

Favorite Opera Arias and Overtures

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Guillaume Tell by Gioacchino Rossini 1829

Libretto by Etienne de Jouy and Hippolyte Bis
with Marrast and Cremiaux based on a play by Schiller

- Switzerland, dominated by Austria, is in rebellion against tyranny.
- Arnaldo who served in the Austrian army is in love with Princess Mathilde.
- Tell, the leader of the rebellion tries to enlist him in the resistance. Arnaldo is forced to give up his love for Mathilde, when his father is killed.
- Governor Gessler forces a celebration of 100 years of Austrian rule.
- Tell is arrested with his son Jemmy for aiding the shepherd Leuthold and is forced to shoot an apple off his head.
- After Tell's arrest, Arnaldo takes on the leadership of the rebellion
- Jemmy gives the signal for the uprising and Tell shoots Gessler, freeing his people from tyranny.
- The people celebrate their freedom.

Guillaume Tell

- One of the best known pieces of music of the Opera and often used for movie background music or advertising

Guillaume Tell

1. act aria and duet between Tell and Arnaldo

Arnoldo *Luciano Pavarotti*

My vow, he said? My vow? Oh no never.

O that I myself was unaware of the forbidden fruit that I desire!

Oh thou, above whose head a crown is poised,

Oh my Matilda, I love you, I adore you,

And for your sake would honor, duty, fatherland and father all forsake!

From the death-dealing avalanche I shielded you;

Daughter of royalty, I saved your life,

You whom my cruel fate destined for a throne.

Drunk with vain hope, the heart that pines for you

Spent itself in the cause of unjust men.

Guillaume Tell

To have shared with these the honors of battle,
That is my shame.
My tears have expiated it, but still I'm torn by bitter remorse.
I hear a noise! The tyrant's vile followers are coming down the mountain.
Oh God! Gessler is there, and my beloved with him!
Ah yes! I must see and hear the woman I adore;
This makes me guilty, perhaps, but happy too.
Tell *Sherrill Milnes*
Stop! How strangely you look at me! You tremble at my presence,
Yet will not explain what troubles you? You are frightened, but why?

In the ongoing duet Tell tries to persuade Arnoldo to join the cause of freedom

Madama Butterfly by Giacomo Puccini 1904 Libretto by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica after the play Madame Butterfly by Belascio

- Goro ,the marriage broker, brings Pinkerton of the U.S. Navy to the house, where he will live with Cio Cio San, after his marriage to her.
- She arrives with her family and the wedding takes place.
- She is cursed by her uncle, the Bonze for leaving her faith.
- Pinkerton leaves after a while, telling Cio Cio San he will return.
- Three years later he returns with an American wife asking for his son. Cio Cio San gives up her child but kills herself with the knife used by her father who committed Hari-Kari, overwhelmed by her grief.

Madama Butterfly

Un bel di vedremo

Butterfly *Renata Scotta*

One fine day we'll see a wisp of smoke arising
Over the extreme verge of the sea's horizon,
And afterwards the ship will appear.
Then the white ship will enter the harbor, will thunder a salute. You
see?
He's arrived! I shan't go down to meet him.
No, I shall stand there on the brow of the hill and wait,
And wait a long time, and I shan't find the long wait wearisome.
And from the midst of the city crowd a man- a tiny speck-
Will make his way up the hill.
Who can it be?

Madama Butterfly

And when he arrives- what ,what will he say?
He'll call, "Butterfly!" from the distance.
Not answering, I'll remain hidden, partly to tease,
Partly so not to die at the first meeting.
And, a trifle worried he'll call, he'll call
"My dear little wife, fragrance of verbena!"
The names he used to call me when he came here.
I promise you. Keep your fears;
With unalterable faith I shall wait for him.

Madama Butterfly

Humming Chorus

Il Trovatore by Giuseppe Verdi 1853

Libretto by Cammarano and Bardare after a play
El trovador by Gutierrez

- The opera is divided into four parts: the Duel, the Gypsy, the Gypsy's son, the Execution.
- Ferrando tells the story of the revenge of a gypsy woman for the death of her mother, as a witch, who was accused killing the infant son of Count di Luna.
- Leonora and Manrico, the son of the gypsy are in love but so is the son of the old Count. The two men meet accidentally in the garden waiting for Leonora and fight a duel. Leonora believes Manrico dead is about to enter a convent.
- Count Di Luna tries to stop her, but Manrico and his men take her to the castle for the wedding.
- The Count's men capture Azucena, the gypsy; Manrico fails to rescue her and both are imprisoned.
- Leonora tries to rescue Manrico promising to marry the count but takes poison and dies.
- The Count has Azucena watching Manrico's execution and she has her final revenge telling him he just killed his brother.

