

CHAN 3106(2)



CHANDOS
OPERA IN
ENGLISH

PETER MOORES FOUNDATION

Clive Barda



SUSAN CHILCOTT

This recording of *Jenůfa* was based on Welsh National Opera's new production in Spring 2003, in which the young British soprano Susan Chilcott was cast as *Jenůfa*. Very sadly, the stage performances with WNO, to which Susan brought intense commitment, were her last and she was obliged to withdraw from our projected recording. She died from cancer in September 2003.

The recording went ahead as planned in July 2003 – thanks to the talent, sensitivity and commitment of Janice Watson, who stepped in to record the title role at my request.

I hope the recording will serve as a tribute to the memory of Susan Chilcott and in gratitude to Janice for her splendid performance.

Sir Charles Mackerras

Left: Susan Chilcott in the title role of Welsh National Opera's production of *Jenůfa*



Lebrecht Collection

Leoš Janáček

Leoš Janáček (1854–1928)

Jenůfa, her Stepdaughter (Brno version)

Opera in three acts

Libretto by the composer after Gabriela Preissová's play *Její pastorkyňa*

English version by Edward Downes and Otakar Kraus

Grandmother Buryja, retired mill owner	Elizabeth Vaughan	<i>mezzo-soprano</i>
The Kostelníčka, her daughter-in-law, Jenůfa's stepmother	Dame Josephine Barstow	<i>soprano</i>
Jenůfa, Grandmother Buryja's granddaughter	Janice Watson	<i>soprano</i>
Števa Buryja, Grandmother Buryja's grandson, present owner of the mill	Peter Wedd	<i>tenor</i>
Laca Kleměň, Števa's older half-brother	Nigel Robson	<i>tenor</i>
Foreman at the mill	Neal Davies	<i>baritone</i>
Mayor of the village	Alan Fairs	<i>bass</i>
Mayor's wife	Marion McCullough	<i>mezzo-soprano</i>
Karolka, their daughter	Charlotte Ellett	<i>soprano</i>
Jano, shepherd boy	Claire Hampton	<i>soprano</i>
Barena, a servant at the mill	Rosie Hay	<i>soprano</i>
Maid	Imelda Drumm	<i>mezzo-soprano</i>
Village woman	Sarah Pope	<i>mezzo-soprano</i>

Chorus of Welsh National Opera

Simon Philippo chorus master

Orchestra of Welsh National Opera

Sir Charles Mackerras

Gareth Jones assistant conductor

Notes on the version used in this recording

In this recording we have used the so-called 'Brno Version' of the opera, being the final form and orchestration of *Jenůfa* before it went to Prague in a re-orchestration by the Musical Director of the Prague National Theatre, Karel Kovařovic.

Jenůfa was performed sporadically between January 1904 (the date of the Brno première) and 1913. During this time Janáček continually revised the score, making considerable alterations both to the musical form and the orchestration. He had already submitted the opera to the National Theatre in Prague in 1903 and it had been turned down. During the First World War, in 1915, *Jenůfa* was again submitted to the National Theatre and this time was accepted for performance, largely through the influence of Maria Calma-Vesela, who had campaigned on behalf of the work for several years. Kovařovic agreed to perform it on condition that Janáček would accept that he, Kovařovic, would revise

it and partially re-orchestrate the score. Janáček was most anxious that his opera should be performed in Prague and so he accepted Kovařovic's changes.

Although Janáček eventually repudiated these changes, the opera was performed all over the world in Kovařovic's version until I decided to re-construct Janáček's own version. This was a challenge I had been considering since the 1970s. Luckily there was still a copy of the score in Brno in which Kovařovic's changes were all noted in red ink. Thus it was possible to distinguish between the original and the additional orchestration. John Tyrrell and I finally produced an edition of the opera which was faithful to Janáček's own final revisions and we discarded Kovařovic's alterations. This version has been performed worldwide since 1982 and finally reached Brno on 21 January 2004, the 100th anniversary of the Brno première. This is the version presented on this recording.

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A short guide to Czech pronunciation

In Czech the stress is invariably on the first syllable of a word.

The pronunciation of (unmarked) consonants is generally akin to English, with the following exceptions: c is pronounced like ts (*Laca* = *Latsa*), j is like the English y (*Jenůfa* = *Yenoofa*). The letters ch are similar in pronunciation to the final sound in Scottish 'loch'.

There are short and long vowels; a *čárka* or long-sign is used to designate long vowels – á, é, í, ó, ú, ý (long u is also represented by ů, using the *kroužek* sign). These are not stress marks.

Consonants marked with a reversed circumflex or *háček* – č, ň, ř, š and ž – are

'soft', as are the letters d and t. Č is pronounced like the ch in 'cheese', ň is like the Spanish ñ (as in 'España'), š is like the sh in 'shoe', ž is like the zh sound in 'pleasure', while ř is a sound unique to Czech and is produced by the simultaneous combination of a rolled r and a zh. The letter d produces a sound similar to the initial sound in the colloquial 'd'ya like it?', while t has a similarly softening effect.

The *háček* used over e produces a ye sound as in 'yellow', e.g. *oběd* ('lunch') = *ob-yed*. Appearing after d, t and n, the vowels i and í soften the preceding consonant; for example, the n in the Kostelníčka's name is pronounced soft (*Kos-tel-nyich-ka*).

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Janice Watson
as Jenůfa

Clive Barda

COMPACT DISC ONE

Time Page

Act I

Scene 1

1 'Soon it will be evening'
Jenůfa, Grandmother Buryja, Laca, Jano 11:59 [p. 94]

Scene 2

2 'What are you doing here, Laca?'
Foreman, Laca, Jenůfa, Grandmother Buryja, Kostelnička 5:07 [p. 95]

Scene 3

3 'Come now, Jenůfa'
Grandmother Buryja, Jenůfa 0:37 [p. 97]

Scene 4

4 'They're all for marrying'
Recruits, Števa, Jenůfa, Foreman, Laca 1:46 [p. 98]

Scene 5

5 'My dear heart, my Števa, Števuška!'
Jenůfa, Števa, Chorus, Kostelnička, Grandmother Buryja, Laca, Foreman 13:03 [p. 98]

Scene 6

6 'Števa, Števa, I know you got drunk today'
Jenůfa, Števa, Grandmother Buryja 5:32 [p. 101]

Scene 7

7 'How all this boasting of Števa'
Laca, Jenůfa, Grandmother Buryja, Foreman, Barena 4:31 [p. 102]

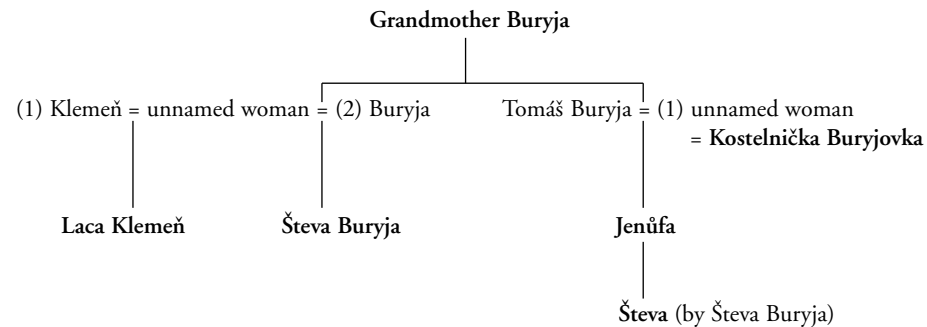
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4	6:17	[p. 112]
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		<i>Maid, Jenůfa, Laca, Kostelnička</i>
Scene 2		
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		<i>Jenůfa, Laca</i>
Scene 4		
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		<i>Laca, Karolka, Števa, Jenůfa</i>
Scene 5		
9	0:16	[p. 117]
		<i>Mayor, Kostelnička, Laca, Mayor's Wife</i>

	Time	Page
Scene 6		
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TT 55:51

Family tree





Clive Barda

Peter Wedd as Števa and Marion McCullough as Karolka in Welsh National Opera's production of *Jenůfa*



Richard Moran

Dame Josephine Barstow as the Kostelnička in Opera North's production of *Jenůfa*

Jenůfa, her Stepdaughter

You will search in vain through the repertory of Czech opera houses, for an opera called *Jenůfa*. In his homeland, Janáček's first theatrical masterpiece is always known by the title of Gabriela Preissová's powerful melodrama on which it is based – *Její Pastorkyňa, Her Stepdaughter*. These three words provide an important clue to the abiding power of the work. *Jenůfa* is not the drama of a single heroine, but the tragedy of two women, entwined in the consequences of their own emotions, as surely as Romeo and Juliet or Antony and Cleopatra. Jenůfa, the vain and impulsive young rural beauty and the Kostelnička, her severe and forceful stepmother, take two parallel journeys through suffering, one to despair and the edge of madness, the other to sober reconciliation. If the end of the opera is crowned by Jenůfa's growing maturity, it is the Kostelnička's agonised and murderous decision in the second act, which stays with us long after the curtain has fallen.

Preissová played a small but significant role in the development of Czech literature. Her short stories and dramas of Moravian village

life were among the first works of 'kitchen sink' realism in the language, and *Her Stepdaughter* caused something of a scandal when it was first produced in 1890. The public was enthusiastic about the grim tale of a village girl whose illegitimate child is murdered by her stepmother to protect her honour and her marriage prospects. The dilemma faced by Jenůfa may seem remote to us today, but in late-nineteenth-century rural Moravia it was both painful and only too familiar. In an enclosed village community, to conceive a child out of wedlock was common, provided the couple had been through a formal public betrothal, but to give birth before marriage carried a savage social stigma. The tragic irony of the play rests in the fact that the father of Jenůfa's baby escapes military conscription, thus making him free to marry her, but is prevented from doing so by the Kostelnička, who disapproves of his drunken lifestyle. No wonder the audience identified with the drama so readily.

However, the critics universally condemned it as a sleazy slice of life, quite inappropriate for the stage of the National Theatre. What

caught Janáček's imagination was not the lurid narrative, but the emotional complexity of Preissová's characters. In particular, he warmed to the dilemma of the Kostelnička (the word means sexton or church-warden), a pillar of the community confronted with personal shame. In a crucial scene in the play, she speaks of her own former husband, a drunken wastrel called Tomáš Buryja. She fears that Jenůfa's lover Števa, Buryja's nephew, is revealing unpleasant inherited traits. This tangle of conflicting feelings – protectiveness, guilt, piety and fear – is at the heart of the play and it provides the core of Janáček's opera.

Janáček was first attracted to Preissová's writing when he was still an obscure choral conductor and teacher, living in a backwater of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Like so many of his contemporaries in Central Europe, he was fascinated by vernacular culture, and Preissová's stories of Moravian rural life struck a chord with a composer deeply absorbed in collecting and arranging the folk music of his birthplace. What is remarkable about *Jenůfa* is the masterly way in which someone with so little theatrical experience transformed a gripping but fairly conventional tale of illegitimacy and social retribution into a heart-rending psychodrama. There is no hint of

what is to come in Janáček's first two operatic projects. *Šárka* is a standard folk epic, a pale imitation of Smetana. *The Beginning of a Romance* – also based on a play by Preissová – is interesting in its use of folk melody, but clumsy in its construction. Janáček himself was only too aware of its shortcomings, and he later suppressed the piece. *Jenůfa* is in an entirely different league.

Janáček was a late developer and he was already in his early forties when he started work on the opera. Composing the first act was a struggle for him, and he put it aside for eight years before venturing any further. There are still hints of traditional Romantic opera in the early scenes. The stamping folk melody for the villagers and recruits who accompany the drunken Števa might well be mistaken for a Dvořák Slavonic Dance. Nevertheless, we can sense Janáček's unique musical world from the opera's opening bars. On the surface, the obsessive xylophone *ostinato* depicts the relentless turning of the mill wheel, but at a deeper level it portrays Jenůfa's state of mind and the disasters which await her. This relentless percussive tapping recurs four times; firstly when Jenůfa fears ill fortune if her rosemary plant were to die, then when she broods on her unwanted pregnancy after

Števa's banishment. It is heard a third time when Jenůfa fears that Števa will abandon her for another and finally returns just before the jealous Laca slashes her face. It provides the musical scaffolding on which the first act is built. The dramatic action is shaped with equal assurance. While Preissová's original plot would not be out of place in a soap opera, Janáček's libretto shaves the narrative back the bone and in doing so, he exposes the nerve endings of the four principal characters.

By the time the curtain rises on the second act, written eight years after the first, there is no doubt that we are in the presence of a theatrical master craftsman. The opening notes – an abrupt *fortissimo* chord and a shuddering string *tremolo* – plunge us into the claustrophobia of the Kostelnička's cottage. The savage string *staccatos* which follow, slice into the main melody like a scalpel. A less assured composer might have been tempted to spread an atmosphere of unrelieved gloom throughout the act. However, time and again, the pain of the two women's predicament is penetrated by an ambivalent tenderness. When the Kostelnička tells Jenůfa that it would be better if God were to take the child away, a caressing cello theme contradicts her. As she

gives Jenůfa the sleeping draught, a noble tune on the harps and woodwind conjures up the alternative future she has dreamed for Jenůfa before the girl's unwanted pregnancy cast a pall over their lives.

In contrast with the bucolic jostling of the first act, Act Two features only the four principals. There is also a fifth character, heard but not seen – the sleeping child, conjured in the tender folk-like fragments of melody associated with him, which constantly emerge from the harmonic darkness. Throughout the act, the score suggests the noose of fate tightening around the Kostelnička's throat. It is a rope she has woven for herself. In her ignorance of her stepdaughter's condition, she has banished Števa for his vulgar and irresponsible behaviour. Now she must go down on her knees and beg him to marry Jenůfa, and when that fails, to turn in desperation to Laca. To depict the trap closing in on the Kostelnička, Janáček returns to his favourite musical device, the *ostinato*, nagging insistently in the orchestra. Her monologue after Jenůfa retires to bed is underpinned by edgy repetitions on strings, horns and harp. The same combination of instruments in a similar rhythm returns when Jenůfa cries out in her drugged sleep, and we hear it once

again in triple time when Laca arrives in response to the Kostelnička's appeal.

It is as if Janáček has constructed a musical prison, whose only exit is the door through which the Kostelnička rushes, carrying the still sleeping baby to drown it in the mill-race. The monologue which precedes the murder, is one of the composer's most remarkable achievements, from its tortured opening, accompanied by glassy string harmonies to its desperate conclusion, where the omnipresent harps and horns are joined by *fortissimo* screams from the trumpets. Yet here again, Janáček refuses to take the obvious path. The phrases which accompany the Kostelnička's appeal to God have a fearful nobility, and after her departure Janáček weaves terror and tenderness into an ambivalent fabric, with a melting solo for the principal violin emerging from the climactic orchestral discord. Jenůfa's aria, as she wakes from her narcotic slumber and realises her baby is missing, is built on a still more massive scale, drawing together musical material from earlier scenes, and reaching a frightening climax as the returning Kostelnička hammers on the window. Janáček's newly developed skill in fashioning huge dramatic paragraphs drives the drama through to the end of the act, and the

Kostelnička's guilty terror is clearly audible as the timpani take up her knocking motif and transform it into a shattering tattoo.

The emotional intensity of this act brings to mind the mature operas of Puccini, and it is fascinating to think of the Tuscan and the Moravian working simultaneously on dramas which focus on young women abandoned by the fathers of their unborn children. What separates *Jenůfa* and *Madama Butterfly*, though, is Janáček's total lack of sentimentality. In the final act, he returns to the folk melodies which dominate Act One, but the brooding presence of the broken figure of the Kostelnička, both on stage and in the tortured harmonies of the orchestra, constantly serves to poison the atmosphere. The jaunty little tune with which the act opens is underpinned by yet another *ostinato*, as if fate were pushing the newlyweds towards catastrophe. As the act progresses, the conflict between the cosy folk tunes and Jenůfa's dark harmonies mirrors the contrast between the brightly coloured traditional dresses of the villagers and the heroine's black mourning outfit. When the young boy Jano bursts in to announce that a tiny frozen corpse has been discovered under the ice, it is a shock, but not a surprise.

Janáček's objectivity persists to the very end. After the Kostelnička's confession and her stepdaughter's act of forgiveness, the music acquires a stoical warmth as the two young people contemplate their future together and the trials they must still undergo. Nevertheless, this is no easy apotheosis. How can it be, when their relationship has been forged in such pain? A century later, we mistrust glib romantic solutions, but for Janáček's contemporaries, the severe conclusion and the music in which it is expressed, proved too much to take. Although his home town of Brno welcomed *Jenůfa*, it took twelve years and much scheming behind the scenes before it was produced in Prague. Even then, Janáček was persuaded to accept cuts and re-orchestrations to soften the savage impact of the original. It did not help that the director of the Prague opera, Karel Kovařovic, had been criticised by the composer for one of his own early works. His opposition was compounded by the traditionally low opinion in which cosmopolitan Prague held provincial Brno.

Kovařovic's rationalisation of the score held sway in Czechoslovakia for almost a hundred years. It was only in 2004, on the opera's centenary, that Brno was able to hear the music once more as the composer intended, thanks to the inspired championship of the

conductor of this recording, Sir Charles Mackerras. Only when we hear the work, uncut, without extra woodwind filling in and smoothing out Janáček's austere contours, without heroic horns replacing the stark trombones in the final scene, can we truly appreciate the naked directness of his first fully achieved musical drama. The composition of *Jenůfa* coincided with the most heart-breaking years of Janáček's life – years in which his marriage finally disintegrated and he lost his daughter to typhoid fever. It was the product of personal as well as artistic struggle, as he recorded in his autobiography:

I would bind Jenůfa with the black ribbon of the long illness, the pain and the sighing of my daughter Olga and my little boy Vladimir. As she was dying, Olga asked her father to play though the score of the *Jenůfa*. At the very end, Janáček made musical sketches of her last exhausted words. It seems a strange, almost heartless act, but throughout his work, music provided him with an objective distance he was unable to summon up in his life. The fact that he could transform such pain into enduring art marks Janáček out as one of the world's operatic giants.

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Background

It is the late nineteenth century. Vebořany, a mountain village in Moravia, is a small, tightly-knit rural community. The local saw mill is owned by the Buryja family, and it is the complex relationships within this group which are at the root of the drama.

Family tree

Grandmother and Grandfather Buryja had two sons, 'Miller' Buryja, the older and heir, and Tomáš Buryja. Miller Buryja married a certain Widow Klemeň, and so acquired a young stepson, Laca Klemeň. The couple then had a son of their own, Števa, to whom both the mill and the family fortune were left when the parents died. He is a fair-haired handsome lad, but promiscuous and a heavy drinker. His half-brother, Laca Klemeň, dark and sensitive, feels overlooked and disregarded by the whole Buryja family.

Miller's younger brother, Tomáš, is now also dead. He was married twice. By his first wife he had a daughter, Jenůfa Buryjovka. When widowed he married again – the Kostelnička, or Lady Sacristan of the local church. The marriage was not a happy one, as Tomáš turned out to be violent and quick-tempered, a spendthrift and a drunkard. Jenůfa and the

Kostelnička, however, have a close and loving relationship. Jenůfa always calls her Mamičko, or Mummy, and the Kostelnička, a God-fearing but overbearing woman, is very proud of her stepdaughter.

COMPACT DISC ONE

Act I

The Buryja Mill

Dusk at the end of August

□ Grandmother Buryja and Laca are both working. Jenůfa is waiting anxiously for Števa to return from an interview with the army conscription board. If he is forced into military service, they will not be able to get married for some time, and her pregnancy will be discovered. The only other person who knows about it is Števa himself, the father-to-be. And if it is revealed Jenůfa, according to the tenets of the time, has earned death by stoning and eternal damnation.

Laca, who has loved Jenůfa since childhood, watches her jealously, tortured by her feelings for Števa.

A herdboy, Jano, thanks Jenůfa for teaching him how to read. □ – □ The mill foreman brings the news that Števa has not been recruited after all.

[4] Števa himself arrives, drunk, and accompanied by the local band and the men who *have* been drafted. [5] They dance and sing with the millworkers, but their merrymaking is cut short by the Kostelnička. She regards Števa as an unsuitable husband for her beloved stepdaughter, spendthrift and violent like her own husband, his uncle. Not knowing that Jenůfa is pregnant, the Kostelnička prohibits their marriage for a year, during which Števa must give up drinking. [6] Left alone together, Števa boasts to Jenůfa that all the girls flirt with him, but she replies possessively that he belongs to her. [7] After he has gone, Laca jealously taunts Jenůfa that Števa loves her only for her pretty face and rosy cheeks. He glances at the knife he is working with. ‘Think how it could spoil those looks of yours.’ He attempts to kiss her, they struggle, and he ‘accidentally’ cuts her cheek with his knife.

Act II

The Kostelnička's house by the river. Five months later. Evening at the end of January

[8] – [9] It is some time since Jenůfa finally told her stepmother about her pregnancy. To save them both from disgrace, the Kostelnička has hidden her in the back room of the house and told everyone that Jenůfa has gone to find

work in Vienna. Her baby boy was born eight days ago. She has called him Števa, and the Kostelnička has christened him.

The Kostelnička is continually reminding Jenůfa of her guilt and dishonour, and saying that she should pray God to take the child from her. Jenůfa is deeply unsettled and feels unwell. The Kostelnička offers her a sleeping draught and Jenůfa retires for the night.

[10] For the last five months the Kostelnička has prayed that Jenůfa might miscarry, but as the baby is healthy she now feels she must plead with Števa to marry Jenůfa. She has therefore sent him a message to come round that evening. [11] When he arrives she reproaches him for never asking about the baby. He says he's sorry, and offers to support the child, on condition that he does not have to admit to being its father. She begs him to marry Jenůfa and to take the baby, to remove the shame from Jenůfa's name and her own. Števa bursts into tears and replies that Jenůfa has latterly changed from her gentle self to an intense and demanding person, resembling the Kostelnička. Her beauty has been ruined by the scar on her cheek. He has fallen out of love with her and he is now engaged to marry the Mayor's daughter, Karolka. Jenůfa calls out in her sleep and Števa rushes out of the door.

[12] Laca, who has been a regular visitor over the past months, sees Števa leaving and calls to ask whether this means that Jenůfa is back from Vienna, and that she and Števa are to be married. He himself still wants to marry her and the Kostelnička has encouraged him. The Kostelnička tells him the truth: Jenůfa has been kept hidden in the house and has just had a baby by Števa. Laca is stunned. Does the Kostelnička expect him also to take Števa's baby? She lies to him that the baby has died.

COMPACT DISC TWO

[1] Left alone, the Kostelnička distractedly tries to decide what to do. She can't take the baby far away somewhere – he will always be a shame and dishonour. She will ‘send him to God’ – put him under the ice in the river. The body will be swept away when the stream thaws. She and Jenůfa will not be tainted. She takes the baby and rushes out into the night, locking the door behind her.

[2] Jenůfa wakes up, still slightly drugged. At first hysterical with worry that she can't find her Mamičko or her baby, she then supposes happily that he has been taken to be shown off at the mill. She prays for the baby.

[3] The Kostelnička returns – her hands are

frozen and she cannot open the door. She knocks at the window, throws in the key, and Jenůfa lets her in. The Kostelnička says that Jenůfa has been ill with a fever for two days and that the baby has died. Jenůfa weeps quietly, and asks whether Števa has called. The Kostelnička tells of his cash offer and, his disinterest in Jenůfa herself and the baby, and his impending marriage to Karolka. She recommends Jenůfa to prefer Laca, who has been told about the baby and its death and has forgiven her.

[4] Laca returns and asks her to marry him and she accepts – the Kostelnička blesses them, but becomes hysterical when the window suddenly blows wide open.

Act III

*The Kostelnička's house
Morning*

[5] – [9] It is Jenůfa's wedding day and the Kostelnička is still not herself. She has been ill, and suffers attacks of terror and delusions. Jenůfa and Laca have invited Števa, his fiancée Karolka and her parents, the mayor and his wife. The wedding is to be very plain in style, which disappoints the Mayoress and Karolka.

[10] Uninvited, some workers from the mill come in with a song, wishing Jenůfa well. Grandmother Buryja gives her good wishes,

^[11] – ^[13] but as the Kostelnička is about to bless the couple, shouts are heard. Brewery workers cutting ice on the river have found a dead baby, frozen in the ice. Jenůfa knows from the baby's clothes that it is little Števa. ^[14] The gathering people threaten to stone her for murder and are only just restrained by Laca, who leaps to her defence.

They are silenced as the Kostelnička absolves Jenůfa from suspicion and confesses her own guilt. Karolka realises that Števa was the father and refuses to marry him. Laca blames himself. The Kostelnička adds to her confession by admitting that she now realises she was thinking more of her own honour and good name than of Jenůfa's and begs her stepdaughter's forgiveness. ^[15] Jenůfa understands, forgives the Kostelnička and asks God to comfort her. The Mayor escorts the Kostelnička away for trial. ^[16] Jenůfa tells Laca to go too, as she is not worthy of him, but he replies that he still loves her and intends to stand by her. She joyously accepts.

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Janice Watson studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and first came to prominence as winner of the Kathleen Ferrier



memorial award. She has been a regular guest with both Welsh National Opera and English National Opera. She has sung Musetta at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; Pamina with the Paris Opéra; Countess Almaviva; Vitellia for Flanders Opera; Strauss' Daphne and Arabella and Elettra (*Idomeneo*) at the Santa Fe Festival; Daphne, Arabella and Eva (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*) with the San Francisco Opera; Pamina at the Bavarian State Opera; Ellen Orford at Covent Garden, the Vienna State Opera, Netherlands Opera and with the London Symphony Orchestra; Countess Almaviva in Lyon, Munich, for the Deutsch Staatsoper, Berlin, and the New National Theatre, Tokyo; Micaela at both the Lyric Opera of Chicago and the Metropolitan Opera and the Marschallin for English National Opera

Her concerts include the Boston Symphony Orchestra under both Roger Norrington and André Previn, the San Francisco Symphony

under Michael Tilson-Thomas, the London Symphony Orchestra under Sir Colin Davis, André Previn and Riccardo Chailly, the Orchestre de Paris and Frans Brüggen, the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields and Sir Neville Marriner, the London Philharmonic Orchestra and Bernard Haitink and both the Chicago Symphony and Royal Concertgebouw Orchestras under Riccardo Chailly.

Her many recordings include Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Ellen Orford in Chandos' award-winning recording of *Peter Grimes* under Richard Hickox, Poulenc's *Gloria* for Chandos, Howells' *Missa Sabrinensis* under Gennady Rozhdestvensky, and Helena in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* under Sir Colin Davis.



Dame Josephine Barstow is acknowledged as a singing actress of the highest rank. Her distinguished career has included acclaimed performances of Salome, Tosca, the Lady Macbeths of

Verdi and Shostakovich and an enormous range of roles from Mozart to Janáček via Beethoven, Verdi, Puccini and Richard Strauss. In 1986 she toured the USSR singing in Tbilisi, Riga and at the Bolshoi in Moscow. She created the protagonist in the world premiere of *Die schwarze Maske* at the Salzburg Festival where Karajan invited her back for *Tosca* and *Un ballo in maschera*. She has sung with the Paris Opéra, the Bayerische Staatsoper, Munich, English National Opera and at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. In the United States she has sung for the Metropolitan Opera, New York, and in San Francisco, Chicago and Houston. She was made a CBE in 1985 and in 1995 she was created a Dame of the British Empire.

Other engagements have included the title role in *Salome* for the Netherlands Opera and the Kostelnička for English National Opera, Opera North and Flanders Opera; Emilia Marty (*The Makropoulos Case*) for Welsh National Opera; Amelia (*Un ballo in maschera*) for the Hong Kong Festival; *Tosca* for Opera North; Ellen Orford (*Peter Grimes*) for the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and in Palermo, and Anna Maurrant (*Street Scene*) for the Teatro Nacional de Sao Carlos in Lisbon.

She has sung regularly with Opera North including the title roles in *Medea* and *Aida*, Alice Ford (*Falstaff*), Marie (*Wozzeck*) and Elizabeth I in *Gloriana*, which was also performed at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, and has sung the role of Miss Wingrave in a TV film of *Owen Wingrave* conducted by Kent Nagano.

Her current recordings include two recitals, Marie (*Wozzeck*) for Chandos' Opera in English series, *Street Scene*, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Britten's *Gloriana* conducted by Sir Charles Mackerras, and Lady Billows in *Albert Herring*.



Peter Wedd studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama with William McAlpine and subsequently at the National Opera Studio. He was a Company Principal at the Royal Opera,

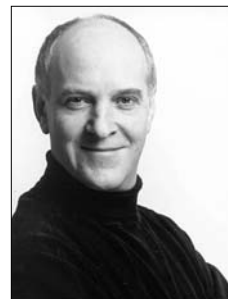
Covent Garden from 1999 to 2001 and is a regular guest artist for Welsh National Opera. As a Company Principal of the Royal Opera he sang Ywain (*Gawain and the Green Knight*)

and Kudrjas (*Kat'a Kabanová*). At Welsh National Opera his roles have included Don José (*Carmen*), Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*), Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*) and Laca (*Jenůfa*).

