

**72. DUBROVAČKE LJETNE IGRE**  
**72<sup>ND</sup> DUBROVNIK SUMMER FESTIVAL**  
**2021.**  
**HRVATSKA CROATIA**

**LAWRENCE**  
**BROWNLEE**

tenor

**VESNA PODRUG**  
**KOSSJANENKO**

*glasovir piano*

**ATRIJ KNEŽEVA DVORA**  
**RECTOR'S PALACE ATRIUM**  
**6. KOLOVOZA 2021. | 6 AUGUST 2021**  
**21:30 9.30 PM**

**GIUSEPPE VERDI:**

*AD UNA STELLA  
LO SPAZZACAMINO  
IL TRAMONTO  
BRINDISI*

**FRANZ LISZT:**

TRE SONETTI DI PETRARCA / TRI PETRARCINA SONETA / THE THREE  
PETRARCH SONNETS, S. 270  
*PACE NON TROVO  
BENEDETTO SIA 'L GIORNO  
I'VIDI IN TERRA ANGELICI COSTUMI*

**GIOACHINO ROSSINI:**

*LA DANZA*

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**GAETANO DONIZETTI:**

„SPIRTO GENTIL“, ARIJA IZ OPERE / ARIA FROM *LA FAVORITE* /  
*FAVORITKINJA / THE FAVOURITE*  
„UNA FURTIVA LAGRIMA“, ARIJA IZ OPERE / ARIA FROM *L'ELISIR*  
*D'AMORE / LJUBAVNI NAPITAK / THE ELIXIR OF LOVE*  
„AH, MES AMIS“, ARIJA IZ OPERE / ARIA FROM *LA FILLE DU RÉGIMENT* /  
*KĆI PUKOVNIJE / THE DAUGHTER OF THE REGIMENT*

**CANZONI NAPOLETANE / NAPOLITANSKE PJESME**

**NEAPOLITAN SONGS:**

SALVATORE CARDILLO: *CORE 'NGRATO*  
VINCENZO DE CRESCENZO: *RONDINE AL NIDO*  
PAOLO TOSTI: *'A VUCHELLA*  
EDUARDO DI CAPUA - ALFREDO MAZZUCCHI: *O SOLE MIO*

## **Giuseppe Fortunino Francesco Verdi**

(Busseto, 1813. – Milano, 1901.), autor 28 romantičkih opera, postao je s vremenom sinonimom za – operu kao takvu. Velike je uspjehe doživio operama iz „srednjeg razdoblja“ – *Rigoletto*, *Trubadur* i *Travijatom*. Poslije je skladao i *Aidu*, *Rekvijem*, *Otella*, *Falstaffa*... Bio je i politički aktivan, zalažući se za ujedinjenje Italije te je inicirao i financirao gradnju posebnog doma za umirovljene glazbenike. Verdi je sebe nazivao „najmanje učenim od skladatelja“, no melodioznost njegovih arija, ali i ekspresivnost vokalnih i orkestralnih linija, instrumentalno naglašavanje atmosfere, kao i bliska suradnja s libretistima i karakterizacija likova stvorile su hvaljen i prepoznatljiv glazbeni stil.

Verdijeve solopjesme nisu bile druga, intimna vrsta, već gotovo vježbe za arije, također pune afekta. Godine 1838. objavio je prvih šest romansi, a 1845. drugu zbirku, iz koje su i večerašnje pjesme: *Zanesena Ad una stella* (*Zvijezdi*, na tekst Andree Maffeia), u kojoj zatočena duša gleda prema zvijezdama; poskočica s plesnim, valcerskim refrenom *Lo spazzacamino* (*Dimnjačar*; Manfredo Maggioni) te još dvije pjesme na Maffeijeve stihove, sentimentalno prisjećanje na ljepša vremena, u predvečerje, *Il tramonto* (*Sumrak*) i razdragana napitnica *Brindisi*.

## **Franz Liszt** (Rajnof, 1811. – Bayreuth,

1886.), skladatelj i jedan od najvažnijih pijanista svojega doba, učio je glazbu u Mađarskoj od oca, u Beču od Czernyja i Salierija, a u Parizu je svirao po salonima te učio na privatnim satovima.

