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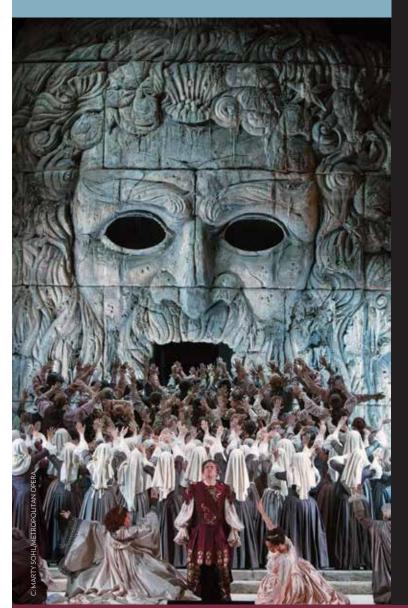
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4 LYRIC PREMIERES



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Idomeneo MOZART Oct 13 – Nov 2, 2018

Siegfried WAGNER Nov 3-16, 2018

Il trovatore VERDI Nov 17 – Dec 9, 2018

Cendrillon MASSENET
Dec 1, 2018 – Jan 20, 2019

Elektra R. STRAUSS Feb 2-22, 2019

La traviata VERDI Feb 16 – Mar 22, 2019

Ariodante HANDEL Mar 2-17, 2019

West Side Story BERNSTEIN/SONDHEIM May 3 – Jun 2, 2019

An American Dream PERLA/MOO Mar 15 & 17, 2019

Anna Netrebko in Recital Dec 2, 2018

Renée Fleming 25th
Anniversary Concert & Gala
Mar 23, 2019

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Piotr Beczała in Recital Martin Katz, piano

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LYRIC CHICAGO O P E R A \mathbf{O} F

PIOTR BECZAŁA, Tenor in Recital

MARTIN KATZ, Piano

Sunday, February 25, 3:00 p. m., Lyric Opera House

Program

Stefano Donaudy Vaghissima sembianza

> (1879-1925) Freschi luoghi, prati aulenti

> > O del mio amato ben

Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari Quando ti vidi

> (1876-1948) Jo dei saluti

> > E tanto c'è pericol O sì che non sapevo

Ottorino Respighi Lagrime

> (1879-1936)Scherzo

Stornellatrice Nevicata Pioggia Nebbie

Francesco Paolo Tosti L'ultima canzone

> (1846-1916)Chi sei tu che mi parli

> > Ideale

Intermission

Karol Szymanowski 6 Songs, Op. 2

> (1882-1937)Daleko został cały świat

> > Tyś nie umarła We mgłach

Czasem, gdy długo na pół sennie marzę

Słyszalem ciebie Pielgrzym

Mieczysław Karłowicz Czasem gdy długo na pół sennie marzę

> (1876-1909)Na spokojnym, ciemnym morzu

> > Rdzawe liście W wieczorną ciszę Zasmuconej Przed nocą wieczną Zaczarowana królewna

Stanisław Moniuszko Dwie zorze

> (1819-1872)Prząśniczka

> > Polna różyczka Krakowiaczek ci ja

80.03

Projected English Titles Roger Pines

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Assistant Stage Manager Daniel Sokalski

PROFILES | LYRIC OPERA OF CHICAGO



PIOTR BECZAŁA

One of the most sought-after tenors of our time, Piotr Beczała triumphed in his Lyric debut in the title role/ Faust (2009/10) and returned with equal

success last season as Edgardo/Lucia di Lammermoor.

The Polish-born artist began the current season with performances in Barcelona (Un ballo in maschera), Vienna (Adriana Lecouvreur), Munich (Lucia), and Berlin (La bohème). He comes to Chicago following concerts and recitals that have brought him to such prestigious venues as Madrid's Teatro de la Zarzuela, the Zurich Opera House (where he is a longtime audience favorite), Barcelona's Palau de la Música, and the Baden-Baden Festspielhaus. He repeats his Chicago program at Carnegie Hall on February 28. In New York Beczała will also star as Rodolfo/Luisa Miller at the Metropolitan Opera. Later in the season he returns to Zurich to star in Werther and Lehár's The Land of Smiles, before singing recitals at Paris's Palais Garnier and Munich's Bavarian State Opera.