Other appearances in the UK and Ireland have included Federico (*L'Arlesiana*) and Pluto (*Orphée aux enfers*) for Opera Holland Park, Kyska (*Šarkatán*) and Julius (*I cavalieri di Ekebu*) at the Wexford Festival, and Satyavan (*Savitri*) at the Aldeburgh Festival, and he has had great success singing Rodolfo in a new production of *La bohème* at London's Royal Albert Hall. Peter Wedd has sung Tamino and Eisenstein (*Die Fledermaus*) for European Chamber Opera as well as Lysander (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) for the Singapore Lyric Theatre.

He is much in demand as a concert artist and has worked with orchestras including the London Philharmonic, Royal Scottish National, City of London Sinfonia, Northern Sinfonia and the Bournemouth Symphony. Peter Wedd has appeared at the Covent Garden and Edinburgh Festivals and abroad at the Maribor Festival, Slovenia and the Cernier Festival in Switzerland.

Recordings in the Opera in English series include *Turandot* and *The Flying Dutchman*.



Nigel Robson was born in Argyleshire and studied with Alexander Young and Gustave Sacher. He is well established as one of Britain's most versatile lyric tenors with an operatic and concert repertoire

ranging from Monteverdi to the most contemporary of compositions, and is particularly well known for his interpretations of Britten.

Operatic engagements have included Bajazet (*Tamerlano*) in Drottningholm, the title role in *Peter Grimes* for the Nationale Reisopera in Holland; Captain Vere (*Billy Budd*) for the Canadian Opera Company; Laca and Captain Vere for Welsh National Opera; the title role in *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* in Lisbon and for Opera North; the title role in *Idomeneo* at the Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich; Male Chorus (*The Rape of Lucretia*) at the Grand Théâtre de Tours; Pandarus (*Troilus and Cressida*) for Opera North; The Madwoman (*Curlew River*) for Opera Factory, Septimus (*Theodora*) for Glyndebourne, and Golo in

Schumann's *Gonevva* for Garsington Opera. His involvement in the work of living composers includes the Dutch world premiere and the UK premiere of Guo Wenjing's *Wolf Cub Village*, Alexander Goehr's *Kantan* and *Damask Drum*, the world premiere of Make Ishi's *Tojiraretta Fune*, and John Lunn's *The Maids*.

Concert appearances have included and Maderna's *Venetian Journal*, Bach's *St John Passion*, *Judas Maccabeus*, *Jephtha*, Britten's *Spring Symphony*, Stravinsky's *Renard*, *Das Lied von der Erde*, Britten's *War Requiem*, Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*, and *Die schöne Müllerin*.

Nigel Robson's recordings include Handel's *Tamerlano*, *Jephtha* and *Alexander's Feast*, Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, *Il coronazione di Poppea* and *Vespers 1610*, Tippett's *Songs for Dov*, Mozart's *Idomeneo*, and for Chandos Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia*, Walton's *Troilus and Cressida* and Delius's *Mass of Life*.

Elizabeth Vaughan was born in Wales and studied at the Royal Academy of Music where she won every major prize including the coveted Kathleen Ferrier Memorial Scholarship. She made her operatic debut with Welsh National Opera where she sang



acclaimed performances of Abigail (*Nabucco*). For The Royal Opera she sang many roles including Cio-Cio San (*Madama Butterfly*), Violetta (*La traviata*), Leonore (*Il trovatore*), Abigail (*Nabucco*), Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*), Gilda (*Rigoletto*), Euridice (*Orfeo*) and Teresa (*Benvenuto Cellini*).

Elizabeth Vaughan has returned to Welsh National Opera as a guest artist singing many leading roles including those in *Manon Lescaut*, *La forza del destino*, *Madama Butterfly*, *La traviata* and *Andrea Chenier*, and Peter Maxwell Davies' *The Doctor of Myddfai*. She has also appeared frequently with English National Opera, Opera North and Scottish Opera in operas including *Aida*, *Fidelio*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Tosca*, *Macbeth*, *La traviata*, *Il trittico* and the role of Auntie in *Peter Grimes*.

Since 1990 she has been a mezzo-soprano and has received the highest critical acclaim for her performances including Herodias (*Salome*) for Scottish Opera, Welsh National

Opera (in the UK and on tour to Japan) and also with the Opera Bastille in Paris and South Korea. Other engagements have included Madame de Croissy (*Dialogues of the Carmelites*) for both English and Welsh National Operas, concert performances of *Hansel and Gretel* with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra conducted by Mark Elder, and concert performances of *Salome* with the Philharmonia Orchestra at the Athens Concert Hall. Internationally, her career has taken her to the Metropolitan Opera in New York, Vienna, Paris, Hamburg, Munich, Prague, Marseilles, Athens, Montreal, Florence, Pisa, Sydney and South America.

Recordings include highlights from *Der Rosenkavalier* for Chandos' Opera in English series.



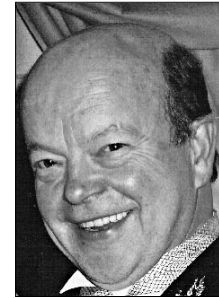
Neal Davies was born in Newport, Gwent and studied at King's College, London, and the Royal Academy of Music, of which he was made a Fellow in 2003. He continued his studies at the International Opera

Studio, Zurich, under the patronage of Dame Gwyneth Jones. He is a regular guest at the Edinburgh Festival and at the BBC Proms.

His operatic appearances have included Rameau's *Platée* under McGegan, Handel's *Giulio Cesare* under Ivor Bolton and Figaro in *Le nozze di Figaro* all for the Royal Opera, Covent Garden; Handel's *L'Allegro* for English National Opera; Handel's *Radamisto* for the Opéra de Marseille; Handel's *Theodora* with Les Arts Florissants and *William Christie* (Paris and Salzburg); Handel's *Orlando* with the Gabrieli Consort; Leporello for both Scottish Opera and Opéra de Quebec; and Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*), Leporello and Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*) for Welsh National Opera.

His recordings include Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* under Sir Colin Davis, *Messiah*, *Theodora* and *Saul* under Paul McCreech, Vivaldi Cantatas and Handel's *L'Allegro* under Robert King, and Dutilleux songs under Yan Pascal Tortelier for Chandos.

Alan Fairs studied privately with Audrey Langford and Robert Dean. He appears frequently as a guest artist with Welsh National Opera where he has performed the roles of Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*), Swallow (*Peter Grimes*), Basilio (*The Barber of Seville*),



Bonze (*Madama Butterfly*), Dikoj (*Katya Kabanova*), and most recently Bartolo (*The Marriage of Figaro*).

With other companies and festivals, he has performed many major roles which include Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*), Don Pasquale, Osmin (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), Sarastro (*Die Zauberflöte*), Leporello (*Don Giovanni*), Gremin (*Eugene Onegin*), Oroveso (*Norma*), Geronimo (*Il matrimonio segreto*), Falstaff (*Falstaff* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*) and Alberich (*Das Rheingold*).



Born in South Wales, **Charlotte Ellett** studied at the Royal Northern College Music and then the National Opera Studio where she was supported by the Wood/Peters Award in association with

Glyndebourne, The Peter Moores Foundation, the Sybil Tutton Award and The Countess of Munster Award. She continues her studies with Enid Hartle and in January 2004 started on Welsh National Opera's Associate Artist Programme.

Her operatic roles include, Despina (*Così fan tutte*) for Aix-en-Provence Festival and Pimlico Opera, Frasquita (*Carmen*) for Glyndebourne Touring Opera, and Karolka, Susanna and Barbarina for Welsh National Opera.

Marion McCullough was born in Bloxwich and studied with Constance Shacklock. Roles for Welsh National Opera include Flosshilde (*Das Rheingold*), Alisa (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Annina and Flora (*La traviata*), and Hansel (*Hansel and Gretel*).

Claire Hampton was born in Staffordshire and studied at the Royal Northern College of Music under Teresa Cahill. She received a scholarship from the Peter Moores Foundation which enabled her to continue her postgraduate studies and to further her language and opera studies. She has performed the roles of Dorinda (*Orlando*) and Susanna (*The Marriage of Figaro*) for Floral Opera, and

is a member of the Chorus of Welsh National Opera.

Rosie Hay was born in Stoke-on-Trent and studied at the City of Leeds College of Music. She joined the Chorus of Welsh National Opera in 1992 and has sung a number of small roles with the company. She has also performed the role of Cio-Cio-San for Opera Lyrica, Stowe Opera and Welsh National Opera, and Hanna Glawari (*The Merry Widow*) for York Theatre Royal.

Imelda Drumm was born in Ireland and studied singing with Anne Marie O'Sullivan and Veronica Dunne. She completed her singing studies at the National Opera Studio supported by Glyndebourne Opera.

Roles include Kate Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*), Hansel (*Hansel and Gretel*), Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), the title role in *Carmen*, Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Beatrice (*Beatrice and Benedict*) for Welsh National Opera; Dorabella and Cherubino for Glyndebourne Festival Opera; Cherubino, Isolier (*Le Comte Ory*) for Glyndebourne Touring Opera; the title role in *La Cenerentola* for English Touring Opera; and *Carmen* for Raymond Gubbay at the Royal Albert Hall.

Sarah Pope was born in Leicester and studied at the Guildhall School of Music and the Royal Northern College of Music. She joined Welsh National Opera in 1992 and has sung a number of small roles with the company. She created the role of Kabanicha in the WNO MAX commission.

The **Orchestra of Welsh National Opera** was founded in 1970. Since then it has established itself as one of the finest British orchestras, highly praised as much for its distinction in a wide-ranging operatic repertoire as for its concert work and recordings.

Under Richard Armstrong, the Musical Director from 1973 to 1986, the orchestra developed a broad operatic repertoire. In was during this period that Reginald Goodall first worked with the orchestra. Sir Charles Mackerras became Musical Director in 1987 and the Orchestra's recording schedule began to expand considerably. Previously several complete operas had been recorded under Richard Bonyngue, with Joan Sutherland, Montserrat Caballé and Pavarotti leading world-class casts. Under Mackerras the orchestra went on to record Janáček's *Osud* (CHAN 3019). Carlo Rizzi has been Musical Director since 1992. In 1995 the Orchestra of

Welsh National Opera won the Royal Philharmonic Society Music Award, in the Large Ensemble category.

The **Chorus of Welsh National Opera** began as a professional body in 1968 working with the Company's famed Voluntary Chorus until 1973, when the latter was disbanded. The Voluntary Chorus was made up of amateur singers who gathered together in 1943 to form the nucleus of what became Welsh National Opera. In the late 1960s it became clear that WNO should become fully professional, and the Voluntary Chorus was replaced by the Chorus of Welsh National Opera. The reputation of the Chorus grew quickly, and its operatic and concert work has won wide praise, not only in the traditional repertory such as Verdi, but also in twentieth-century works such as Tippett's *A Midsummer Marriage* and Janáček's *From the House of the Dead*.

The Chorus has recorded many operas including *Andrea Chenier*, *Tristan und Isolde* and *Parsifal*, *I Masnadieri*, *Norma*, *Hamlet*, *Ernani*, *Anna Bolena* and *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Tosca*, *Rigoletto*, *Faust* and *Un ballo in maschera* as well as *The Mikado*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *The Yeomen of the Guard*, *Trial by Jury*,

Britten's *Gloriana* and Janáček's *Osud* with Mackerras. Among concert pieces it has recorded are *Sea Drift* by Delius, *The Vigil of Venus* by George Lloyd and *Hiawatha* by Coleridge-Taylor. Foreign touring has taken the chorus to Paris, Tokyo, New York, Milan, Wiesbaden, Lisbon, Oporto, Berlin and Leipzig.



Sir Charles Mackerras studied at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music and came to England in 1947. He gained a British Council Scholarship to study further at the Academy of Music in Prague. His great interest and love for Janáček commenced in 1947 on hearing *Katya Kabanova* conducted by the great Václav Talich.

As an assistant conductor at Sadler's Wells in 1951 he gave the first performance of *Katya Kabanova* in the English-speaking world. Later he introduced *The Makropoulos Case* and *From the House of the Dead* at Sadler's Wells and continued conducting highly successful

productions of Janáček's operas, as well as more standard repertoire, when he became Musical Director of English National Opera (1970–77) and for Welsh National Opera when he became their Musical Director (1987–1992). He has been a pioneer in the dissemination of the music of Janáček throughout the capitals of Europe and in the USA and Australia. *Jenůfka* has been a particular favourite.

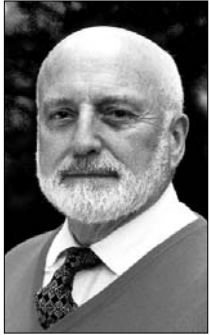
He has had a long association with the Czech Philharmonic and recorded most of Janáček's orchestral works with them as well as *Katya Kabanova* and Dvořák's *Rusalka*. Included in his vast discography is an award-winning cycle of the Janáček operas with the Vienna Philharmonic in the early 1980s. For Chandos he has recorded Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass* in the original version, Kodály's *Psalmus Hungaricus* and Dvořák's Cello Concerto. As part of the Opera in English series he has recorded *Osud*, *La traviata*, *Werther*, *Julius Caesar* and *Mary Stuart*.

Sir Charles has also undertaken much research into the music of the eighteenth century, particularly Handel and Mozart. He has recorded a series of Mozart and Gilbert and Sullivan operas as well as a complete series of Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms

Symphonies, several oratorios by Handel and symphonies by Mahler and Elgar. He is at present Principal Guest Conductor of the Philharmonia Orchestra, Conductor Laureate of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Conductor Emeritus of Welsh National Opera and the San Francisco Opera.

Sir Charles received a CBE in 1974, was knighted in 1979, honoured with the Medal of Merit from the Czech Republic in 1996 and made a Companion of the Order of Australia in 1997. In 2003 he became a Companion of Honour in the Queen's Birthday Honours.

Bill Cooper/PMF



SIR PETER MOORES, CBE, DL

Sir Peter Moores was born in Lancashire and educated at Eton College and Christ Church, Oxford, where he studied Italian and German. He had a 'gap year' at Glyndebourne working as a behind-the-scenes administrator before going to Oxford, then studied for three years at the Vienna Academy of Music, where he produced the Austrian premiere of Benjamin Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* and was a production assistant with the Vienna State Opera working as assistant producer of performances by Viennese artists at the San Carlo Opera House, Naples, at the Geneva Festival and at the Rome Opera.

In 1957 he joined his father's business, Littlewoods, becoming Vice-Chairman in 1976, Chairman from 1977 to 1980 and remaining a director until 1993. His public appointments include from 1981 to 1983 Governor of the BBC, Trustee of the Tate Gallery from 1978 to 1985 and from 1988 to 1992 a Director of Scottish Opera. He received the Gold Medal of the Italian Republic in 1974, an Honorary MA from Christ Church, Oxford in 1975, and was made an Honorary Member of the Royal Northern College of Music in 1985. In 1992 he was appointed Deputy Lieutenant (DL) of Lancashire by HM Queen Elizabeth II. He was appointed a Commander of the British Empire (CBE) in 1991 and received a Knighthood in the New Year's Honours List for 2003 in recognition of his charitable services to the arts.

PETER MOORES FOUNDATION

Peter Moores' philanthropic work began with his passion for opera: in his twenties he identified and helped a number of young artists in the crucial, early stages of their careers, several of whom – Dame Joan Sutherland, Sir Colin Davis and the late Sir Geraint Evans amongst them – became world-famous. He set up his eponymous Foundation in 1964 when he was thirty-two, in order to develop his charitable aims, not only in music and the visual arts, but also in education, health,

youth, social and environmental projects. To date, because of his initiatives and life-long commitment to these causes, he has disbursed more than £85 million of his own money through the Foundation and the Peter Moores Charitable Trust – 'to get things done and to open doors'.

Projects to help the young have ranged from a scheme to encourage young Afro-Caribbeans to stay on at school to the endowment of a Faculty Directorship and Chair of Management Studies at Oxford University (providing the lead donation in 1991 for the new School of Management Studies). In 1994 a permanent Transatlantic Slave Trade Gallery, initiated by Peter Moores, opened at the Merseyside Maritime Museum, with the aim of fostering discussion about the heritage and true history of the slave trade. Substantial help was given to the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Development Trust, whilst through annual PMF Scholarships established in 1971 well over two hundred young singers have received practical support at the outset of their careers, enabling a significant number to become international opera stars.

In 1993 the Foundation acquired Compton Verney, an eighteenth-century mansion, and established the Compton Verney House Trust, an independent charity which it funded in order to transform the mansion into an art gallery designed especially to encourage newcomers to the visual arts. Alongside major international touring exhibitions, it will house permanent collections of North European art, Neapolitan paintings and one of the finest collections of archaic oriental bronzes in the UK, as well as a British Portrait Collection and a British Folk Art Collection. The gallery is scheduled to open in Spring 2004.

Opera has given the Foundation its most public 'face'. Since Peter Moores initiated the live recording of the 'Goodall *Ring*' at the London Coliseum in the 1970s, the Foundation has enabled some eighty recordings to be produced: Chandos Records' Opera in English series – 'Opera that speaks your language' – is now the largest recorded collection of operas sung in English whilst Opera Rara's recordings of rare *bel canto* operas have opened up an immensely rich repertory previously only accessible to scholars. In live performance, the Foundation has encouraged the creation of new work and schemes to attract new audiences, financing the publication of scores and enabling rarely heard works to be staged by British opera companies and festivals.



Clive Barda

Nigel Robson as Laca in Welsh National Opera's production of *Jenůfa*



Clive Barda

Peter Wedd as Števa, Marion McCullough as Karolka and Nigel Robson as Laca in Welsh National Opera's production of *Jenůfa*

Jenůfa, ihre Stieftochter

Im Spielplan tschechischer Häuser sucht man vergebens nach einer Oper namens *Jenůfa*. In seiner Heimat heißt Janáčeks erstes großes Bühnenwerk stets *Její Pastorkyňa*, (ihre Stieftochter); so nannte Gabriele Preissová ihr erschütterndes Drama, auf dem die Oper basiert. Diese drei Worte bergen einen wichtigen Hinweis auf die anhaltende Wirkung des Werks. Bei *Jenůfa* handelt es sich nämlich nicht um das Schicksal einer einzigen Titelheldin; vielmehr ist es die Tragödie zweier Frauen, die genau so in die Folgen ihrer Gefühle verstrickt sind wie Romeo und Julia oder Antonius und Cleopatra. Die Leidenswege der eitlen, impulsiven Bauernschönheit Jenůfa und der Küsterin, ihrer strengen, herrischen Zieh Mutter, verlaufen auf parallelen Wegen; der eine führt zur Verzweiflung und an den Rand des Wahnsins, der andere zu sachlicher Versöhnung. Obwohl Jenůfa am Ende der Oper zu größerer Reife findet, ist es die Verzweiflungstat der Küsterin, der Kindermord, die einen noch lange danach nicht verläßt.

In der Entwicklung der tschechischen Literatur spielte die Preissová eine kleine, aber maßgebliche Rolle. Ihre Erzählungen und

Schauspiele über das mährische Dorfleben waren die ersten veristischen Werke in dieser Sprache und als *Ihre Ziehtochter* 1890 erstmals über die Bühne ging, wurde sie sehr kühl empfangen. Das Publikum begeisterte sich für die bedrückende Geschichte vom Dorf Mädchen, dessen uneheliches Kind ihre Ziehmutter umbringt, um ihre Ehre und Aussichten auf eine gute Partie zu wahren. Heute scheint das Dilemma der Jenůfa fast unverständlich, aber auf dem mährischen Land war es Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts nicht nur ein fast alltägliches, sondern auch ein schmerzliches Ereignis. Freilich gab es in eng begrenzten Dorfgemeinden viele außereheliche Kinder, doch erwartete man von den Eltern, dass sie öffentlich verlobt waren; die Mutterschaft vor der Hochzeit war eine Katastrophe. Die tragische Ironie des Dramas beruht auf dem Umstand, dass der junge Štewa, dessen Kind Jenůfa trägt, vom Militärdienst befreit worden ist und sie heiraten könnte, doch die Küsterin verweigert ihre Einwilligung, weil er zu viel trinkt. Kein Wunder, dass sich das Brüner Publikum ohne Weiteres mit der Handlung identifizierte,

obwohl sie von der Kritik in Bausch und Bogen als anstößig abgelehnt und völlig unpassend für das Nationaltheater erklärt wurde. Dass sie Janáček sofort zusagte, beruht nicht auf dem schaurigen Stoff, sondern auf der emotionalen Vielschichtigkeit der Personen. Besonders interessierte er sich für das Dilemma der Küsterin, einer Stütze der Gesellschaft, die sich mit ihrer persönlichen Schande auseinandersetzen muss. In einer kritischen Szene spricht sie von ihrem verstorbenen Mann Tomáš Buryja, der ein betrunkenen Nichtsnutz war. Sie befürchtet, dass Štewa, Tomáš' Neffe, unliebenswürdige ererbte Wesenszüge hat. Diese widersprüchlichen Gefühle – das Bedürfnis, Jenůfa zu beschützen, Schuld, Frommheit und Angst – die im Mittelpunkt des Schauspiels liegen, bilden auch den Kern von Janáčeks Oper.

Als Janáček sich für die Werke der Preissová zu interessieren begann, war er noch immer ein unbedeutender Chorleiter und Lehrer in der österreichisch-ungarischen Provinz. Wie viele seiner mitteleuropäischen Zeitgenossen war auch er von der landesprachlichen Kultur fasziniert und befasste sich eingehend mit der Sammlung und Bearbeitung seiner heimatlichen Volksmusik; daher fanden die

Erzählungen der Preissová über das mährische Landleben unmittelbar Anklang bei ihm. Was an seiner *Jenůfa* so ganz besonders erstaunt, ist die Meisterhand, mit der Janáček, der in Bühnenwerken so gut wie unerfahren war, eine packende, wenngleich recht konventionelle Geschichte über ein uneheliches Kind und die Haltung der Gesellschaft zu einem herzzerreißenden Psychodrama gestaltete. Seine ersten beiden Versuche im Genre Oper – *Šárka*, ein gewöhnliches Volksepos und Abklatsch von Smetana, und das ebenfalls auf einem Schauspiel von Gabriele Preissová basierende *Der Anfang einer Romanze* – sind in Bezug auf die Auswertung von Volksmelodien von Interesse, aber der Bau ist unbeholfen. Janáček war sich über diese Mängel keineswegs im Zweifel und zog beide Stücke später zurück. *Jenůfa* ist etwas ganz Anderes.

Janáček, war ein Spätentwickler; als er die Oper in Angriff nahm, war er schon über vierzig Jahre alt. Der erste Akt machte ihm große Schwierigkeiten und lag acht Jahre lang in der Schublade, ehe er sich wieder daran heranwagte. Die Anfangsszenen tragen noch immer Spuren der traditionsgebundenen romantischen Oper. So könnte die stampfende Volksweise der Dörfler und Rekruten, die den

betrunkenen Štewa begleiten, ohne weiteres ein Tanz von Dvořák sein. Dennoch gibt sich die ganz besondere Welt von Janáčeks Inspiration schon von Anfang an zu erkennen. Vordergründig beschreibt das beharrliche *Ostinato* des Xylophons das unaufhörlich sich drehende Mühlrad, doch darunter ist es auch eine Vertonung von Jenůfas seelischer Verfassung und der kommenden Katastrophe. Nach dem Vorspiel erklingt das konstante Klappern noch viermal: zunächst, während Jenůfa sich Sorgen macht, dass ihr Topf mit Rosmarin eingeht, denn das wäre ein böses Wahrzeichen; dann während der Vorwürfe, die sie Štewa macht, nachdem die Küsterin die Heirat verboten hat, sowie bei ihrer Eifersucht, weil er von anderen Mädchen spricht. Schließlich hört man das Mühlrad knapp vor der Stelle, an der ihr der eifersüchtige Laca die Wange aufschlitzt. Das klappernde Xylophon ist das musikalische Skelett, das den ersten Akt trägt. Nicht minder eindringlich ist der mit sicherer Hand entworfene dramatische Aufbau. Das ursprüngliche Drama der Preisová hätte sich ohne Weiteres für eine Soap-Opera geeignet, aber Janáček nahm radikale Kürzungen vor, als er an dem Libretto arbeitete; nun sind die Nerven der vier Hauptpersonen schonungslos bloßgelegt.

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Der zweite Akt, der allerdings erst acht Jahre später entstand, beweist sogleich, dass Janáček sich zu einem Meister der Bühnenkunst entwickelt hatte. Die ersten Noten – ein abrupter *Fortissimo*-Akkord und ein schauerndes *Tremolo* der Streicher – versetzen den Hörer schlagartig in das klaustrophobische Milieu in der Hütte der Küsterin. Wilde Streicher-Staccati dringen wie Messer in die Hauptmelodie ein. Ein weniger selbstsicherer Komponist wäre vielleicht in die Versuchung geraten, die Stimmung den ganzen Aktes unvermindert düster zu gestalten. Indes erhellt von Zeit zu Zeit eine ambivalente Zärtlichkeit das Dilemma der beiden Frauen. Als die Küsterin Jenůfa erklärt, es wäre das Beste, wenn der Herr das Kind zu sich nehmen würde, widerspricht ihr ein inniges Cello. Und während sie Jenůfa den Schlaftrunk verabreicht, malt ein herrliches Thema der Harfen und Holzbläser die Zukunft, die ihr für ihre Ziehtochter vorschwebte, bevor deren unglückselige Schwangerschaft beiden das Leben verbitterte.

Im Gegensatz zum bukolischen Treiben im ersten Akt, treten nur die vier Hauptpersonen im zweiten Akt auf. Man kann aber auch eine fünfte Person hören: sanfte, volksliedhafte, mit dem schlafenden Kind assoziierte melodische

Bruchstücke tauchen wiederholt aus dem harmonischen Dunkel auf. Während des ganzen Aktes drückt die Musik die Schlinge aus, die sich die Küsterin selbst gedreht hat. Da sie nicht weiß, dass ihre Ziehtochter ein Kind erwartet, hat sie die Heirat mit Štewa wegen dessen liederlicher Lebensweise auf ein ganzes Jahr verschoben. Nun muss sie ihn kniefällig beschwören, Jenůfa zu heiraten, aber er schlägt ihre Bitte ab, und in ihrer Verzweiflung wendet sie sich an Laca. Die Falle, in die sie sich zunehmend verstrickt, veranschaulichte Janáček durch das hartnäckig im Orchester nagende *Ostinato* – eine Satztechnik, die er besonders liebte. Der Monolog, den die Küsterin singt, nachdem sich Jenůfa schlafen gelegt hat, ist von unbehaglichen Wiederholungen der Streicher, Hörner und Harfe gestützt. Dieselbe Instrumentation und Rhythmik begleiten den Aufschrei der betäubten Jenůfa im Schlaf, und dann ertönt sie noch einmal im Dreiertakt, als Laca, der dringenden Aufforderung der Küsterin nachkommend, sie aufsucht.

Janáček hat gleichsam ein musikalisches Gefängnis erbaut, durch dessen einzigen Ausgang die Küsterin eilt, um das schlafende Baby im Mühlbach zu ertränken. Der Monolog, der den Mord einleitet, ist eine von

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Janáčeks erstaunlichsten Schöpfungen, von den gläsernen Streicherflageolets der qualvollen Einleitung bis zum verzweigungsvollen Schluss, in dem *fortissimo* Aufschrei der Trompeten zu den omnipräsenten Harfen und Hörnern treten. Doch auch hier betritt Janáček nicht den nächstliegenden Weg. Die Phrasen, mit denen die Küsterin Gott anruft, sind so erschütternd wie erhaben; nachdem sie sich entfernt hat, verweht Janáček Schrecken und Zärtlichkeit in ein ambivalentes Ganzes, in dem der Konzertmeister eine schmelzende Solopartie spielt, die sich der dissonanten Hektik im Orchester entringt. Noch großformatiger ist die Arie der Jenůfa, die aus ihrem Betäubungsschlaf erwacht und sieht, dass ihr Kind verschwunden ist; hier wird musikalisches Material aus früheren Szenen kombiniert, das sich zum Höhepunkt steigert, als die heimkehrende Küsterin an das Fenster hämmert. Janáček hatte erlernt, riesige dramatische Bögen zu gestalten: das Drama treibt unerbittlich dem Aktschluss zu und das angstvolle Schuldbewusstsein der Küsterin wird in den Paukenschlägen, die ihr Klopfen übernehmen und in einen gewaltigen Trommelwirbel umwandeln, deutlich.

