander Rahbee
Musical preparation Rhonda Kline & Thomas Harper
Rehearsal pianist Megan McElroy
Supertitle technician & diction coach Lorenzo Guggenheim

In 1913, three years before Ottorino Respighi composed *Fountains of Rome*, he was appointed teacher of composition at the city's National Academy of Saint Cecilia. Respighi's own training had included compositional study with Giuseppe Martucci, who had helped to bring Richard Wagner's operas to Italy; and also, briefly, with Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. After his appointment at the Academy, Respighi's compositions turned notably more nationalistic in character. Many of his most well-loved orchestral works were written during this period, including the first two *Ancient Airs and Dances* suites and the three symphonic poems known as his "Roman Trilogy."

Fountains of Rome, the first of Respighi's Trilogy, was composed in 1916 and premiered in 1917. The symphonic poem was Respighi's first true public success, and presents musical impressions of four of Rome's most famous fountains. Each fountain is depicted at the hour of day when Respighi felt its character was most impressive or in harmony with the surrounding landscape. The Fountain of Valle Giulia, now in a northern suburb of Rome, was still in a pastoral landscape during the early twentieth century. Gian Lorenzo Bernini's grand Triton Fountain stands by the entrance to the Palazzo Barberini. More than fifty yards wide, the Trevi Fountain is the largest Baroque fountain in the city. The comparatively subdued Villa Medici Fountain sits in a shaded grove overlooking the city.

Respighi's own program notes provide vivid imagery for each movement:

- The first part of the poem, inspired by *The fountain of Valle Giulia*, depicts a pastoral landscape; droves of cattle pass and disappear in the fresh damp mists of a Roman dawn.
- A sudden, loud, and insistent blast of horns above the trills of the whole orchestra introduces the second part, *The Triton Fountain*. It is like a joyous call, summoning troops of naiads and tritons, who come running up, pursuing each other and mingling in a frenzied dance between the jets of water.
- Next there appears a solemn theme borne on the undulations of the orchestra. It is *The fountain of Trevi at mid-day*. The solemn theme passing from the wood to the brass instrument, assumes a triumphal character. Trumpets peal: across the radiant surface of the water there passes Neptune's chariot drawn by seahorses, and followed by a train of sirens and tritons. The procession then vanishes while faint trumpet blasts resound in the distance.
- The fourth part, *The Villa Medici Fountain*, is announced by a sad theme which rises above a subdued warbling. It is the nostalgic hour of sunset. The air is full of the sound of tolling bells, birds twittering, leaves rustling. Then all dies peacefully into the silence of the night.

Respighi and his works have not enjoyed much scholarly attention, despite his compositions' long-term popularity. Surrounded by a culture that praised innovation, he continued to write in a somewhat more traditional, Romantic style. Additionally, Mussolini's Fascist government exploited Respighi's music to further their own political ends; the degree to which Respighi, apolitical and reclusive by nature, encouraged or merely allowed this activity remains an argument.

After completing the last section of his Roman Trilogy, *Roman Festivals (Feste Romane, 1928)*, Respighi turned away from nationalist subjects. His enduring interest in Italian music of the Renaissance and Baroque is evident in his later works, such as the opera *Maria egiziaca (Saint Mary of Egypt, 1932)*, which incorporates Gregorian-like monophony into his own, modern harmonic language.

Despite the relative dearth of research on Respighi, his works continue to be well-respected and are frequently performed worldwide. With its vivid imagery, colorful orchestration, and scenic locale, *Fountains of Rome* remains, understandably, one of Respighi's most-loved compositions.

GIANNI SCHICCHI, by GIACOMO PUCCINI

GIANNI SCHICCHI is a one-act comic opera by Giacomo Puccini, and is the third and final part of Puccini's *IL TRITTICO*. *IL TRITTICO* consists of three one-act pieces, the first being *Il Tabarro*, which is followed by *Suor Angelica*, and lastly *GIANNI SCHICCHI*. *Il Trittico* premiered at New York's Metropolitan Opera in 1918. *GIANNI SCHICCHI* was very well received, but the other two operas were met with much less immediate enthusiasm. Today *GIANNI SCHICCHI* is the most performed of the three and has been recorded multiple times.

The character of Gianni Schicchi, although based on actual events from the 13th century, originates from Dante's *The Divine Comedy*. Gianni is only briefly mentioned in Dante's tale as being witnessed among the damned in the Circle of Impersonators. However, the plot for Puccini's opera is mostly taken from a later edition of *The Divine Comedy* by Pietro Fanfani, which was written in 1866.

The opera begins in the interior of a wealthy household in Florence. The owner, Buoso Donati, lies dead in the room. His family has gathered to "mourn" his passing, but are, in actuality, more interested in the contents of his will. Betto begins telling of rumors he has heard that Buoso has left everything to the friars of the monastery of Santa Reparata. The family searches madly for the will. Upon finding it, Rinuccio, Buoso's nephew, forces his aunt to approve of his wedding to Lauretta, Gianni Schicchi's daughter, before he will give her the will to read. She quickly agrees, and Rinuccio sends for Gianni. Rinuccio is confident that his deceased uncle has left him enough that he can now afford to wed Lauretta.