Other starring roles at the Met have included the Duke of Mantua (debut, 2006), Prince/Rusalka, Edgardo, Lensky/Eugene Onegin (all four seen in HD transmissions and now available on DVD), Rodolfo/La bohème, Romeo, Faust, and Des Grieux/Manon. On DVD Beczała's Duke of Mantua in Michael Mayer's new Rigoletto production in 2013 earned the tenor the ECHO Klassik "Singer of the Year" Award.

Among Beczała's recent stage successes were his first Lohengrin at Dresden's Semperoper (subsequently reprised in Zurich); a new production of Werther at the Opéra National de Paris; and another role debut, Maurizio/Adriana Lecouvreur, in Vienna. Beczała is a regular at the Salzburg Festival, where he appeared most recently in 2016 as Faust. At La Scala he has earned acclaim as the Duke of Mantua, Puccini's Rodolfo, and Verdi's Alfredo, which he sang in a new Traviata production to open the house's 2013/14 season. In Munich the tenor has starred as the Prince, Alfredo, the Singer/Der Rosenkavalier, Werther, and most recently as Edgardo and Gustavo/Un

ballo in maschera. Beczała has also been a guest artist with the major companies of Amsterdam, Brussels, Hamburg, Geneva, Bologna, Warsaw, and St. Petersburg, among many others. His 20th stage anniversary was commemorated with a concert at Warsaw's famous Teatr Wielki.

Beczała's extensive discography includes repertoire staples, such as *Faust* live from Vienna and *La traviata* from Munich (Grammy nomination, 2008), and also such rarely-heard works as Szymanowski's *Król Roger*, Offenbach's *Rheinnixen*, and Johann Strauss II's *Simplicius*. On CD he also stars opposite Natalie Dessay in *Lucia* with the Mariinsky Opera under Gergiev. Beczała has released five solo CDs encompassing operatic and operetta in six languages. *Opera News* named his *Slavic Opera Arias* disc Number One on its list of 2011's "Twelve Best Recital Discs."

In addition to the Met performances previously mentioned, Beczała's DVD releases include a series of acclaimed performances from the Zurich Opera House: Don Giovanni, Rigoletto, La traviata, The Merry Widow, The Abduction from the Seraglio, The Magic Flute, and Simplicius. Also available are La bohème, Der Rosenkavalier, and Don Giovanni from Salzburg. Other recent DVD releases include Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with Christian Thielemann leading the Vienna Philharmonic and numerous opera galas.

Born in Czechowice-Dziedzice in Southern Poland, Beczała received his initial training at the Katowice Academy of Music, where he worked with such illustrious singers as Pavel Lisitsian and Sena Jurinac. He began his professional career at the Landestheater Linz, developing his repertoire further as a company member of the Zurich Opera House, where he has appeared with great success since 1997.

MARTIN KATZ



One of the world's busiest collaborative pianists, Martin Katz has been in constant demand by the most celebrated vocal soloists for four decades. In

addition to Piotr Beczała, he has appeared internationally and recorded regularly with Marilyn Horne, Frederica von Stade, Karita Mattila, José Carreras, Samuel Ramey, David Daniels, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Cecilia Bartoli, and Kathleen Battle, to name just a few.

The Los Angeles native began piano studies at age five. He attended the University of Southern California and studied the field of accompanying with its pioneering teacher, Gwendolyn Koldofsky. While still a student, he accompanied master classes of Lotte Lehmann, Jascha Heifetz, Pierre Bernac, and Gregor Piatigorsky. Katz subsequently served as pianist for the U.S. Army Chorus for three years, before moving to New York, where his busy international career began in earnest in 1969.

In recent years, he has added conducting to his schedule, and has led operatic and concert performances for many of his recital partners, as well as fully staged opera productions for the New National Theatre of Tokyo, San Francisco Opera's Merola Program, and at the University of Michigan, his home base. Katz has chaired the University's collaborative piano program for over 30 years, where he was named the first Arthur Schnabel Professor of Music. He has been a pivotal figure in the training of countless young artists, both singers and pianists, who are performing all over the world. His textbook, The Complete Collaborator, published by Oxford University Press, is considered a seminal work on the subject.

In addition to his work in Michigan, Katz is a regular guest at The Santa Fe Opera, Songfest, San Francisco Opera, the Sibelius Academy, Chicago College of Performing Arts, and the New National Theatre of Tokyo.