Die emotionelle Dichte dieses Aktes erinnert sehr an die Opern aus Puccinis Reifezeit; interessanterweise arbeiteten der

toskanische und der mährische Komponist gleichzeitig an Dramen über Mädchen, die vom Vater ihres Kindes im Stich gelassen werden. Der große Unterschied liegt allerdings in Janáčeks völligem Mangel an Sentimentalität. Im letzten Akt kehrt er zu den im ersten Akt vorherrschenden Volkweisen zurück, obwohl die Anwesenheit der völlig gebrochenen Küsterin auf der Bühne sowie die gequälte Harmonik des Orchesters dauernd die Stimmung trüben. Die flotte Eröffnungsmelodie wird wieder von einem *Ostinato* getragen, ganz so, als ob das Brautpaar einer Katastrophe zutriebe. Im Verlauf des Aktes spiegelt der Konflikt zwischen den gemütlichen Volkweisen und Jenúfas düsteren Harmonien den Kontrast zwischen ihrem Witwenkleid und der bunten Landestracht der Dörfler wider. Der Augenblick, in dem der junge Jano mit der Kunde von einem toten Kind unter dem Eis herbeistürzt, erschreckt, aber er überrascht nicht.

Bis zum Schluss lässt Janáčeks Objektivität nicht nach. Nachdem die Küsterin gestanden und ihre Ziehtochter ihr verziehen hat, erklingen im Orchester stoische, warme Töne, als Laca und Jenúfa ihre Zukunft und die Prüfungen, die ihnen bevorstehen, erwägen.

Freilich ist die Apotheose nicht unbeschwert – wie wäre es auch möglich, da ihre Beziehung mit solchen Schmerzen erprobt worden ist? Ein Jahrhundert später hält man nicht besonders viel vom glatten Happy-End, aber Janáčeks Zeitgenossen konnten sich mit dem nüchternen Ausgang und der Musik, die ihn ausdrückt, nicht zurechtfinden. Trotz des Erfolgs, den die Oper in seiner Heimatstadt Brünn hatte, wurde sie erst nach zwölf Jahren und vieler Manövern hinter den Kulissen in Prag angesetzt. Selbst dann ließ sich Janáček zu Strichen und Revisionen der Instrumentierung überreden, um die grimmige Auswirkung der Originalfassung zu mildern. Dass er Karel Kovařovic, den Direktor des Prager Nationaltheaters, in dessen Studentenjahren kritisiert hatte, war der Sache gewiss auch nicht förderlich. Außerdem betrachtete die Metropole Prag das provinzielle Brünn seit eh und je als nicht ebenbürtig.

Kovařovic' Eingriffe in die Partitur herrschten fast hundert Jahre lang in der Tschechoslowakei vor. Erst als die Oper 2004 ihre Hundertjahrfeier erlebte, konnte Brünn die Musik wieder so genießen, wie sie dem Komponisten vorgeschwebt hatte. Der Dank dafür gebührt dem Dirigenten der vorliegenden CD, Sir Charles Mackerras, der

sich unermüdlich dafür einsetzte. Allein wenn man das Werk ungekürzt hört, ohne die Holzbläser, die Janáčeks kargen Satz ausfüllen und glätten, oder die heroischen Trompeten, die in der letzten Szene die Posaunen vertreten, kann man die unverblümt direkte Tonsprache seines ersten wirklich gelungenen Musikdramas würdigen. Die Komposition von *Jenúfa* fiel mit den traurigsten Jahren von Janáčeks Leben zusammen, als seine Ehe in die Brüche ging und seine Tochter an Typhus starb. Laut seiner Autobiographie war die Oper das Produkt eines persönlichen wie künstlerischen Kampfes:

Am liebsten möchte ich Jenúfa mit dem schwarzen Band der langen Krankheit, der Schmerzen und Seufzer meiner Tochter Olga und meines kleinen Sohnes Vladimír zubinden.

Als Olga im Sterben lag, bat sie ihren Vater, ihr die Partitur der *Jenúfa* vorzuspielen. Als das Ende kam, hielt Janáček ihre letzten, erschöpften Worte in musikalischen Skizzen fest. Dieses Verhalten scheint sonderbar, ja geradezu herzlos, aber in seinem gesamten Schaffen konnte ihm die Musik die objektive Distanzierung bieten, die ihm im Leben versagt blieb. Dass er dieses Leid in zeitlose Kunst umwandeln konnte, beweist, dass

Janáček ein Riese in der Welt des Operngrenzes war.

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Übersetzung: Gery Bramall

Der Hintergrund

Zeit der Handlung: Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts. Schauplatz ist Veborany, eine enge, mährische Dorfgemeinde im Gebirge. Die Sägemühle ist im Besitz der alten Buryja, deren komplizierte Familienverhältnisse das Drama verursachen.

Der Stammbaum

Das alte Ehepaar Buryja hatte zwei Söhne: den ältesten, "Müller" Buryja, der die Mühle erbt, und Tomáš. Der Müller heiratete die Witwe Klemeň, die bereits einen Sohn namens Laca hatte. In zweiter Ehe hatte das Paar einen Sohn namen Štewa, der nach dem Tod seiner Eltern die Mühle und das Vermögen der Familie erbt. Er ist ein blonder, fescher Schürzenjäger und Säufer. Sein dunkler, feinfühligler Halbbruder Laca meint, die ganze Sippe der Buryja nehme ihn nicht ernst.

Tomáš, der jüngere Bruder des Müllers, ist nicht mehr am Leben. Auch er war zweimal verheiratet. Seine erste Frau gebar ihm eine Tochter – Jenúfa Buryaková. Als deren Mutter

starb, heiratete er die Küsterin; die Ehe war nicht glücklich, denn Tomáš war ein rabiater Verschwender und Trunkenbold. Jenůfa hat eine liebevolle Beziehung zur Küsterin, nennt sie Mamičko (Mütterchen), und die Küsterin, eine gottesfürchtige, diktatorische Frau, ist sehr stolz auf ihre Stieftochter.

COMPACT DISC ONE

Erster Akt

Vor der Mühle der alten Buryja

Ende August, Dämmerung

☐ Die alte Buryja und Laca sind beide an der Arbeit. Jenůfa wartet sorgenvoll auf Štewas Heimkehr von der Musterung. Wenn er einrücken muss, können sie nicht heiraten und ihre Schande wird offenbar. Nur Štewa weiss, dass sie ein Kind von ihm erwartet. Laut den damaligen Grundsätzen stehen ihr die Steinigung und ewige Verdammnis bevor.

Laca, der Jenůfa seit seiner Kindheit liebt und den ihre Liebe zu Štewa quält, behält sie eifersüchtig in den Augen.

Der Hirtenjunge Jano kommt freudestrahlend gelaufen und dankt Jenůfa, dass sie ihn das Lesen gelehrt hat. ☐ – ☐ Der Altgeselle bringt die frohe Kunde, das Štewa vom Militärdienst befreit worden ist.

☐ Der betrunkene Štewa kehrt heim, begleitet von Musikanten und den Burschen, die einrücken müssen. ☐ Sie tanzen und singen mit dem Gesinde, doch die Ankunft der Küsterin macht ihrer guten Laune schnell ein Ende. Sie hält Štewa nicht für den richtigen Mann ihrer geliebten Stieftochter, denn er scheint seinem verschwenderischen, gewalttätigen Onkel nachzugeraten. Sie hat keine Ahnung, das Jenůfa in anderen Umständen ist und verbietet die Heirat auf ein Jahr, während dessen er nüchtern sein muss.

☐ Allein mit Jenůfa, prahlt Štewa über die vielen Mädchen, die ihm Augen gemacht haben; sie antwortet, sehr aufgebracht, dass er nur an sie denken darf. ☐ Er geht ab und der eifersüchtige Laca reizt Jenůfa und behauptet, Štewa liebe sie nur wegen ihrer apfelglatten Wangen. Er arbeitet gerade an einer Schnitzerei. “Wie leicht könnte ich deine Wangen verschandeln!” Er versucht, sie zu küssen, sie wehrt sich und er schlitzt ihr “versehentlich” die Wange auf.

Zweiter Akt

Im Haus der Küsterin am Mühlbach. Fünf Monate später. Ende Januar, Abend

☐ – ☐ Seitdem Jenůfa ihrer Stiefmutter gebeichtet hat, dass sie schwanger ist, sind

zwanzig Wochen vergangen. Um sie beide vor der Schande zu bewahren, hat die Küsterin sie in einer Stube versteckt und allen Leuten gesagt, Jenůfa suche in Wien Arbeit. Vor acht Tagen hat sie ein Kind zur Welt gebracht und Štewa genannt. Die Küsterin hat ihn getauft.

Die Küsterin wirft Jenůfa noch immer die Schande vor, die auf ihr lastet; sie solle den Herrgott bitten, das Kind zu sich zu nehmen. Jenůfa ist verstört und fühlt sich nicht wohl. Die Küsterin gibt ihr einen Schlaftrunk und sie legt sich in ihrer Kammer schlafen.

☐ Die Küsterin hat fünf Monate lang um eine Fehlgeburt gebetet, doch das Kind ist bei bester Gesundheit; deshalb entschließt sie sich, Štewa zu bitten, Jenůfa zu heiraten und hat ihn für den Abend zu sich bestellt. ☐ Er kommt und sie macht ihm Vorwürfe, dass er nie nach dem Kind gefragt hat. Er macht Ausflüchte, verspricht, für das Kind zu zahlen, vorausgesetzt, dass niemand erfährt, dass er sein Vater ist. Sie beschwört ihn, Jenůfa zu heiraten und das Kind anzuerkennen, um ihre und Jenůfas Schande zu tilgen. Er bricht in Tränen aus und erwidert, Jenůfa habe sich ganz verändert: sie sei nicht mehr so lieb und fröhlich wie zuvor, sondern werde der Küsterin immer ähnlicher. Ausserdem ist sie nicht mehr schön, seit sie eine Narbe auf der Wange hat.

Er liebt sie nicht mehr und hat sich mit Karolka, der Tochter des Dorfrichters, verlobt. Jenůfa ruft im Schlaf aus und Štewa läuft davon.

☐ Laca, der monatelang bei der Küsterin zu Besuch war, hat Štewas Flucht gesehen und will wissen, ob Jenůfa endlich aus Wien heimgekehrt ist und Štewas Frau werden soll. Er möchte sie selber gerne heiraten und die Küsterin hat ihn nicht entmutigt. Nun erfährt er die Wahrheit: Jenůfa war im Haus versteckt und hat Štewas Kind geboren. Laca ist wie vor den Kopf geschlagen. Erwartet die Küsterin von ihm, dass er Štewas Kleinen an Kindes Statt annehmen soll? Sie lügt ihn an und behauptet, es sei gestorben.

COMPACT DISC TWO

☐ Die verzweifelte Küsterin ist allein. Was soll sie tun? Sie kann das Kind nicht irgendwohin schaffen, denn es wird ihnen immer Schande machen. Sie wird ihn Gott übergeben – im Mühlbach ertränken und unter dem Eis begraben. Gewiss wird das Tauwasser den kleinen Leichnam fortschwemmen. Sie packt das Kind, läuft in die Nacht hinaus und versperrt die Tür von aussen.

[2] Jenůfa erwacht, noch immer schlaftrunken. Zunächst ist sie ausser sich, weil weder ihre Mamičko noch das Kind da sind, aber dann tröstet sie sich mit dem Gedanken, dass sie ihn sicher zur Mühle getragen hat, um ihn den Leuten zu zeigen. Sie betet für ihr Kind. [3] Die Küsterin kommt zurück – ihre Hände sind vor Kälte steif und sie kann nicht aufsperrn. Sie hämmert ans Fenster, wirft den Schlüssel ins Zimmer und Jenůfa lässt sie ein. Die Küsterin macht ihr vor, sie habe zwei Tage lang hoch gefiebert und unterdessen sei der Kleine gestorben. Die weinende Jenůfa will wissen, ob Štewa gekommen ist. Sie erfährt von seinem Besuch, seiner Gleichgültigkeit über sie und seinen Sohn und die Verlobung mit Karolka. Die Küsterin rät ihr, Laca zu erhören, der von dem gestorbenen Kind erfahren hat und ihr verzeiht. [4] Laca kommt wieder, bittet sie, ihn zu heiraten und sie willigt ein. Die Küsterin erteilt den beiden ihren Segen, doch plötzlich reißt ein Windstoß das Fenster auf und sie wird ganz hysterisch.

Dritter Akt

Im Haus der Küsterin

Morgen

[5] – [9] Jenůfas Hochzeitstag: die Küsterin ist wie ausgewechselt. Sie war krank und leidet an

panischen Wahnvorstellungen. Jenůfa und Laca haben Štewa, seine Braut Karolka und deren Eltern, den Dorfrichter und seine Frau, eingeladen. Die beiden Frauen sind über die schlichten Hochzeitsvorbereitungen sehr enttäuscht. [10] Das Gesinde der Mühle kommt – uneingeladen – daher und wünscht Jenůfa viel Glück an ihrem Freudentag. [11] – [13] Die Küsterin will das junge Paar gerade segnen, als lautes Geschrei ertönt. Die Arbeiter aus der Brauerei haben im Mühlbach Eis gehackt und ein totes, steif gefrorenes Kind gefunden. An den Kleidern erkennt Jenůfa ihr Kind. [14] Die Menge zieht sich drohend zusammen, um sie für den Mord zu steinigen und wird nur von Laca zurückgehalten, der sie verteidigt.

Nun zerstreut die Küsterin den Verdacht der Anwesenden, indem sie ihr Verbrechen gesteht. Karolka begreift, dass Štewa der Vater des Kindes war und weigert sich, ihn zu heiraten. Die Küsterin erkennt, dass es ihr mehr um ihre eigene Ehre und Reputation zu tun war als um Jenůfas und bittet sie, ihr zu verzeihen. [15] Ihre Stieftochter versteht alles, vergibt ihr und und bittet Gott, sie zu trösten. Der Dorfrichter führt die Küsterin ab. [16] Jenůfa sagt Laca, er solle auch fortgehen, dass sie seiner nicht würdig sei, aber er liebt sie

noch immer und will sie nicht im Stich lassen. Freudig willigt sie ein, ihn zu heiraten.

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Übersetzung: Gery Bramall

Janice Watson studierte an der Guildhall School of Music and Drama und machte erstmals von sich reden, als sie mit dem Kathleen Ferrier Memorial Award ausgezeichnet wurde. Sie hat regelmäßig an der Welsh National Opera und der English National Opera gastiert. Wichtige Stationen waren Musetta an der Royal Opera Covent Garden, Pamina an der Pariser Opéra, Gräfin Almaviva, Vitellia an der Vlaamse Opera, Strauss' Daphne und Arabella sowie Elettra (*Idomeneo*) beim Santa Fe Festival, Daphne, Arabella und Eva (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*) an der San Francisco Opera, Pamina an der Bayerischen Staatsoper, Ellen Orford an der Royal Opera Covent Garden, der Wiener Staatsoper, der Nederlandse Opera und mit dem London Symphony Orchestra, Gräfin Almaviva in Lyon, München, an der Deutschen Staatsoper Berlin und am New National Theatre Tokio, Micaela an der Lyric Opera of Chicago und an der Metropolitan Opera sowie die Marschallin an der English National Opera.

Konzertiert hat sie mit dem Boston Symphony Orchestra unter der Leitung von Roger Norrington und André Previn, San Francisco Symphony Orchestra unter Michael Tilson-Thomas, London Symphony Orchestra unter Sir Colin Davis, André Previn und Riccardo Chailly, mit dem Orchestre de Paris und Frans Brüggen, der Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields und Sir Neville Marriner, dem London Philharmonic Orchestra und Bernard Haitink sowie dem Chicago Symphony Orchestra und dem Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra unter Riccardo Chailly.

Zu ihren vielen Schallplattenaufnahmen gehören Orffs *Carmina Burana*, Ellen Orford in der preisgekrönten Chandos-Einspielung von *Peter Grimes* unter der Leitung von Richard Hickox, Poulencs *Gloria* für Chandos, die *Missa Sabrinensis* von Howells unter Gennady Rozhdestvensky sowie Helena in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* unter Sir Colin Davis.

Dame Josephine Barstow ist eine singende Schauspielerin von höchstem Niveau. Glanzlichter ihrer erlauchten Karriere waren unter anderem Salome, Tosca, die Lady Macbeth von Verdi und von Schostakowitsch

sowie die verschiedensten Rollen in Opern von Komponisten wie Mozart, Beethoven, Verdi, Puccini, Richard Strauss und Janáček. 1986 bereiste sie die Sowjetunion und trat in Tbilisi, Riga und an der Bolshoi-Oper in Moskau auf. Sie sang die Hauptrolle in der Welturaufführung von Pendereckis *Die schwarze Maske* bei den Salzburger Sommerfestspielen; danach wurde sie von Karajan auch zur Mitwirkung in *Tosca* und *Un ballo in maschera* eingeladen. Man hat sie an die Pariser Opéra, Bayerische Staatsoper, English National Opera und Royal Opera Covent Garden verpflichtet. In den USA hat sie an der Metropolitan Opera New York, in San Francisco, Chicago und Houston gesungen. 1985 erhielt sie den britischen Verdienstorden CBE, und 1995 wurde sie als Dame of the British Empire in den Adelsstand erhoben.

Weitere Rollen waren die Titelpartie in *Salome* an der Nederlandse Opera und *Kostelnička* an der English National Opera, Opera North und Vlaamse Opera, Emilia Marty (*Die Sache Makropulos*) an der Welsh National Opera, Amelia (*Un ballo in maschera*) beim Hong Kong Festival, *Tosca* an der Opera North, Ellen Orford (*Peter Grimes*) an der Royal Opera Covent Garden und in Palermo

sowie Anna Maurant (*Street Scene*) am Teatro Nacional de Sao Carlos in Lissabon. Sie hat regelmäßig an der Opera North gesungen, darunter die Titelpartien in *Medea* und *Aida*, Alice Ford (*Falstaff*), Marie (*Wozzeck*) und Elizabeth I. in *Gloriana* (auch an der Royal Opera Covent Garden aufgeführt), und sie war Miss Wingrave in einer Fernsehproduktion von *Owen Wingrave* unter der Leitung von Kent Nagano.

Zu ihren jüngsten Aufnahmen gehören zwei Recitals, Marie (*Wozzeck*) für die Chandos-Serie "Opera in English", *Street Scene*, Beethovens Neunte, Brittens *Gloriana* unter der Leitung von Sir Charles Mackerras und Lady Billows in *Albert Herring*.

Peter Wedd studierte an der Guildhall School of Music and Drama bei William McAlpine und anschließend am National Opera Studio. Er war von 1999 bis 2001 erster Tenor an der Royal Opera Covent Garden und gastiert regelmäßig an der Welsh National Opera. Als erster Tenor an der Royal Opera sang er Ywain (*Gawain and the Green Knight*) und Kudrjás (*Katja Kabanowa*). An der Welsh National Opera ist er als Don José (*Carmen*), Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*), Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*) und Laca (*Jenůfa*) aufgetreten.

Weitere Verpflichtungen auf den britischen Inseln waren Federico (*L'Arlesiana*) und Pluto (*Orphée aux enfers*) mit der Opera Holland Park, Kyska (*Sarkatán*) und Julius (*I cavalieri di Ekebu*) beim Wexford Festival sowie Satyavan (*Savitri*) beim Aldeburgh Festival. Außerdem hatte er großen Erfolg als Rodolfo in einer Neuinszenierung von *La bohème* in der Royal Albert Hall London. Peter Wedd hat Tamino und Eisenstein (*Die Fledermaus*) mit der Europäischen Kammeroper sowie Lysander (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) am Lyric Theatre Singapur gesungen.

Als vielgefragter Konzertkünstler ist er u.a. mit dem London Philharmonic Orchestra und dem Royal Scottish National Orchestra, der City of London Sinfonia und der Northern Sinfonia sowie dem Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra aufgetreten. Peter Wedd hat bei Festspielen wie in Covent Garden und Edinburgh, Maribor (Slowenien) und Cernier (Schweiz) gesungen.

Für die Chandos-Serie "Opera in English" hat er *Turandot* und *The Flying Dutchman* aufgenommen.

Nigel Robson wurde in Argyleshire (Schottland) geboren und studierte bei Alexander Young und Gustave Sacher. Er gilt

als einer der vielseitigsten lyrischen Tenöre Großbritanniens; sein Opern- und Konzertrepertoire reicht von Monteverdi bis zu den Komponisten unserer Zeit, wobei seine Britten-Interpretationen besondere Anerkennung finden.

Er hat *Bajazet (Tamerlano)* in Drottningholm gesungen, die Titelpartie in *Peter Grimes* an der Nationale Reisopera der Niederlande, *Captain Vere (Billy Budd)* mit der Canadian Opera Company, Laca und *Captain Vere* an der Welsh National Opera, die Titelpartie in *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* in Lissabon und an der Opera North, die Titelpartie in *Idomeneo* an der Bayerischen Staatsoper, Male Chorus (*The Rape of Lucretia*) am Grand Théâtre de Tours, Pandarus (*Troilus and Cressida*) an der Opera North, The Madwoman (*Curlew River*) an der Opera Factory, Septimus (*Theodora*) in Glyndebourne und Golo in Schumanns *Genoveva* an der Garsington Opera. Sein Engagement für neue Musik fand Ausdruck in der niederländischen Welturaufführung und der britischen Erstaufführung von Guo Wenjings *Wolf Cub Village*, Alexander Goehrs *Kantan* und *Damask Drum*, der Welturaufführung von Make Ishis *Tojiraretta Fune* und John Lunn's *The Maids*.

Zu seinen Konzertauftritten gehörten Madernas *Venetian Journal*, Bachs *Johannespassion*, *Judas Maccabeus*, *Jephtha*, Brittens *Spring Symphony*, Strawinskys *Renard*, *Das Lied von der Erde*, Brittens *War Requiem*, Elgars *Dream of Gerontius* und *Die schöne Müllerin*.

Nigel Robsons Diskographie umfasst Händels *Tamerlano*, *Jephtha* und *Alexander's Feast*, Monteverdis *Orfeo*, *Il coronazione di Poppea* und *Marienesper*, Tippetts *Songs for Dov*, Mozarts *Idomeneo* sowie – für Chandos – Brittens *The Rape of Lucretia*, Waltons *Troilus and Cressida* und *Mass of Life* von Delius.

Elizabeth Vaughan wurde in Wales geboren und studierte an der Royal Academy of Music, wo sie mit allen wichtigen Auszeichnungen geehrt wurde, so etwa mit dem begehrten Kathleen Ferrier Memorial Stipendium. Sie gab ihr Operndebüt an der Welsh National Opera, wo sie als Abigaille (*Nabucco*) begeisterte. An der Royal Opera Covent Garden sang sie viele Rollen, darunter Cio-Cio San (*Madama Butterfly*), Violetta (*La traviata*), Leonore (*Il trovatore*), Abigaille (*Nabucco*), Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*), Gilda (*Rigoletto*), Euridice (*Orfeo*) und Teresa (*Benvenuto Cellini*).

Elizabeth Vaughan ist als Gastkünstlerin an die Welsh National Opera zurückgekehrt und hat dort viele Hauptrollen verkörpert, so etwa in *Manon Lescaut*, *La forza del destino*, *Madama Butterfly*, *La traviata*, *Andrea Chenier* und *The Doctor of Myddfai* von Peter Maxwell Davies. Häufiger Gast ist sie auch an der English National Opera, Opera North und Scottish Opera in Inszenierungen wie *Aida*, *Fidelio*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Tosca*, *Macbeth*, *La traviata*, *Il trittico* und als Auntie in *Peter Grimes*.

Seit 1990 singt sie als Mezzosopran und findet mit ihren Interpretationen höchste kritische Anerkennung, u.a. als Herodias (*Salome*) an der Scottish Opera und der Welsh National Opera (in Großbritannien und auf Japan-Tournee) sowie an der Opéra national de Paris-Bastille und in Südkorea. Weitere Höhepunkte waren Madame de Croissy (*Dialogues of the Carmelites*) an der English National Opera und der Welsh National Opera, Konzertaufführungen von *Hänsel und Gretel* mit dem City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra unter der Leitung von Mark Elder und Konzertaufführungen von *Salome* mit dem Philharmonia Orchestra in Athen. Ihre internationale Karriere hat sie an die Metropolitan Opera New York, nach

Wien, Paris, Hamburg, München, Prag, Marseilles, Athen, Montreal, Florenz, Pisa, Sydney und Südamerika geführt.

Zu ihren Schallplattenaufnahmen gehören Auszüge aus *Der Rosenkavalier* für die Chandos-Serie "Opera in English".

Neal Davies wurde in Newport (Wales) geboren und studierte am King's College London und an der Royal Academy of Music, die ihn 2003 zum Fellow ernannte. Am Internationalen Opernstudio Zürich setzte er mit Unterstützung von Dame Gwyneth Jones seine Studien fort. Er gastiert regelmäßig beim Edinburgh Festival und bei den BBC Proms.

Zu seinen Opernrollen gehören Rameaus *Platée* unter der Leitung von Nicholas McGegan, Händels *Giulio Cesare* unter Ivor Bolton und die Titelpartie in *Le nozze di Figaro*, alle an der Royal Opera Covent Garden, Händels *L'Allegro* an der English National Opera, Händels *Radamisto* an der Opéra de Marseille, Händels *Theodora* mit Les Arts Florissants und William Christie (Paris und Salzburg), Händels *Orlando* mit dem Gabrieli Consort, Leporello an der Scottish Opera und der Opéra de Quebec sowie Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*), Leporello und Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*) an der Welsh National Opera.

Seine Diskographie umfasst Brittens *A Midsummer Night's Dream* mit Sir Colin Davis, *Messiah*, *Theodora* und *Saul* mit Paul McCreech, Vivaldi-Kantaten und Händels *L'Allegro* mit Robert King und Lieder von Dutilleux mit Yan Pascal Tortelier für Chandos.

Alan Fairs studierte privat bei Audrey Langford und Robert Dean. Er gastiert regelmäßig an der Welsh National Opera, wo er Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*), Swallow (*Peter Grimes*), Basilio (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Bonze (*Madama Butterfly*), Dikoj (*Katja Kabanowa*) und gerade erst Bartolo (*Le nozze di Figaro*) gesungen hat.

Auch andernorts hat er viele wichtige Rollen verkörpert, u.a. Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*), Don Pasquale, Osmin (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), Sarastro (*Die Zauberflöte*), Leporello (*Don Giovanni*), Gremin (*Eugen Onegin*), Oroveso (*Norma*), Geronimo (*Il matrimonio segreto*), Falstaff (*Falstaff* und *The Merry Wives of Windsor*) sowie Alberich (*Das Rheingold*).

Charlotte Ellett wurde in Süd-Wales geboren und studierte zunächst am Royal Northern College Music und dann am National Opera

Studio, wo sie durch den Wood/Peters Award in Verbindung mit Glyndebourne, die Peter Moores Foundation, den Sybil Tutton Award und den Countess of Munster Award unterstützt wurde. Sie setzte ihre Studien bei Enid Hartle fort und wird seit Januar 2004 durch das Gastkünstlerprogramm der Welsh National Opera gefördert.

Sie hat Despina (*Così fan tutte*) bei den Festspielen von Aix-en-Provence und mit der Pimlico Opera gesungen, Frasquita (*Carmen*) mit der Glyndebourne Touring Opera sowie Karolka, Susanna und Barbarina an der Welsh National Opera.

Marion McCullough wurde in Bloxwich geboren und studierte bei Constance Shacklock. Zu ihren Rollen an der Welsh National Opera gehören Flosshilde (*Das Rheingold*), Alisa (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Annina und Flora (*La traviata*) sowie Hänsel (*Hänsel und Gretel*).

Claire Hampton wurde in Staffordshire geboren und studierte am Royal Northern College of Music bei Teresa Cahill. Mit einem Stipendium der Peter Moores Foundation konnte sie ihr Anschlussstudium fortsetzen und ihre Sprach- und Opernausbildung erweitern. Sie hat Dorinda (*Orlando*) und

Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*) für die Floral Opera gesungen und gehört dem Chorus of Welsh National Opera an.

Rosie Hay wurde in Stoke-on-Trent geboren und studierte am City of Leeds College of Music. Sie trat 1992 dem Chorus of Welsh National Opera bei und hat eine Reihe kleinerer Rollen an der Welsh National Opera gesungen. Außerdem ist sie als Cio-Cio-San an der Opera Lyrica, Stowe Opera und Welsh National Opera sowie als Hanna Glawari (*Die lustige Witwe*) am Theatre Royal York aufgetreten.

Née en Irlande, **Imelda Drumm** a étudié le chant avec Anne Marie O'Sullivan et Veronica Dunne. Elle a complété ses études vocales au National Opera Studio de Londres grâce au soutien du Glyndebourne Opera.

Les rôles de son répertoire incluent Kate Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*), Hansel (*Hänsel und Gretel*), Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), le rôle titre dans Carmen, Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Béatrice (*Béatrice et Bénédict*) au Welsh National Opera; Dorabella et Cherubino au Festival de Glyndebourne; Cherubino, Isolier (*Le Comte Ory*) avec le Glyndebourne Touring Opera; le rôle titre

dans *La Cenerentola* avec l'English Touring Opera; et *Carmen* dans la production de Raymond Gubbay donnée au Royal Albert Hall de Londres.

Sarah Pope wurde in Leicester geboren und studierte an der Guildhall School of Music und am Royal Northern College of Music. Sie trat 1992 der Welsh National Opera bei und hat dort eine Reihe kleinerer Rollen gesungen. Sie war die erste Kabanicha in der WNO MAX Produktion.