Paganinijevu virtuoznost Liszt je želio prenijeti na klavirsku glazbu. Živio je u Ženevi, u Parizu, u Weimaru, poslije je često odlazio u domovinu Mađarsku, kojom se oduševljavao, a i ona njime, zapadajući u pravu *lisztomaniju*. U Zagrebu je publiku oduševio 1846. godine. Kasnijih je godina počeo skladati veća djela i postao vođom Novonjemačke škole u glazbi, a zatim većinu vremena provodi po samostanima u Italiji, položivši čak, 1865. godine, jednostavne zavjete i nazvavši se Abbé Liszt; piše i sve više sakralne glazbe. U Lisztovom se opusu isprepliću originalne skladbe i preradbe tuđih djela, među kojima ima transkripcija za drugi instrument, novih djela na posuđenu temu, *potpourrija*. Virtuozni klavirski komadi, nadahnuti pijanistički recitali, uvođenje majstorskih radionica, ali i programnih simfonijskih pjesama, u glazbeni svijet – Lisztova su ostavština. Godine 1838. i 1839. Liszt je bio u Italiji s groficom Marie d'Agoult. Putovali su, zajedno čitali djela Dantea i Petrarce te je Liszt 1838. odlučio uglazbiti tri Petrarčina soneta, iz glasovite zbirke o Lauri koju je pjesnik vidio na Veliki petak 1327. u

Avignonu. Neki su to od prvih Lisztovih pokušaja da piše solopjesme; objavio ih je 1847., ali zatim i preradio za klavir solo. Opernu dramatičnost Liszt je podario tekstu *Pace non trovo – Ja nemam mira, a u rat ne hrlim*, preveo je naslov Mirko Tomasović, a Šiško Menčetić u 15. ga je stoljeću preveo *Ne nalazim mira, a za rat sam mlitav*. Mirnija je i tečnija *Benedetto sia... (Blažen nek je dan, ili kako je Menčetić preveo, Blaženi čas i hip / najprvo kada sam ja / vidil tvoj obraz lip / od koga slava sja)*, a sonetu *I' vidi...* (*Vidjeh na zemlji anđeosku krepost*) Liszt je dodijelio romantično, baladno ruho.

„Jesti, voljeti, pjevati i probavljati hranu – četiri su čina komične opere poznate pod nazivom *život*. A sve to prolazno je poput mjehurića pjenušca.” Rekao je to **Gioachino Rossini** (Pesaro, 1792. – Passy, Pariz, 1868.), najznačajniji talijanski skladatelj prve polovice 19. stoljeća. I po glazbenoj i po izvanglazbenoj djelatnosti povezuje ga se s lakoćom i hedonizmom, no iza njih stajalo je posebno glazbeno umijeće. Rossini je odrastao po kazalištima u kojima su nastupali njegov otac, trubač i kornist, i majka, pjevačica. Svirao je nekoliko instrumenata i učio pjevanje te nastupao kao dječjački sopran, zatim je u kazalištima svirao čembalo i počeo skladati prve arije, učiti kompoziciju u Bologni i

proučavati djela Haydna i Mozarta. Bio je pod ugovorom s dvama napuljskim kazalištima te je svake godine za svako od njih pisao po jednu novu operu, ali ubrzo počinje pisati i za mnoga druga kazališta. Putovao je po Europi, nizao operne uspjehe po Italiji, u Beču te u Parizu, gdje je živio u više navrata i proveo završnih 14 godina života. Poznat je bio i po gastronomskoj vještini. Rossini je usavršio komičnu operu *buffo* i razvio operu *seria*, pisao djela koja traže puno virtuoznosti, a sebe je nazivao „posljednjim od klasicista.“ Skladao je mnoga instrumentalna djela, no najpoznatiji je po komičnim operama, ali i drugim vokalnim skladbama.

Rossinijeva ***La Danza*** dio je zbirke *Les soirées musicales* iz 1835., u kojoj je Rossini skupio pjesme proizašle iz tjednih soareja koje je održavao u svojem pariškome domu. Živahna tarantela otvara se, nakon iskričavog instrumentalnog uvoda, vokalnim bravurama koje su i druge skladatelje potakle da posude njezine motive, primjerice Chopina i Respighija, a i pijaniste da naprave virtuozne prerade za klavir, kao što je učinio Liszt. Autor teksta („Mamma mia... mjesec je iznad mora... uskoro ćemo na ples“) je grof Carlo Pepoli, koji je bio i libretist Bellinijeve opere *Puritanci*, ali važan dio zauzimaju i razdragani slogovi „la ra la ra“.

