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4 CDs

PETER JOSEPH VON  
LINDPAINTNER

(1791-1856)

# IL VESPRO SICILIANO

DIE SIZILIANISCHE VESPER

MATIJA MEIĆ · SILVIA DALLA BENETTA  
DARIO RUSSO · DANILO FORMAGGIA  
CÉSAR ARRIETA · ANA VICTÓRIA PITTS

CAMERATA BACH CHOIR, POZNAŃ  
VIRTUOSI BRUNENSIS

FEDERICO LONGO



Deutschlandfunk Kultur

ROSSINI  
in WILDBAD  
At the San Carlo Festival

Peter Joseph von  
**LINDPAINTNER**  
(1791–1856)

# Il vespro siciliano

(‘Die sizilianische Vesper’)

Opera in four acts (1843)

Libretto by Heribert Rau (1813–1876), Italian version by Wilhelm Häser (1781–1867)  
revised by Reto Müller and Stefano Piana

Carlo d’Anjou, re di Napoli e di Sicilia .....	Matija Meić, Baritone		
Alphonse Drouet	} preferiti del re .....	César Arrieta, Tenor	
Conte di Fondi		Danilo Formaggia, Tenor	
Eleonora, sposa di Fondi .....	Silvia Della Benetta, Soprano		
Celinda	} cameriere di Eleonora .....	Sara Bañeras, Soprano	
Aurelia		Sara Blanch, Soprano	
Albino, paggio di Fondi .....	Ana Victória Pitts, Mezzo-soprano		
Guillaume l’Étendart, governatore di Sicilia .....	Carlos Natale, Tenor		
Conte di Marche	} nobili francesi .....	Damian Whiteley, Bass-baritone	
De Bellecour		Daniele Caputo, Baritone	
Giovanni da Procida, medico e nobile siciliano .....	Dario Russo, Bass		
Visconte Vernazzo	.....	Carlos Natale, Tenor	
Conte di Sanseverino	} nobili siciliani .....	Gheorghe Vlad, Tenor	
Albergo da Barbiano		.....	Marco Simonelli, Bass
Francesco Ruffo		.....	Damian Whiteley, Bass-baritone

**Carceriere** ..... **Damian Whiteley, Bass-baritone**  
**Due servitori** { ..... **Bartek Zolubak, Tenor**  
                          { ..... **Jedrzej Wróblewski, Bass**

**Camerata Bach Choir, Poznań • Chorus-master: Ania Michalak**  
**Virtuosi Brunensis (Karel Mitáš, Artistic Director)**

## **Federico Longo**

**Music assistants: Silvano Zabeo, Marco Simonato**

**Recorded: 23, 25 July 2015 at the Trinkhalle, Bad Wildbad, Germany**  
**for the XXVII ROSSINI IN WILDBAD Festival (Artistic director: Jochen Schönleber)**  
**A co-production of Rossini in Wildbad (Artistic Director: Jochen Schönleber) and Deutschlandradio Kultur**  
**Executive producer: Jochen Schönleber**  
**Critical edition by Volker Tosta (Edition Nordstern, Stuttgart)**