Das **Orchester der Welsh National Opera** wurde 1970 gegründet. Seitdem hat es sich zu einem der besten Orchester Großbritanniens entwickelt, das für seine herausragende Leistung in einem breiten Opernrepertoire ebenso berühmt ist wie für seine Konzertauftritte und Schallplattenaufnahmen.

Unter der musikalischen Leitung von Richard Armstrong (1973 bis 1986) baute das Orchester ein vielseitiges Opernrepertoire auf. Auf diese Zeit geht auch die Zusammenarbeit mit Reginald Goodall zurück. 1987 übernahm Sir Charles Mackerras die musikalische Leitung, und das Orchester widmete sich verstärkt der Studioarbeit. Zuvor hatte man bereits unter der Leitung von Richard

Bonyngé mehrere Operngesamtaufnahmen mit Joan Sutherland, Montserrat Caballé, Pavarotti und anderen weltberühmten Sängern eingespielt. Mit Mackerras nahm das Orchester Janáčeks *Osud* (CHAN 3019) auf. Seit 1992 liegt die musikalische Leitung bei Carlo Rizzi. 1995 wurde das Orchester der Welsh National Opera in der Kategorie Großes Ensemble mit dem Musikpreis der Royal Philharmonic Society ausgezeichnet.

Der **Chorus of Welsh National Opera** begann 1968 als Berufsensemble und arbeitete bis 1973 mit dem berühmten Voluntary Chorus der WNO zusammen, bis dieser aufgelöst wurde. Der Voluntary Chorus bestand aus Laiensängern, die 1943 zusammengefunden hatten und den Kern der späteren Welsh National Opera bildeten. Ende der sechziger Jahre war abzusehen, dass die WNO den Schritt zum professionellen Ensemble tun würde, und der Voluntary Chorus wurde vom Chorus of Welsh National Opera abgelöst. Der Ruf des Chores wuchs schnell, und seine Opern- und Konzerttätigkeit hat breite Anerkennung gefunden, nicht nur im traditionellen Repertoire wie Verdi, sondern auch mit Werken des 20. Jahrhunderts, wie Tippett's *A Midsummer Marriage* und Janáčeks *Aus einem Totenhaus*.

Der Chor hat zahlreiche Opern aufgenommen, darunter *Andrea Chenier*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Parsifal*, *I Masnadieri*, *Norma*, *Hamlet*, *Ernani*, *Anna Bolena*, *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Tosca*, *Rigoletto*, *Faust* und *Un ballo in maschera*, aber auch Gilbert-und-Sullivan-Operetten wie *The Mikado*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *The Yeomen of the Guard* und *Trial by Jury*, Brittens *Gloriana* sowie Janáčeks *Osud* mit Mackerras. Zu seinen Konzertaufnahmen gehören *Sea Drift* von Delius, *The Vigil of Venus* von George Lloyd und *Hiawatha* von Coleridge-Taylor. Auslandsreisen haben den Chor nach Paris, Tokio, New York, Mailand, Wiesbaden, Lissabon, Oporto, Berlin und Leipzig geführt.

Sir Charles Mackerras studierte am Konservatorium in Sydney und kam 1947 nach England. Von der Kulturorganisation British Council erhielt er ein Stipendium zur Erweiterung seines Studiums an der Musikakademie Prag. In jenem Jahr begann seine Leidenschaft für die Musik Janáčeks, als er *Katja Kabanowa* unter der Leitung des großen Václav Talich hörte.

Als Assistent Conductor am Londoner Opernhaus Sadler's Wells dirigierte er 1951 die erste Aufführung von *Katja Kabanowa* in

der englischsprachigen Welt und brachte später auch *Die Sache Makropulos* und *Aus einem Totenhaus* nach Sadler's Wells. Hoherfolgreiche Inszenierungen von Janáčeks Opern sowie vertrautere Werke aus dem Standardrepertoire leitete er auch während seiner Zeit als Musikdirektor der English National Opera (1970–77) und der Welsh National Opera (1987–1992). In ganz Europa, den USA und Australien gilt er als Wegbereiter der Musik Janáčeks. *Jenífa* ist ihm besonders ans Herz gewachsen.

Name verbindet sich seit langem mit der Tschechischen Philharmonie, mit der er die meisten Orchesterwerke Janáčeks, *Katja Kabanowa* und Dvořáks *Rusalka* aufgenommen hat. Seine umfangreiche Diskographie enthält einen preisgekrönten Zyklus von Janáček-Opern mit den Wiener Philharmonikern aus den frühen achtziger Jahren. Für Chandos hat er Janáčeks *Glagolitische Messe* in der Originalfassung, Kodálys *Psalmus Hungaricus* und Dvořáks Cellokonzert eingespielt. Für die Chandos-Serie "Opera in English" hat er *Osud*, *La traviata*, *Werther*, *Julius Caesar* und *Mary Stuart* aufgenommen.

Sir Charles hat auch die Musik des 18. Jahrhunderts erforscht, insbesondere Händel

und Mozart. Er hat eine Reihe von Mozart-Opern und Gilbert-und-Sullivan-Operetten sowie Gesamtaufnahmen der Sinfonien von Mozart, Beethoven und Brahms, mehrere Oratorien von Händel sowie Sinfonien von Mahler und Elgar vorgelegt. Derzeit ist er Hauptgastdirigent des Philharmonia Orchestra, Conductor Laureate des Scottish Chamber Orchestra sowie Conductor

Emeritus der Welsh National Opera und der San Francisco Opera.

Sir Charles wurde 1974 mit dem britischen Verdienstorden CBE ausgezeichnet, 1979 zum Ritter geschlagen, 1996 mit der Ehrenmedaille der Tschechischen Republik gewürdigt und 1997 zum Companion of the Order of Australia ernannt. 2003 erhob ihn Königin Elizabeth II. zum Companion of Honour.

Jenůfa, sa belle-fille

Si vous cherchez dans tout le répertoire des théâtres lyriques tchèques un opéra intitulé *Jenůfa*, ce sera peine perdue. Dans sa patrie, le premier chef d'œuvre lyrique de Janáček est toujours mentionné sous le titre du magistral mélodrame de Gabriela Preissová dont il est tiré: *Její Pastorkyňa, Sa belle-fille*. Ces trois mots constituent un indice important sur la puissance durable de l'œuvre. *Jenůfa* n'est pas le drame d'une seule héroïne, mais la tragédie de deux femmes, entremêlées dans les conséquences de leurs propres émotions, aussi sûrement que Roméo et Juliette ou Antoine et Cléopâtre. Jenůfa, la jeune et belle paysanne, vaniteuse et impulsive, et la Kostelníčka, sa belle-mère sévère et énergique, empruntent deux voies parallèles dans la souffrance; pour l'une, c'est celle du désespoir au bord de la folie, pour l'autre celle de la réconciliation discrète. Si la maturité croissante de Jenůfa couronne la fin de l'opéra, c'est la décision déchirante et meurtrière de Kostelníčka au deuxième acte qui nous reste longtemps en mémoire lorsque le rideau est retombé.

Preissová joua un petit rôle, mais un rôle important dans le développement de la

littérature tchèque. Ses nouvelles et ses drames de la vie des villages de Moravie furent parmi les premières œuvres au langage réaliste du "théâtre naturaliste" et *Sa Belle-fille* causa un certain scandale lorsque l'œuvre fut représentée pour la première fois en 1890. Le public s'enthousiasma pour l'effroyable histoire de la jeune villageoise dont l'enfant illégitime est assassiné par sa belle-mère pour protéger son honneur et ses perspectives de mariage. Le dilemme auquel est confronté Jenůfa peut nous paraître très loin de nous aujourd'hui, mais, à la fin du XIXe siècle, dans la campagne morave, il n'était que douloureux et trop familier. Dans une communauté villageoise, il était courant de concevoir un enfant hors des liens du mariage, pourvu que le couple ait contracté des fiançailles officielles, mais donner naissance à un enfant avant le mariage laissait de cruels stigmates sociaux. L'ironie tragique de la pièce repose sur le fait que le père du bébé de Jenůfa échappe à la conscription militaire, ce qui devrait lui permettre de l'épouser, mais c'est Kostelníčka qui l'en empêche car elle désapprouve son mode de vie et son ivrognerie. Il n'est guère

étonnant que l'auditoire se soit si facilement identifié à ce drame.

Pourtant, la condamnation de la critique fut unanime, car elle y voyait un aspect de la vie scabreux et tout à fait inapproprié à la scène du Théâtre national. Ce qui captiva l'imagination de Janáček ce n'est pas la narration épouvantable, mais la complexité émotionnelle des personnages de Preissová. Il s'enthousiasma en particulier pour le dilemme de la Kostelníčka (ce mot veut dire marguillier ou sacristine), un pilier de la communauté confrontée à la honte personnelle. Dans une scène cruciale de la pièce, elle parle de celui qui fut autrefois son mari, un vaurien alcoolique du nom de Tomáš Buryja. Elle craint que l'amant de Jenůfa, Števa, le neveu de Buryja, a des traits héréditaires désagréables. Cet imbroglio de sentiments contradictoires – instinct de protection, culpabilité, pitié et peur – est au cœur de la pièce et constitue le noyau central de l'opéra de Janáček.

Janáček fut tout d'abord attiré par l'écriture de Preissová alors qu'il n'était encore qu'un obscur chef de chœur et professeur dans un village tranquille de l'Empire Austro-Hongrois. Comme bon nombre de ses contemporains en Europe centrale, il était fasciné par la culture

vernaculaire et les histoires de la vie rurale morave de Preissová trouvèrent un écho chez un compositeur profondément absorbé par la collecte et l'arrangement de musique traditionnelle de son pays natal. Ce qui est remarquable à propos de *Jenůfa*, c'est la façon magistrale dont une personne si peu expérimentée en matière théâtrale transforma une histoire captivante mais assez conventionnelle de naissance illégitime et de châtement social en un psychodrame déchirant. Il n'y a rien en commun avec ce que l'on trouve dans les deux premières tentatives lyriques de Janáček. *Šárka* est une épopée folklorique standard, une pâle imitation de Smetana. *Le Début d'une romance* – également tiré d'une pièce de Preissová – est intéressant dans son utilisation de la mélodie traditionnelle, mais maladroit dans sa construction. Janáček lui-même n'était que trop conscient de ses points faibles et il retira par la suite cette œuvre. *Jenůfa* se situe à un niveau totalement différent.

Janáček a connu un développement tardif et il avait déjà plus de quarante ans lorsqu'il commença à travailler à cet opéra. La composition du premier acte fut un combat pour lui et il le mit de côté pendant huit ans avant de s'aventurer un peu plus loin. On y

trouve encore des traces de l'opéra romantique traditionnel dans les premières scènes. La mélodie traditionnelle que chantent en tapant des pieds les villageois et les recrues qui accompagnent Števa, complètement ivre, pourrait très bien être prise pour une Danse slave de Dvořák. Néanmoins, on peut percevoir la spécificité de l'univers musical de Janáček dès les premières mesures de l'ouvrage. En surface, l'*ostinato* de xylophone obsédant dépeint la roue du moulin qui tourne inexorablement, mais, si on considère les choses plus en profondeur, il dépeint l'état d'esprit de Jenůfa et les désastres qui l'attendent. Ce battement percussif incessant revient quatre fois; en premier lieu, lorsque Jenůfa craint la malchance si son romarin meurt, puis lorsqu'elle ressasse sa grossesse non désirée après le bannissement de Števa. On l'entend une troisième fois lorsque Jenůfa a peur que Števa l'abandonne pour une autre et il revient enfin juste avant que Laca ne lui entaille la figure sous l'emprise de la jalousie. Il constitue l'échafaudage musical sur lequel est construit le premier acte. L'action dramatique est façonnée avec une égale assurance. Alors que l'intrigue originale de Preissová pourrait très bien s'insérer dans un "soap opera", le livret de Janáček décortique la narration et, ce

faisant, met en lumière les terminaisons nerveuses des quatre principaux personnages.

Lorsque le rideau se lève au deuxième acte, de huit ans postérieur au premier, il ne fait aucun doute que nous sommes en présence d'un maître de l'art dramatique. Les notes initiales – un brusque accord *fortissimo* et un *tremolo* frissonnant des cordes – nous plongent dans la claustrophobie de la petite maison de la Kostelnička. Les *staccatos* violents des cordes qui suivent tranchent dans la mélodie principale comme un scalpel. Un compositeur moins assuré aurait pu être tenté de recréer une atmosphère de morosité permanente d'un bout à l'autre de l'acte. Toutefois, de temps à autre, la souffrance liée à la situation difficile des deux femmes s'efface derrière une tendresse ambivalente. Lorsque la Kostelnička dit à Jenůfa qu'il vaudrait mieux que Dieu emmène l'enfant, un thème caressant du violoncelle la contredit. Lorsqu'elle donne à Jenůfa le soporifique, un air noble aux harpes et aux bois évoque comme par magie l'autre avenir dont elle a rêvé pour Jenůfa avant que la grossesse non désirée de la jeune fille ne vienne assombrir leurs vies.

En contraste avec la bousculade bucolique du premier acte, l'acte II ne fait appel qu'aux quatre principaux personnages. Il y a également un cinquième personnage, que l'on

entend sans le voir – l'enfant endormi, évoqué dans les tendres fragments de la mélodie traditionnelle à laquelle il est identifié et qui émerge constamment de l'obscurité harmonique. D'un bout à l'autre de l'acte, la partition évoque la corde du destin qui se resserre autour du cou de la Kostelnička. C'est une corde qu'elle s'est elle-même tissée. Ignorant l'état de sa belle-fille, elle a banni Števa en raison de son comportement vulgaire et irresponsable. Maintenant, elle doit se mettre à genoux et le supplier d'épouser Jenůfa, et après cet échec, en désespoir de cause, elle doit se tourner vers Laca. Pour dépeindre le piège qui se referme sur la Kostelnička, Janáček revient à son procédé musical favori, l'*ostinato*, une sorte d'obsession qui se reproduit avec insistance au sein de l'orchestre. Lorsque Jenůfa est couchée, son monologue est étayé par des répétitions anxieuses aux cordes, aux cors et à la harpe. La même combinaison instrumentale sur un rythme analogue revient lorsque Jenůfa pousse des cris dans son sommeil drogué et on l'entend une fois encore en rythme ternaire lorsque Laca arrive en réponse à l'appel de la Kostelnička.

On a l'impression que Janáček a construit une prison musicale, dont la seule issue est la porte par laquelle se précipite la Kostelnička, lorsqu'elle emporte le bébé encore endormi

pour le noyer dans le chenal. Le monologue qui précède le meurtre est l'une des pages les plus remarquables du compositeur, du début torturé sur des harmonies glaciales aux cordes à la conclusion désespérée, où les harpes et les cors omniprésents sont rejoints par les cris *fortissimo* des trompettes. Une fois encore, Janáček refuse de prendre le chemin le plus évident. Les phrases qui accompagnent l'appel à Dieu de la Kostelnička possèdent une noblesse craintive et, après son départ, Janáček entremêle terreur et tendresse dans un tissu ambivalent, avec un solo attendri de violon qui émerge d'une discordance orchestrale cruciale. L'air de Jenůfa, lorsqu'elle s'éveille de son sommeil narcotique et se rend compte de l'absence de son bébé, est construit à une échelle encore plus massive; on y trouve du matériel musical de scènes antérieures et l'air parvient à un sommet effrayant lorsque la Kostelnička revient et frappe à la fenêtre. Grâce à l'expérience récemment acquise par Janáček pour façonner d'énormes séquences dramatiques, il conduit le drame jusqu'à la fin de l'acte et la terreur coupable de la Kostelnička est clairement perceptible lorsque les timbales reprennent le motif de ses coups à la fenêtre et le transforment en un roulement accablant.

L'intensité émotionnelle de cet acte évoque les opéras de la maturité de Puccini et il est fascinant de penser que le Toscan et le Morave ont travaillé simultanément à des drames centrés sur des jeunes femmes abandonnées par le père de leur nouveau-né. Toutefois, ce qui sépare *Jenůfa* et *Madama Butterfly*, c'est l'absence totale de sentimentalisme de Janáček. Dans le dernier acte, il revient aux mélodies traditionnelles qui dominent l'acte I, mais la présence menaçante de la personne brisée de la Kostelnička, sur scène comme dans les harmonies torturées de l'orchestre, sert constamment à empoisonner l'atmosphère. Le petit air guilleret qui ouvre l'acte est étayé par un autre *ostinato*, comme si le destin était en train de pousser les jeunes mariés à la catastrophe. Au fur et à mesure du déroulement de l'acte, le conflit entre les airs traditionnels rassurants et les harmonies sombres de Jenůfa reflète le contraste entre les couleurs vives des habits traditionnels des villageois et le noir de la tenue de deuil de l'héroïne. Lorsque le jeune garçon Jano surgit pour annoncer qu'un minuscule cadavre gelé a été découvert sous la glace, c'est un choc, mais pas une surprise.

L'objectivité de Janáček persiste jusqu'à la fin. Après la confession de la Kostelnička et le

pardon que lui accorde sa belle-fille, la musique acquiert une chaleur stoïque alors que les deux jeunes gens envisagent ensemble leur avenir et les épreuves qu'ils doivent encore traverser. Néanmoins, ce n'est pas une apothéose facile. Comment pourrait-il en être autrement, lorsque leur relation a été forgée dans une telle douleur? Un siècle plus tard, les solutions romantiques désinvoltes suscitent notre méfiance, mais pour les contemporains de Janáček, la conclusion sévère et la musique qui l'exprime se sont avérées trop lourdes à supporter. Bien que sa ville natale de Brno ait fait un accueil chaleureux à *Jenůfa*, il fallut attendre douze ans et beaucoup de tractations de coulisse avant que l'ouvrage ne soit représenté à Prague. Et même alors, Janáček dut accepter des coupures et la réorchestration de certains passages pour adoucir l'impact violent de l'original. Le fait que le compositeur ait critiqué le directeur de l'Opéra de Prague, Karel Kovařovic, lorsqu'il était étudiant, n'a pas joué en sa faveur. Son opposition fut encore accentuée par la mauvaise opinion qu'avait traditionnellement la Prague cosmopolite de la ville provinciale de Brno.

La partition altérée par Kovařovic domina la scène tchécoslovaque pendant près d'un siècle. Ce n'est qu'en 2004, pour le centenaire de cet

opéra, que Brno put à nouveau entendre la musique comme le voulait le compositeur, grâce à l'acharnement inspiré du chef d'orchestre de cet enregistrement, Sir Charles Mackerras. C'est seulement en entendant l'ouvrage, sans coupures, sans bois supplémentaires et sans l'adoucissement des contours austères de Janáček, sans les cors héroïques substitués aux trombones saisissants de la scène finale, que l'on peut vraiment apprécier la véritable authenticité de son premier drame musical entièrement achevé. La composition de *Jenůfa* coïncida avec les années les plus déchirantes de la vie de Janáček – des années durant lesquelles son mariage finit par se désintégrer et où il perdit sa fille de la fièvre typhoïde. Ce fut le produit d'un combat personnel et artistique, comme il le remarque dans son autobiographie :

J'entourerai ma partition de Jenůfa de rubans noirs: maladie, souffrance et gémissements de ma fille Olga et du petit Vladimir.

Alors qu'elle était sur le point de mourir, Olga demanda à son père de lui jouer toute la partition de *Jenůfa*. À la toute dernière extrémité, Janáček fit des esquisses musicales de ses dernières paroles épuisées. Cela semble étrange, presque cruel, mais d'un bout à l'autre de cette œuvre la musique lui a fourni une

distance objective qu'il était incapable d'avoir dans sa vie. Le fait qu'il ait pu transformer une telle douleur en une œuvre d'art durable fait de Janáček l'un des géants lyriques du monde.

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Traduction: Marie-Stella Pâris

Contexte

L'action se déroule à la fin du XIXe siècle. Veborany, village de montagne en Moravie, est une petite communauté rurale très unie. La scierie locale appartient à la famille Buryja et ce sont les relations complexes au sein de ce groupe qui sont à la racine du drame.

Arbre généalogique

Grand-mère et Grand-père Buryja eurent deux fils, le "meunier" Buryja, l'aîné et l'héritier, et Tomáš Buryja. Le meunier Buryja épousa une certaine veuve Klemeň, et eut ainsi un jeune beau-fils, Laca Klemeň. Le couple eut ensuite son propre fils, Števa, auquel le moulin et la fortune de la famille furent laissés à la mort des parents. C'est un beau jeune homme blond, mais un gros buveur aux mœurs légères. Son demi-frère, Laca Klemeň, sombre et sensible, se sent ignoré et négligé par toute la famille Buryja.

Le jeune frère du meunier, Tomáš, est maintenant mort lui aussi. Il fut marié à deux reprises. De sa première femme, il eut une fille Jenůfa Buryakova. Une fois veuf, il épousa en secondes noces Kostelnička, ou la Sacristine. Ce mariage ne fut pas heureux, car Tomáš se révéla violent et coléreux, dépensier et buveur. Néanmoins, d'une certaine façon, Jenůfa et la Kostelnička s'aiment bien. Jenůfa l'appelle toujours Mamičko, ou Maman, et la Kostelnička, une femme qui craint Dieu, mais qui est dotée d'un caractère dominateur, est très fière de sa belle-fille.

COMPACT DISC ONE

Acte I

Le moulin des Buryja

Le crépuscule à la fin du mois d'août

1 Grand-mère Buryja et Laca sont tous deux en train de travailler. Jenůfa attend avec impatience le retour de Števa convoqué par la commission de conscription. S'il est recruté, il ne pourra pas l'épouser avant un bon moment et sa grossesse sera découverte. La seule personne au courant, c'est Števa lui-même, le futur père. Et si la vérité éclate au grand jour, selon les principes de l'époque, Jenůfa sera vouée à la mort par lapidation et à la damnation éternelle.

Laca, qui aime Jenůfa depuis son enfance, l'observe jalousement, torturé par les sentiments qu'elle éprouve pour Števa.

Un berger, Jano, remercie Jenůfa de lui apprendre à lire. 2 – 3 Le contremaître du moulin vient annoncer que, finalement, Števa n'a pas été enrôlé.

4 Števa revient complètement ivre, accompagné d'une fanfare et de ceux qui ont été recrutés. 5 Ils dansent et chantent avec les employés du moulin, mais leurs réjouissances sont interrompues par la Kostelnička, qui voit en Števa un mari mal approprié pour sa chère belle-fille, aussi dépensier et violent que son propre mari, l'oncle de Jenůfa. Ignorant que celle-ci est enceinte, la Kostelnička refuse de consentir à leur mariage à moins qu'ils ne le repoussent d'un an; au cours de cette année d'attente, Števa devra renoncer à la boisson.

6 Laissés seuls, Števa se vante auprès de Jenůfa de ce que toutes les jeunes filles flirtent avec lui, mais elle lui répond de façon possessive qu'il lui appartient. 7 Après le départ de Števa, Laca provoque jalousement Jenůfa en lui disant que Števa l'aime uniquement pour son joli minois et ses joues roses. Il jette un coup d'œil au couteau avec lequel il est en train de travailler. "Pense à quel point ce couteau pourrait facilement abîmer

tes joues." Il cherche à l'embrasser, ils se battent et il lui coupe "accidentellement" la joue avec son couteau.

Acte II

La maison de la Kostelnička près de la rivière.

Cinq mois plus tard

Le soir, à la fin du mois de janvier

8 – 9 Vingt semaines se sont écoulées depuis que Jenůfa a finalement annoncé sa grossesse à sa belle-mère. Pour échapper toutes deux à la disgrâce, la Kostelnička a cachée sa belle-fille dans la chambre du fond de la maison et elle dit à tout le monde que Jenůfa est partie chercher du travail à Vienne. Son bébé, un garçon, est né il y a huit jours. Elle lui a donné le nom de Števa et la Kostelnička l'a baptisé.

10 La Kostelnička rappelle encore à Jenůfa sa culpabilité et son déshonneur et lui dit qu'elle devrait prier Dieu de lui enlever son enfant. Jenůfa est profondément perturbée et ne se sent pas très bien. La Kostelnička lui propose un somnifère et Jenůfa se retire pour la nuit.

Pendant les cinq derniers mois, la Kostelnička a prié pour que Jenůfa fasse une fausse couche, mais comme le bébé se porte bien, elle pense maintenant qu'elle doit supplier Števa d'épouser Jenůfa. Elle lui a donc

envoyé un message pour qu'il vienne ce soir-là.

11 Lorsqu'il arrive, elle lui reproche de n'avoir jamais demandé de nouvelles du bébé. Il répond qu'il est désolé et propose de donner de l'argent pour faire vivre l'enfant, à condition qu'il n'ait pas à admettre qu'il en est le père. Mais elle lui demande d'épouser Jenůfa et de prendre le bébé, afin d'effacer la honte du nom de Jenůfa et de son propre nom. Števa fond en larmes et lui réplique que, ces derniers temps, Jenůfa a changé, qu'elle n'est plus une personne douce mais une femme sérieuse et exigeante, qui ressemble à la Kostelnička. Sa beauté a été anéantie par la balafre qu'elle a sur la joue. Il ne l'aime plus et s'est maintenant engagé à épouser la fille du maire, Karolka. Jenůfa crie dans son sommeil et Števa se précipite hors de la maison.

12 Laca, qui est venu régulièrement au cours des derniers mois, voit Števa s'en aller et appelle pour savoir si cette visite signifie que Jenůfa est de retour de Vienne et si elle va épouser Števa. Lui-même veut toujours l'épouser, encouragé par Kostelnička. Celle-ci lui dit toute la vérité: Jenůfa est restée cachée dans la maison et vient d'avoir un bébé de Števa. Laca est sidéré. Kostelnička s'attend-elle à ce qu'il prenne le bébé de Števa? Elle lui ment et lui dit que le bébé est mort.

COMPACT DISC TWO

[1] Restée seule, la Kostelnička tente comme une folle de prendre une décision. Elle ne peut éloigner le bébé – il sera toujours source de honte et de déshonneur. Elle “l’enverra à Dieu”, le mettra sous la glace dans la rivière. Le corps sera emporté à la fonte des glaces. Sa réputation et celle de Jenůfa ne seront pas entachées. Elle prend le bébé et se précipite dehors dans la nuit, en refermant la porte à clé derrière elle.

[2] Jenůfa se réveille, encore légèrement sous l’effet du somnifère. Elle est tout d’abord hystérique tant elle est inquiète de ne trouver ni sa Mamičko ni son bébé, puis elle suppose joyeusement qu’on l’a emmené au moulin pour le présenter. Elle prie pour son enfant. [3] La Kostelnička revient – ses mains sont gelées et elle ne peut ouvrir la porte. Elle frappe à la fenêtre, lance la clé à l’intérieur et Jenůfa la fait entrer. La Kostelnička dit à Jenůfa qu’elle a été malade et fiévreuse pendant deux jours et que le bébé est mort. Jenůfa pleure calmement et demande si Števa s’est manifesté. La Kostelnička lui raconte sa visite, son désintérêt pour Jenůfa elle-même et pour le bébé; elle lui annonce son prochain mariage avec Karolka. Elle recommande à

Jenůfa de lui préférer Laca, qui est au courant de l’existence du bébé et de sa mort et qui lui a pardonné. [4] Laca revient et lui demande de l’épouser; elle accepte – la Kostelnička les bénit, mais devient hystérique lorsque la fenêtre s’ouvre soudain sous la poussée du vent.

Acte III

*La maison de la Kostelnička**Un matin*

[5] – [9] C’est le jour des noces de Jenůfa et la Kostelnička est toujours bouleversée. Apparemment, elle a été malade et souffre d’attaques de terreur et de crises de délire. Jenůfa et Laca ont invité Števa, sa fiancée Karolka et ses parents, le maire et sa femme. Les noces seront très simples ce qui déçoit Karolka et sa mère. [10] Sans avoir été invités, certains employés du moulin arrivent et chantent, souhaitant du bonheur à Jenůfa. [11] – [13] Alors que la Kostelnička est sur le point de bénir le couple, on entend des cris. En découpant la glace sur la rivière, des ouvriers de la brasserie ont découvert un bébé mort, gelé dans la glace. Jenůfa reconnaît ses vêtements, réalise qu’il s’agit du petit Števa et fond en larmes. [14] La foule rassemblée menace de la lapider pour le meurtre de son enfant, mais Laca l’en empêche en bondissant pour la défendre.

Tous sont réduits au silence par la Kostelnička, qui avoue sa propre culpabilité, dissipant ainsi les soupçons qui pèsent sur Jenůfa. Karolka comprend que Števa était le père et refuse de l’épouser. Laca se reproche ce qu’il a fait à Jenůfa. La Kostelnička complète sa confession en avouant qu’elle se rend compte maintenant qu’elle a davantage pensé à son propre honneur et à son propre nom qu’à ceux de Jenůfa. Elle implore le pardon de sa belle-fille. [15] Jenůfa comprend, lui pardonne et demande à Dieu de la consoler. Le maire emmène la Kostelnička pour qu’elle soit jugée. [16] Jenůfa demande à Laca de partir également, car elle n’est pas digne de lui, mais il lui répond qu’il l’aime encore et veut rester auprès d’elle. Elle accepte avec joie.