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Program Notes

By Roger Pines

Like the better-known Francesco Paolo Tosti, STEFANO DONAUDY composed songs representing the best of salon music - what Giampiero Tintori, writing in The Italian Musical Salon in the Late 19th Century, considered pieces that found a natural place in houses of the well-to-do, "for at-home days where a daughter would respond to the request, 'Play something for us."

The short-lived Donaudy (he died at just 46), a native of Palermo and of Italian and French parentage, began composing very early on. His first opera was written at the age of just 13. He studied in his hometown's conservatory, after which he worked teaching and coaching singers, while also performing throughout Sicily as an accompanist in salon performances. He composed in a number of different genres (including works for orchestra and six operas, all of which were performed in his lifetime), but he is remembered today exclusively for music written for solo voice and piano. The vast majority of his songs are settings of lyrics by his own brother, Alberto.

Donaudy never wrote a vocally ungrateful phrase, and the three songs chosen by Piotr Beczała are among the composer's loveliest works. For that reason, his music has attracted some of the very greatest singers. "Vaghissima sembianza" is yet another example of the skill of which the very young Donaudy was capable when only 13. The exquisitely soulful "O del mio amato ben" in particular has been performed in recital and recorded probably more frequently than any other Italian art song written in the past 150 years. This song provides a notable contrast with the sweet charm and buoyancy of "Freschi luoghi, prati aulenti."

ERMANNO WOLF-FERRARI, born Ermanno Wolf, added his mother's maiden name to his own in his late teens. He studied visual art in Rome, but eventually undertook extensive musical training in Munich. Upon his return to Italy, he quickly made important musical connections, although his first opera to be produced, a version of the Cinderella story, was unsuccessful when premiered at Venice's Teatro La Fenice in 1902. Various successes in Germany enhanced his reputation, as did a six-year stint as director of Venice's prestigious Liceo Musicale. He eventually taught composition in Salzburg and also spent many years in Zurich, not returning to Italy to live until 1946. He died two years later.

Wolf-Ferrari's operas are his great legacy. A number of them provide exciting vehicles for particularly charismatic performers, especially star sopranos in I gioielli della Madonna (1911) and star tenors – in recent years Domingo, Carreras, and Alagna - in Sly (1927). In Italy the comic operas have earned a good deal of attention, and conservatories, colleges, and smaller companies have gotten a good deal of mileage out of the adorable comic opera for lyric soprano and baritone, Il segreto di Susanna (1909).

The songs of Wolf-Ferrari are unjustly neglected. Those chosen by Beczała all communicate the ache of young people falling in love. Following "Quando ti vidi," Beczała turns to the Wolf-Ferrari pieces most frequently heard on the recital platform, the "Quattro Rispetti," Opus 11, of which the tenor sings the last three of the four songs, with texts taken from Tuscan folksongs: the sweetly sincere "Jo dei saluti," which breathes the sweetness of young love (and what a lovely leap upward in the vocal line on, appropriately, the word "sole" – "sun"); the marvelously graceful and increasingly passionate "E tanto c'è pericol"; and the effervescent "O sì che non sapevo."

OTTORINO RESPIGHI, who came from a musical family, was already studying at the musical college of his native Bologna when he was twelve years old. Trained thoroughly in piano, violin, and viola, as well as in composition, he undertook his first professional work as a viola player in Russia, where he had the benefit of instruction in orchestration from none other than Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. He continued to work as an instrumentalist when he returned home to Bologna, while also serving as an accompanist for many singers. Among his early major works were the opera Semirama (1910) and the cantata Aretusa (1911). Eventually he moved to Rome, where he worked at the Santa Cecilia Liceo (later



Piotr Beczała as Edgardo in Lucia di Lammeroor at Lyric (2016/17 season).

renamed the Conservatorio) as a composition professor. He also very significantly - married a singer, Elsa Sangiacomo, who became a very important influence on his work. He composed ballets, chamber music, and nine operas, but more than anything else, it was his three exhilarating symphonic poems - The Fountains of Rome, The Pines of Rome, and Roman Festivals - that took his name far beyond Italy.