**Domenico Gaetano Maria Donizetti** (Bergamo, 1797. – 1848.), jedan od najvažnijih autora talijanskih opera prve polovice 19. stoljeća. Glazbu je učio u Bergamu pa na Konzervatoriju u Bologni, a zatim često boravi u Napulju i piše za tamošnja kazališta, kojima je bio i ravnatelj. Pisao je i opere za Rim, Firencu, Pariz. Od 1834. bio je profesor na Napuljskom konzervatoriju te zatim privremeni ravnatelj, no nije dobio stalno mjesto. Uslijedile su osobne tragedije, smrti tek rođene djece i smrt supruge, nakon čega Donizetti, 1838., odlazi u Pariz. Ondje je imao velike uspjehe, naročito s operama *Kći pukovnije* i *Favoritkinja*, a skladao je i za Beč (*Linda di Chamonix*), gdje je postao dvorskim kapelnikom. Kraj života obilježavaju mu sve snažnije posljedice zaraze sifilisom. Doživio je praizvedbu 60 svojih opera, no neke su otkrivene i poslije, a pisao je i sakralnu glazbu, u mladosti i gudačke kvartete, klavirska djela, *sinfonie*. Unaprijedio je skladanje dramatičnog i emotivnog naboja u ozbiljnim operama, kao i glazbeno prikazivanje prštave vedrine i tečnosti u komičnima. Operu *La favorite* napisao je 1840. na libreto Alphonsea Royera i Gustave Vaeza, prema drami Bacularda d'Arnauda. U ariji „**Spirto gentil**“ Fernando je slomljena srca: iako je našao Leonoru, u koju se zaljubio pa napustio samostan kako bi je

pronašao, i iako je od kralja dobio dozvolu da se vjenčaju, doznao je i da Leonora bila kraljeva ljubavnica – *favoritkinja*.

*Ljubavni napitak* iz naslova opere koju je Donizetti skladao 1832. na libreto Felicea Romanija, nastao prema francuskome libretu Eugènea Scribea, tajno je oruđe kojim Nemorino želi osvojiti Adinu. Iako je jasno da je prevaren, jer zapravo su mu prodali obično vino, a ne čarobno piće, on je uvjeren da *napitak* djeluje, jer u njezinu je oku „furtiva lagrima“, ili „tajna suza“. „Visoki C“ poseban je element repertoara visokih glasova: teško dohvatljiv, zvonak, posebno visok ton kojim pjevači zadivljuju publiku – a u ariji „**Ah, mes amis**“ (*Ah, prijatelji moji*) čak ih je osam! Pjevači obično dodaju i deveti, koji Donizetti nije napisao. Ova vatrometna, „atletska“ arija potječe iz opere koju je Donizetti napisao 1840. na libreto Julesa-Henrija Vernoya i Jeana-Françoisa Bayarda. U ariji mladi vojnik Tonio slavi što se pridružio vojsci, jer je u pukovniji blizu voljene Marie, s kojom se namjerava oženiti.

Oznaka „**napolitanske pjesme**“ ne odnosi se samo na tradicijske pjesme, *canzonette* koje se pjevaju na napolitanskom narječju, tipičnome za Napulj i okolice, već i na niz pjesama skladanih u tom stilu, onih kojima se autori znaju. Pjesme su sa sobom u Ameriku i druge krajeve ponijeli emigranti

iz Napulja i drugih dijelova južne Italije te im donijeli svjetsku popularnost, a proslavili su ih veliki tenori kao Caruso ili Del Monaco. Strastven napolitanski „stil“ promoviran je i natjecanjem za nove pjesme Festivala Piedigrotta, koji se održavao od 1830ih do 1950. godine. Caruso je često pjevao, a možda i naručio, pjesmu *Core 'ngrato* (*Srce nezahvalno*) iz 1911., na tekst Riccarda Cordiferra (pseudonim Alessandra Sisce), o „nezahvalnome srcu“ neke Caterine, koja odbija pjevača. Jedini je to veliki napolitanski „hit“ nastao u Sjedinjenim američkim državama, kamo je Cardillo bio emigrirao.

*Rondine al nido* (*Lastavica u gnijezdu*) napisao je 1926. Vincenzo de Crescenzo na tekst Luigija Sice. U toj romantičnoj ariji koja mirno počinje, ali zatim traži sve više strasti, pjeva se o lastavici koja odleti, ali se vraća svake godine, no kada *ljubav* jednom odleti – više je nema.

Tekst za *A' vucchella* (*Ustašca*) napisao je netko tko nije bio iz Napulja – Hrvatskoj dobro poznati pjesnik, okupator Rijeke Gabriele d'Annunzio. Bio je iz Abruzza, ali je želio pokazati da može pisati i na napolitanskome dijalektu i to o ženi za kojom je žudio, naročito o njezinim *ustima*, od kojih, kako piše, priželjkuje poljubac.

*O sole mio* jedna je od najpoznatijih pjesama napolitanskog repertoara. Di

Capua ju je 1898. napisao na tekst Giovannije Capurre, ali rabeći jednu od melodija koju je godinu prije otkupio od Alfreda Mazzucchija, čija je kći naknadno izborila autorska prava za njegove nasljednike. Prema tekstu, prekrasno je kada je dan sunčan, ali još ljepše sunce „sja s tvogeg lica“.

