

**Viennese Operettas
by
Johann Strauss Jr.**

Opera Guild of Rochester

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Viennese Operettas by Johann Strauss Jr. Introduction

- **Johann Strauss Jr. dominated the Viennese music scene for social occasions during the 19th Century with his waltzes**
- **(the Blue Danube waltz) and his polkas (the Tritsch-Tratsch polka) to name the most famous ones.**
- **During the last part of the 19th Century he started to compose operettas beginning in 1868-71. He composed 19, if you count the last "Wiener Blut" (Viennese Spirit), which is a pastiche of his waltzes and melodies, put together by his friend Adolf Mueller and premiered 4 month after his death in 1899.**
- **4 of these operettas are still in the repertory and I will present them to you with excerpts of their most beloved melodies.**

Viennese Operettas by Johann Strauss Jr. Introduction

- **Die Fledermaus 1874, considered his masterpiece**
- **Eine Nacht in Venedig 1883**
- **Der Zigeunerbaron 1885**
- **Wiener Blut 1899**

Introduction continued

- **An operetta has spoken dialogue between the music parts and is related to the Singspiel**
- **The Viennese operettas are full of balls with waltzes, polkas, minuets. They have distinct comic elements with disguises, misunderstanding and often womanizing aristocrats. The comic elements are also presented in the aristocratic, the bourgeois' and servant class characters.**
- **There is usually a happy ending at the conclusion with waltz like melodies and the whole ensemble singing and dancing.**

Die Fledermaus

**Libretto Haffner and Genee
Premiered Theatre and der Wien 1874
1894 Staatsoper Hamburg**

- **The Fledermaus is a comic revenge by Dr. Falke on his friend Gabriel von Eisenstein, who embarrassed him some time ago, leaving him after a great party on a park bench in his Fledermaus costume for all to see and make fun of.**
- **Eisenstein is to support to prison for a few days for a minor affront. Knowing this Dr. Falke arranges a party at the house of Prince Orlofsky and comes to Eisenstein to invite him.**

Act 1, chapter 6 "Komm mit mir zum Soupee.

- **Dr. Falke persuades Eisenstein's wife Rosalinde to come to the party disguised as a Hungarian Countess.**

Fledermaus continued

- Alfred, an opera singer and Rosalinde's lover before her marriage, comes to Rosalinde after Eisenstein has left, to have a tête à tête. They are having supper.

Act 1, Chapter 8 "Trinke Liebchen, Trinke schnell"

- When the prison director comes to pick up Eisenstein for his prison term, Alfred has to pretend he is Eisenstein to avoid a scandal and has to go with him to prison in Eisenstein's place.
- Rosalinde gave her maid Adele a night off to visit her sick aunt, but instead Adele also goes to the ball at Prince Orlofsky.

Fledermaus continued

- Eisenstein and the prison director Frank are introduced at Prince Orlofsky's party as French Marquis.
- Eisenstein is surprised to see Adele in his wife's best dress at the party. Adele makes fun of him that he thinks she is a maid rather than a noble woman.

Act 2, Chapter 15 "Mein her Marquis"

- When Rosalinde arrives masked as a Hungarian Countess, Eisenstein courts her. She sings a Czardas

Act 2, Chapter 17 "Klaenge der Heimat"

When Eisenstein dangles his pocket watch in Rosalinde's face to get her attention, she snatches it away from him.

Fledermaus continued

- The prison director Frank in his disguise is enamored with Adele and promises to help her to become an actress.
- Everybody dances and sings at the party into the morning hours. Dr. Falke sings a toast.

Act 2 Chapter 20: "Bruederlein, Bruederlein und Schwesterlein"

- Next morning they all meet in the prison, still a little under the influence of the wine at the party. Eisenstein is surprised to be told a Mr. Eisenstein is already there since last night. The comic prison guardian Frosch, a speaking role, is totally confused. He usually makes jokes of the current political situation for a production.

Fledermaus continued

- Adele appears to see Frank. She demonstrates her ability as an actress in her aria:

Act 3, Chapter 30 "Spiel ich die Unschuld vom Lande"

- When Eisenstein accuses Rosalinde of being unfaithful, she pulls out his watch and he has to ask her for forgiveness.
- Dr. Falke jumps into the room in his Fledermaus costume and tells all it was all a joke.

Act 3, Chapter 33, Finale " O Fledermaus, O Fledermaus"

Eine Nacht in Venedig

1. Premiere Berlin 1883

2. Premiere 6 days later with revisions Theater an der Wien
Libretto Zell and Genee

- **The story and the place serve up the escapist spirit of operetta: Venice during the carnival season is full of nights with balls, dances of masked women and men, who under their disguises have adventures.**
- **This is the story of the middle aged womanizer the Duke of Urbino, who has spent 30 years one night in Venice during the carnival season. This time he wants to conquer Barbara, the young wife of the aged senator Delaqua. The Duke of Urbino is manipulated finally by three women: Barbara, Annina, her milk sister, who is in love with Caramello, the Duke's barber and Ciboletta, Barbara's maid, who is in love with Pappagoda, the funny Makkaroni chef, who is too poor to marry her.**

Eine Nacht in Venedig continued

- **The Duke finally gives in to the women and makes Barbara's husband Delaqua the magistrate of his estates, Caramello his Venetian administrator and Pappagoda his head chef.**
- **The most memorable melody of the operetta is the song of the gondola, sung by Caramello, while he is floating through the canals of Venice, with the pictures of Venice mirrored in the waters of the canals.**