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Traduction: Marie-Stella Pâris

Janice Watson étudia à la Guildhall School of Music and Drama de Londres, et attira l’attention du public en remportant le Kathleen Ferrier Memorial Award. Elle est régulièrement invitée à se produire au Welsh National Opera et à l’English National Opera. Elle a chanté le rôle de Musetta au Royal Opera de Covent Garden; Pamina à l’Opéra

de Paris; la Comtesse Almaviva; Vitellia à l’Opéra des Flandres; Daphne et Arabella de Richard Strauss et Elettra (*Idomeneo*) au Festival de Santa Fe; Daphne, Arabella et Eva (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*) à l’Opéra de San Francisco; Pamina au Bayerische Staatsoper de Munich; Ellen Orford au Royal Opera de Covent Garden, au Wiener Staatsoper, à l’Opéra de Hollande et avec le London Symphony Orchestra; la Comtesse Almaviva à Lyon, Munich, au Deutsche Staatsoper de Berlin et au Nouveau Théâtre National de Tokyo; Micaela au Lyric Opera de Chicago et au Metropolitan Opera de New York, et la Maréchale (*Der Rosenkavalier*) à l’English National Opera.

En concert, Janice Watson s’est produite avec le Boston Symphony Orchestra sous la direction de Roger Norrington et d’André Previn, le San Francisco Symphony Orchestra sous la direction de Michael Tilson-Thomas, le London Symphony Orchestra sous la direction de Sir Colin Davis, André Previn et Riccardo Chailly, l’Orchestre de Paris sous la direction de Frans Brüggen, l’Academy of St Martin in the Fields sous la direction de Sir Neville Marriner, le London Philharmonic Orchestra sous la direction de Bernard Haitink, avec le Chicago Symphony Orchestra et l’Orchestre

royal du Concertgebouw sous la direction de Riccardo Chailly.

La vaste discographie de Janice Watson inclut *Carmina Burana* de Carl Orff, Ellen Orford dans l'enregistrement primé de Chandos de *Peter Grimes* sous la direction de Richard Hickox, le *Gloria* de Poulenc pour Chandos, la *Missa Sabrinensis* de Herbert Howells sous la direction de Gennady Rozhdestvensky, et Helena (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) sous la direction de Sir Colin Davis.

Dame Josephine Barstow est reconnue comme une actrice-chanteuse du plus haut niveau. Sa carrière distinguée a compté des prestations acclamées de Salome, Tosca, Lady Macbeth (Verdi et Chostakovitch), et d'une immense diversité de rôles allant de Mozart à Janáček en passant par Beethoven, Verdi, Puccini et Richard Strauss. En 1986, elle effectua une tournée en URSS, se produisant à Tbilissi, Riga et au Théâtre du Bolchoï à Moscou. Elle créa la protagoniste dans la première mondiale de *Die schwarze Maske* au Festival de Salzbourg où Karajan le réinvita pour chanter Tosca et dans *Un ballo in maschera*. Elle s'est produite à l'Opéra de Paris, au Bayerische Staatsoper de Munich, à l'English National Opera et au Royal Opera de Covent Garden. Aux États-

Unis, elle a chanté au Metropolitan Opera de New York et à San Francisco, Chicago et Houston. Elle a été nommée commandeur de l'empire britannique (CBE) en 1985 et Dame of the British Empire en 1995.

Parmi les autres engagements de Josephine Barstow, on citera le rôle titre dans Salome à l'Opéra de Hollande et le rôle de Kostelnička (*Jenůfa*) à l'English National Opera, à l'Opera North et à l'Opéra des Flandres; Emilia Marty (*L'Affaire Makropoulos*) au Welsh National Opera; Amelia (*Un ballo in maschera*) au Festival de Hong Kong; Tosca à l'Opera North; Ellen Orford (*Peter Grimes*) au Royal Opera de Covent Garden et à Parlerme, Anna Murrant (*Street Scene*) au Teatro Nacional de Sao Carlos de Lisbonne. Elle a chanté régulièrement à l'Opera North, incluant les rôles titres dans *Medea* et *Aida*, Alice Ford (*Falstaff*), Marie (*Wozzeck*) et Elizabeth I (*Gloriana*), un rôle qu'elle a également incarné à Londres au Royal Opera de Covent Garden. Elle a chanté sous la direction de Kent Nagano le rôle de Miss Wingrave (*Owen Wingrave*) dans un film réalisé pour la télévision.

La discographie de Josephine Barstow comporte actuellement deux récitals, Marie (*Wozzeck*) pour la série Opera in English de Chandos, *Street Scene*, la Neuvième

Symphonie de Beethoven, *Gloriana* de Britten sous la direction de Sir Charles Mackerras, et Lady Billows (*Albert Herring*).

Peter Wedd a étudié à la Guildhall School of Music and Drama de Londres avec William McAlpine et au National Opera Studio. Il a été Company Principal au Royal Opera de Covent Garden de 1999 à 2001, se produisant dans le rôle de Ywain (*Gawain and the Green Knight*) et dans celui de Kudrjas (*Kat'a Kabanová*). Il est régulièrement invité au Welsh National Opera où il a chanté les rôles de Don José (*Carmen*), Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*), Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*) et Laca (*Jenůfa*).

Parmi ses autres prestations en Grande-Bretagne et en Irlande, on citera Frederico (*L'Arlesiana*) et Pluto (*Orphée aux Enfers*) avec l'Opera Holland Park, Kyska (*Šarkatán*) et Julius (*I cavalieri di Ekebu*) au Festival de Wexford et Satyavan (*Savitri*) au Festival d'Aldeburgh. Son interprétation du rôle de Rodolfo dans une nouvelle production de *La bohème* donnée au Royal Albert Hall de Londres a remporté un très vif succès. Peter Wedd a chanté Tamino et Eisenstein (*Die Fledermaus*) avec l'European Chamber Orchestra et Lysander (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) avec le Singapore Lyric Theatre.

Il est très demandé au concert et a travaillé avec des orchestres tels que le London Philharmonic Orchestra, le Royal Scottish National Orchestra, le City of London Sinfonia, le Northern Sinfonia Orchestra et le Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. Il s'est produit au Festival de Covent Garden et au Festival d'Edimbourg, et à l'étranger au Festival Maribor en Slovénie et au Festival de Cernier en Suisse.

Peter Wedd a enregistré *Turandot* et *The Flying Dutchman* pour la série Opera in English de Chandos.

Né dans le comté d'Argyl, **Nigel Robson** a étudié avec Alexander Young et Gustave Sacher. Il s'est imposé comme l'un des ténors lyriques anglais les plus talentueux et possède un répertoire de concert et d'opéra allant de Monteverdi aux œuvres les plus contemporaines. Il est particulièrement connu pour ses interprétations de Britten.

Sur scène, il a chanté des rôles tels que Bajazet (*Tamerlano*) à Drottningholm, le rôle titre dans *Peter Grimes* au Nationale Reisoopera en Hollande, Captain Vere (*Billy Budd*) avec la Canadian Opera Company, Laca et Captain Vere au Welsh National Opera, le rôle titre dans *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* à Lisbonne et à

l'Opera North, le rôle titre dans *Idomeneo* au Bayerische Staatsoper de Munich, le Recitant (*The Rape of Lucretia*) au Grand Théâtre de Tours, Pandarus (*Troilus and Cressida*) à l'Opera North, The Madwoman (*Curlew River*) avec l'Opera Factory, Septimus (*Theodora*) à Glyndebourne, et Golo dans *Genoveva* de Robert Schumann au Garsington Opera. Il a également donné la création mondiale en Hollande et la première anglaise de *Wolf Cub Village* de Guo Wenjing, la création mondiale de *Tojiraretta Fune* de Make Ishi, et a chanté dans *Kantan* et *Damask Drum* d'Alexander Goehr et dans *The Maids* de John Lunn.

En concert, Nigel Robson a interprété le *Journal vénitien* de Bruno Maderna, et chanté dans la *Passion selon saint Jean* de Bach, *Judas Maccabeus* et *Jephtha* de Haendel, la *Spring Symphony* et le *War Requiem* de Britten, *Renard* de Stravinski, *Das Lied von der Erde* de Mahler, *The Dream of Gerontius* d'Elgar, et *Die schöne Müllerin* de Schubert.

La discographie de Nigel Robson inclut *Tamerlano*, *Jephtha* et *Alexander's Feast* de Haendel, l'*Orfeo* et *Il coronazione di Poppea* et les *Vesperae de 1610* de Monteverdi, les *Songs for Dov* de Michael Tippett, *Idomeneo* de Mozart, et pour Chandos, *The Rape of*

Lucretia de Britten, *Troilus and Cressida* de Walton et la *Mass of Life* de Delius.

Née au Pays de Galles, **Elizabeth Vaughan** a étudié à la Royal Academy of Music de Londres où elle a remporté tous les prix principaux, notamment le très convoité Kathleen Ferrier Memorial Scholarship. Elle a fait ses débuts sur scène au Welsh National Opera où son interprétation de Abigail (*Nabucco*) a été très acclamée. Elle a chanté de nombreux rôles au Royal Opera de Covent Garden, notamment Cio-Cio San (*Madama Butterfly*), Violetta (*La traviata*), Leonore (*Il trovatore*), Abigail (*Nabucco*), Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*), Gilda (*Rigoletto*), Euridice (*Orfeo*) et Teresa (*Benvenuto Cellini*).

Elizabeth Vaughan est revenue au Welsh National Opera en qualité d'artiste invitée, chantant de nombreux rôles importants dans des opéras tels que *Manon Lescaut*, *La forza del destino*, *Madama Butterfly*, *La traviata*, *Andrea Chenier*, et dans *The Doctor of Myddfai* de Peter Maxwell Davies. Elle s'est également souvent produite à l'English National Opera, à l'Opera North et au Scottish National Opera dans des ouvrages tels que *Aida*, *Fidelio*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Tosca*, *Macbeth*, *La traviata*, *Il trittico* et dans le rôle de Auntie dans *Peter Grimes*.

Depuis 1990, Elizabeth Vaughan chante dans le registre de mezzo-soprano, et a obtenu les plus hautes éloges pour ses interprétations du rôle d'Herodias (*Salome*) au Scottish National Opera, au Welsh National Opera (en Grande-Bretagne et en tournée au Japon), à l'Opéra Bastille à Paris et en Corée du Sud. Elle s'est également produite dans le rôle de Madame de Croissy (*Dialogues of the Carmelites*) à l'English National Opera et au Welsh National Opera, dans des versions de concert de *Hansel und Gretel* avec le City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra sous la direction de Mark Elder, et dans des versions de concert de *Salome* avec le Philharmonia Orchestra au Mégaron d'Athènes. Sa carrière internationale l'a conduite au Metropolitan Opera de New York, à Vienne, Paris, Hambourg, Munich, Prague, Marseille, Athènes, Montréal, Florence, Pise, Sydney et en Amérique du Sud.

La discographie d'Elizabeth Vaughan inclut des extraits de *Der Rosenkavalier* pour la série Opera in English de Chandos.

Né à Newport au Pays de Galles, **Neal Davies** a étudié au King's College de Londres et à la Royal Academy of Music dont il est devenu membre en 2003. Il a ensuite poursuivi sa formation au Studio International d'Opéra de

Zurich sous le patronage de Dame Gwyneth Jones. Il est régulièrement invité à se produire au Festival d'Edimbourg et aux BBC Proms de Londres.

Neal Davies a chanté au Royal Opera de Covent Garden dans *Platée* de Rameau sous la direction de McGegan, *Giulio Cesare* de Haendel sous la direction de Ivor Bolton et le rôle de Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*); *L'Allegro* de Haendel à l'English National Opera; *Radamisto* de Haendel à l'Opéra de Marseilles; *Theodora* de Haendel avec Les Arts Florissants sous la direction de William Christie (Paris et Salzbourg); *Orlando* de Haendel avec le Gabrieli Consort; Leporello au Scottish Opera et à l'Opéra de Québec; Giuglielmo (*Così fan tutte*), Leporello et Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*) au Welsh National Opera.

Les enregistrements de Neal Davies incluent *A Midsummer Night's Dream* de Britten sous la direction de Sir Colin Davis, le *Messie*, *Theodora* et *Saul* sous la direction de Paul McCreech, des cantates de Vivaldi et *L'Allegro* de Haendel sous la direction de Robert King, et des mélodies de Dutilleux sous la direction de Yan Pascal Tortelier pour Chandos.

Alan Fairs a étudié en privé avec Audrey Langford et Robert Dean. Il se produit

fréquemment au Welsh National Opera où il a chanté les rôles de Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*), Swallow (*Peter Grimes*), Basilio (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Bonze (*Madama Butterfly*), Dikoj (*Karà Kabanovà*), et très récemment Bartolo (*Le nozze di Figaro*).

Alan Fairs a interprété de nombreux rôles importants avec d'autres compagnies lyriques et dans des festivals, notamment Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*), Don Pasquale, Osmin (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), Sarastro (*Die Zauberflöte*), Leporello (*Don Giovanni*), Gremin (*Eugène Onéguine*), Oroveso (*Norma*), Geronimo (*Il matrimonio segreto*), Falstaff (*Falstaff* et *Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor*) et Alberich (*Das Rheingold*).

Née dans le Sud du Pays de Galles, **Charlotte Ellett** a étudié au Royal Northern College of Music de Manchester puis au National Opera Studio de Londres grâce au soutien d'un Wood/Peters Award en association avec Glyndebourne, la Peter Moores Foundation, le Sybil Tutton Award et le Countess of Munster Award. Elle continue ses études avec Enid Hartle, et participe depuis janvier 2004 au programme Artiste Associate du Welsh National Opera.

Elle a chanté le rôle de Despina (*Così fan*

tutte) au Festival d'Aix-en-Provence et avec le Pimlico Opera, Frasquita (*Carmen*) avec le Glyndebourne Touring Opera, Karolka, Susanna et Barbarina au Welsh National Opera.

Née à Bloxwich, **Marion McCullough** a étudié avec Constance Shacklock. Elle a chanté au Welsh National Opera les rôles de Flosshilde (*Das Rheingold*), Alisa (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Annina et Flora (*La traviata*), et Hänsel (*Hänsel und Gretel*).

Née dans le Staffordshire, **Claire Hampton** a étudié au Royal Northern College of Music de Manchester auprès de Teresa Cahill. Une bourse de la Peter Moores Foundation lui a permis de poursuivre ses études de troisième cycle et d'approfondir ses connaissances des langues et de l'opéra. Elle a chanté Dorinda (*Orlando*) et Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*) avec le Floral Opera, et est membre du Chœur du Welsh National Opera.

Née à Stoke-on-Trent, **Rosie Hay** a étudié au Collège de Musique de Leeds. Elle est devenue membre du Chœur du Welsh National Opera en 1992, et a chanté plusieurs rôles secondaires avec cette compagnie. Elle a

également incarné le rôle de Cio-Cio San avec l'Opera Lyrica, le Stowe Opera et le Welsh National Opera, et Hanna Glawari (*Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor*) au Royal Theatre de York.

Née en Irlande, **Imelda Drumm** a étudié le chant avec Anne Marie O'Sullivan et Veronica Dunne. Elle a complété ses études vocales au National Opera Studio de Londres grâce au soutien du Glyndebourne Opera.

Les rôles de son répertoire incluent Kate Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*), Hansel (*Hänsel und Gretel*), Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), le rôle titre dans *Carmen*, Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Béatrice (*Béatrice et Bénédict*) au Welsh National Opera; Dorabella et Cherubino au Festival de Glyndebourne; Cherubino, Isolier (*Le Comte Ory*) avec le Glyndebourne Touring Opera; le rôle titre dans *La Cenerentola* avec l'English Touring Opera; et *Carmen* dans la production de Raymond Gubbay donnée au Royal Albert Hall de Londres.

Née à Leicester, **Sarah Pope** a étudié à la Guildhall School of Music and Drama de Londres et au Royal Northern College of Music de Manchester. Elle est devenue membre du

Welsh National Opera en 1992, et a chanté quelques rôles secondaires avec cette compagnie. Elle a créé le rôle de Kabanicha dans la Welsh National Opera MAX production.

L'Orchestre du Welsh National Opera fut fondé en 1970. Il figure parmi les meilleurs orchestres britanniques, apprécié non seulement pour ses interprétations superbes dans un vaste répertoire lyrique mais aussi pour son travail en concert et ses enregistrements.

Sous la direction de Richard Armstrong, directeur musical de 1973 à 1986, l'orchestre développa un large répertoire lyrique. C'est à cette époque que Reginald Goodall travailla pour la première fois avec l'ensemble. Sir Charles Mackerras devint directeur musical en 1987 et développa considérablement le programme d'enregistrements de l'orchestre. Avant 1987, plusieurs intégrales d'opéras avaient été gravées sous la direction de Richard Bonyngue, avec Joan Sutherland, Montserrat Caballé et Pavarotti à la tête de distributions de carrure internationale. Sous Mackerras, l'orchestre enregistra *Osud* de Janáček (CHAN 3019). Carlo Rizzi est directeur musical depuis 1992. En 1995, l'Orchestre du Welsh National Opera remporta le Prix de musique de la

Royal Philharmonic Society, dans la catégorie “Grands ensembles”.

Le **Chorus of Welsh National Opera** (Chœur de l’Opéra National du Pays de Galles) est un ensemble professionnel depuis 1968. Il a travaillé avec le célèbre Voluntary Chorus (Chœur volontaire) jusqu’à 1973, date de sa dissolution. Le Voluntary Chorus était constitué de chanteurs amateurs qui se réunirent en 1943 pour former le noyau de ce qui allait devenir le Welsh National Opera. Il apparut clairement vers la fin des années 1960 que le Welsh National Opera devait devenir un ensemble entièrement professionnel, et le Voluntary Chorus fut remplacé par le Chœur du Welsh National Opera. Sa réputation grandit rapidement, et son travail à l’opéra et en concert lui a valu de nombreux éloges, non seulement dans le répertoire traditionnel (Verdi par exemple), mais également dans des ouvrages du vingtième siècle tels que *A Midsummer Marriage* de Tippett et *La Maison des morts* de Janáček.

Le Chœur a enregistré de nombreux opéras incluant *Andrea Chenier*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Parsifal*, *I Masnadieri*, *Norma*, *Hamlet*, *Ernani*, *Anna Bolena*, *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Tosca*, *Rigoletto*, *Faust*, *Un ballo in maschera*, *The*

Mikado, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *The Yeomen of the Guard*, *Trial by Jury*, *Gloriana* de Britten et *Osud* de Janáček sous la direction de Charles Mackerras. Parmi les pièces de concert qu’il a enregistrées figurent *Sea Drift* de Delius, *The Vigil of Venus* de George Lloyd et *Hiawatha* de Coleridge-Taylor. Les tournées internationales du Chœur l’ont conduit à Paris, Tokyo, New York, Milan, Wiesbaden, Lisbonne, Oporto, Berlin et Leipzig.

Sir Charles Mackerras étudia au Conservatoire de Musique de Sydney et vint en Angleterre en 1947. Il obtint une bourse du British Council pour continuer ses études à l’Académie de Musique de Prague. Son vif intérêt et sa passion pour la musique de Janáček commença en 1947 après avoir entendu l’opéra *Kat’á Kabanová* dirigé par le grand Václav Talich.

C’est en qualité de chef assistant au Sadler’s Wells qu’il donna la première de *Kat’á Kabanová* dans un pays de langue anglaise en 1951. Plus tard, il présenta *L’Affaire Makropoulos* et *La Maison des morts* au Sadler’s Wells. Il continua à diriger des productions très acclamées d’opéras de Janáček ainsi que des ouvrages du répertoire habituel quand il

devint directeur musical de l’English National Opera (1970–1977), et au Welsh National Opera dont il fut directeur musical de 1987 à 1992. Il a été un défenseur de la musique de Janáček dans les capitales européennes, aux USA et en Australie. *Jenifá* est l’une de ses œuvres préférées.

Il a entretenu une longue collaboration avec la Philharmonie tchèque et a enregistré à la tête de cette formation la plupart des œuvres pour orchestre de Janáček, ainsi que *Kat’á Kabanová* et *Rusalka* de Dvořák. Sa vaste discographie inclut le cycle primé des opéras de Janáček réalisé avec le Wiener Philharmoniker au début des années 1980. Pour Chandos, il a enregistré la version originale de la *Messe Glagolitique* de Janáček, le *Psalmus Hungaricus* de Kodály et le Concerto pour violoncelle de Dvořák. Dans la série Opera in English, il a enregistré *Osud*, *La traviata*, *Werther*, *Julius Caesar* et *Mary*

Stuart.

Charles Mackerras a également fait d’importantes recherches dans le domaine de la musique du dix-huitième siècle, en particulier Haendel et Mozart. Il a enregistré une série consacrée aux opéras de Mozart et à ceux de Gilbert et Sullivan, ainsi que les cycles complets des symphonies de Mozart, Beethoven et Brahms, plusieurs oratorios de Haendel et des symphonies de Mahler et Elgar. Il est actuellement chef principal invité du Philharmonia Orchestra, chef lauréat du Scottish Chamber Orchestra et chef émérite du Welsh National Opera et du San Francisco Opera.

Charles Mackerras fut nommé commandeur de l’empire britannique (CBE) en 1974 et anobli en 1979. Il a reçu la Médaille du Mérite de la République tchèque en 1996 et fait Companion of the Order of Australia en 1997. En 2003, la reine Elizabeth II l’a nommé Companion of Honour.

Jenůfa, la sua figliastra

Nel repertorio del teatro lirico ceco, non esiste un'opera intitolata *Jenůfa*. Il primo capolavoro teatrale di Janáček è sempre noto in patria con il titolo del potente melodramma di Gabriela Preissová a cui si ispira: *Její Pastorkyňa, La sua figliastra*. Queste tre parole forniscono un indizio importante sul potere duraturo dell'opera. *Jenůfa* non è il dramma di una sola eroina, ma la tragedia di due donne, prigioniere delle conseguenze dei propri sentimenti, come Giulietta e Romeo o Antonio e Cleopatra. Jenůfa, la bella ragazza di campagna, vanitosa e impulsiva, e Kostelníčka, la sua severa ed energica matrigna, affrontano due viaggi paralleli attraverso la sofferenza, l'una verso una sobria riconciliazione, l'altra verso la disperazione e la soglia della follia. Se la conclusione dell'opera è coronata dalla crescente maturità di Jenůfa, è la decisione tormentata e omicida di Kostelníčka nel secondo atto che rimane con noi anche quando è calata la tela.

Gabriela Preissová ebbe un piccolo ma significativo ruolo nello sviluppo della letteratura ceca. Le sue novelle e i suoi drammi imperniati sulla vita di un villaggio della Moravia furono tra le prime opere di realismo

domestico in quella lingua e il dramma *La sua figliastra* fece scandalo quando venne allestito nel 1890. Il pubblico rimase entusiasta del sinistro racconto di una ragazza di villaggio che dà alla luce un figlio illegittimo, assassinato dalla matrigna per proteggere il suo onore e le sue prospettive matrimoniali. Il dilemma affrontato da Jenůfa oggi può sembrarci lontano, ma nella Moravia rurale dell'Ottocento era una realtà penosamente nota. In una piccola comunità chiusa spesso venivano concepiti figli illegittimi da coppie pubblicamente fidanzate, ma dare alla luce un figlio prima delle nozze era un terribile marchio di disonore. La tragica ironia del dramma sta nel fatto che il padre del bambino di Jenůfa riesce a sfuggire all'arruolamento, rimanendo libero di sposare la donna, ma questo gli viene impedito da Kostelníčka, scandalizzata dalla sua propensione all'ubriachezza. Era inevitabile che il pubblico si identificasse subito con la vicenda.

L'opera teatrale fu tuttavia bollata dalla critica come *tranche de vie* inconsistente, del tutto inadatta per un allestimento presso il Teatro nazionale. Ciò che aveva fatto presa

sulla fantasia di Janáček non era stata la storia dello scandalo, ma la complessità emotiva dei personaggi della Preissová. In particolare si era sentito solidale con il dilemma di Kostelníčka (il cui nome significa sagrestano), un pilastro della comunità, di fronte a una vergogna personale. In una scena fondamentale del dramma, parlando dell'ex marito, uno spendaccione ubriaco di nome Tomáš Buryja, la donna esprime il timore che Števa, innamorato di Jenůfa, nipote di Buryja, ha i tratti ereditati antipatici. Questo groviglio di sentimenti contrastanti – senso di protezione, colpa, pietà e paura – sta al cuore del dramma e costituisce il nucleo dell'opera di Janáček.

Janáček si era sentito attratto dalle opere della Preissová quando era ancora sconosciuto e faceva il direttore di coro e l'insegnante in una zona povera dell'impero austro-ungarico. Come tanti suoi contemporanei nell'Europa centrale, era affascinato dalle tradizioni locali e le storie della Preissová sulla vita rurale in Moravia avevano fatto presa su un compositore profondamente impegnato a raccogliere e arrangiare la musica popolare del suo luogo di nascita. Quello che è notevole a proposito di *Jenůfa* è il modo magistrale in cui una persona di scarsa esperienza teatrale sia riuscita a

trasformare una vicenda avvincente, ma alquanto tradizionale in uno straziante dramma psicologico. Non c'è alcun accenno di quello che verrà nei primi due progetti operistici di Janáček. *Šárka* è una normale epopea popolare, una pallida imitazione di Smetana. *Inizio di un romanzo* – anch'esso basato su un dramma della Preissová – è interessante per l'utilizzo delle melodie popolari, ma goffo nella sua costruzione. Lo stesso Janáček era anche troppo consapevole dei suoi difetti e in seguito eliminò il brano. *Jenůfa* è un'opera di livello completamente diverso.

La produzione di Janáček ebbe uno sviluppo tardivo e il compositore era già quarantenne quando iniziò a lavorare all'opera. Il primo atto fu completato con fatica e accantonato per otto anni prima di procedere oltre. Le prime scene contengono ancora accenni dell'opera romantica tradizionale. La melodia folcloristica accompagnata battendo i piedi dagli abitanti del villaggio e dalle reclute che accompagnano Števa, ubriaco, potrebbe essere facilmente scambiata per una danza slava di Dvořák. Ma già le battute di apertura dell'opera fanno percepire l'originale mondo musicale di Janáček. Superficialmente l'ostinato dello xilofono descrive il movimento incessante della ruota del mulino, ma a un

livello più profondo ritrae lo stato d'animo di Jenůfa e le tragedie che l'attendono. I colpi implacabili della percussione si ripetono quattro volte: prima quando Jenůfa teme che la morte della sua piantina di rosmarino sia presagio di sventura, poi quando riflette tristemente sulla sua gravidanza indesiderata dopo la cacciata di Števa. Ritornano per una terza volta quando Jenůfa teme che Števa l'abbia lasciata per un'altra donna e infine poco prima che il geloso Laca le sfregi il viso. Forniscono l'impalcatura musicale sui cui poggia il primo atto. L'azione drammatica viene costruita con altrettanta sicurezza. La trama originale della Preissová non sfuggirebbe in una soap opera, mentre il libretto di Janáček riduce la vicenda all'osso e, in tal modo, rivela il tessuto nervoso dei quattro personaggi principali.

Quando si alza il sipario sul secondo atto, scritto otto anni dopo il primo, la magistrale arte teatrale del compositore è ormai evidente. Con le note d'apertura – un brusco accordo fortissimo e un vibrante tremolo degli archi – entriamo nella buia e angusta abitazione di Kostelnička. I selvaggi staccati degli archi che seguono incidono la melodia come un bisturi. Un compositore meno sicuro del fatto suo sarebbe stato tentato di diffondere un'atmosfera

di costante malinconia in tutto l'atto. Invece, di tanto in tanto, il dolore della triste situazione delle due donne è attraversato da un'ambigua tenerezza. Quando Kostelnička dice a Jenůfa che sarebbe meglio se Dio si riprendesse il bambino, un delicato tema del violoncello la contraddice. Mentre la donna somministra a Jenůfa il sonnifero, un nobile motivo sulle arpe e legni evoca il futuro diverso che la donna avrebbe sognato per Jenůfa prima che la gravidanza indesiderata della fanciulla avesse steso una pesante coltre sulle loro vite.

In contrasto con l'animazione bucolica del primo atto, nel secondo sono presenti solo i quattro protagonisti. C'è anche un quinto personaggio che si sente, ma non si vede – il bambino addormentato, evocato dai teneri frammenti melodici di sapore popolare associati a lui, che emergono costantemente dalle cupe armonie. La partitura dell'intero atto fa pensare al nodo del fato che si stringe intorno alla gola di Kostelnička. Ma è un cappio che la donna si è creata da sé. Non essendo a conoscenza della condizione della figliastra, ha cacciato Števa per il suo comportamento volgare e irresponsabile. Adesso deve chiedergli in ginocchio di sposare Jenůfa, e quando il tentativo fallisce, deve rivolgersi per disperazione a Laca. Per illustrare

la trappola che si chiude su Kostelnička, Janáček ritorna al suo espediente musicale preferito: un tormentoso e costante ostinato nell'orchestra. Il monologo della donna quando Jenůfa è andata a letto è sottolineato da nervose ripetizioni degli archi, dei corni e dell'arpa. La stessa combinazione di strumenti in un ritmo simile ritorna quando Jenůfa, ormai in preda all'effetto del sonnifero, grida nel sonno, e ancora una volta in tempo ternario all'arrivo di Laca, chiamato da Kostelnicka.