*Dina Puhovski*



**Lawrence Brownlee** (Youngstown, Ohio, 1972.) vodeća je figura u operi današnjice, i kao pjevač na svjetskim pozornicama i kao glas aktivizma i poticanja na promoviranje raznolikosti. Osvaja publiku i kritiku diljem svijeta te je hvaljen kao „međunarodna zvijezda belkantističkog repertoara“ (*New York Times*), „jedna od vodećih zvijezda *bel canta*“ (*Guardian*) i „jedan od svjetski najtraženijih opernih pjevača današnjice“ (*NPR*).

Tijekom izazova koje je donijela pandemija, Brownlee je predvodio preusmjeravanje prema digitalnim programima, kao i prema ponovnoj uspostavi razgovora o rasnim nepravdama. Započeo je tjednu seriju *The Sitdown with LB* na *Facebooku*, u kojoj se govori o iskustvima afroameričkih opernih pjevača, a vodi i video-seriju *Coffee and a Song*, u kojoj njegovi prijatelji-pjevači izvode solopjesme u svojim domovima.

U sezoni 2020.-2021. pjevao je Don Ramira u *Pepeljuzi* u Palau de les Arts u Valenciji, debitirao kao Edgardo u *Lucii di Lammermoor* u Nacionalnom kazalištu u Tokiju, pjevao Artura u *Puritancima* u Teatro dell'Opera u Rimu i Tonija u *Kćeri pukovnije* u Liègeu. Nastavio je i s koncertnim programima *Lawrence Brownlee and Friends*, *Giving Voice* i *Cycles of My Being* te održao virtualne koncerte s pijanisticom Myrom Huang, sa Simfonijskim orkestrom iz Tallahasseeja i Orkestrom iz Tulse. U proljeće 2021. postao je gostujući profesor Škole za glazbu Juilliard.

Kao strastveni pobornik inicijativa za veću raznolikost, Brownlee surađuje s tvrtkama i organizacijama u gradovima u kojima nastupa kako bi stvorio programe kojima se može proširiti operna publika. S recitalom *Cycles of My Being*, o iskustvima mladih crnaca u današnjoj Americi, tri je puta bio na turneji po SAD-u.

Umjetnički je savjetnik Opere Philadelphia, što uključuje rad na razvoju i povećanju raznolikosti publike, promoviranju novih djela i suradnju s ravnateljem Opere u ime izvođača. „Kao umjetnik, smatram da je važno da se aktivno zauzmemo za ovu prekrasnu umjetničku formu koju toliko volimo“, kaže Brownlee. On je također promotor projekta *Lyric Unlimited* čikaške Lyric

Opera i „peace ambassador“ inicijative *Opera For Peace*.

Lawrence Brownlee učvrstio je svoje mjestu u vrhu klasične glazbe: Redovit je gost najvažnijih svjetskih opernih kuća, kao što su Opera Metropolitan, Teatro alla Scala, Kraljevska operna kuća Covent Garden, Bavarska državna opera, Državna opera Unter den Linden, Bečka državna opera, Teatro Real, Pariška nacionalna opera, a recitale redovito održava u dvoranama kao što su Carnegie Hall, Wigmore Hall i Centar Kennedy. Suraduje s brojnim orkestrima, među kojima su simfonijski orkestri iz Clevelanda, Chicaga, Philadelphie i San Francisca, Orkestar Concertgebouwa i Orkestar Akademije Santa Cecilia, a i s festivalima u Baden-Badenu i Salzburgu.

Rođen kao četvrti od šestoro djece, glazbu je otkrio u crkvi koju je njegova obitelj pohađala u Hubbardu, Ohio, gdje je svirao električni bas, bubnjeve i klavir.

Magistrirao je na Sveučilištu Indiana. Dobitnik je Velike nagrade nacionalnih audicija Opere Metropolitan 2001., Međunarodne operne nagrade za najboljeg pjevača 2017., nagrade „Marian Anderson“ Centra Kennedy i nagrade „Opera News“ 2021. U listopadu 2019. imao je iznimnu čast pjevati na sprovodu Jessye Norman u njezinu rodnom gradu Augusti (Georgia, SAD).





**Vesna Podrug Kossjanenko** rođena je u Splitu, gdje je započela svoje muzičko obrazovanje u klasi Gordane Lentić. Za vrijeme školovanja osvojila je šest prvih nagrada na državnim i saveznim natjecanjima u bivšoj Jugoslaviji. Maturirala je 1986., a iste je godine dobila stipendiju «Ivo Pogorelić» koja joj je omogućila početak studiranja na Visokoj školi za glazbu u Beču u klasi Paula Badure-Skode. Godine 1988. snimala je za austrijsku televiziju ORF, 1989. bila je

stipendistica Austrijskog ministarstva za znanost, a 1992. završava studij klavira naslovom Magistra umjetnosti. Klavirsku komornu glazbu usavršavala je kod Georga Eberta, a 2000. godine završila je na istom Sveučilištu i pedagoški odjel, s odličnim uspjehom.

