



Opera Rara

In partnership with the Royal Opera House present

DONIZETTI: L'ANGE DE NISIDA

WORLD PREMIÈRE

Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden

Sir Mark Elder, conductor

Joyce El-Khoury; David Junghoon Kim; Vito Priante; Laurent Naouri; Evgeny Stavinsky; Royal Opera Chorus

Wednesday 18 and Saturday 21 July 2018, 7.30pm

ROYAL OPERA HOUSE, COVENT GARDEN

"But it's also the knowledge that in enabling such a venture, Opera Rara is not only going to bring pleasure to connoisseurs... but is also adding to the sum of musical knowledge and producing for posterity a recording of a work very few would otherwise get to hear." The Financial Times, 2 May 2015

When Patric Schmid and Don White conceived Opera Rara in the late 1960s, their dream was to establish a Donizetti collection that would document all his operas through recordings. With nearly 70 operas to his name, this was no small ambition, particularly as at that time only a handful of Donizetti operas were widely known.

On Wednesday 18 July 2018, Opera Rara - in their fourth collaboration with the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden - will present the world première of Donizetti's *L'Ange de Nisida*. Opera Rara's Artistic Director Sir Mark Elder conducts two concert performances at Covent Garden, during which a live recording will be made for release in 2019. The recording will mark the company's 25th complete opera recording by the composer and Sir Mark Elder's ninth Donizetti title for Opera Rara.

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

For this world première, Sir Mark Elder is joined by Joyce El-Khoury as Sylvia (featured on Opera Rara's recent recordings of *Les Martyrs* and *Belisario*, both by Donizetti, and in her recital disc *Écho*), David Junghoon Kim (2017 graduate of the Jette Parker Young Artist Programme at the Royal Opera) as Leone de Casaldi, Vito Priante as King Fernand of Naples (featured on Opera Rara's recordings of Donizetti's *Linda Chamounix* and Bellini's *Il pirata*), Laurent Naouri as Don Gaspar (recently heard on Opera Rara's recording of Gounod's *La Colombe*) and Evgeny Stavinsky as the Monk.

As well as a continuing focus on the *bel canto* repertory, Sir Mark Elder's tenure has seen Opera Rara renew its interest in 19th-century French repertory and explore new territories including *verismo* works from the turn

of the 20th century. 2018 also sees the company undertake its second *verismo* project: a concert performance at the Royal Festival Hall and a studio recording of the original version of Puccini's first stage work, *Le Villi*, with Ermonela Jaho – the star of their revival of Leoncavallo's *Zazà* – joining forces with Elder and the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

“The opportunity to give the world première of a late, mature Donizetti opera is a rather a surprise for us all! Donizetti has here already composed an original and beautiful semiseria work, completely different from traditional grand opera! The cast is small, as is the chorus, but Donizetti, so near to the end of his life, has given us a fascinating and passionate drama, full of exciting vocal writing and distinctive orchestral colours.”

Sir Mark Elder on the world premiere of *L'Ange de Nisida*

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Sylvia

Leone de Casaldi

King Fernand of Naples

Don Gaspar

Monk

Royal Opera House Chorus

Serge Levitin, Concert Master

Tickets: General booking opens on 4 April 2018

Box Office: 020 7304 4000

Online: www.roh.org.uk

For further information:

Ginny Macbeth/Moë Faulkner: 020 7251 9448

moe@macbethmediarelations.co.uk