Respighi set a wide variety of poetry, some of it from names as familiar as Boccaccio, Victor Hugo, and Gabriele d'Annunzio. Much of Respighi's song output plumbs profound emotional depths, especially where love is concerned. Typical is "Lagrime" (1896), in three distinct sections - the outer ones stately and somber, the middle with more forward motion, with an accompaniment based on lulling triplet figures. One of Respighi's liveliest songs is the brief "Scherzo," in which a lover delightedly remembers the brush of a kiss against his cheek. "Stornellatrice" (1906) is marked a piacere, and the singer, expressing a lover's ache, is allowed maximum freedom to shape each exquisite line with maximum sensitivity and heart. A steady snowfall is vividly depicted in "Nevicata" (1921), in which the line begins unusually low in the voice, ascending gloriously to a pianissimo high G at the close.

A lover bathes his hair in the rain, memorably evoked in the scintillating "Pioggia" (1909). Dark clouds provide a sad complement to the singer's desperate loneliness in what is possibly Respighi's most frequently performed song, the starkly dramatic "Nebbie" (1921), which makes especially formidable demands on a singer's expressive resources.

FRANCESCO PAOLO TOSTI, a native of Ortona sul Mare on the Italian coast north of Naples, was the son of a cereal dealer. Already composing at the age of 14, he studied at Royal Conservatory in Naples under scholarship, as both a composer and a violinist, and with his delightful tenor voice, he had an awareness of bel canto traditions from the start. He worked in Ortona for three years as the director of a chapel choir, but eventually had a nervous breakdown, from which he took seven months to recover. During that time he wrote his first songs.

Once he moved to Rome in 1870, he was able to find work composing for social occasions arranged by the wealthy (in many of these salon concerts, he also sang with considerable charm). Gradually he made his way, particularly once he was appointed as personal singing teacher of the future Queen of Italy, Margherita di Savoia. Also very significant was the initiation of his longtime association with the Ricordi music-publishing house, which began publishing Tosti in 1873. When he traveled to London, his music made a tremendous impact among

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Piotr Beczała as Gounod's Faust, his Lyric debut role (2009/10 season).

the salons, as he continued to produce songs in Italian while also composing extensively in English. His output eventually amounted to nearly 400 songs.

His continuing success in London prompted him to settle there in 1880. An entire generation of singers was coached by him at the Royal College and Royal Academy. He was also singing teacher and music administrator to the Royal household, utlimately becoming a central figure in the final decades of the reign of the now-aging Queen Victoria, herself an enormously appreciative fan of vocal music (he also knew very well her oldest son, both as the Prince of Wales and later King Edward VII). Tosti became arguably the most dearly loved composer in Europe, with his songs inspiring devotion from people in all walks of life. Returning to Rome in 1912 as a retiree after an incredibly productive and satisfying life, he died four years later. Following some decades of neglect, his music attracted renewed popularity during the heyday of the Three Tenors. Tosti's hometown, Ortona, created a National Tosti Institute in 1982.

Tosti's excellence arose from his background in bel canto and his understanding of how to flatter the voice. The late Francesco Sanvitale, most eminent of Tosti scholars, noted that the composer boasted "perfect knowledge of the vocal medium, a taste for the instinctively natural, a refined sense of melody, subtle thematic and rhythmic balance between music and words and careful and knowledgeable choice of poetic texts...a high degree of originality, both in terms of compositional technique and musical delight.

Beczała has chosen "L'ultima canzone," in which the *allegro* marking belies the lover's unhappiness that his Nina is marrying another (and what a ravishing melody Tosti gives the second half of each verse – a melody

truly unmistakably Italian); "Chi sei tu che mi parli," with its mesmerizing legato quite devastatingly projecting the singer's aching melancholy; and the romantic, matchlessly beautiful "Ideale," justly beloved by recitalists for more than 130 years.

One of Eastern Europe's musical giants of the interwar years, KAROL SZYMANOWSKI widely acknowledged as Poland's finest composer between the death of Chopin and the emergence 110 years later of Kryzstof Penderecki. Szymanowski, whose musical education was solidified with his studies in Warsaw in his mid-teens, began as a composer of a good deal of piano music, along with an orchestral overture. At the same time, however, he began early on composing songs, working with texts by some of the most exciting poets of the younger Polish literary generation at the time. As he proceeded through his musical career, he worked in a style notably influenced by composers as diverse as Debussy, Scriabin and Stravinsky, while also taking on very significant nationalistic influences. He made incomparably eloquent and innovative contributions in the area of the stage (most prominently the opera King Roger, premiered in 1926), choral music, songs with orchestra, and songs with piano.