Već za vrijeme studija, Vesna Podrug svira brojne recitale te nastupa solistički s orkestrom HNK u Splitu pod ravnanjem Borisa Papandopula, Ive Lipanovića. Od 2000. – 2005. Vesna Podrug je u Beču

osam puta izvela Beethovenov 5. koncert s Orkestrom Bečke državne opere. Održala je brojne solističke koncerte sa Simfonijskim orkestrom HNK Osijek, Simfonijskim orkestrom HNK Split, Državnim Filharmonijskim orkestrom Almaty i komornim orkestrom Splitski virtuozi, izvodeći djela Ludwiga van Beethovena, Alfreda Schnittkea i Borisa Papandopula.

Vesna Podrug nastupala je s renomiranim umjetnicima – Davidom Grigorjanom, Wladimirom Kossjanenom, Soo Kyung Hong, Goranom Listešom, Isabell Bringmann, Martinom Serafin, Miguelangelom Cavalcantijem – u poznatim koncertnim dvoranama kao što su bečki Musikverein, Konzerthaus i Dvorana Državne opere, zagrebačka KDVL i HGZ, dvorana Konzervatorija „Verdi“ u Milanu. Među brojnim međunarodnim koncertima koje održava posebno se ističu koncerti s belgijskim violistom Michaelom Kugelom te američkom sopranisticom Denyce Graves na 53. dubrovačkim ljetnim igrama 2002., s francuskim violistom Gérardom Causséom na festivalu u Hartbergu, s austrijskim flautistom Karl-Heinz Schützom na festivalu FaLaUt i u Splitu, s kineskom sopranisticom Hui He na 61. dubrovačkim ljetnim igrama i Gudačkim kvartetom Tartini na 56. Splitskom ljetu 2010., američkim klarinetistom Vadimom

Landom, Armanom Mourzagalievim i Wladimirom Kossjanenom na Međunarodnom festivalu Forte Music Fest u Almatiju 2015. i 2016.; s Edinom Karamazovim na Glazbenim večerima u Sv. Donatu i na Splitskome ljetu 2019. godine.

Pored pedagoške djelatnosti na bečkom učilištu *Wiener Volkshochschule* gdje je vodila klavirsku klasu (1992. – 1995.), predavala je i na mnogobrojnim seminarima. Bila je stalna korepetitorica u Bečkoj državnoj operi (1998. - 2008.) te pedagoška suradnica na Sveučilištu za glazbu i scensku umjetnost u Beču (2002. - 2008.). Od 2007., Vesna Podrug djeluje kao izvanredna profesorica za glavni predmet klavir, a od 2017. kao prodekanica Glazbenog odjela, na Umjetničkoj Akademiji u Splitu. Godine 2012. s Wladimirom Kossjanenom osniva festival "Dani J. S. Bacha u Splitu" koji se održava svake godine na dan rođenja kompozitora.

## **Giuseppe Fortunino Francesco Verdi**

(Busseto, 1813 – Milan, 1901) composed 28 Romantic operas and his name became synonymous with opera. The operas he wrote in his middle period were a big success – *Rigoletto*, *Il trovatore* and *La traviata*. His later works include *Aida*, *Requiem*, *Otello*, *Falstaff* etc. He was engaged in politics as an advocate of unification of Italy and he also initiated and financed the building of a home for retired musicians. Verdi considered himself 'the least learned of all composers', but the melodiousness of his arias, expressiveness of his vocal and orchestral lines, instrumental highlighting of the atmosphere, as well as his close collaboration with librettists and developed characterisations defined his praised and distinctive musical style.

Verdi's art songs were not a separate, intimate type of works, but practically aria exercises, also filled with intense emotions. In 1838 he published his first six *romanze* and in 1845 his second collection, which includes the songs from this evening's programme: The rapturous *Ad una stella* (*To a Star*, text by Andrea Maffei), in which an imprisoned soul looks at the stars; a cheerful dance with a waltz-like refrain, *Lo spazzacamino* (*The Chimney Sweep*; Manfredo Maggioni) and two more settings to poems by Maffei, a sentimental reminiscence of better times at sunset, *Il*

*tramonto* (*The Sunset*) and a merry drinking song, *Brindisi*.

