

Prokofiev – Maddalena & Stravinsky – Mavra (Tikhonov) [2001]

Written by bluesever

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Sergey Prokofiev – Maddalena (opera) 1. Maddalena: Overture 1:11 2. Maddalena: Scene I. How Wonderful 3:54 3. Maddalena: Scene II. Madonna Maddalena 1:14 4. Maddalena: The Hours Dragged On 4:13 5. Maddalena: For That Whole Day 1:49 6. Maddalena: I Have No Fear 2:45 7. Maddalena: Scene III. But Wait 0:40 8. Maddalena: My Greetings, Friend 1:51 9. Maddalena: Listen 1:18 10. Maddalena: Come Close 2:03 11. Maddalena: She Came To Me 4:52 12. Maddalena: Scene IV. But Wait Was That? 0:20 13. Maddalena: Ah! There Is She Is? 2:40 14. Maddalena: Your Time Has Come! 2:01 15. Maddalena: But Tell Me 1:39 16. Maddalena: Yes, She Is Right! 1:19 17. Maddalena: Throw Down Your Dagger 2:30 18. Maddalena: No, I Will Not Come, Genaro 3:51

Yekaterina Melnikova (mezzosoprano) Svetlana Kulikova (soprano) Natalia Zagorinskaja (soprano) Sergei Yakolev (bas) Sergei Donets (baritone) Moscow Helikon Theater Chamber Orchestra Cyril Tikhonov (conductor) Igor Stravinsky – Mavra (opera)

19. Mavra: Overture 2:40 20. Mavra: My Dear Friend 2:09 21. Mavra: What Is The Use 2:23 22. Mavra: May God forbid 0:59 23. Mavra: No, Never Shall I Forget 2:56 24. Mavra: Good Day To You! 3:52 25. Mavra: I Found A Cook For Us! 3:55 26. Mavra: Parasha! 5:02 27. Mavra: Parasha! 1:28 28. Mavra: I Wait 3:56 29. Mavra: The Door Is Wide Open? 0:42

Svetlana Kulikova (soprano) Yekaterina Melnikova (mezzosoprano) Natalia Zagorinskaja (soprano) Sergei Yakolev (tenor) Moscow Helikon Theater Chamber Orchestra Cyril Tikhonov (conductor) Прокофьев С. «Маддалена», опера в одном действии

1. Увертюра 1:11 2. Сцена I. Какой закат! 3:55 3. Сцена II. Мадонна Маддалена 1:15 4. Я долгими часами 4:14 5. За целый день испорченный 1:49 6. Я не боюсь 2:46 7. Сцена III. Постой, стучат! 0:40 8. Привет тебе 1:51 9. Слушай 1:18 10. Вглядись в меня поближе 2:04 11. Она пришла нежданно 4:52 12. Сцена IV. Закрой окно 0:20 13. Вот! Вот она! 2:41 14. Пора суду! 2:02 15. Скажи когда 1:40 16. Она права! 1:19 17. Отбрось свой кинжал 2:30 18. Нет, не пойду, Женаро 3:43

Стравинский И. «Мавра», комическая опера в одном действии

19. Увертюра 2:40 20. Друг мой милый 2:09 21. Зачем следит дозор пустой 2:24 22. Избави Бог прислугу 0:59 23. Нет, не забыть вовеки 2:57 24. Желаю здравствовать 3:52 25. Вот, я кухарку привела! 3:55 26. Параша! 5:02 27. Параша! 1:28 28. Я жду, я жду покорно 3:56 29. Открыта настезь дверь? 0:42

Everything started ten years ago, when Dmitri Berman, a young and yet unknown 23 year-old stage director, decided to work with a group of fellow-students on a new performance of Stravinsky's "Mavra". They had to reduce the score to the 7 available musicians, helped in the process by Kiril Tikhonov, a famous conductor who had made most of his career in the United States.

Helikon (1) Opera was born. Sheltered between the magnificent walls of an old XVIIIth century Moscow palace, near the Tchaikovsky Conservatory and the Bolshoy, the orchestra rapidly grew to normal size, and this new stage soon started to draw every night a faithful audience of opera lovers, both passionate and fortunate enough to buy tickets 10 times as expensive as at the Bolshoy...