È come se Janáček avesse costruito una prigione musicale: l'unica via d'uscita è la porta attraverso la quale Kostelnička si precipita, portando il bambino ancora addormentato per annegarlo nella gora del mulino. Il monologo che precede l'infanticidio è uno dei più notevoli risultati del compositore, dal suo esordio tormentato, accompagnato da cristalline armonie degli archi, alla sua disperata conclusione, dove alle arpe onnipresenti e ai corni si aggiunge, urlato, il fortissimo delle trombe. Ma anche qui Janáček si rifiuta di incamminarsi verso l'ovvio. Le frasi che accompagnano l'appello a Dio di Kostelnička hanno una nobiltà spaventosa e, quando la donna esce di scena, Janáček intreccia terrore e tenerezza in un

tessuto ambivalente, con un tenero assolo del primo violino che emerge dalla dissonanza orchestrale culminante. L'aria di Jenůfa, al suo risveglio, quando la donna scopre che il bambino non c'è più, ha un respiro ancora più vasto e riunisce insieme materiale musicale delle scene precedenti, raggiungendo uno spaventoso culmine quando, al suo ritorno, Kostelnička bussa alla finestra. Le capacità da poco sviluppate da Janáček nel dare forma a enormi paragrafi drammatici portano avanti il dramma fino alla conclusione di questo atto e il terrore colpevole di Kostelnička emerge chiaramente mentre i timpani riprendono il motivo dei suoi colpi alla finestra e li trasformano in una fragorosa ritirata.

L'intensità emotiva di questo atto richiama alla mente le opere pucciniane della maturità ed è affascinante pensare che il compositore toscano e quello moravo lavorassero simultaneamente a melodrammi incentrati su giovani donne abbandonate dai padri dei loro bambini. A separare *Jenůfa* dalla *Madama Butterfly*, però, è l'assoluta manza di sentimentalità di Janáček. Nell'ultimo atto il compositore ritorna alle melodie popolari che dominano il primo atto, ma la presenza tristemente meditativa della donna ormai spezzata che è Kostelnička, sulla scena e nelle

torturate armonie dell'orchestra, serve sempre ad avvelenare l'atmosfera. Il motivetto disinvolto con cui inizia l'atto è sostenuto da un altro ostinato, come se il fato spingesse i giovani sposi verso una catastrofe. Con il progredire dell'atto il conflitto tra i familiari motivi popolari e le cupe armonie di Jenůfa rispecchia il contrasto tra i tradizionali costumi dai colori vivaci degli abitanti del villaggio e il lutto dell'eroina. Quando il piccolo Jano irrompe per annunciare che sotto il ghiaccio è stato scoperto un corpicino assiderato è un colpo, ma non una sorpresa.

L'obiettività di Janáček persiste fino alla fine. Dopo la confessione di Kostelnička e il perdono della figliastra, la musica acquista un calore stoico mentre i due giovani meditano sul loro futuro di coppia e sulle prove che li attendono. Tuttavia questa non è una facile catarsi. Non sarebbe possibile per un rapporto costruito su tanta sofferenza. A un secolo di distanza noi diffidiamo delle disinvolte soluzioni romantiche, ma per i contemporanei di Janáček la severa conclusione e la musica in cui viene espressa furono difficili da accettare. Sebbene la sua città natale di Brno accogliesse *Jenůfa*, furono necessari dodici anni e molto lavoro dietro le quinte prima che venisse allestita a Praga e Janáček fu costretto ad

accettare tagli e rifacimenti dell'orchestrazione per smussare il selvaggio impatto dell'originale. Le cose furono rese ancora più difficili dal fatto che il direttore dell'opera di Praga, Karel Kovarovic, era stato criticato dal compositore quando era studente. Alla sua opposizione si aggiungeva anche la sfavorevole opinione che Praga, capitale cosmopolita, aveva tradizionalmente della provinciale Brno.

La partitura modificata richiesta da Kovarovic continuò a essere eseguita in Cecoslovacchia per quasi un secolo. Solo nel 2004, in occasione del centenario dell'opera, Brno ha potuto finalmente riascoltare la musica come il compositore desiderava, grazie all'ispirata difesa del direttore di questa registrazione, sir Charles Mackerras. Solo quando ascoltiamo l'opera senza tagli, senza legni aggiunti e addolcimenti degli austeri contorni di Janáček senza corni eroici al posto dei severi tromboni della scena finale, possiamo veramente apprezzare la nuda schiettezza del suo primo melodramma a pieno titolo. La composizione di *Jenůfa* coincise con gli anni più dolorosi della vita di Janáček, che videro il disintegrarsi del suo matrimonio e la perdita della figlia, morta di tifo. Fu il prodotto di una lotta personale oltre che artistica, come scrisse il compositore stesso nella sua autobiografia:

Io legherei Jenůfa con il nastro nero della lunga malattia, della sofferenza e dei sospiri di mia figlia Olga e del mio figlioletto Vladimir.

Ormai vicina alla morte, Olga aveva chiesto al padre di suonare la partitura di *Jenůfa*. Alla fine Janáček realizzò degli abbozzi musicali delle ultime parole rotte della figlia. Sembra che una reazione strana, quasi spietata, ma attraverso la sua opera, la musica diede al compositore una distanza obiettiva che non era stato capace di raggiungere nella sua vita. Proprio questa capacità di trasformare un tale dolore in arte immortale fa di Janáček uno dei giganti del melodramma mondiale.

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Traduzione: Emanuela Guastella

Antefatto

È la fine dell'Ottocento. Veborany, un villaggio di montagna in Moravia, è una piccola comunità rurale stretta. Il mulino locale è di proprietà della famiglia Buryja e la vicenda è imperniata sui complessi rapporti all'interno di questo gruppo.

Albero genealogico

I coniugi Buryja avevano avuto due figli: il mugnaio, primogenito ed erede, e Tomáš. Il

“mugnaio” aveva sposato la vedova Klemeň, che aveva già un figlio, Laca Klemeň. La coppia poi aveva avuto un figlio proprio, Števa, erede del mulino e della fortuna della famiglia alla morte dei genitori. Števa è un bel ragazzo biondo ma gli piacciono le donne e l'alcool. Il fratellastro, Laca Klemeň, bruno e sensibile, si sente trascurato e ignorato dall'intera famiglia Buryja.

Anche Tomáš, fratello minore del mugnaio, è morto. Si era sposato due volte e dalla prima moglie aveva avuto una figlia, Jenůfa Buryjakova. Rimasto vedovo, si era risposato con la sagrestana Kostelnička. Il matrimonio non era stato felice, perché Tomáš si era rivelato violento e irascibile, spendaccione e ubriaccone. Matrigna e figliastra sono comunque molto vicine e si vogliono bene. Jenůfa chiama Mamičko (mammina) la matrigna e Kostelnička, donna timorata di Dio ma autoritaria, è molto orgogliosa della figliastra.

COMPACT DISC ONE

Atto I

Il mulino dei Buryja

Un tramonto alla fine di agosto

□ Nonna Buryja e Laca lavorano. Jenůfa attende ansiosamente il ritorno di Števa che ha

ricevuto la chiamata per il servizio di leva. Se sarà arruolato non potranno sposarsi per qualche tempo e la sua gravidanza sarà scoperta. L'unica persona a conoscenza del suo stato è proprio Števa, il futuro padre. Se la gravidanza venisse scoperta Jenůfa, secondo i principi dell'epoca, rischierebbe la lapidazione e la dannazione eterna.

Laca, innamorato di Jenůfa fin dall'infanzia, la osserva con tormento: è geloso dei suoi sentimenti per Števa.

Il pastorello Jano ringrazia Jenůfa che gli ha insegnato a leggere. [2] – [3] Il capo del mulino viene a riferire che Števa non è stato arruolato dopo tutto.

[4] Arriva Števa, ubriaco e accompagnato da una banda e dai giovani di leva. [5] Tutti danzano e cantano con gli operai del mulino, ma la baldoria viene interrotta da Kostelnička. La donna considera Števa un marito inadatto per l'amata figliastra, potenzialmente spendaccione e violento come era stato suo marito, zio del giovane. Non sapendo che Jenůfa è incinta, Kostelnička rimanda le nozze di un anno, durante il quale Števa dovrà smettere di bere. [6] Quando i due giovani sono rimasti soli insieme, Števa si vanta di avere ai suoi piedi tutte le ragazze, ma Jenůfa ribatte in maniera possessiva che lui le

appartiene. [7] Quando è uscito, Laca gelosamente punzecchia Jenůfa dicendole che Števa l'ama solo per il suo bel viso e le guance rosee. Guarda il coltello che usa per lavorare. "Pensa come sarebbe facile per me rovinarti quelle guance". Tenta di baciarla, litigano e lui "accidentalmente" le sfregia la guancia con il coltello.

Atto II

La casa di Kostelnička sul fiume. Cinque mesi dopo

Una sera alla fine di gennaio

[8] – [9] Sono passate venti settimane da quando Jenůfa ha finalmente rivelato la propria gravidanza alla matrigna. Per salvare entrambe dal disonore, Kostelnička l'ha nascosta nella stanza sul retro della casa e ha raccontato a tutti che Jenůfa è andata a cercare lavoro a Vienna. Il bambino è nato otto giorni prima. La ragazza lo ha chiamato Števa e Kostelnička l'ha battezzato.

Kostelnička ricorda ancora a Jenůfa la sua colpa e le dice di pregare Dio perché le porti via il bambino. Jenůfa è sconvolta e si sente male. Kostelnička le offre un sonnifero e Jenůfa si ritira per la notte.

[10] Per cinque mesi Kostelnička ha pregato per un'interruzione della gravidanza della

figliastra, ma il bambino è nato sano e adesso la donna pensa che sia necessario chiedere a Števa di sposare Jenůfa. Così gli ha mandato un messaggio chiedendogli di venire a trovarla quella sera. [11] Al suo arrivo gli rimprovera di non aver mai chiesto notizie del bambino. Lui si scusa e si offre di mantenere il bambino, a condizione che non venga rivelata la sua paternità. La donna lo supplica di sposare Jenůfa e riconoscere il bambino, per non coprire il suo nome e quello di Jenůfa di vergogna. Števa scoppia a piangere e risponde che Jenůfa ultimamente è cambiata, non è più dolce e gentile ed è diventata ipersensibile ed esigente, come Kostelnička. La sua bellezza è sfigurata dalla cicatrice sulla guancia. Lui non l'ama più e adesso è fidanzato con la figlia del sindaco, Karolka. Jenůfa grida nel sonno e Števa si precipita fuori.

[12] Laca, che è venuto regolarmente a fare visita alla donna nel corso dei mesi, vede Števa uscire e viene a chiedere se Jenůfa è tornata da Vienna e se sta per sposarsi con Števa. È sempre innamorato e Kostelnička l'ha incoraggiato. La matrigna gli rivela la verità: Jenůfa è nascosta in casa e ha appena dato alla luce un figlio di Števa. Laca è sconvolto. Kostelnička non può pretendere che lui prenda il figlio di Števa. La donna gli risponde

con una menzogna, dicendo che il bambino è morto.

COMPACT DISC TWO

[1] Rimasta sola Kostelnička in preda all'agitazione cerca di decidere il da farsi. Non può portare lontano il bambino, che rappresenterà sempre una vergogna e un disonore. Decide di "inviarlo a Dio", seppellendolo nel fiume ghiacciato. Il corpo sarà portato via al disgelo. In questo modo lei e Jenůfa non andranno incontro al disonore. Prende il bambino e si precipita fuori nella notte, chiudendosi dietro la porta.

[2] Jenůfa si sveglia, con la mente ancora leggermente annebbiata dal sonnifero. Inizialmente si dispera perché non riesce a trovare né la sua Mamičko né il suo bambino, alla fine immagina allegramente che la matrigna abbia portato il bambino al mulino per farlo vedere. Prega per il bambino.

[3] Kostelnička ritorna: ha le mani gelate e non riesce ad aprire la porta. Bussa alla finestra, butta dentro la chiave e Jenůfa la fa entrare. Kostelnička dice a Jenůfa che ha avuto la febbre per due giorni e che il bambino è morto. Jenůfa piange silenziosamente e chiede se Števa è venuto. Kostelnička le parla della

sua visita, del suo disinteresse per Jenůfa e per il bambino e delle sue prossime nozze con Karolka. Consiglia a Jenůfa di preferire Laca, che sa del del bambino e della sua morte e che l'ha perdonata. ^[4] Laca ritorna e Jenůfa accetta di sposarlo. Kostelnička li benedice, ma si lascia prendere dall'isteria quando la finestra viene improvvisamente spalancata dal vento.

Atto III

La casa di Kostelnička

Mattina

^[5] – ^[9] È il giorno delle nozze di Jenůfa e Kostelnička non ha ancora ripreso il controllo di sé. È stata ammalata e soffre di attacchi di terrore e di manie. Jenůfa e Laca hanno invitato Števa, la sua fidanzata Karolka e i genitori di lei, il sindaco con la moglie.

Le nozze saranno molto semplici, con grande disappunto di Karolka e di sua madre.

^[10] Alcuni lavoratori del mulino, non invitati, vengono a cantare e fare gli auguri a Jenůfa.

^[11] – ^[13] Mentre Kostelnička sta per benedire la coppia, si sentono delle grida. I lavoratori della birreria che tagliavano ghiaccio sul fiume hanno trovato un neonato morto, congelato. Dai vestiti del bambino Jenůfa capisce che si tratta del piccolo Števa. ^[14] Si radunano

persone che minacciano di linciarla per l'infanticidio; Laca la difende e riesce appena a trattenere gli altri.

Tutti ammutoliscono quando Kostelnička distoglie ogni sospetto da Jenůfa e confessa il proprio delitto. Karolka capisce che il padre del piccolo morto è Števa e rifiuta di sposarlo. Laca biasima se stesso. Kostelnička completa la confessione ammettendo che adesso si rende conto di aver pensato più al proprio onore e al proprio buon nome che a quello di Jenůfa e supplica la figliastra di perdonarla. ^[15] Jenůfa comprende, perdona e chiede a Dio di confortare la matrigna. Il sindaco accompagna Kostelnička in tribunale. ^[16] Jenůfa chiede a Laca di lasciarla; non è degna di lui. Ma l'uomo risponde che l'ama ancora e non vuole abbandonarla. La donna accetta con gioia.

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Traduzione: Emanuela Guastella

Janice Watson ha studiato presso la Guildhall School of Music and Drama e si è messa in luce per la prima volta vincendo il concorso intitolato a Kathleen Ferrier. È ospite regolare della Welsh National Opera e della English National Opera. Ha cantato Musetta alla Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; Pamina

all'Opéra di Parigi; la contessa Almaviva; Vitellia all'Opera delle Fiandre; Daphne e Arabella di Strauss ed Elettra (*Idomeneo*) al festival di Santa Fe; Daphne, Arabella ed Eva (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*) per l'Opera di San Francisco; Pamina per l'Opera nazionale della Baviera; Ellen Orford al Covent Garden, l'Opera di Vienna, l'Opera dei Paesi Bassi e con la London Symphony Orchestra; la contessa Almaviva a Lione, Monaco, per la Deutsche Staatsoper di Berlino e il New National Theatre di Tokyo; Micaela per la Lyric Opera di Chicago e la Metropolitan Opera e la Marschallin per English National Opera

Nell'arco della sua carriera concertistica è comparsa, tra l'altro, con la Boston Symphony Orchestra diretta da Roger Norrington e André Previn, la San Francisco Symphony diretta da Michael Tilson-Thomas, la London Symphony Orchestra diretta da sir Colin Davis, André Previn e Riccardo Chailly, l'Orchestre de Paris con Frans Brüggen, l'Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields con sir Neville Marriner, la London Philharmonic Orchestra e Bernard Haitink e la Chicago Symphony e l'Orchestra del Concertgebouw, entrambe dirette da Riccardo Chailly.

Le sue numerose registrazioni comprendono

Carmina Burana di Orff, Ellen Orford nella premiata registrazione Chandos del *Peter Grimes* diretta da Richard Hickox, il *Gloria* di Poulenc per Chandos, la *Missa Sabrinensis* di Howells diretta da Gennady Rozhdestvensky, e il ruolo di Helena in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* diretta da sir Colin Davis.

Dame Josephine Barstow è un'artista di altissima levatura. La sua illustre carriera riunisce apprezzate interpretazioni di Salome, Tosca, le due Lady Macbeth di Verdi e Shostakovich e una vastissima serie di ruoli da Mozart a Janáček passando per Beethoven, Verdi, Puccini e Richard Strauss. Nel 1986 svolgeva una tournée dell'allora Unione Sovietica con tappe a Tbilisi, Riga e al teatro Bolshoi di Mosca. Ha creato il ruolo di protagonista alla prima mondiale di *Die schwarze Maske* al festival di Salisburgo; a questa manifestazione veniva poi nuovamente invitata da Karajan per *Tosca* e *Un ballo in maschera*. Si è esibita all'Opéra di Parigi, alla Bayerische Staatsoper di Monaco, alla English National Opera e alla Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Negli Stati Uniti ha anche cantato alla Metropolitan Opera di New York, oltre che a San Francisco, Chicago e Houston. Nel 1985 è stata nominata "Commander of

the British Empire” e nel 1995 “Dame of the British Empire”.

Altri impegni comprendono il ruolo di protagonista nella Salome per l’Opera dei Paesi Bassi e Kostelnička per English National Opera, Opera North e Opera delle Fiandre; Emilia Marty (*L'affare Makropoulos*) per la Welsh National Opera; Amelia (*Un ballo in maschera*) per il Festival di Hong Kong; *Tosca* per Opera North; Ellen Orford (*Peter Grimes*) per la Royal Opera House, Covent Garden e Palermo, Anna Maurrant (*Street Scene*) per il Teatro Nacional de Saõ Carlos di Lisbona. Ha cantato regolarmente con Opera North, interpretando tra l’altro i ruoli di protagonista in *Medea* e *Aida*, Alice Ford (*Falstaff*), Marie (*Wozzeck*) ed Elisabetta I in *Gloriana*, allestita presso la Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Ha inoltre interpretato il ruolo di Miss Wingrave nella versione televisiva di *Owen Wingrave* diretto da Kent Nagano.

Attualmente la sua discografia comprende due dischi di recital, Marie (*Wozzeck*) per la serie Opera in English di Chandos, *Street Scene*, la Nona Sinfonia di Beethoven, *Gloriana* di Britten diretta da sir Charles Mackerras, e Lady Billows in *Albert Herring*.

Peter Wedd ha studiato presso la Guildhall School of Music and Drama con William McAlpine e poi presso il National Opera Studio. È stato solista della compagna alla Royal Opera, Covent Garden dal 1999 al 2001 ed è regolarmente ospite della Welsh National Opera. Nelle vesti di solista della Royal Opera ha cantato Ywain (*Gawain and the Green Knight*) e Kudrjas (*Kat'a Kabanová*). Alla Welsh National Opera ha interpretato, tra l’altro, i ruoli di Don José (*Carmen*), Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*), Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*) e Laca (*Jenůfa*).

Altre apparizioni nel Regno Unito e in Irlanda hanno compreso Federico (*L'Arlesiana*) e Plutone (*Orphée aux enfers*) per Opera Holland Park, Kyska (*Sarkatán*) e Julius (*I cavalieri di Ekebù*) al Wexford Festival, Satyavan (*Savitri*) al Festival di Aldeburgh e Rodolfo, in un nuovo allestimento della *Bohème* alla Royal Albert Hall di Londra, che ha riscosso grande successo. Peter Wedd ha cantato Tamino e Eisenstein (*Die Fledermaus*) per la European Chamber Opera e Lysander (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) per il Lyric Theatre di Singapore.

Il tenore è molto richiesto nei concerti e ha collaborato con orchestre tra cui London Philharmonic, Royal Scottish National, City

of London Sinfonia, Northern Sinfonia e Bournemouth Symphony. Peter Wedd è comparso al festival del Covent Garden e a quello di Edimburgo e all’estero ai festival di Maribor in Slovenia e di Cernier in Svizzera.

La discografia per la serie Opera in English comprende *Turandot* e *The Flying Dutchman*.

Nigel Robson è nato in Scozia (Argyleshire) e ha studiato con Alexander Young e Gustave Sacher. È considerato uno dei più versatili tenori lirici della Gran Bretagna e il suo repertorio operistico e concertistico spazia da Monteverdi alle composizioni più moderne. Particolarmente apprezzate sono le sue interpretazioni di Britten.

Gli impegni teatrali hanno compreso Bajazet (*Tamerlano*) a Drottningholm, il ruolo di protagonista in *Peter Grimes* per la Nationale Reisopera in Olanda; Captain Vere (*Billy Budd*) per la Canadian Opera Company; Laca e Captain Vere per la Welsh National Opera; il ruolo di protagonista ne *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* a Lisbona e per Opera North; il ruolo di protagonista in *Idomeneo* alla Bayerische Staatsoper di Monaco; il Coro maschile (*The Rape of Lucretia*) al Grand Théâtre di Tours; Pandarus (*Troilus and Cressida*) per Opera North; la Madwoman (*Curlew River*) per

Opera Factory, Septimus (*Theodora*) per Glyndebourne e Golo nella *Genoveva* di Schumann per la Garsington Opera. La sua collaborazione con i compositori viventi lo ha visto interprete della prima mondiale olandese e nel Regno Unito di *Wolf Cub Village* di Guo Wenjing, *Kantan* e *Damask Drum* di Alexander Goehr, *Tojiraretta Fune* di Make Ishi (prima mondiale) e *The Maids* di John Lunn.

Le apparizioni in concerto comprendono *Venetian Journal* di Bruno Maderna, *La passione secondo san Giovanni* di Bach, *Judas Maccabeus*, *Jephtha* di Handel, la *Spring Symphony* di Britten, *Renard* di Stravinskij, *Das Lied von der Erde* di Mahler, il *War Requiem* di Britten, *The Dream of Gerontius* di Elgar, *Die schöne Müllerin* di Schubert.

La discografia di Nigel Robson comprende *Tamerlano*, *Jephtha* e *Alexander's Feast* di Handel, *Orfeo*, *L'incoronazione di Poppea* e i *Vespri del 1610* di Monteverdi, *Songs for Dov* di Tippett, *Idomeneo* di Mozart e, per Chandos, *The Rape of Lucretia* di Britten, *Troilus and Cressida* di Walton e *Mass of Life* di Delius.

Elizabeth Vaughan è nata in Galles e ha studiato alla Royal Academy of Music dove ha vinto i premi più importanti, compresa

l'ambita borsa di studio intitolata a Kathleen Ferrier. Ha esordito in teatro con la Welsh National Opera dove è stata molto apprezzata la sua interpretazione di Abigaille (*Nabucco*). Per la Royal Opera ha interpretato numerosi ruoli tra cui Cio-Cio San (*Madama Butterfly*), Violetta (*La traviata*), Leonora (*Il trovatore*), Abigaille (*Nabucco*), Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*), Gilda (*Rigoletto*), Euridice (*Orfeo*) e Teresa (*Benvenuto Cellini*).

Elizabeth Vaughan ha fatto ritorno alla Welsh National Opera come ospite, interpretando molti ruoli di protagonista in opere tra cui *Manon Lescaut*, *La forza del destino*, *Madama Butterfly*, *La traviata*, *Andrea Chenier* e *The Doctor of Myddfai* di Peter Maxwell Davies. Ha lavorato spesso con English National Opera, Opera North e Scottish Opera interpretando, tra l'altro, *Aida*, *Fidelio*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Tosca*, *Macbeth*, *La traviata*, *Il tritico* e *Peter Grimes* (Auntie).

Dal 1990 canta da mezzosoprano e ha ottenuto grandissime lodi dalla critica per le sue interpretazioni, in particolare nel ruolo di Herodias (*Salome*) interpretato per la Scottish Opera, la Welsh National Opera (nel Regno Unito e in tournée in Giappone) e inoltre con l'Opéra Bastille a Parigi e in Corea del Sud. Altri impegni hanno compreso Madame de

Croissy (*Dialogues of the Carmelites*) per la English National Opera e la Welsh National Opera, interpretazioni in concerto di *Hansel and Gretel* con la City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra diretta da Mark Elder, e interpretazioni in concerto di *Salome* con la Philharmonia Orchestra presso la sala dei concerti di Atene. A livello internazionale la sua carriera l'ha portata alla Metropolitan Opera di New York, a Vienna, Parigi, Amburgo, Monaco, Praga, Marsiglia, Atene, Montreal, Firenze, Pisa, Sydney e in Sud America.

La discografia comprende momenti salienti da *Der Rosenkavalier* per la serie Opera in English di Chandos.

Neal Davies è nato a Newport, nella regione gallese del Gwent, e ha studiato presso il King's College di Londra e la Royal Academy of Music, di cui è stato nominato Fellow nel 2003. Si è perfezionato presso l'International Opera Studio di Zurigo con l'appoggio di dame Gwyneth Jones. È ospite regolare del Festival di Edimburgo e dei Prom della BBC.

La sua attività teatrale ha compreso *Platée* di Rameau diretta da McGegan, *Giulio Cesare* di Handel diretto da Ivor Bolton e Figaro ne *Le nozze di Figaro*, tutte allestite alla Royal Opera,

Covent Garden; *L'Allegro* di Handel per English National Opera; *Radamisto* di Handel per l'Opéra de Marseille; *Theodora* di Handel con Les Arts Florissants e William Christie (Parigi e Salisburgo); *Orlando* di Handel con il Gabrieli Consort; Leporello per Scottish Opera e Opéra de Quebec; Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) Leporello e Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*) per la Welsh National Opera.

La discografia include *A Midsummer Night's Dream* di Britten diretta da sir Colin Davis, *Messiah*, *Theodora* e *Saul* di Handel diretti da Paul McCreech, le Cantate di Vivaldi e *L'Allegro* di Handel diretti da Robert King, e canzoni di Dutilleux dirette da Yan Pascal Tortelier per Chandos.

Alan Fairs ha studiato privatamente con Audrey Langford e Robert Dean. È spesso ospite della Welsh National Opera per cui ha interpretato i ruoli di Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*), Swallow (*Peter Grimes*), Basilio (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), il bonzo (*Madama Butterfly*), Dikoj (*Katá Kabánova*), e ultimamente Bartolo (*Le nozze di Figaro*).

Per altre compagnie e festival ha interpretato numerosi ruoli importanti tra cui Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*), Don Pasquale, Osmin (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), Sarastro

(*Die Zauberflöte*), Leporello (*Don Giovanni*), Gremin (*Eugenio Onieghin*), Oroveso (*Norma*), Geronimo (*Il matrimonio segreto*), Falstaff (*Falstaff* e *Le allegre comari di Windsor*) e Alberich (*Das Rheingold*).

Nata nel Galles meridionale, **Charlotte Ellett** ha studiato presso il Royal Northern College Music e poi presso il National Opera Studio con l'appoggio del Wood/Peters Award in associazione con Glyndebourne, Peter Moores Foundation, The Sybil Tutton Award e The Countess of Munster Award. Prosegue i suoi studi con Enid Hartle e nel gennaio 2004 ha iniziato un programma come Artista associata per la Welsh National Opera.

I ruoli teatrali comprendono Despina (*Così fan tutte*) per il Festival di Aix-en-Provence e la Pimlico Opera, Frasquita (*Carmen*) per la Glyndebourne Touring Opera, Karolka, Susanna e Barbarina per la Welsh National Opera.

Marion McCullough è nata a Bloxwich e ha studiato con Constance Shacklock. I ruoli per la Welsh National Opera comprendono Flosshilde (*Das Rheingold*), Alisa (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Annina e Flora (*La traviata*), e Hänsel (*Hänsel und Gretel*).

Claire Hampton è nata nella regione dello Staffordshire e ha studiato presso il Royal Northern College of Music con Teresa Cahill. Ha ottenuto una borsa di studio della Peter Moores Foundation che le ha consentito di perfezionarsi e proseguire nello studio delle lingue e della lirica. Ha interpretato i ruoli di Dorinda (*Orlando*) e Susanna (*The Marriage of Figaro*) per la Floral Opera e fa parte del Coro della Welsh National Opera.

Rosie Hay è nata a Stoke-on-Trent e ha studiato presso il City of Leeds College of Music. È entrata nel Coro della Welsh National Opera nel 1992 e ha cantato diversi ruoli secondari per la compagnia. Ha inoltre interpretato il ruolo di Cio-Cio-San per Opera Lyrica, Stowe Opera e Welsh National Opera, e Hanna Glawari (*La vedova allegra*) per il Theatre Royal di York.