**Franz Liszt** (Doborján [Raiding], 1811 – Bayreuth, 1886), composer and one of the most important pianists of his time, received his early music education in Hungary from his father. He later studied with Czerny and Salieri in Vienna and played in salons and took private lessons in Paris. Liszt's ambition was to introduce Paganini's virtuosity to piano music. He lived in Geneva, Paris and Weimar and later often visited his homeland. He was thrilled by Hungary and Hungary was thrilled by him, which caused a true *lisztomania*. He delighted the audience in Zagreb in 1846. In his later years he began composing larger works and became the leader of the New German School in music, after which he spent most of his time in Italian monasteries. He even received minor orders in 1865 and started calling himself Abbé Liszt; he increasingly wrote sacred music in this period. Liszt composed original pieces and reworked other composers' works, including transcriptions for other instruments, new pieces on borrowed themes, potpourris. Virtuoso piano pieces, inspired piano recitals, introduction of masterclasses and programmatic symphonic poems to music world – are all considered Liszt's legacy.

In 1838 and 1839 Liszt stayed in Italy with Countess Marie d'Agoult. They travelled and read Dante and Petrarch together; in 1838 Liszt decided to set to music three Petrarch's sonnets from his famous collection of poems dedicated to Laura, whom the poet first saw in Avignon on Good Friday in 1327. This is one of Liszt's first attempts at composing songs; he published them in 1847, after which he rewrote them for solo piano. Liszt added operatic sense of drama to the poem *Pace non trovo – I find no peace, and all my war is done*, translated to Croatian in the 15<sup>th</sup> century by the Dubrovnik poet Šiško Menčetić. *Benedetto sia 'l giorno (Blessed be the day)* is more peaceful and fluid, while Liszt turned the sonnet *I'vidi in terra angelici costumi (I saw angelic virtue on earth)* into a romantic ballad.

'Eating, loving, singing and digesting are, in truth, the four acts of the comic opera known as *life* and they pass like bubbles of a bottle of champagne.' These are the words of **Gioachino Rossini** (Pesaro, 1792 – Passy, Paris, 1868), the most important Italian composer of the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Both his musical and non-musical activities are associated with lightness and hedonism, but there was a special musical artistry behind them. Rossini grew up in theatres in which his father, a trumpeter

and hornist, and his mother, a singer, performed. He played several instruments, took singing lessons and performed as a boy soprano; then he played harpsichord in theatres and started composing his first arias, studying composition in Bologna and studying the works of Haydn and Mozart. He had a contract with two theatres in Naples and wrote one new opera for each of them every year, but he soon started writing for many other theatres as well. He travelled across Europe and had a string of operatic successes in Italy, Vienna and Paris, where he occasionally lived and spent the final 14 years of his life. He was also renowned for his gastronomic skills. Rossini refined *opera buffa* and developed *opera seria*, wrote works that require considerable virtuosity and referred to himself as 'the last of the Classics'. He composed numerous instrumental pieces, but is best known for his comic operas, as well as other vocal works.

Rossini's *La Danza* is a part of the collection *Les soirées musicales* from 1835, in which Rossini collected songs from the weekly soirees he hosted in his Paris home. Following a sparkling instrumental introduction, the lively tarantella opens with vocal bravura that inspired other composers, like Chopin and Respighi, to borrow its motifs, and pianists, like Liszt, to write virtuosic piano arrangements. The author of the text

(‘Mamma mia... now the moon is above the sea... soon we’ll be dancing’) is Count Carlo Pepoli, librettist of Bellini’s opera *I puritani*, and it includes cheerful repetition of ‘la ra la ra’.

**Domenico Gaetano Maria Donizetti** (Bergamo, 1797 – 1848) is one of the most important Italian opera composers of the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He studied music in Bergamo and at the Bologna Conservatory. He often stayed in Naples, writing for local theatres, where he also served as director. He wrote operas for Rome, Florence and Paris. From 1834 he served as professor at the Naples Conservatory, later also as temporary director, but was never offered full tenure. After a series of personal tragedies, deaths of his newborn children and wife, Donizetti moved to Paris in 1838, where he achieved great success, especially with his operas *La fille du régiment* and *La favorite*. He also composed for Vienna (*Linda di Chamonix*), where he was appointed court Kapellmeister. His final days were marked by worsening symptoms of syphilis. In his lifetime, he saw sixty of his operas premiere, while some of them were discovered after his death; he also wrote sacred music and in his youth he composed string quartets, piano pieces and *sinfonie*. He developed dramatic weight and

emotional content of the *opera seria* genre, as well as ways of conveying sparkling brightness and fluidity in *opera buffa*.

He wrote *La favorite* in 1840 to a libretto by Alphonse Royer and Gustave Vaéz based on a play by Baculard d'Arnaud. In the aria ‘**Spirto gentil**’, Fernando is broken-hearted: after he found Leonora, the woman he fell in love with and left the monastery for, and was granted permission by the King to marry her, he finds out that Leonora was the King’s mistress – his *favourite*.