Il Trovatore,

Act 1

Ferrando, Captain of the Guard, stands watch with the soldiers before the palace, while Count di Luna keeps his nightly vigil beneath the window of Leonara who he loves. Ferrando tells the story of the infant son who was believed to be bewitched by a gypsy. The baby was found dead amid the ashes on the site where the old woman was burned at the stake in punishment for her crime.

Ferrando *Ildebrando D'Arcangelo*

Awake, awake we must await the count's return

The serpents of jealousy attack his heart

The troubador sings every night in the garden and the count fears a rival.

Il Trovatore

Anvil Chorus *Gypsies*

See! The heaven's great vault removes its gloomy, night-time tatters!

It seems like a widow who takes off at last the dark clothes that enfolded her.

To work! To work! At it! Hammer!

Who brightens the Gypsy man's days? The gypsy maid.

Pour me a draught: strength and courage the body and soul draw from drinking.

Oh, look, look! A ray of the sun sparkles brighter in my/your glass!

To work! To work! Who brightens the gypsy man's days?

The gypsy maid!

Il Trovatore

Stride La vampa

Azucena: *Larissa Diadkova*

The flames crackles! The unstrained mob

Runs to that fire, their faces all happy!

Spouts of joy re-echo around;

Surrounded by killers, a woman comes forward!

Sinister, shining on the horrible faces,

The ghastly flame rises, rises towards heaven!

The flame crackles! The victim arrives, dressed in black,

Disheveled, barefoot!

A fierce shout of death is raised, its echo repeated from hill to hill!

Sinister, shining etc.

Il Trovatore

- Azucena proceeds to tell the Gypsies and Manrico the story of her mothers death burned at the stake.
- In Act 4 Manrico, the troubador and Azucena are imprisoned and Azucena cannot sleep. She sings again of her mother's death and envisions herself dying at the stake dying like her mother.
- I have called sleep to my eyes. I am praying. I wish I could flee this living tomb for here I will suffocate. Do not worry about me. The monsters cannot harm me. See the finger of death has put its dark sign upon my brow.
- Azucena is tortured again by the vision of her mother's death.

Mignon by Ambroise Thomas 1866

Libretto by Michel Carre and Jules Barbier
based on the novel by Goethe: Wilhelm Meister

- Lothario, a wandering minstrel, sings of his lost daughter. A traveling group of actors and gypsies are in the courtyard of the German Inn.
- Mignon is being forced to dance by the gypsy Jarro but William and Lothario protect her from the gypsy leader.
- She falls in love with William and he buys her freedom.
- William is pursued by the actress Philene.
- In response to questions, Mignon sings what she remembered about her childhood prior to her capture by the gypsies.
- It finally becomes clear after much mayhem that she is Lothario's lost daughter, the owner of the castle in Italy, where Mignon grew up.
- At the conclusion of the opera Mignon and William find happiness together.

Mignon

Overture

Mignon

Mignon *Marilyn Horne*

Here! I am alone, alas! already Meister forgets me
What does it matter! He has granted my wishes!
To follow and to serve him, that is all I desire!
Come now, to weep would be foolish..
No, no, I accept all.
Do not weep any more!
What a lovely house!
I have never seen anything like it ,no never!
If it were not a dream.
Ah it was here that just before while smiling at the mirror,
She listened to Meister, I did not wish to see or hear any more!
Alas and however, I could not stop myself. Forgive me dear Meister.

Mignon

Here is the rouge to make her beautiful.
Well, and what if I tried to make myself up too?
My pallor is already gone!
My complexion is becoming lively!
I know a poor child, a poor gypsy child, with a sad look and sallow
face.
Ah silly! In vain I try to stop myself
I think I look better, I am no longer the same.
Ah is that Mignon? Is that really Mignon there?
Ah is that Mignon? Ta la
One fine day triumphant, quite proud of her plan.

Mignon

To please the master whom she loves
Ah silly story! In vain I try to stop myself.

Mignon tries to make herself beautiful for William Meister
whom she loves.