Op. 2 begins with "Daleko zostal caly swiat," painting an utterly bleak picture of the singer's longing, marked by a shattering leap to the climactic high A (marked ff). Emotional devastation continues in the adagio of "Tyś nie umarła, a jednak zaiste," the lover lamenting that although his beloved isn't dead, her lips have turned cold. It's the chill of evening fog that is evoked in "We mglach" which builds from intimacy to grand-scale expression and back again, as did the previous two songs as well as the song that follows, "Czasem, gdy dlugo na pot sennie marze" (a text also sung by Beczała in the Karłowicz setting). The most lyrically ravishing moments in all of Op. 2 are the two leaps to soft F-sharps in the in the singer's rapt recollection of the voice he loves. The group concludes with the sweet "Pielgrzym," the ineffably touching confession of a wanderer, contented with the simplest things in life.

MIECZYSŁAW KARŁOWICZ would doubtless be a more familiar figure internationally had he not died at the tragically early age of 32. He composed only 22 songs over a period of six years (1892-98). Apparently he rejected song once his student days in Berlin were past, preferring to focus his energy on orchestral music. His years there were hugely important, given his exposure to the gamut of German music, from Weber and Wagner to Strauss.

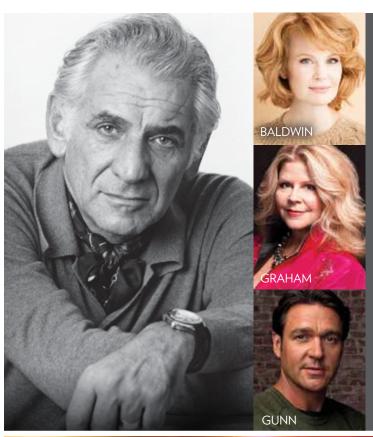
Karłowicz's lyrically highly rewarding, instantly sympathetic style draws on influences as early as Schubert but also Chopin and Tchaikvosky. His songs are not lengthy, often strophic, and unlike his German contemporaries, he generally did not work with especially distinguished texts.

Coruscating, Tchaikovsky-esque accompaniment supports the charmingly confiding vocal line of "Czasem gdy długo na pół sennie marzę," as we hear that the singer would willingly follow the voice he hears in his dreams. The stately andante sostenuto of "Na spokojnym ciemnym morzu" suits the sentiments of the singer, who hopes to cast off all his cares lying in a boat on the dark sea. The rhythmic bounciness of "Rdzawe liście" belies the sentiments expressed (the singer lamenting that his dreams have been taken away), while the very brief "W wieczorną cisze," appropriately marked agitato, uses groups of 16-note quadruplets to simulate the distant river. We don't know why the young girl of "Zasmuconej" is so unhappy, but the singer comforts her with the comforting gentleness of his concern for her. Matters turn painfully soulful in another very brief song, "Przed nocą wieczną." Matters turn first sweet and then very dramatic in "Zaczarowana królewna," as the singer tells of a knight in his ill-fated pursuit of an enchanted princess.

STANISŁAW MONIUSZKO, the son of very culturally oriented parents, was devoted to opera from a very young age. This developed significantly during his years of study in Berlin. In adulthood, as a resident of Vilnius, he worked teaching piano, playing the organ, and conducting in the local theater. He was already composing operas and operettas when in his early twenties. His struggles as a working musician made his great success with the Warsaw production of Halka (1858) doubly gratifying; that work initiated his rise to fame as the greatest of all Polish opera composers. His fame rests largely on an output of stage works that numbers more than 20, many heavily influenced by folk melodies and rhythms, and stories of common people. Poland's "national opera" is Halka, but outside of Poland it is his other masterpiece, The Haunted Manor (1861), that is heard more frequently.

The lilting, folklike 6/8 feel of "Dwie zorze" exudes charm in keeping with the singer as he sees his beloved appear, as lovely as the dawn. "Przasniczka," marked presto, is characterized by wildly scampering groups of 16th notes from start to finish, perfectly bringing to life the whirring of the maiden's spinning wheel. "Polna rozyczka" exudes as much charm as Schubert's more famous setting of the same tale of the plucked rose ("Heidenröslein"). Machismo comes to the fore in the assertive vocal line of "Krakowiaczek," the syncopations throughout vividly evoking the ardent lover's horse in its vigorous prancing.

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