*The Elixir of Love* from the title of the opera composed by Donizetti in 1832 to a libretto by Felice Romani, based on a French libretto by Eugène Scribe, is a secret weapon that Nemorino plans to use to win Adina’s love. Although it is obvious that he was tricked and the ‘elixir’ is nothing but ordinary wine, he is convinced that it is working because he sees a ‘furtiva lagrima’, ‘a secret tear’ in her eye.

The ‘high C’ is a special element in the repertoire for high voice: a hard to reach, ringing and particularly high tone used to impress the audiences – and the aria ‘**Ah, mes amis**’ (*Ah, my friends*) contains as much as eight of them! Singers usually add the ninth, not written by Donizetti. This blazing, ‘athletic’ aria originates from the opera written by Donizetti in 1840 to a libretto by Jules-Henri Vernoy and Jean-François Bayard. The young soldier Tonio

is celebrates joining the army, because in his regiment he will be near his beloved Marie, whom he intends to marry.

The term ‘**Neapolitan songs**’ does not refer only to traditional songs, *canzonette* sung in Neapolitan dialect, typical of Naples and its surrounding area, but also to the songs written in Neapolitan style whose composers are known. They were brought to America and other parts of the world by immigrants from Naples and elsewhere in southern Italy, while the famous tenors such as Caruso and Del Monaco made them popular worldwide. The passionate Neapolitan style was also promoted through a song-writing competition within the Piedigrotta Festival, held from 1830s to 1950.

Caruso often sang and possibly even commissioned the song ***Core 'ngrato*** (*Ungrateful Heart*) from 1911, composed to a text by Riccardo Cordiferro (a pseudonym of Alessandro Sisca), about the ‘ungrateful heart’ of a woman named Caterina, who rejected the singer. It is the only Neapolitan ‘hit’ written in the USA, where Cardillo had immigrated.

***Rondine al nido*** (*Swallow in the Nest*) was written in 1926 by Vincenzo de Crescenzo to a text by Luigi Sica. This romantic aria that begins slowly and then turns more and more passionate is about a swallow that

flies away and returns every year. But once love ‘flies away’ – it is gone forever.

The text of ‘***A vucchella*** (*A Sweet Mouth*)’ was written by an author who was not from Naples – the poet Gabriele d'Annunzio, well known in Croatia as the leader of the occupation of Rijeka in 1919. Originally from Abruzzo, he wanted to show he could write in Neapolitan dialect. The song is about a woman he longed for, specifically her mouth and a kiss he desires.

***O sole mio*** is one of the most famous Neapolitan songs. Di Capua wrote it in 1898 to a text by Giovanni Capurro, using one of the songs he had bought a year earlier from Alfredo Mazzucchi, whose daughter subsequently won the legal battle for copyright. According to the lyrics, a sunny day is a wonderful thing, but the sun ‘that shines from your face’ is even more beautiful.

*Dina Puhovski*

**Lawrence Brownlee** (Youngstown, Ohio, 1972) is a leading figure in opera, both as a singer on the world's top stages, and as a voice for activism and diversity in the industry. Captivating audiences and critics around the globe, he has been hailed as 'an international star in the bel canto operatic repertory' (*The New York Times*), 'one of the world's leading bel canto stars' (*The Guardian*), and 'one of the most in-demand opera singers in the world today' (*NPR*).

Amidst the challenges of COVID-19, Brownlee has emerged as a pivotal voice in classical music's shift toward digital programming and the resurgence of conversations around racial justice. He launched *The Sitdown with LB*, a weekly Facebook Live series which explores the experience of being an African American opera singer, and he has also hosted the video series *Coffee and a Song*, in which he invites artist friends to perform interpretations of art-songs from the intimacy of their own homes.

Highlights of Brownlee's 2020-21 season include Don Ramiro in *La Cenerentola* at Palau de les Arts Reina Sofía, his role debut as Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* at New National Theatre Tokyo, Arturo in *I Puritani* with Teatro dell'Opera di Roma, and Tonio in *La Fille du Regiment* with Opéra Royal de Wallonie-Liège. In concert, Brownlee reprised *Lawrence*

*Brownlee and Friends*, *Giving Voice* and *Cycles of My Being*, gave a virtual recital with pianist Myra Huang and appeared in virtual concerts with the Tallahassee Symphony and the Tulsa Symphony. In spring 2021, Brownlee joined The Juilliard School as a Distinguished Visiting Faculty Member.

A passionate advocate for diversity initiatives, he works with companies and engages civic organizations in the cities he visits to create programs and experiences seeking to expand opera audiences. His critically-acclaimed solo recital program *Cycles of My Being*, a song cycle that centers on the black male experience in America today, has toured across the USA three times.