Once the will is read, however, the family discovers Betto's rumor is indeed fact. The family turns to Simone for help, since he is the oldest of Buoso's cousins, and was once the mayor of Fucecchio. Rinuccio intervenes and states that if anyone can help them it is Lauretta's father, Gianni Schicchi. The family shuns him, but much to their surprise Schicchi has already been summoned. Zita rudely informs him that his services will not be needed. An argument breaks out between Zita and Schicchi, which ends with Schicchi vehemently refusing to help. Lauretta then sings, the famous aria, "O mio babbino caro," in which she begs her father to help, stating that she will die if she cannot wed Rinuccio. Begrudgingly, Schicchi agrees to look at the will.

Upon initial inspection of the will, he claims there is nothing he can do, but after further thought he devises a plan. He sends Lauretta out of the room, and orders the family to remove Buoso's body. In the midst of preparation, doctor Spinelloccio arrives for his evening check-up of the very ill Buoso Donati. He is unaware that Donati has already died. Gianni quickly dives into the bed, which has been recently cleared of the body, and proceeds to impersonate Buoso, which fools the doctor.

As the doctor leaves, the family still does not grasp the plan, so Schicchi spells it out for them. They are to call the Notary so that Schicchi can impersonate Buoso and change the will. After brief bickering, the family decides how to split up the majority of Buoso's holdings. However, they leave the bequeathing of Donati's best mule, the finest in all of Tuscany, the sawmills of Signa, and Buoso's house in Florence, to Schicchi. Before the Notary arrives, Gianni reminds them that they must remain silent about this endeavor forever; that the penalty for forgery is cutting off one's right hand and eternal banishment from Florence.

The Notary arrives and Schicchi begins his impersonation. He fulfills all of the family's requests just as they specified. However, as they finally reach the three items left to Schicchi's judgement, Gianni bequeaths all three to himself. After the Notary leaves, the outraged family begins grabbing as many of the household items as they can before Gianni chases them out. Lauretta and Rinuccio remain behind dreaming, as lovers do, of their future together. Gianni returns and then addresses the audience, pleading for forgiveness. After all, what better wedding gift could he have given his daughter than old Buoso's house?

[Notes by Patrick Borrer]

UW SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
David Alexander Rahbee, *conductor*
Tigran Arakelyan & Riley Youngren, *assistant conductors*

VIOLIN I
Corentin Pokorny - CM
Heather Borrer
Daniel Kim
Anastasia Nicolov
Judith Kim
Deric Pang
Hannah Waterloo
Jonathan Keuhn
Anthony Fok
Frank Liu
Nao Ikeda

VIOLIN II
Erin Kelly - *
Yunjung Kim
Maddie Down
Katherine Wang
Elizaveta Mikhaylova
Yanran Zeang
Vicky Wahlstrom
Nate Lempko
Nat Bumrungtrakul
Koon Yu Wong

VIOLA
Alessandra Barrett - *
Emmeran Pokorny
Romaric Pokorny
Lucas McMillan
Jerry Bi
Savannah Rank
Karl Vyhmeister
Emily Hull
Edwin Li

CELLO
Yang Lu - *
Hajung Yuk
Jens Luebeck
Brandon Kawaguchi
Allyssa Stockdill
Thomas Zadrozny
Mark Duroshkin
Matthew Farmer
Sean Tanino
Makenzie Moore

BASS
Patrick Stephen Aubyrn - *
Ramon Salumbides
Tyler Cigich
Brad Gaylor
Darian Woller
Nate Spielman
Sena Dawes

PICCOLO
Mona Sangesland - R
Laura Colmenares - P

FLUTE
Natalie Ham - R
Alexander Hoelzen - P
Joyce Lee
Sabrina Bounds

OBOE
James Phillips - *
Megan Bernovich

ENGLISH HORN
Nick Hendryx - *

CLARINET
Alexander Tu - R
Clarissa Thompson - P
Rian Naveen Chandra

BASS CLARINET
Victor Morgan - R
Alexander Tu - P

BASSOON
Jamael Smith *
Boone Hapke

HORN
Renee Millar - R
Trevor Cosby - P
Kelly Brown
Alison L P Farley

TRUMPET
David Sloan - R
Rebecca Fuller - P
Nicole Harreld - G

TROMBONE
Elizabeth McDaniel - *
Zach Wendt
Mike Dobranski - G

TUBA AND CIMBASSO
Julio Cruz - *

TIMPANI
Declan Sullivan - *

PERCUSSION
Matt Grady
Neal Goggans
Evan Berge

HARP
Brianna Spargo - * G
Sophie Baird-Daniel G

CELESTA
Yuhua Jiang - P, R

PIANO
Lidia Kotlova - R

ORGAN
Samuel Libra - R

Concertmaster - CM
Principal - *
Principal Respighi - R
Principal Puccini - P
Guest Musician - G

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