**Deutschlandfunk Kultur**



CD 1	67:10	CD 2	48:07
1 Sinfonia	5:36	<b>Atto II</b>	
<b>Atto I</b>		<b>No. 10, Coro e ballo</b>	
<b>No. 1, Coro</b>		1 Lasciate le cure ( <i>Coro, Procida, Vernazzo, Bellecour, Carlo, Quattro nobili, Fondi</i> )	13:28
2 Ah, come il vino brilla ( <i>Coro</i> )	3:34	<b>No. 11, Scena ed Aria Drouet</b>	
<b>No. 2, Scena e Romanza Fondi</b>		2 Precipitato io son ( <i>Drouet</i> )	2:00
3 Inver, signor ( <i>Étendart, Fondi</i> )	1:35	3 Vendetta mi guidi ognor! ( <i>Drouet</i> )	3:36
4 La dama sul balcone sta ( <i>Fondi, Coro; Étendart</i> )	4:31	<b>No. 12, Scena e Cavatina Albino</b>	
<b>No. 3, Concertato con Coro</b>		4 Eccomi al luogo ( <i>Albino</i> )	0:50
5 Vediam ch'il brindisi seconda! ( <i>Bellecour, Étendart, Coro</i> )	4:13	5 Dolce tormento mi dona l'amor ( <i>Albino</i> )	2:10
<b>No. 4, Scena ed Aria Fondi</b>		<b>No. 13, Scena e Duetto</b>	
6 Ora gli schiavi regi andar ( <i>Quattro nobili, Fondi</i> )	1:23	6 È innamorato sul mio onore! ( <i>Drouet, Albino, Aurelia</i> )	1:40
7 O patria cara a questo seno ( <i>Fondi</i> )	4:40	7 Ti riveggo alfin mio bene ( <i>Drouet, Aurelia; Albino</i> )	6:27
<b>No. 5, Scena e Giuramento</b>		<b>No. 14, Recitativo, Ballata e Duetto</b>	
8 E chi è per voi mallevadore? ( <i>Quattro nobili, Fondi, Procida, Coro</i> )	3:18	8 Venir ei tarda ( <i>Eleonora</i> )	4:16
9 Giurate al sommo dio d'amor! ( <i>Procida, Fondi, Coro</i> )	2:58	9 Sul balco ancor piangendo stava ( <i>Eleonora, Fondi</i> )	4:27
<b>No. 6, Scena ed Aria Procida</b>		10 Ti stringo al palpitante petto ( <i>Eleonora, Fondi; Carlo</i> )	2:41
10 Ohimè! Si vien! ( <i>Coro, Fondi, Albino, Procida</i> )	1:27	<b>No. 15, Finale II</b>	
Addio, fra po' il desiato istante ( <i>Procida, Fondi, Coro</i> )	4:50	11 Il re! Ohimè! ( <i>Eleonora, Fondi, Carlo, Aurelia, Drouet, Quattro nobili, Coro</i> )	6:32
<b>No. 7, Scena e Concertato</b>		<b>CD 3</b>	<b>48:26</b>
12 Dio, che veggio? Eleonora! ( <i>Fondi, Quattro nobili, Eleonora</i> )	4:00	<b>Atto III</b>	
13 Pria che c'intrecciario ( <i>Fondi, Eleonora, Quattro nobili</i> )	2:42	<b>No. 16, Cavatina Albino e Duetto</b>	
<b>No. 8, Scena, Cavatina e Duetto Eleonora</b>		1 Mia primavera già sfiora ( <i>Albino</i> )	5:42
14 Siam soli alfin! ( <i>Fondi, Eleonora</i> )	1:54	2 Tu, per cui nutrirò il petto ( <i>Albino, Aurelia</i> )	4:04
15 Non temer, consorte amato ( <i>Eleonora, Fondi</i> )	5:15	<b>No. 17, Coro, Ballo e Scena</b>	
<b>No. 9, Finale I</b>		3 Come il sol suoi rai diffonde ( <i>Coro, Carlo</i> )	3:54
16 Sentimi, mio bene! ( <i>Fondi, Eleonora, Quattro nobili</i> )	3:13	4 Ballo	8:35
17 Il re viva! ( <i>Coro, Carlo, Fondi, Drouet, Celinda, Due servitori</i> )	5:14	5 Basta! finite! ( <i>Carlo, Aurelia</i> )	2:59
18 Pien di timor ( <i>Fondi, Drouet, Carlo, Quattro nobili, Coro</i> )	3:16	<b>No. 18, Aria Carlo</b>	
19 Voi, che li dubbi in me destate ( <i>Carlo, Coro</i> )	3:29	6 Quell'immagine sì cara ( <i>Carlo</i> )	4:38
		<b>No. 19, Duetto e concertato</b>	
		7 V'appressate amabil donna ( <i>Carlo, Eleonora, Drouet, Étendart, Marche, Bellecour, Aurelia</i> )	10:12
		<b>No. 20, Cavatina Eleonora, Terzetto e Finale III</b>	
		8 Piangi? Ah, no; quest'è mia sorte ( <i>Eleonora, Aurelia, Drouet</i> )	3:05
		9 Non gli muove questo pianto ( <i>Eleonora, Aurelia, Drouet</i> )	1:19
		10 Ah, chi d'arrestarmi ardisce! ( <i>Drouet, Procida, Eleonora, Aurelia, Le maschere</i> )	3:55