Part 1 Chapter 14 "Komm in die Gondel"

Der Zigeunerbaron

Premier 1885 Theatre an der Wien
1910 Vienna State Opera Libretto Schnitzer and Jokay

- This is Strauss' homage to the Hungarian influence of the Viennese music.
- This operetta launched the career of Siegfried Jerusalem
- It is the colorful story of the marriage of the landowner Barinkay, who returns from exile. His father had been driven out of his estate, when the Austrian army under Prince Eugene drove the Ottoman Empire out of Hungary. During the reign of Maria Theresia, Barinkay is brought back by the commissioner Count Carnero. The legends tells that the last Pasha on his flight hid a big treasure on Barinkay's estate.

Der Zigeunerbaron continued

- Barinkay first offers himself as a suitor to the daughter of his neighbor Zsupan, a wealthy pig breeder, but she tells him she wants to marry a Baron. She is in love with Ottokar, who turns out to be the son of Count Carnero, who thought he had lost his wife in the Austrian-Turkish war.
- Barinkay observes a pretty Gypsy girl Saffi singing a Gypsy song, which he recognizes from his youth.

Part 1, Act 1 Chapter 9 "So elend and so treu"

Barinkay falls in love with her, but the neighbors are upset and want to know, who married them

Act 2, Chapter 18 "We hat uns getraut"

Der Zigeunerbaron continued

- The gypsies come to protect Barinkay and Saffi and make Barinkay their " Gypsy Baron".
- Czipra, a gypsy woman and presumed to be the mother of Saffi, has a dream, that the treasure the fleeing Pasha hid during the Turkish war, is hidden in the partially demolished tower of Barinkay's estate.
- Czipra, Barinkay and Saffi find the treasure.
- The commissioner Count Carnero, wants the treasure for the Austrian State. Barinkay knowing his country needs the treasure for the war against Spain, gives up the treasure.
- Czipra now reveals that Saffi is really the daughter of the last Pasha. Barinkay thinks he can not marry Saffi now in good faith since she is a princess and joins the army to go to war with Spain, so do Ottokar and Zsupan.

Der Zigeunerbaron continued

- After a victorious War, the army returns. Ottokar is now an officer and is united with Arsena, Zsupran's daughter, Barinkay has been nobled and is a Baron and the Austrian State gives him back the treasure. This clears the path for him to marry Saffi with whom he is united when he hears her singing the Gypsy song
 - Every body is singing the waltz of happiness
- Act 3, Chapters 26 and 27 which includes the dialogue and the final waltz melody

Wiener Blut

Première October 1899 after Strauss' death

Carltheatre Wien

Libretto Leon and Stein

Music put together by conductor Adolf Mueller

- This is a pastiche of many of Strauss' most beloved waltzes, polkas, minuets and melodies.
- There are three couples : Count Balduin Zedlau and his wife Gabrielle Zedlau; Balduin's mistress in Vienna Franziska Cagliari (Franzi), Duke Ypsheim-Gindelbach, minister of his small principality and Balduin's employer, who ends up with taking Franzi as his wife; Josef the Count's valet and his fiancée Pepi, a seamstress.
- In a comic opera the couples have mix ups and finally the ones ,who should belong to each other , unite again at the finale

Wiener Blut continued

- The place is the Vienna congress 1814/15 after Napoleon's defeat, where the European principalities and countries reshape European politics, while attending balls and having great fun in the Viennese spirit.
- Balduin, a delegate to the congress is sung by the young Renee Kollo ,who at the peak of his career was one of Germany's dramatic tenors.
- Balduin, who was shy in his small principality becomes a real Casanova in Vienna. He has his mistress Franzi installed at his wife's parent's estate, telling her that the estate is being repaired and he cannot take her there.

Wiener Blut continued

- Josef, his valet is looking for him and finds his Pepi, singing a duet and dancing a polka.

Act 1, Chapter 7

- The countess suspects her husband Balduin plays around and rides to her childhood home, singing of her memories.

Act 1, Chapter 11 "Guess Dich Gott, du liebes Nesterl"

- Duke Ypsheim is looking for Balduin at the estate and now the confusion starts when he fazes Franzi and then Balduin and the Countess. Balduin asked him quickly to introduce Franzi as his wife.

Wiener Blut continued

- Count Balduin and his wife attend one of the Viennese balls. The Countess tells him how he changed, when he came to Vienna and that the Viennese spirit transformed him.

Act 2, Chapter 15 "Das eine kann ich nicht verzeihn"

Wiener Blut waltz.

- The count meets Pepi at his wife's taylor. He is smitten by her and arranges a rendezvous with her in Hitzing, a suburb of Vienna with restaurants to entertain the population.
- All the three couples meet in Hitzing where the count has his last rendezvous. The countess persuades Ypsheim to accompany her so she can look for her husband, Franzi is looking for Balduin and Josef for Pepi.

Wiener Blut continued

- Act 3, Chapter 26 "the last rendezvous"
- In the end Count Zedlau promises his wife he will be faithful, Josef and Pepi find each other, Duke Ypsheim proposes to Franzi to become his wife.
- The Viennese spirit makes everybody happy.