In a few years' time, Helikon Opera repertoire was to include more than 20 different operas, many of them never staged in Russia, or elsewhere in the world. But even in the most popular works, everything was new, daring and brilliant, a long way from the conventional and overplayed versions, while every single artist, singer, chorist or musician could compete with the best in Russia.

In 1998, Dmitry Berman was awarded the "Golden Mask", a Russian equivalent of the Grammy Awards, for his sulphurous staging of Bizet's masterpiece "Carmen". A host of "Golden Masks" have followed since : in 1999 for "The Tzar's Bride", in 2000 for "Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk"...

Today, Helikon Opera employs some 300 people. This outstanding ensemble, subsidized by the city of Moscow, forms a permanent troupe, not limited to a single production, as is often the case in most opera houses nowadays.

To this singularity, Helikon Opera probably owes its exceptionnal artistic level, and a unity of purpose which is not easily found elsewhere. --- sara-artists.com

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Maddalena was Prokofiev's first mature opera; there were at least four earlier ones from his youth -- the first, *The Giant*, written when he only nine years old. Maddalena has a very interesting history and might never have been performed had it not been for the efforts of conductor/musicologist Sir Edward Downes.

Beginning in about 1913, Prokofiev attempted to interest various companies in staging his new opera, but none with the means could be found. Prokofiev moved on to other projects, and the manuscript was eventually lost in Paris. When it turned up in the 1970s, Downes expressed interest in staging the opera, but discovered that only the Prelude and the first of the work's four scenes had been orchestrated. He painstakingly set about finishing the orchestration, and Maddalena was premiered, with Downes conducting, in a BBC broadcast in 1979.

This short opera, using verse by Magda Gustavovna Liven-Orlova, under the pen name Baron Liven, is set in fifteenth-century Venice and deals with the love triangle of Genaro, his wife Maddalena, and her lover Stenio. Stenio does not know the name of his lover (Maddalena insists on anonymity), and he confesses his love for the strange but beautiful woman to Genaro. When her identity becomes known to Stenio and her unfaithfulness revealed to Genaro, she goads the two into fighting to the death. Both are killed. ---Robert Cummings, Rovi

Mavra is a one-act comic opera based on Alexander Pushkin's story *The Little House in Kolomna*. The opera was written shortly after Stravinsky's orchestration of Tchaikovsky's music for a revival of *The Sleeping Beauty*; the resulting work shows Tchaikovsky's influence, most notably in its deep connection to the Russian folk tradition (Stravinsky insisted that Tchaikovsky was a true Russian composer, with an "unconscious" link to "the true popular sources" of the Slavic race).

Mavra's libretto was written by Boris Kochno, secretary to Stravinsky collaborator and ballet impresario Sergei Diaghilev. The plot of the opera is quite simple: Parasha, daughter of a middle class family, and Basil, a young hussar, fall in love. In order to be together, Parasha dresses Basil in women's clothes and brings him into the household as the family's new cook, Mavra; the mother's discovery of "her" shaving leads to a comical dissolution of the ruse. The premiere of Mavra was given on June 3, 1922 under Gregor Fitelburg at the Paris Opera, and it has only seldom been revived since.

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The opera consists of thirteen formal numbers, connected by spoken dialogue. Musically, the work is something of a throwback to the idiom of early Stravinsky stage works like *Le Rossignol* and *Renard*, although in purely instrumental terms it bears some traces of the neo-classical sound Stravinsky had recently explored in his ballet *Pulcinella*, completed not long before. It also glances in the direction of Tchaikovsky and Glinka in certain spots, but Mavra's lightly applied motor rhythms and comical bursts of polytonal scoring clearly place the work in the twentieth-century. At the time, Stravinsky was at a crossroads with his Russian "primitivist" vein, given the protracted genesis of *Les noces* and his desire to explore neo-classic concepts with more depth, a style that seemed more fresh and new to him in 1922 than that of *Le Sacre du Printemps*. Despite the relative lack of success that greeted it at its Paris premiere, Mavra remained one of Stravinsky's favorites among his own works, and at one time Stravinsky commented that he thought it was the best thing he had ever done. ---Rovi

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