<b>CD 4</b>	<b>37:52</b>	<b>5</b>	All'opra! All'armi! ( <i>Coro, Procida, Fondi, Vernazzo</i> )	4:38
<b>Atto IV</b>				
<b>No. 21, Romanza Carceriere, scena, [canzonetto] e terzetto</b>				
<b>1</b>	7:16	<b>6</b>	Viva la guerra, viva l'onor! ( <i>Coro, Drouet, Vernazzo</i> )	4:12
Qua porto un vitto misero ( <i>Carceriere, Aurelia, Fondi</i> )		<b>7</b>	Nume eterno! sia clemente! ( <i>Coro</i> )	2:55
<b>No. 22, Scena ed Aria Eleonora</b>		<b>8</b>	Zitti, oia, nel nome del sovrano! ( <i>Drouet, Vernazzo, Fondi, Coro, Procida</i> )	4:01
<b>2</b>	1:18	<b>9</b>	Ma nostro simbolo cantiamo ( <i>Procida, Coro</i> )	3:23
Or non pavento più ( <i>Eleonora</i> )				
<b>3</b>	5:47			
Deh ritorna tu, mia vita ( <i>Eleonora, Albino, Aurelia</i> )				
<b>No. 23, Alla Siciliana, Scena e Coro</b>				
<b>4</b>	4:20			
Bel giorno, al ciel mai si spandea ( <i>Procida, Coro, Vernazzo</i> )				

## Peter Joseph von Lindpaintner (1791–1856) Il vespro siciliano

### An important piece of Stuttgart's operatic history – Peter Joseph von Lindpaintner's *Die sizilianische Vesper*

February 14, 1844 was a great day in the life of the Württemberg court Kapellmeister Peter Joseph von Lindpaintner, who was born in Koblenz in 1791. Exactly 25 years after assuming the post in 1819, Lindpaintner was to be decorated with the Knight's Cross of the Crown of Württemberg, which brought with it a personal elevation to the nobility. This was King Wilhelm I's way of recognising Lindpaintner's services to the court opera in Stuttgart, which he had restored to the level of artistic excellence it had attained during Niccolò Jommelli's legendary tenure at the court of Duke Carl Eugen of Württemberg between 1753 and 1769.

Lindpaintner had developed the orchestra in particular, making it one of the finest in Germany. Felix Mendelssohn wrote: 'I believe Lindpaintner is now the best orchestral conductor in Germany, it is as though he were playing the entire score with that little baton of his.' Lindpaintner owed this achievement primarily to the strict discipline he had established in the orchestra and among the singers. However, he did not see himself first and foremost as a conductor and

administrator, but as a composer, and this was also how his contemporaries regarded him. At the height of his powers, Lindpaintner was regarded by leading contemporary musicians (Spohr, Schumann) and theoreticians (Marx) of his day as the most promising of the German operatic composers; Mendelssohn even used his personal influence to get Lindpaintner's music performed at concerts given in the Leipzig Gewandhaus, and Lindpaintner was acknowledged as a master of those popular genres the instrumental concerto and the overture.

But Lindpaintner's relationship to Stuttgart remained ambivalent throughout the 38 years he was active there. He was conscious that Stuttgart, with its Lutheran heritage, was provincial, artistically speaking, and a bad place to be trying to establish a career as a composer, especially a composer of opera. King Wilhelm's prosaic disposition, the moderation of his passions, his hatred of ostentation and his practical spirituality all reflected the intellectual climate of daily life in the capital of his kingdom. There was no obvious enthusiasm for the arts, and the public rarely roused itself to applaud. But Lindpaintner's Stuttgart position was well paid, and for many years, thanks to an excellent relationship with the King, it was also

unassailable. Lindpaintner did in fact have a number of opportunities to move to Berlin, Dresden, Munich or Vienna. Indeed, on several occasions he was on the verge of signing a contract to move to a new post, but each time his desire for an easy and settled life won the day. Stuttgart became a gilded cage for him.