Imelda Drumm è nata in Irlanda e ha studiato canto con Anne Marie O'Sullivan e Veronica Dunne. Ha completato gli studi di canto presso il National Opera Studio con l'appoggio della Glyndebourne Opera.

I suoi ruoli comprendono Kate Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*), Hänsel (*Hänsel und Gretel*), Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), il ruolo di

protagonista in *Carmen*, Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Beatrice (*Beatrice and Benedict*) per Welsh National Opera; Dorabella e Cherubino per la Glyndebourne Festival Opera; Cherubino, Isolier (*Le Comte Ory*) per la Glyndebourne Touring Opera; il ruolo di protagonista ne *La Cenerentola* per English Touring Opera; e *Carmen* per Raymond Gubbay alla Royal Albert Hall.

Sarah Pope è nata a Leicester e ha frequentato la Guildhall School of Music e il Royal Northern College of Music. È entrata alla Welsh National Opera nel 1992 e ha interpretato diversi ruoli secondari per la compagnia. Ha creato il ruolo di Kabanicha nella commissione WNO MAX.

L'**Orchestra della Welsh National Opera**, fondata nel 1970, è considerata una delle migliori orchestre britanniche, molto apprezzata per il un vasto repertorio operistico e anche per i concerti e le registrazioni.

Dal 1973 al 1986, sotto la guida del suo direttore musicale Richard Armstrong, l'orchestra ha sviluppato un vasto repertorio operistico. A questo periodo risale la prima collaborazione di Reginald Goodall con l'orchestra. Nel 1987 la carica di Direttore

musicale passava a sir Charles Mackerras e gli impegni di registrazione dell'orchestra cominciarono ad ampliarsi notevolmente. In precedenza erano state registrate diverse opere in versione integrale con Richard Bonyng e Joan Sutherland, Montserrat Caballé e Luciano Pavarotti alla testa di cast di prim'ordine. Con Mackerras l'orchestra ha registrato *Osud* di Janáček (CHAN 3019). Carlo Rizzi è Direttore musicale dal 1992. Nel 1995 l'Orchestra della Welsh National Opera si è aggiudicata il premio della Royal Philharmonic Society Music, nella categoria Large Ensemble.

Il **Coro della Welsh National Opera** è nato nel 1968 come organizzazione professionale e ha lavorato con il famoso Voluntary Chorus della compagnia fino al 1973, finché quest'ultimo venne sciolto. Il Voluntary Chorus era composto di cantanti dilettanti che si erano riuniti nel 1943, creando il nucleo di quella che sarebbe divenuta la Welsh National Opera. Alla fine degli anni Sessanta era ormai chiaro che la WNO stava per diventare una compagnia di professionisti e il Voluntary Chorus fu sostituito dal Coro della Welsh National Opera. La reputazione del Coro è cresciuta rapidamente e la sua attività teatrale e

in concerto è molto apprezzata non solo nel repertorio tradizionale come quello verdiano, ma anche nella produzione del Ventesimo secolo, in opere come *A Midsummer Marriage* di Tippett e *Da una casa di morti* di Janáček.

Il Coro ha registrato numerose opere tra cui *Andrea Chenier*, *Tristan und Isolde* e *Parsifal*, *I Masnadieri*, *Norma*, *Hamlet*, *Ernani*, *Anna Bolena* e *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Tosca*, *Rigoletto*, *Faust* e *Un ballo in maschera* oltre a *The Mikado*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *The Yeomen of the Guard*, *Trial by Jury*, *Gloriana* di Britten e *Osud* di Janáček con Mackerras. Tra i brani da concerto registrati sono *Sea Drift* di Delius, *The Vigil of Venus* di George Lloyd e *Hiawatha* di Coleridge-Taylor. All'estero il coro ha svolto alcune tournée a Parigi, Tokyo, New York, Milano, Wiesbaden, Lisbona, Oporto, Berlino e Lipsia.

Sir Charles Mackerras ha studiato presso il Conservatorio di Sydney e si è trasferito in Inghilterra nel 1947. Ha ottenuto una borsa di studio del British Council per proseguire gli studi presso l'Accademia Musicale di Praga. Nel 1947 nasceva il suo appassionato interesse per Janáček, dopo aver ascoltato la *Kat'a Kabanová* diretta dal grande Václav Talich.

In qualità di vicedirettore d'orchestra a Sadler's Wells nel 1951 Mackerras proponeva la prima esecuzione di *Kat'a Kabanová* nel mondo anglofono. Il seguito avrebbe presentato *L'affare Makropoulos* e *Da una casa di morti* a Sadler's Wells; avrebbe poi continuato a dirigere le opere di Janáček in allestimenti di grande successo, oltre a un repertorio più tradizionale alla sua nomina a Direttore musicale della English National Opera (1970–77) e in seguito della Welsh National Opera (1987–1992). È stato un pioniere della diffusione della musica di Janáček nelle capitali europee, negli USA e in Australia. Una delle sue opere predilette è *Jenůfa*.

Sir Charles Mackerras ha al suo attivo una lunga collaborazione con la Filarmonica ceca, con cui ha registrato la maggior parte delle opere orchestrali di Janáček oltre a *Kat'a Kabanová* e *Rusalka* di Dvořák. La sua vasta discografia comprende un premiato ciclo di opere di Janáček con i Wiener Philharmoniker all'inizio degli anni Ottanta. Le registrazioni per Chandos comprendono la versione originale della *Messa lagolitica* di Janáček,

Psalmus Hungaricus di Kodály e il Concerto per violoncello di Dvořák. Per la serie Opera in English ha registrato *Osud*, *La traviata*, *Werther*, *Julius Caesar* e *Mary Stuart*.

Sir Charles Mackerras ha svolto inoltre ricerche approfondite sulla musica del XVIII secolo, soprattutto quella di Handel and Mozart. Ha registrato opere di Mozart e Gilbert e Sullivan oltre a una serie completa delle sinfonie di Mozart, Beethoven e Brahms, numerosi oratori di Handel e sinfonie di Mahler ed Elgar. Attualmente è Principal Guest Conductor della Philharmonia Orchestra, Conductor Laureate della Scottish Chamber Orchestra e Conductor Emeritus della Welsh National Opera e della San Francisco Opera.

Sir Charles Mackerras ha ricevuto diverse onorificenze, tra cui il CBE nel 1974, seguito dalla nomina a baronetto nel 1979, la Medaglia di Merito della Repubblica Ceca nel 1996 e il titolo di Companion of the Order of Australia nel 1997. Nel 2003 all'elenco delle onorificenze reali britanniche si è aggiunto il Companion of Honour.



Clive Barda

Janice Watson
as Jenůfa



Clive Bartha

Welsh National Opera's production of *Jenüfa*



Clive Bartha

Welsh National Opera's production of *Jenüfa*

COMPACT DISC ONE

Act I

End of August. Late afternoon. A lonely mill in the mountains. On the right, in front of the house, the overhanging roof is supported by wooden posts. Some baskets; some felled timber. In the background, a stream.

Scene One

Jenůfa, a pot of rosemary in her hand, stands on a knoll by the stream and looks into the distance shading her eyes with her hand. Grandmother Buryja sits under the overhanging roof selecting potatoes from a basket, cutting their eyes out and throwing them into a bag. Left, on a tree trunk, sits dark-haired Laca whistling away with a knife at a whipstock.

Jenůfa

1 Soon it will be evening and Števa has not come back;
horrible dreams have haunted me all through the night,
and dawn brought no rest but only new torments...
O Virgin Mary,
if you do not hear my prayer,
if as a soldier my lover is sent away,
so that we cannot be married,
shame and dishonour will drive me to damnation!
O Virgin Mary,
please have mercy on me!

Grandmother Buryja

Jenůfa, you're always leaving your work and running off!
Must I sit here and do all this work myself?
You know quite well my poor old eyes see very badly.

Laca (*ironically, sarcastic*)

Yes, Grandmama, yes, there are many things your eyes do not see;
you have always treated me just like any common labourer who must work to eat.

I'm not yours, that I know well,
not your flesh and blood.
You have gone out of your way to make me feel it;
after my parents had died, I wanted affection,
But you cuddled little Števa on your knee,
and stroked his fair hair,
and said it was 'golden just like the sun!'
I was ignored by you, even though I was also an orphan. If my share you'd give back to me...

Jenůfa (*Kneeling, she turns away from the stream.*)

Laca, always speaking to poor Grandma so rudely!

Laca

Give back to me my twelve-hundred crowns,
then I'd go away, go wherever I wanted!

Jenůfa

And you expect us to love you!

Grandmother Buryja

Oh yes, he behaves as though I don't matter.
Truly, he does not consider me mistress here,
let alone one of the family.

Laca (*to Grandmother Buryja*)

And now you expect Jenůfa to work hard,
worrying if Števa's been conscripted.

Jenůfa (*to herself*)

How well he knows what I hide in my heart!
With those painful and penetrating eyes he sees into my heart, into my soul!
I shall not even bother to speak to him,
wretched man.

(*to Grandmother Buryja*)

Grandmama, don't get all upset!
I'll make up for all the work I've missed.
I was afraid my rosemary plant would wither up and die:
so I went off to water it.

If my plant should wither,
Grandma, you know that old saying
that happiness and joy would also wither.

Jano (*calling from the mill*)

Jenůfka, hey, Jenůfka, hey!
I can read now, now I know how to read.
(*pleading*)
Won't you write for me,
just a few more pages?

Jenůfa

Patience, patience, Jano!

When I go to the town again, I'll bring you a book to read, and you can teach yourself then!
I shall teach you how to write as well, you'll be glad of that when you're older.
And now off to work with you,
or we'll have Grandmother scolding us again!

Jano (*distant, from the mill*)

Hey, hey, hey, hey!
I know how to read,
Jenůfa has taught me to read!

Grandmother Buryja (*more mildly*)

That is what you enjoy!
Yes, my girl, that is what you enjoy!
Barena you've taught to read and write already!
You've a man's common sense like your foster-mother,
there's no doubt at all you should have been a teacher.

Jenůfa (*sighing*)

Ah! Yes;
but Granny dear,
my common sense has long since flowed away like water in the mill stream.

Scene Two

The Foreman in a suit, not overalls, whitened with flour, comes along and stops by Laca.

The Foreman

2 What are you doing, Laca?
That's a fine whipstock you have there.

Laca

With such a blunt knife it will take me hours to get it finished.
Sharpen it for me!

Foreman (*taking a whetstone from his pocket and sharpening the knife*)
Give it here!

(*Laca flicks Jenůfa's kerchief from her head with the end of the whipstock.*)

Jenůfa (*without turning round*)
Stop that Laca!
You always try to plague and torment me...

Laca
If it had been Števa who'd done that,
Yes, but would you have minded?

Jenůfa
Števa would never do it.

Laca
Yes, but would you would have minded?

Jenůfa
Števa would never do it.

Laca
Only because you are always snuggling so close together!

Jenůfa
That's not your business,
that does not concern you.

(*Jenůfa goes into the house by the porch; after a while she comes out again, settles herself by the basket and busies herself with the potatoes.*)

Laca (*to the Foreman who gazes after Jenůfa as she goes off*)
She'll make a charming sister-in-law,
she'll be so kind and so good to me!...

The Foreman
Yes, yes, she's a nice looking girl;
she could turn your head completely;
she's as graceful as a flower,
and with those big dove-grey eyes of hers,
she tears the soul out of you.
She's a nice looking girl,
she could turn your head completely.
But you don't need me to tell you all this,
for you know yourself the power those eyes have!

Laca (*scornfully*)
I... I... You might well have noticed just how much I love her.
Just now she was grieving over her rosemary,
that was because she didn't know I'd put worms all around the plant,
so that it, just like her wedding, would be destroyed,
like this wedding she and Števa plan,
which they're both preparing for.

The Foreman
Look here, Laca,
that's what I find so strange,

You're so aggressive.
Just as if you want to make us hate you.
Come now,
don't deny it, you're not really so hard-hearted.
And I've often noticed
that when Jenůfa's here, you are different.

Laca
Stupid talk!
That's all nonsense.
Just remember,
remember she is not his bride yet,
for if today he has been conscripted,
there will be no wedding.

The Foreman
He's not taken!
I met the messenger just now. Only nine
altogether were recruited, and Števa not!

Jenůfa (*jumping up for joy*)
He's not taken!
(*Kissing Grandmother Buryja*)
God be praised, he's not taken, oh dearest
Grandma!

Laca
He's not taken?
And they dare to call this justice!
He's as strong as ten men!

Grandmother Buryja
He's not taken!
He's been lucky since he was a baby.

The Foreman
He's not taken!
Since he was a baby he's been lucky.

Laca
And they dare to call this justice!
(*The Kostelnička enters.*)

Kostelnička
Števa's not been taken?

Laca
And they dare to call this justice!

Jenůfa
Welcome, welcome, mamicko!
(*Kostelnička enters the mill.*)

The Foreman
Here, take it;
this knife of yours, I'm afraid,
just won't sharpen.

Scene Three
The Foreman says goodbye and goes in.

Grandmother Buryja (*about to go in after the Kostelnička*)

3 Come now, Jenůfa, we must go and join your mother.

Jenůfa
Grandma, I beg of you – don't make me go in with mother!
Don't make me, Grandma!

Grandmother Buryja

Child, you're acting so strangely!

Scene Four

The song of the recruits and the band playing is heard off stage.

Recruits

- [4] They're all for marrying,
Rather than soldiering!
But I shall not be wed!
I'll join the army instead!
If I were rich I could buy myself out of it,
But I've no money to pay,
So I'm a soldier today.

Števa

And so a-soldiering I must go!
And then there'll be no more courting!

Jenůfa (*looking around the recruits and recognising*

Števa)

Števa!

Števuška!

Recruits

Then there'll be no more courting!
Hi there! Hi there! Hi there!

(Recruits enter from the left.)

The Foreman

Števa has brought the music with him!
You can all see now that he's not been taken!
(Števa appears with the recruits and four

musicians. Jenůfa goes to meet him.)

Recruits, Millworkers and Servants
Hurrah there!

Recruits

They're all for marrying,
Rather than soldiering,
But I shall not be wed.
I'll join the army instead!
If I were rich I would buy myself out of it,
But I've no money to pay,
So I'm a soldier today.

Laca and Chorus

If they were rich they'd buy themselves out,
Yes, they would buy themselves out.

(Števa, ginger blond, with a lock of hair combed over his forehead – drunk – unsteady on his legs, waves his flower-bedecked hat.)

Števa

And so a-soldiering I must go,
Then there'll be no more courting!

Recruits

There'll be no more courting!

Jenůfa

Števa!

Števuška! Števa!

Scene Five

Jenůfa (*reproachfully*)

- [5] My dear heart, my Števa, Števuška!

Oh! Števa you're drunk again!

Števa

I, I!

You say I'm drunk?

This from you,

Jenůfa?

Ah, you know my name is Štefan

Buryja?

That I'm owner of this mill?

That is the reason all the girls like me!

(indicating the posy)

See this posy that I have here? That's from one of them!

(to the musicians)

Why have you stopped your playing?

You underfed leechers you!

(He throws money with both hands, which the musicians pick up.)

Here, take it!

Play the song that Jenůfa likes:

'Far away there in the town of Nových

Zámků...'

Števa, Recruits, Millworkers and Servants

Far away there in the town of Nových Zámků
stood a high tower built of fine and handsome fellows.

High above all was a handsome young boy
standing and his fair hair like a golden dome
was shining.

But the boy's sweetheart had seen this fine dome
falling,

She was there waiting and in her lap she caught

it.

Yes, she saw that golden dome was falling down
and in her lap she caught it!

Števa

Come now, Jenůfa!

All the Men

Yes, she saw that golden dome was falling down
and in her lap she caught it!

(Števa clasps Jenůfa round the waist.)

Števa

So, we will dance at our wedding day!

(The Kostelnička stops the musicians with a gesture of the hand.)

Kostelnička

So, this is the way your whole life would be,
and you, Jenůfa,

you would have to live on what was left after this
spendthrift had wasted his money!

This whole family is the same!

Ah, he was so strong and manly,
golden-haired and handsome;
I longed for him to be mine
even before he was first married,
and even more when his wife died.

My mother warned me against him,
said that he'd always been a hopeless spendthrift!
I paid no heed to what she said.

So I never told her how life was with him
even when week after week

he came back drunk;
 until in the end he was never sober at all!
 He got into debt, squandered every penny we had.
 Then when I tried to reason with him
 he beat me brutally,
 many a night I had to hide in the fields
 to escape from him!
 I have a feeling deep within me
 that this Števa of Veborany
 is not yet worthy to be married
 to my foster-daughter.

Jenůfa
 Oh, Mamičko, don't be angry.

Kostelnička
 I have said nothing to you until now because
 I know you love him.
 Tell him this:
 I will not give my permission for you two to
 marry yet,
 not till Števa's done a year's trial,
 during which he gives up drinking.

All the Men
 How can she be so hard-hearted?

Kostelnička
 If you should disobey, Jenůfa,
 if you let yourself be influenced by Števa,
 God will surely strike you.

Grandmother Buryja
 Oh stop, my daughter!
 (*Števa, shaken, leans his head against the pillar.*)

She is so hard-hearted.
Kostelnička
 You must go away tomorrow...

Grandmother Buryja
 But he's not really as bad as you think,
 and even her late husband, my dear son,
 he was not all that bad.

Laca (*ironically aside*)
 She keeps on spoiling him.

Kostelnička
 Then there will be no more gossip that you only
 seek your fortune here.

Laca
 Kostelnička, you have dropped your scarf here,
 and I would like also to kiss your hand.

All the Men
 How can she be so hard-hearted?

Kostelnička
 I hope you all enjoy yourselves here!

Grandmother Buryja
 Now then, all you fiddlers,
 go away, go away!
 Leave our lads alone now!
 Go away, go away!

All
 Go away, go away!
 Now then all you fiddlers,
 Go away, go away!
 Leave our lads alone now,

Go away, go away, *etc.*
The Foreman
 Go away, go away!

Grandmother Buryja
 Go and sleep now, Števuško,
 Go!
 You're young now,
 led on by your companions;
 and you forgot yourself!

Recruits
 Led astray by your companions?

Grandmother Buryja
 And you, Jenůfa, don't cry!
 Love must always endeavour
 over misfortune to triumph.

The Foreman then everyone
 Love must always endeavour,
 over misfortune to triumph.
 (*All leave, except Jenůfa and Števa.*)

Scene Six

Jenůfa (*quietly, to Števa*)
 [6] Števa, Števa, I know you got drunk today
 because you were so happy.
 But I beg you, Števuška,
 don't make my mother cross;
 you know my trouble,
 I'm so afraid my heart trembles within me,
 lest my mother and all the neighbours find out

about my guilty secret.
 I dread the punishment that might fall on me;
 all night long I lie awake.
 But remember, my beloved,
 God has only helped us over your conscription,
 so that we might soon be married.
 Even without that I shall be reproached quite
 enough by my mother!
 She has always been so proud of me, you know,
 you have heard her.
 I just don't know
 what I'd do if we did not get married in time!
 I just don't know
 what would happen to me!

Števa
 Do shut up!
 Now look here,
 Now look here, Aunt Kostelnička always scolds me
 all for your sake,
 and it's only because I love you;
 just now you could have seen it,
 how all the girls are eager to smile at me.

Jenůfa (*irritated*)
 Yes, but now you should take no notice,
 I am the one whom you belong to.
 If you left me
 I'd have to kill myself!
 (*seizing him by the shoulder*)
 God! How can you behave like this?
 God in heaven!
 Weak and childish,

how can you be so stupid?
(*shaking him*)

Števa (*trying to calm Jenůfa*)
You don't really think that I'd leave you?
For your cheeks are like two rosy apples,
Jenůfa;
you are far the fairest of all creatures,
yes, you're far the fairest!

Jenůfa
Ah! If you left me I'd kill myself!
If you left me, I'd have to kill myself!

Grandmother Buryja
Come, stop this bickering!
Your head will be much clearer in the morning!
Go, Števa, go and lie down now!

Števa
O Jenůfa!
You are far the fairest of all creatures!
(*going off*)
Of all creatures...

(*Grandmother Buryja and Števa go off. Jenůfa sits down once again by the basket with bowed head, and begins to work.*)

Scene Seven
Laca gets up. He has thrown away the whip, but still has the knife in his hand.

Laca
[7] How all this boasting of Števa has suddenly

faded, when Kostelnička scolded!
Jenůfa
Even so, he remains a hundred times better than you.

Laca
Even now!
(*Feverish with passion, he picks up the posy that was thrown away.*)
Jenůfa, here is the posy which he dropped just now.
One which was given by a girl,
by one of those girls he says, always smile at him!
Look now!
I'll pin it here on your dress for you...

Jenůfa (*drawing herself up proudly*)
Give it to me!
This little posy,
which my sweetheart was given to honour him,
I'll wear it proudly.

Laca (*aside*)
You'll wear it proudly!
(*aloud*)
And even though he sees nothing else in you,
but those cheeks of yours like rosy apples.
(*with a glance at the knife in his hand*)
Think how this knife, how it could spoil those looks of yours.
(*Barena comes out to work. Laca approaches Jenůfa feverishly excited, holding the posy and the knife in his right hand.*)
But you're not going to get those flowers for

nothing.
(*Trying to embrace her.*)

Jenůfa (*defending herself*)
Laca, I shall hit you!

Laca
What have you against me?

Jenůfa (*crying out*)
Jesus Maria!
(*As she defends herself, and as he is leaning down to her, he passes his knife across her cheek.*)
Laca – you have slashed me!

(*She presses her scarf to her cheek. Barena raises her hands in horror.*)

Laca (*on his knees, holding Jenůfa in his arms*)
What have I done to you?
Jenůfka!
(*Jenůfa runs off into the building.*)
I have loved you all my life,
All my life I've loved you!

Grandmother Buryja (*hurrying out*)
What's this?
Whatever's happened?

The Foreman (*hurrying out*)
What's this?
Whatever's happened?

Barena (*urgently*)
It was an accident,

they were fooling, he was only trying to kiss her.
He had his knife in his hand like this
and by accident, he scratched her cheek,
somehow scratched her.
(*The Foreman runs indoors after Jenůfa.*)
Thanks to heaven that it didn't go in her eye!

Grandmother Buryja
Only sorrow,
that is all you boys have ever brought me!

The Foreman (*returning*)
Grandmother, come to Jenůfa!
She is fainting;
someone send for Kostelnička,
she must come here!
(*The grandmother hastens indoors. Laca pulls himself together and rushes off.*)
She can help her!
(*The foreman calls after him.*)
Laca, don't run away,
you did to her it on purpose!

Act II
Slovakian peasant living room, five months later. The walls covered with holy pictures and statuettes. By the door, a holy water stoup; elsewhere a stove, a feather bed made up for the day, a trunk, a shelf with china, cutlery etc., a clothes chest; some chairs. By the window, a picture of the Virgin Mary.

Scene One
[8] *Jenůfa is in ordinary peasant clothes, with an obvious scar on her pallid cheek; she sits at the table*

sewing with bent head. Kostelnička goes to the door leading to the bedroom and opens it.

Kostelnička

- 9 If I leave the door ajar a little,
then it will make your room warmer.
Tell me why you are always praying at the window
like a soul in torment?

Jenůfa

I cannot help it;
I have no peace of mind now!

Kostelnička (*sighing*)

I believe you...
I too have no peace of mind.
You were so upset that day when I brought you
back home.
and I felt that you were not quite telling me
everything.
And later when you told me, when you
confessed your guilt to me...
Then I thought that such disgrace would kill
me,
I could not bear the shame.
Fearfully I kept you hidden in your dishonour,
until the day when the boy first saw the light,
and all the time his father,
the worthy Števa, did not care at all!

(Jenůfa hurries to the bedroom door and looks in.)

Jenůfa

Hush now! I think I heard little Števa crying.

Kostelnička

How you always spoil the baby!
It would be far better if you went down on your
knees and prayed,
prayed that God might take it from you.

Jenůfa (*returning to the table to work*)

Ah, no!
He is still asleep!
He sleeps so sweetly,
so quietly.

Kostelnička

Better if you went down on your knees and
prayed,
prayed that God might take it from you.

Jenůfa

All these eight days that he's been alive,
never, never has he once cried!

Kostelnička

But he'll soon be howling,
he will drive us mad.
Ah! His very existence makes me sick!
I was so proud, ah, how proud I was of you.
God in Heaven!

(Laying her work aside, Jenůfa gets up.)

Jenůfa

Ah, I feel so faint, Mamičko!

Kostelnička

Ah, how proud I was of you!

Jenůfa

Mamičko, I'll go and rest now!
*(Kostelnička takes a small pot from the stove and
hands it to Jenůfa.)*

Kostelnička

Yes, but you should swallow more of this first,
you will find it helps you sleep much better.
Your bed is ready,
and I have lit the candle for you!

Jenůfa

So good night, Mamičko!

(Jenůfa drinks and goes slowly into the bedroom.)

Scene Two

Kostelnička (*shutting the door after Jenůfa*)

- 10 Yes, in all these twenty weeks that I've kept the
shutters tightly closed,
your worthy lover Števa has not shown his face
here.
Today, though, I have sent to tell him he must
come!
Then we shall settle it.
And the baby, it is pale like Števa,
and so like his father, it disgusts me!
(desperate)
How I have prayed and fasted,
prayed that the child might not be born –
but my prayers have all been useless,
it's been born a week now,
and still it shows no sign of dying.

So I'm forced to sacrifice Jenůfa to that wretched
Števa;
as well as that I have to plead with him.
(a noise at the door)
There he is!

*(She locks the bedroom door and opens the main
door. Števa enters.)*

Scene Three

Števa (*anxious*)

- 11 Aunt Kostelnička, in the note you sent me
you spoke of some great misfortune if I did not
come!
Tell me why you wanted me.

*(Kostelnička points to the bedroom door. Števa
hesitates.)*

Kostelnička

Come inside...
Why hesitate?

Števa

I am uneasy...
Something is wrong with Jenůfa?

Kostelnička

She has recovered, and the baby is well too.

Števa

What, it's born already?

Kostelnička (*with deep reproach*)

And you did not even bother to come here,
did not even ask.

Števa

Even so, I've thought about it often.

I was really very sorry.

But then I recalled how you mocked at me,
persecuted me just like always.

And I thought how Jenůfa's beauty had been
ruined,

I couldn't help myself.

Kostelnička

Well, come and see her!

Števa

I am frightened.

Has she come back then?

Kostelnička

Jenůfa's sleeping.

(She opens the bedroom door.)

Števa

When did she return then?

Kostelnička

She was hidden in there.

There now, come and look at your baby.

Like you, he's called Števa;

I myself have christened him.

Števa

Oh, poor little mite.

Kostelnička

Ah, poor little mite!

Števa

I will support it gladly,

but no-one must be told that I'm the father!

Kostelnička

But it's far worse, far worse for Jenůfa!

(With a spasmodic movement she grips his hand

and pulls him to the door of the bedroom.)

You must come and look at her too...

At Jenůfa! What has this poor creature done to
you,

that you've brought her this shame and
dishonour?

But surely you will help her now?

Just look now,

he is your son, your baby.

And he is so like you!

Come now, Števa!

Come now and look at him!

Must I fall upon my knees and beg you to look.

(falling on her knees)

Števa, won't you take them both and marry

Jenůfa?

(Števa covers his face with his hands.)

Please do not desert my foster-daughter,

my daughter, my only joy...

Even if with you she should be unhappy,

You must not leave her with this shame upon

her name and on mine too...

You're weeping?

(She stands up and takes him by the hand.)

You're weeping?

Come to them Števa, in your arms take your

own baby,

comfort Jenůfa!

Števa *(slipping his hand away)*

Aunt, your words would melt a heart of stone,

but I cannot marry her!

It would bring us suffering, both of us.

Kostelnička

Why on you both?

Števa

Because she made me frightened,

for she used to be so sweet and gentle,

so full of joy.

But suddenly she began to alter before my

eyes,

she became like you with your dreadful

intensity.

Then when I saw her after the enlistment,

when I saw her cheek so badly cut,

all my love for her disappeared,

and you, Aunt,

(don't be cross when I speak quite frankly)

you make me frightened;

for you seem to me to be so strange, dreadful,

like some horrible sorceress,

following me and plaguing me,

always trying to persecute me!

Anyway, I'm now engaged again,

I'm going to marry Karolka!

So it's finished, really finished!

Kostelnička

Števa!

Jenůfa *(from her bedroom in her sleep)*

Mamičko, see a stone will crush me!

(Števa visibly shudders and runs out of the room.)

Kostelnička

Can she be awake?

No, she was just talking in her sleep!

Števa must have heard...

Once more she's sleeping.

(She shuts the door again quickly. With suppressed

fury)

He ran off, wretched fellow!

Nor did he once go near the baby,

and it's his own flesh and blood!

(with utmost excitement)

Oh, I feel that I could kill this miserable

baby,

and throw it at his feet –

'There! There it is,

You have it on your conscience!'

(beginning to think in a calmer way)

What must I do!?

(The house door opens. Laca enters unobserved.)

Who will save her now?

Laca

Look it's me, Aunt!