He serves as artistic advisor for Opera Philadelphia, where his responsibilities include increasing and expanding audience diversity, advocating for new works, and liaising with the General Director from the perspective of a performing artist. 'As an artist, I think it is important that we are actively advocating for this beautiful art form we love so much,' said Brownlee. He also serves as an Ambassador for Lyric Opera of Chicago's Lyric Unlimited, and is a Peace Ambassador for a new initiative called Opera for Peace.

Lawrence Brownlee has cemented his place as one of the top artists in classical music. He is a regular guest at the world's

most important opera houses including The Metropolitan Opera, Teatro alla Scala, Royal Opera House - Covent Garden, Bayerische Staatsoper, Staatsoper Unter den Linden, Wiener Staatsoper, Teatro Real and Opéra national de Paris. He is a fixture at the world's top recital venues including Carnegie Hall, Wigmore Hall, and The Kennedy Center. His concert performances include collaborations with The Cleveland Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, The Philadelphia Orchestra, The San Francisco Symphony, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, and the festivals of Baden-Baden and Salzburg.

Brownlee is the fourth of six children and first discovered music when he learned to play bass, drums, and piano at his family's church in Hubbard, Ohio. He was awarded a Masters of Music from Indiana University and went on to win a Grand Prize in the 2001 Metropolitan Opera National Council auditions. Brownlee is a winner of numerous awards and distinctions including Male Singer of the Year (2017 International Opera Awards), the Kennedy Center's Marian Anderson Award, and the Opera News Award (2021). In October 2019, he had the distinct honor of singing at Jessye Norman's funeral in her hometown of Augusta, Georgia.

**Vesna Podrug Kossjanenko** was born in Split, where she began her musical education under Gordana Lentić. In the course of her education, she won six first prizes in state and federal competitions in former Yugoslavia. She graduated from secondary school in 1986 and received the Ivo Pogorelich scholarship the same year, enabling her to study at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna under Paul Badura-Skoda. In 1988 she performed for the ORF (Austrian Radio and Television), in 1989 she received scholarship from the Austrian Ministry of Science, and in 1992 she earned a Master of Arts in Piano. She studied piano chamber music with Georg Ebert, and in 2000 completed her studies in education at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna with distinction. During her studies, Vesna Podrug gave numerous recitals and appeared as soloist with the Orchestra of the Croatian National Theatre Split conducted by Boris Papandopulo and Ivo Lipanović. From 2000 to 2005 she performed Beethoven's Concerto No. 5 eight times with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra in Vienna. She has often appeared as soloist with the Symphony Orchestra of the Croatian National Theatre Osijek, the Symphony Orchestra of the Croatian National Theatre Split, the Kazakh State Philharmonic Orchestra Almaty and the chamber



orchestra Virtuosos of Split, performing the works of Ludwig van Beethoven, Alfred Schnittke and Boris Papandopulo. Vesna Podrug has appeared with renowned artists, such as David Grigorian, Wladimir Kossjanenko, Soo Kyung Hong, Goran Listeš, Isabell Bringmann, Martina Serafin and Miguelangelo Cavalcanti, at major concert halls, such as Vienna's Musikverein, Konzerthaus and State Opera, the Vatroslav Lisinski Hall and the Croatian Music Institute in Zagreb, and the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory of Music in Milan. Her numerous international appearances include concerts with Belgian violist Michael Kugel and American soprano Denyce Graves at the 53<sup>rd</sup> Dubrovnik Summer Festival in 2002, with French violist Gérard Caussé at the Hartberg Music Festival, with Austrian flautist Karl-Heinz Schütz at the FaLaUt Festival and in Split, with Chinese soprano Hui He at the 61<sup>st</sup> Dubrovnik Summer Festival and with the Tartini String Quartet at the 56<sup>th</sup> Split Summer Festival in 2010, with American clarinetist Vadim Lando, Arman Mourzagaliev and Wladimir Kossjanenko at the Forte Music Fest in Almaty in 2015 and 2016, and with Edin Karamazov at the Musical Evenings in St Donat in Zadar and the Split Summer Festival in 2019.

In addition to teaching piano at the Vienna Volkshochschule from 1992 to 1995, she

has also held numerous masterclasses. She was engaged as a pianist at the Vienna State Opera (1998–2008) and the Vienna University of Music and Performing Arts (2002–2008). Since 2007 Vesna Podrug has served as Associate Professor of piano, and since 2017 as Associate Dean at the Department of Music at the Split Academy of Arts. In 2012 she founded the International Bach Days in Split with Wladimir Kossjanenko, held every year on Bach's birthday.