Despite a demanding schedule at the court theatre, Lindpaintner devoted considerable energy and enthusiasm to developing his career as a composer, especially where opera was concerned. By the time he died (in 1856), he had written 21 operas in a wide range of genres – a complete digest of the operatic forms that were in vogue during his lifetime, from *opera seria* (*Demophoon*, 1810, reworked in 1819 under the influence of Rossini's operatic hits as *Timantes*) through German Romantic opera (*Sulmona*, 1823, *Der Bergkönig*, 1825, *Der Vampyr*, 1828), German comic opera with spoken dialogue (*Die Macht des Liedes*, 1836, *Libella*, 1855) and historical grand opera (*Die Genueserin*, 1838, *Die sizilianische Vesper*, 1843, *Giulia oder die Korsen* 1853) to a prestigious festive opera for the inauguration of the remodelled court theatre (*Lichtenstein*, 1846).

The versatility of Lindpaintner's operatic output was partly a result of the dilemma facing German composers in the first half of the 19th century, namely: how were they to develop an operatic form that was specifically German? Repertoire was largely dictated by the tastes of audiences. They, in the main, favoured operas by French and Italian composers, so three quarters of theatrical programmes were devoted to such works. Critics and widely disseminated theoretical writings, on the other hand, were calling for a distinct German approach to the genre. Time and again, this gave rise to works that ignored listeners' demands that opera should be enjoyable and appeal to the senses. Lindpaintner, too, was forced to realise, as a result of operas like *Sulmona*, that placing excessive demands on his audience was not conducive to box office success. After that, he took a different tack, trying to achieve a breakthrough by emulating Auber, Rossini and Meyerbeer in writing historical operas. 'I ventured to turn my hand to a work in the grand operatic vein', he wrote; 'I wanted to try and find a way

to the German people's hearts, winning them over as listeners by writing tunes that would be easy for most people to grasp.' The composition under discussion here is Lindpaintner's *Die sizilianische Vesper* ('The Sicilian Vespers'), a grand heroic opera in four acts about the successful Sicilian uprising of 1282 against French rule under Charles of Anjou.

Historical grand opera, which had been developed in Paris, was in fact very much in vogue with leading German operatic composers in the late 1830s. In the 1840s, the works of Meyerbeer in particular became a model for the foremost German operatic composers – he had the additional virtue of being their compatriot, and they hoped he might offer inspiration in creating a new German opera. Marschner, Lachner, Lindpaintner and Wagner therefore all wrote their own versions of historical grand opera. Of these, Lindpaintner follows Meyerbeer most closely. It is possible to identify specifically German elements in the harmonies, which were advanced by contemporary standards, in an orchestral language that was greatly enriched using developmental elements, and in the repeated use of folksong-like strophic songs, which were very popular with German audiences. Nevertheless, the opera's tuneful melodies mean that it still gives the impression of owing more to the Franco-Italian operatic tradition. In spite of his eclectic approach, Lindpaintner's variations on his models produce a convincing end result that deploys the latest stylistic devices to meet the demands of each given dramatic situation.

Lindpaintner received the libretto by Heribert Rau (1813–1876), who had no operatic experience, at the beginning of 1842 and began sketching out the opera straight away. Composition proper was undertaken during the theatrical recess, in July and August 1842, at Langenargen on the shores of Lake Constance, where Lindpaintner usually spent the summer. The orchestration was done back in Stuttgart during the winter of 1842–43, and the score was completed on 29 January 1843. Lindpaintner did not write the overture until a couple of weeks before the premiere; it is dated 24 April 1843. The premiere took place on 10 May 1843. A review of the occasion in a well-known music periodical documents its enthusiastic reception:

Stuttgart, 10 May.

'Yesterday Lindpaintner's new opera, *Die sizilianische Vesper*, was given its first performance here in the royal court theatre. As it is undeniable that Lindpaintner used to face fairly stiff opposition and the Stuttgart audience is generally very frosty, rarely rousing itself from its impassive torpor, it does the worthy author doubly credit that his new opera was received with a level of approval, with a warmth hitherto unknown here. This was sustained throughout the performance, gaining in intensity, to such a degree that at the end of the work there were tumultuous calls for the composer to come out and take a bow, something which has never ever happened here before.'