You know how I like to come and talk to you
when I'm feeling lonely.

Scene Four

Laca

¹² But I saw a man come in here just now.
It was Števa, I am certain.
What did he want?
Does it mean perhaps Jenůfa's here?

Kostelnička

Yes, she's back.

Laca

And so she'll marry him now.

Kostelnička

No... She did not speak to him at all.

Laca

Then will you give her to me?
For you've encouraged me to hope that one day,
it might turn out that way.
Oh, I will never leave her,
not for all the world.

Kostelnička

I have kept her all this time,
Laca you must know the whole story.
It will really test your love for her.
Jenůfa, poor unfortunate girl, never went to the
city at all.
I have kept her all this time, hidden in there.
Just a week ago she had a baby by Števa!

Laca

Aunt, is this the truth you tell me?

You're only testing me!

Kostelnička

God is my witness,
Everything I have told you is but the simple
truth.

Laca

Oh, Aunt,
such a burden weighs upon me just like a stone,
like a heavy stone...
And now do you expect me to take Števa's baby?

*(Kostelnička crosses the room, holding her head in
her hands.)*

Kostelnička

Laca, you must believe me,
Števa's child did not survive...
it died!

Laca

And does Števa know that?

Kostelnička

He knows. But I wash my hands of him.
I pray now for vengeance on him throughout his
miserable existence.
(with increased feverishness)
Now go!
And try to find out the date of his wedding.
Find all about it.
Now go!

Laca

I'll go now,

I'll only be a moment, one moment.

COMPACT DISC TWO

Scene Five

Kostelnička

¹ One moment...
In that moment must I lose hope of salvation
Of eternity?
What if I took the baby somewhere far away?
No...
For he would only be a burden.
An everlasting shame and dishonour!
I could do it, only I could save her...
The Lord God,
He knows how it would be if the baby stayed
here...

*(She takes a woollen shawl from a hook and wraps
it round herself.)*

So to the Lord God I'll give the child...

It will be simple and quicker!

Then when the Spring melts the ice away,
there'll be no trace of him.

God will surely take him,

He is too young to have sinned yet.

(in the highest excitement, her senses disordered)

How they would mock me,
how they would mock Jenůfa!

*(She doubles herself up like a hag and points her
finger.)*

Just look at her,

Kostelnička!

*(She slips quickly into the bedroom and returns
with the child, which she has wrapped in the shawl.)*
Sin-begotten... just like his miserable father,
Števa.

Scene Six

*The Kostelnička locks the door and hurries away.
Jenůfa comes into the room.*

Jenůfa

² Mamičko, my head is aching.
Oh, my head is heavy like a stone!
Help me now!
But where are you, Mamičko!
(looking slowly round her)
This is mother's room.
(rubbing her forehead)
And I must remain in there hidden in my little
bedroom,
(anxiously)
So that no one sees me here.
Mother will reproach me bitterly,
Her words like daggers pierce my heart.
Now it's evening,
I can have the shutters open!
All is dark,
and the moon sheds its light upon all poor
creatures...
and thousands and thousands of stars...
and Števa still has not come,
and now he will not come.
If he could once see his baby,

just see those deep blue eyes of his...
 And where is my Števuška?
 Where have you put him?
(She runs into the bedroom and comes back again.)
 Where have you put him?
(She searches among the bedding.)
 Where is my Števuška?
 Ah, I can hear him,
 I can hear him crying.
 Do not hurt him, good people;
 I, and I alone am guilty:
 I and Števa.
 Where have you put my baby?
 He will fall there, he'll fall!
 He will catch cold there!
 He will freeze to death!
 Do not abandon him!
(crying out)
 Ah! Wait!
 I will protect him!
(She runs to the door, which is locked, and presses against it with her hands. Quietly)
 Where am I?
 Surely this is my mother's room...
 And the door is locked...
(joyfully)
 Now I know, Mother has gone to the mill with him!
 That's it...
 Gone to show them all Števa's baby,
 Števa's baby!
(worried)

But now I must pray for Števuška,
 kneeling here at the Blessed Virgin's feet.
(She takes the picture from the wall, puts it on the table and kneels down.)
 Hail Mary, Holy Queen,
 Hail, Thou mother of mercy,
 Hail, sweetest holy queen,
 Our hope in our sadness!
 Hail Mary!
 Hail Mary, to Thee!
 We cry on earth,
 poor banished suffering children,
 to Thee we send our sighs, crying and sorrowing
 in our sorrowing vale of tears.
 Oh, turn then to us your most merciful eyes
 Jesus Christ, blessed fruit of Thy womb,
 and after our ever-wandering exile,
 have mercy on us,
 O Thou sweetest Virgin Maria!
(There is a noise at the door. Feverishly)
 And Števuška protect for me,
 and do not desert him,
(knocking at the door)
 and do not desert him,
 O most merciful mother!

Scene Seven
Jenůfa jumps up.

Jenůfa
 3 Who is there?

Kostelnička *(from outside, distraught, panting)*

and
trembling)
 Jenůfa,
 why aren't you asleep still?
 Open the window!
(Jenůfa gently opens the window.)

Jenůfa
 Have you brought Števuška?

Kostelnička *(at the window, in a state of shock)*
 Here's the key, quickly now, open the door for me.
 How my hands are trembling,
 frozen... frozen...

(Jenůfa shuts the window, but not completely – goes to the door and unlocks it.)

Jenůfa
 Where is Števuška?
 Have you left him behind at the mill?
(joyfully)
 And now perhaps, yes, Števa himself will
 come and bring him Mamičko, for
 he's such a lovely baby.

Kostelnička
 Girl, these are delusions,
 God in Heaven help you!
 Listen to me, something dreadful has happened.
 You've had a fever for two whole days
 and your poor baby's dead now, yes it's dead now!
(Jenůfa sinks down on her knees before Kostelnička

and leans her head on her lap.)

Jenůfa
 He died then,
 my darling baby boy,
(sobbing)
 Mamičko, how my heart is aching,
 though I know you always said to me
 that this would be the best thing for him,
 for God could give him so much more,
 more than I could offer him!
 So my child died,
 now he's an angel in heaven.
 But without him I feel so broken.

Kostelnička
 You should give thanks to Heaven!
 Now you are free again.

Jenůfa *(decisively, firm)*
 What of Števa?
 Mamičko, you gave me your promise that you
 would send for him.
 We must tell him what has happened.

Kostelnička
 May his name be accursed.
 He came here while you were in there sleeping,
 saw the baby.
 I went down on my knees before him,
 but he offered money and nothing else,
 said you made him frightened,
 said that your face was scarred and ugly,
 said that I too frightened him,

like a sorceress, a sorceress!

Jenůfa

Lord God forgive him!

Kostelnička

Now he says he's going to marry Karolka!
Do not break your heart over this miserable
drunken spendthrift!

You should think rather of Laca!
There you have a love you could depend on!

Scene Eight

Kostelnička

⁴ He's coming now!...

(to Jenůfa hurriedly)

He knows all about it,

I have told him everything
and he's forgiven you.

Laca

Aunty, Aunty,

no one was in at the Mayor's house.

(He sees Jenůfa, and offers his hand.)

Jenůfka!

God be with you,

Jenůfka!

Won't you take my hand now?

Jenůfa

I must thank you, Laca,
for all your kindness,
and for the generous way in which you behaved
while I was kept in hiding,

I often sat in there and heard you talking,
heard how you always spoke of me with my dear
mother.

You know how I've been broken.

Laca

Soon you'll be well again,
and learn to bear your loss!

Jenůfa

I had never thought my life would be like this,
never be like this,
but now I feel that this must be the end!

Laca *(sadly)*

You mean that you will not take me
Jenůfka, take me Jenůfka?

Kostelnička

Yes, she'll take you, Laca,
she will take you!

She's already come back to her senses,
(sinking into an armchair)

and she must be happy once again.

Jenůfa

Mamičko speaks sometimes so childishly!

How could you take me now?

Oh, Laca think it over!

I have neither wealth nor honour,
and as for love, however hard I try –
that is lost for ever.

Do you want me like that?

Laca *(taking her in his arms and kissing her on the
cheek)*

Yes, Jenůfka, yes,

Jenůfka.

Jenůfa *(gently, lightly)*

Then I will gladly share with you all the
good and all the ill that may befall us!

Laca

If only you will take me!

Kostelnička *(pulling herself up with an effort and
going over to them)*

Now, you see,

I have arranged it well;

Everything's all right now.

So receive my blessing
from a heart that is heavy.

May the Lord God guide you safely
through all misfortune,

May He bless you with good health,
with contentment and property...

As for Števa,
he who is the cause of this misfortune,
curses on him!

Should he wish to marry,

should he ever find a girl to take him

better she go mad before she crosses his threshold!

May he be damned as I am!

(A draught forces the window open.)

Laca

Aunty, what's wrong with you?

Kostelnička

Don't you hear outside there that wild crying?
(sobs)

Hold me!

*(Laca sympathetically puts his arm around her
shoulders.)*

Do not leave me!

Laca, stay!

(She looks fearfully round her.)

Laca

Aunty, what's wrong with you?

Kostelnička

Shut that window!

(Jenůfa goes to close the window.)

Jenůfa

How bitter and cruel the wind!

Kostelnička

The icy hand of death, tearing at my heart!

Act III

*Spring time, early morning, March. The
Kostelnička's room as in Act Two. On the table,
which is covered with a white cloth, stands the
potted rosemary and a plate with a few rosemary
sprigs tied up with a ribbon; a bottle of wine,
glasses, a plate of small round cakes.*

Scene One

Jenůfa, in her best clothes, sits on a chair with a

prayer book and a handkerchief in her hand. Laca stands near Jenůfa. Grandmother Buryja sits in an armchair by the table. The Kostelnička walks up and down in feverish restlessness – she looks very pale and exhausted. Jenůfa seems more cheerful than in Act Two, but very serious.

Maid

5 Don't you feel nervous, Jenůfka?

Jenůfa

No, no!

Laca

Why should she be so nervous?

She knows I'll never harm her again.

Maid

Well, that's what usually happens;
girls are sad when they lose their freedom.
God knows I was very stupid,
spent the whole time crying.
Why, I just can't imagine,
for I had married a good and honest man!

Kostelnička (*frightened, shocked*)

Who's that making a noise out there?

Who is there?

Maid (*opening the door to the new arrivals*)

Welcome!

(*to Kostelnička*)

Do not be afraid,
for it is only the Mayor and his wife.

Scene Two

Mayor (*offering his hand to Kostelnička*)

6 God be with you!

Were you afraid, frightened of us?

Us? Frightened to us?

You invited us to come.

Maid

She is very ill now.

Welcome! Welcome!

Mayor

Karolka's waiting for Števa,
they'll be here together.

Laca

You are welcome!

Jenůfa

Welcome!

Maid (*aside, at the table*)

What is best for me to do now?

Should I give them flowers first or offer them a
glass of wine?

I have only come to help out.

Kostelnička is not quite herself yet after her
illness!

(*She pours out the drinks and distributes the sprigs
of rosemary.*)

Mayor

Clearly she's fading,
one can see that!

I can remember how fit and strong you were,
so alive and active!

(*raises his glass to her*)

Here's an end to your troubles,

God grant you'll be well again!

Kostelnička

Today I've been preparing for Jenůfa's wedding
with a worthy man;

that is no cause for weeping,

but I feel myself failing.

(*clasps her head in her hands*)

Ah, this unending torment!

Sleep cannot relieve the torture!

I just lie awake the whole night, all the time I'm
thinking, worrying.

Jenůfa

Mamičko,

with the help of God above you will recover!

Kostelnička

But I don't want that.

Oh no!

I don't want that...

Long life for me would only be horror,

only horror...

But what then?

(*pulling herself together*)

This is your wedding day,

Jenůfa,

and that makes me happy.

Mayor's Wife

What has given Jenůfa such a strange idea,
that her dress is so plain and sombre on her
wedding morning?

Kostelnička

What, Jenůfa?

All the finest gentry dress plainly and simply
when they go to the altar.

Why should my foster-daughter disregard
tradition on her wedding day?

Mayor's Wife

Gentry folk have their own habits and fashions,
but we believe in country customs,

I'd never dream of being wed without my bridal
crown and ribbons.

Never, not for all the money in the world.

Never!

Kostelnička

Come along and look at the trousseau I've made
for her!

Maid

Even so, Jenůfa will make a good and loving wife
for Laca.

Kostelnička

I have worked on all of it,
every single stitch...

You will never see such a trousseau anywhere!

(*Everyone goes into the bedroom except Jenůfa and
Laca.*)

Scene Three

Jenůfa

7 There now, Laca,
just as I foresaw,
everybody was commenting
on the way I'm dressed for my wedding.
Laca (*taking a little posy from his jacket pocket*)
Jenůfka,
I at least have brought you some flowers...
They're from Belovec,
from the old gardener.

Jenůfa

Thank you so much, Laca!

Laca

Won't you take them now?
Jenůfka!

Jenůfa (*fastening the posy to her dress*)

Ah, Laca!
Truly you have not deserved such a bride.

Laca

Oh, my dearest, say no more about it.
Only when Kostelnička told me,
in that first moment
I thought that I could never bear it!
But then afterwards I could not help forgiving
you!
Ah, but I have harmed you so in too many ways.
My whole life I'll spend trying to make it up to
you.

Jenůfa

Laca, I feel so sorry,
you've been completely loyal
you, not Števa.

Laca

I know that Števa you preferred,
if you could only not think of him!
My heart was full of hatred for Števa,
and I would have liked nothing better than to
ruin him.
But then you insisted that I should make it up
with him.
Now I've overcome all hatred in my heart,
Yes all, for you are with me,
therefore I thought it would be fitting if I
invited Števa to come here for our wedding;
so he will come here as a brother with Karolka.

Scene Four

Laca

8 Aha! Here they are.

(*Karolka and Števa enter.*)

Karolka

God be with you one and all.
Števa seemed to take so long in getting ready,
that I thought his legs must have been rooted to
the floor!
My best wishes.
May you both be very happy, may the good Lord
bless you both.

Watching you today will make me sad, and
envious too,
since it will be my turn soon to walk to the altar.
It's really a shame though,
that it's such a simple wedding;
neither music nor a party!
Now then, Števa, your best wishes.

Števa

I can't speak half as well as Karolka!

Jenůfa

Well, never mind,
just come and shake hands with your brother!
Each of you has something good to recommend
him.

You, Števa, you're handsome;
and Laca, you are so tender-hearted!

Karolka

Oh, how I wish you wouldn't keep telling
him that he's handsome; for he's conceited
enough already!

Jenůfa

Surely he's outgrown all that by now?

Laca

How long must you wait till your wedding?

Števa

Just two weeks from today.

Karolka (*joking*)

Aha, only if I feel like it!
I still have time to change my mind.

You should hear the warnings I've had about you!

Števa

Ah! If you changed your mind,
I would have to kill myself!

Jenůfa

See now, Števa,
now you know what real love is!
May it never hurt you,
never turn to pain.

(*The Mayor, Kostelnička and the others come in
once more.*)

Scene Five

Mayor

9 There's no denying that all that was really a sight
worth seeing.

Kostelnička (*frightened, shocked*)

Števa is here!
Has he come again to bring more trouble?
(*to Laca*)
Even though you beg me,
I cannot bear to see him!

Mayor

It's just as well I lit a cigar in there;
all that rummaging
would have made me furious!

Laca (*to Kostelnička*)

But she has agreed to it!

Mayor's Wife

Well, she has a lovely trousseau,
you might well be proud of it!

Scene Six

Barena and the girls enter with a posy tied with coloured ribbons.

Barena

¹⁰ God be with you one and all!

Peasant Girls

We were not invited, but you
need not fear that we shall keep
you long. God be with you one and all!

Barena

We all knew that there would be
no celebration, yet we had to
come here all the same, just to
sing our song to Jenůfa and to
give her our best wishes!

Peasant Girls and Barena

We all wish you this: May you
have as many hours of joy as
there are stars in heaven!
And now we'll sing for you!

Hey, mother, mother, little mother mine!
You must give me fine new clothes now,
For I shall be married today,
Hey!

Hey, daughter, daughter, little daughter mine!

You are far too young to marry,
You must put such thoughts away.
Hey!

Hey, mother, mother, little mother mine!
Don't forget that you were young once,
So let me be married today.
Hey!

Mayor

Well, you sang that very nicely, charming.

Barena (*giving Jenůfa a posy of flowers*)
And then we've brought you these, Jenůfa!

Jenůfa

Thank you, thank you all, I cannot
tell you how deeply it has touched me!

Laca

The Preacher said that we must be
at church at nine o'clock exactly.

Mayor

Well, we must hurry, but first the
blessing, so that we can go!

(Laca and Jenůfa kneel down before Grandmother Buryja.)

Laca

With respect I beg you, give your blessing.

Grandmother Buryja

So now I bless you, in the name
of the Father, the Son, and the
Holy Spirit.

Please, Laca, don't think badly of me!

(The bride and groom kiss the hand of Grandmother Buryja.)

Mayor

Now you, Kostelnička, you should
know the way to bless them as the
priest would bless them.
(The bride and groom kneel before Kostelnička; she raises her hand. There is a noise outside. Kostelnička draws back in horror. Two voices are distinguished from outside.)

Chorus

Poor baby!
Oh, what a monstrous thing,
murdering a baby!
What ungodly wretch could have
killed a baby?

Kostelnička

What baby?

Scene Seven

Kostelnička

¹¹ What baby's that they're shouting about?

Jano (*rushing in*)

Where's the Mayor?
You must come!

Mayor

What's happened? What is it?

Jano

Don't you know what's happened then?

Števa

What has happened?

Jano

Men from the brewery found it
under the ice, a frozen baby!

Chorus

Oh horror! Oh horror! Oh horror!

Jano

As they held it,
it seemed like a live baby lying there,
wrapped up tightly,
wearing a little red cap on its head.
Oh, it was awful!
Out there everyone is weeping!

Scene Eight

Jano

¹² Come quickly now!

(Jano runs out, followed by the Mayor, his wife, the maid, Laca, Jenůfa and Karolka. Only Steva remains standing as if petrified. Kostelnička stays by the bed; near her, Grandmother Buryja.)

Kostelnička

Jenůfa,
don't go out there!

Hold me, help me!

Grandmother Buryja

What is this,
my daughter?

Kostelnička

Hold me, help me

Grandmother Buryja

Daughter,
you are ill again.
*(Števa runs off, but in the doorway bumps into
Karolka, who seizes him by the hand.)*

Kostelnička

They've all come for me.

Scene Nine

Karolka

¹³ Števa, this is terrible...
Now the wedding's ruined...
Oh, if I were the bride,
I'd be crying.

Jenůfa *(outside)*

O God! O God!
That is my baby, my baby!

Števa

All that noise out there makes me tremble,
and now I feel afraid.

*(Jenůfa tries to free herself from Laca's grasp, but he
drags her inside.)*

Laca

Jenůfa! Jenůfa!
Try to pull yourself together!
What dreadful things you are saying!
People are listening!
Oh, try to pull yourself together!

Jenůfa

Let me go!
That is Števuška, my baby.
Mine, mine!
*(The Mayor enters, in his hand, baby clothes and a
little red cap. Behind him, the other people.)*

Scene Ten

Jenůfa

¹⁴ Ha, there now, you see his baby clothes!
There's his cap too!
I myself have made it from my own ribbons.

Mayor's Wife

Did you hear that?
They know all about it!

Jenůfa

You people,
what a way to bury him,
neither coffin nor a wreath!

Village Woman

Jesus Maria!
Can she herself have killed the baby?

Jenůfa

Now you won't even let him rest!

Why must you drag him out in the ice and snow,
Števa, Števa!
Quick you must run after them!
It is your baby!

The Mayor

Well, I think I've found the answer by myself.
There is no one higher than me here,
(wiping the sweat from his brow)
yet, I wish that I were somewhere else!

Chorus

Death to the murderer! *etc.*

Laca

Just let one of you land a hand upon her!
With his life he'll pay for it!
Ah! I will kill you all!

Kostelnička *(pulling herself together with an effort)*

Now listen to me!
You know nothing about it!
It was I who did it, mine the punishment!

Chorus

Kostelnička!

Kostelnička

Yes, it was I who killed Jenůfa's baby!
I, I alone!

I was thinking of her future,
her future happiness.
I felt ashamed and guilty that my foster-
daughter's life was completely ruined!
(sinking to her knees)

O God in heaven, you know that it
was too much to bear;
that if the child had stayed alive,
two lives would have been utterly wasted.
Jenůfa never went to Vienna;
I kept her hidden here.
First I drugged her,
then I took the child,
down to the river,
and through a hole cut in the ice,
pushed it in!

Chorus

Jesus Maria!
Our own Kostelnička! *etc.*

Kostelnička

It was at night,
not a sound came from the baby...
not the slightest struggle...
I felt as if my hands had been set on fire,
and from that moment, I have known that I'm a
murderess.
Afterwards I told Jenůfa that it had died without
regaining consciousness!

Jenůfa

O mother, under the ice...

Kostelnička

Have mercy on my daughter.
Do not blame her...

Jenůfa *(with fury)*

Away from me!

Kostelnička

...she is quite innocent...
for I,
I'm the one who's guilty!

Karolka (*to Števa, who, quite shattered, leans against the window*)

Števa, is all this on your conscience?
(*flinging her arms around her mother's neck*)
Mamičko,

I feel so faint, I can hardly breathe!
Take me out of here!

The Mayor's Wife

Karolka, darling!

Laca

God in heaven, God in heaven!
I have been the cause of this;
I cut your cheek and disfigured you,
that was why Števa left you,
from that moment everything turned into such
misfortune!

Karolka

I will never marry Števa.
I would rather jump in the river!
Take me home! Take me home!

Maid

He'll never find a girl who will marry him.
That is his punishment –
(*Karolka rushes out, followed by her mother.*)
he will not even get a gipsy girl to take him!

(*Števa covers his face with his hands and hurries out. Grandmother Buryja, completely shattered, is led out by the maid.*)

Scene Eleven

Jenůfa (*to the Kostelnička*)

¹⁶ Do not kneel, dear mother!
There's been enough humiliation and torture
already!

(*She raises Kostelnička up.*)

Kostelnička

Why, oh why do you raise me up?

(*with horror*)

Look, they will take me away!

(*s shrieks*)

Ah!

(*She rushes towards the bedroom with the intention of killing herself.*)

No, no!

I must not!

If I did they would turn on you,

Jenůfa!

Jenůfa

Ah, my dearest Mamičko,

Oh, I see now.

Ah, no, we should not curse her

Do not condemn her,

give her time to make atonement!

Ah, the Lord will look down on her!

Laca

Jenůfka,
surely you have lost your senses!

Kostelnička

If only you'll forgive me,
now I see I've thought more of myself than I

have thought of you, child,

you can say no longer:

'Mamičko, ah Mamičko.'

You could not inherit my character or my blood,

But now, I come to you for strength...

to suffer, for the Saviour will look down on me!

Jenůfa

God give you comfort!

Kostelnička

Come, now, take me away!

Jenůfa

God give you comfort!

(*The Mayor supports Kostelnička and leads her away, the rest of the people pushing out after them. Jenůfa and Laca remain.*)

Scene Twelve

Jenůfa

¹⁶ They have gone!
Now you go!
Surely you see now
that my wretched life cannot ever be linked with
yours.

So go now

Ah, remember this; that you were always,

always for me the best and the finest man of all!

Though you meant to hurt me when you

cut my cheek, I forgave you long ago!

You sinned only out of love,

just as I sinned.

Laca

So, now you are going away,
seeking a better life and you won't take me with
you, Jenůfka?

Jenůfa

You know they'll call me to the trial,
just think how contemptuously everyone will
look at me!

Laca

Jenůfka,
I would bear far more than that for you!

What does the world matter,
if only we are together!

Jenůfa

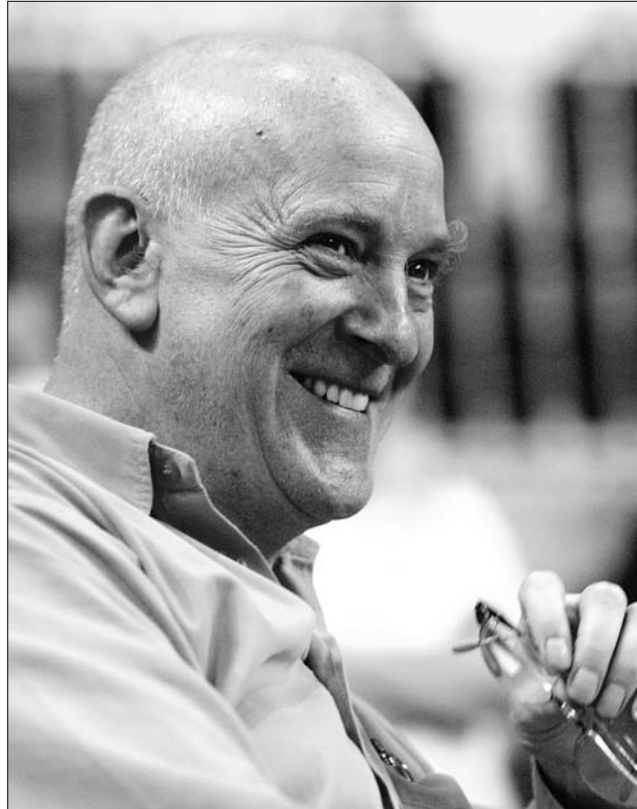
O Laca,
Dearest Laca!
Oh, come! Oh, come!



On session:
Sir Charles Mackerras



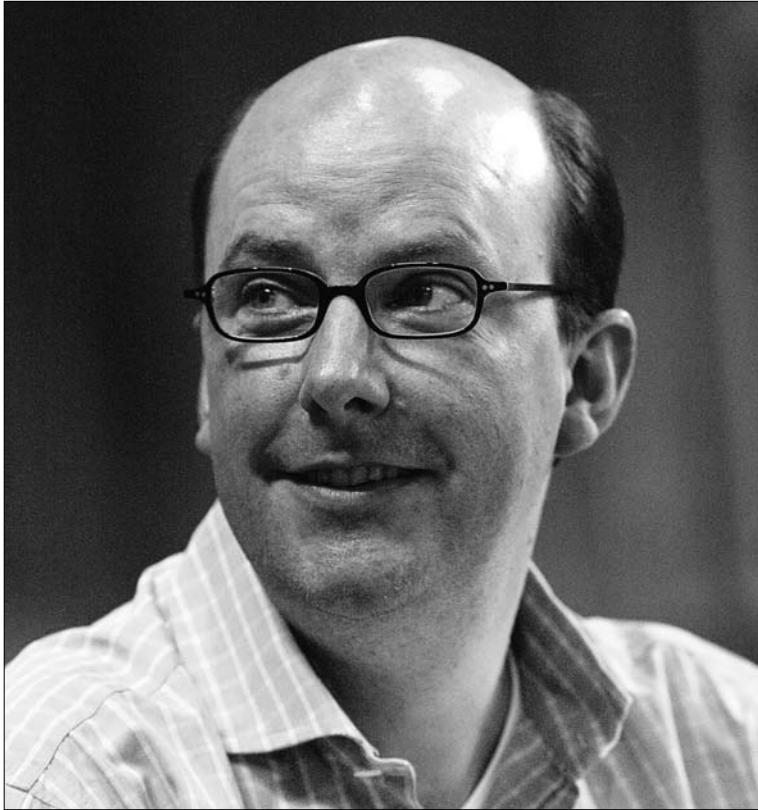
On session:
Janice Watson



On session:
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Brno version of *Jenůfa* of 1908, republished in 1996 in the edition of John Tyrrell and Sir Charles Mackerras

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Back cover Photograph of Sir Charles Mackerras by Clive Barda
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JANÁČEK: JENŮFA, HER STEPPAUGHTER

CHANDOS DIGITAL 2-disc set **CHAN 3106(2)**

Leoš Janáček (1854–1928)

Jenůfa, her Steppaughter (Brno version)

Opera in three acts

Libretto by the composer after Gabriela Preissová's play *Její pastorkyňa*
English version by Edward Downes and Otakar Kraus

Grandmother Buryja, retired mill owner	Elizabeth Vaughan	<i>mezzo-soprano</i>
The Kostelnička, her daughter-in-law, Jenůfa's stepmother	Dame Josephine Barstow	<i>soprano</i>
Jenůfa, Grandmother Buryja's granddaughter	Janice Watson	<i>soprano</i>
Števa Buryja, Grandmother Buryja's grandson, present owner of the mill	Peter Wedd	<i>tenor</i>
Laca Klemeň, Števa's older half-brother	Nigel Robson	<i>tenor</i>
Foreman at the mill	Neal Davies	<i>baritone</i>
Mayor of the village	Alan Fairs	<i>bass</i>
Mayor's wife	Marion McCullough	<i>mezzo-soprano</i>
Karolka, their daughter	Charlotte Ellett	<i>soprano</i>

Chorus of Welsh National Opera
Orchestra of Welsh National Opera
Sir Charles Mackerras

COMPACT DISC ONE
65:21

COMPACT DISC TWO
55:51

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