In 1843 alone, there were four further performances in Stuttgart. Other cities followed: Munich, Hamburg, Kassel, Brunswick, Coburg, Breslau and Dresden. The work became Lindpaintner's greatest success after *Der Vampyr* (1828). But after a promising start, for hitherto unexplained reasons, little more is heard of the opera. This was the time leading up to the German revolutions of 1848–49, and the authorities did not welcome works with revolutionary subjects. There were a total of eight performances in Stuttgart in the period up to 1845 – a good number for a new work at that time. After that, there was a lull in theatrical performances while the court theatre was remodelled, and in 1846 the newly reopened theatre was inaugurated with another new opera by Lindpaintner, *Lichtenstein*. *Die sizilianische Vesper* was forgotten. During the years that followed, Lindpaintner's star was on the wane. He had a disagreement with the new artistic director and was relieved of some of his duties. Now a broken man, Lindpaintner did not manage to leave Stuttgart for another post, and his request to be pensioned off was refused. It was only his authority as an experienced orchestral director that saved him

from worse relegation. Lindpaintner died in the town of Nonnenhorn on Lake Constance on 21 August 1856, following a heart attack. A memorial service was held for him in Stuttgart in 1856, at which his opera *Der Vampyr* was given for the last time. None of his operas were performed there subsequently.

Lindpaintner's many visits to Bad Wildbad link him to the spa town where he often went to recuperate, as he did shortly after the stressful weeks preparing for the premiere of *Die sizilianische Vesper*. Entries in Lindpaintner's hand in the manuscript of the vocal score, which he completed in May and June 1843 in Wildbad, document this visit. But it was not just this intriguing piece of local history that led to this particular work being performed at the bel canto festival Rossini in Wildbad. It also shows how much bel canto there is in pre-Wagnerian German opera, of the variety and range of which musicians and music lovers today are completely unaware, and which is by no means adequately represented in the repertoire by *Fidelio* and *Der Freischütz*. Lindpaintner was a great Rossini aficionado and played a decisive role in establishing the Italian composer's operas in the repertoire of the Stuttgart court theatre. A propensity for *italianità* runs like a common thread through Lindpaintner's operas. It was not by chance that the vocal scores of several of them were published with both German and Italian text. Rossini in Wildbad elected to give Lindpaintner's *Die sizilianische Vesper* as *Il vespro siciliano*, in the Italian translation by Wilhelm Häser (1781–1867), a singer with literary aspirations at the court theatre in Stuttgart. In preparation for a critical edition of the opera, the numerous cuts which had been carried over into the old (Schott) vocal score were opened out, and the work was published for the first time in full score, based on the autograph.

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Translation: Sue Baxter

## Synopsis

The opera is set in Sicily in the year 1282. Charles of Anjou has been King of Sicily for 16 years. Among his courtiers are the Italian Count of Fondi and his rival, the French Marquis de Drouet. Fondi has angered the King by returning empty-handed from a mission to ask for the hand of Eleonora in marriage. Charles does not suspect that Fondi has himself fallen in love with Eleonora and secretly married her.

### CD 1

#### 1 Overture

#### Act One

*In Fondi's castle.*

2 At a feast, while the French knights drink and make merry, the Sicilians present put a brave face on things. 3 The host evades Etendart's query as to his wife's whereabouts. 4 As a distraction, he sings a troubadour song. 5 The atmosphere at the gathering is relaxed. Bellecour baits the Sicilians by proposing a toast to Charles of Anjou and utters threats against them when they fail to join in. Thanks to his authority as Governor of Sicily, Etendart is able to prevent matters escalating. 6 When the French have left, Fondi assures his compatriots that he is trying to deceive the enemy by feigning friendship towards them. 7 He pledges himself to the struggle to liberate his homeland. 8 and dispels the suspicion voiced by four Sicilian nobles (Vernazzo, Sanseverino, Barbiano and Ruffo) that he is only paying lip service to the cause by summoning Procida out of his hiding place. Procida, whom Charles has banished, intends to lead the resistance disguised as a monk and put the island under the protection of the Kings of Aragon. 9 All present solemnly swear to liberate Sicily from the French. 10 Albino arrives with the shocking news that Charles himself is approaching at the head of his troops. 11 Procida tries to rouse his own and the others' courage, then disappears back through the secret doorway. 12 A distraught Eleonora rushes in. Celinda has told her that Fondi has incurred the King's displeasure. 13 Fondi admits to her what led up to their marriage. The four Sicilian nobles encourage the couple to remain true to their love. They are prepared to sacrifice their own lives

to protect them. 14 When they are alone, Fondi asks his wife's forgiveness for having in all probability prevented her becoming Queen. 15 But Eleonora despises the tyrant and declares her love and loyalty to Fondi, who in turn pledges undying love to her. 16 The nobles return to warn the couple of the King's arrival. Eleonora suggests pretending that her maidservant Celinda is Fondi's wife, then withdraws. 17 The French entourage and the Sicilians toast the King. He demands to see Fondi's wife, who Drouet claims he was cheated out of marrying. When Fondi presents Celinda, Charles sees through the deception, as she does not correspond to the description of Eleonora. 18 Fondi and the bystanders feel consternation, Charles seethes inwardly and Drouet rejoices at his coup. The King has the two rivals put under surveillance while he sets off to track down the real Eleonora for himself. 19 Charles swears vengeance on whichever of the two men has deceived him.

### CD 2

#### Act Two

*Outside Fondi's castle.*

1 The Sicilian people have gathered together to dance. Meanwhile, in a tent, French soldiers are singing satirical songs. Procida circulates among the crowd, disguised as a monk, stirring up the people against the French. Vernazzo succeeds in calming the situation. The King arrives, followed by Drouet, Fondi and the other nobles, and asks what the people want. He reacts to their call for justice by ordering that the turbulent crowd be disarmed. They leave cursing and secretly uttering threats. As the search for his wife (who is in hiding) has been in vain, Fondi asks that the traitor who brought him into disrepute be punished. Charles restores Fondi to his favour and banishes Drouet.

*A garden.*

2 Drouet plots his revenge. He knows that Aurelia, who idolises him, is one of the Countess's maidservants. By giving her false hopes of his affection, he will persuade her to betray her mistress. 3 He vows he will not rest until he has brought about his rival's downfall. 4 The page Albino is looking forward to an assignment with Aurelia 5 and anxiously awaits



her arrival. [6] Drouet makes fun of the youth, and when she joins them, Aurelia sends the page away. [7] Aurelia succumbs to Drouet's protestations of love. But he can only keep his promise to marry her when he has been restored to the King's favour. Aurelia agrees to clandestinely show him and the King the true Eleonora. Albino has overheard the two of them and hurries off to warn Fondi.

*A room in one of the towers of Fondi's castle.*

[8] In her hiding place, Eleonora is waiting for her husband. [9] She sings a sad ballad. Meanwhile, Aurelia, Drouet and the King enter a gallery unobserved. Finally, Fondi arrives. [10] For a moment, the two lovers forget their troubles. Fondi has not taken Albino's warning seriously and rejoices at Charles's impending ruin. [11] But suddenly the enraged King steps forward. Drouet is triumphant, Aurelia regrets her betrayal, Eleonora pleads for mercy. Soldiers with flaming torches and the four nobles arrive. Fondi succeeds in preventing them from intervening in what is a hopeless situation and allows himself to be led away.

### CD 3

#### Act Three

*A lobby in the castle.*

[1] Albino is extremely dejected at having lost his beloved and his master. [2] A repentant Aurelia joins him, and together they decide to rescue the Count and Countess.

*A hall in Fondi's castle.*

[3] The courtiers pay homage to the King, who has seized Fondi's possessions and thrown the Count into a dungeon. Before returning to Naples, he gives a magnificent feast. [4] Dancers perform a *pas de six*. [5] Aurelia throws herself at the King's feet and pleads for mercy for her mistress. Charles asks her to bring Eleonora to him. [6] Left alone, Charles voices his desire for Eleonora. [7] She enters and rejects the King's offer to spare Fondi's life if she will marry him, reminding him that he murdered Conradin, the last of the Hohenstaufens. Her words catch Charles where he is weakest, and he is tormented by a hideous apparition

of the dead Conradin. He renounces Eleonora and entrusts her to Drouet's protection before returning to Naples. [8] When Aurelia reproaches Drouet for feigning affection, he taunts her. [9] Eleonora and Aurelia realise how merciless Charles's henchman is; he laughs at the women's tears. [10] He is about to lead Eleonora away when Procida, dressed in his monk's habit, approaches him, and a group of masked men hold him at bay so that Procida can make off with Eleonora.

### CD 4

#### Act Four

*An anteroom leading off to the dungeons.*

[1] The gaoler is about to take Fondi a meal. Eleonora pays him a visit under the pretext of wanting to let him have his part of the feast that is going on by bringing him some French wine. Overwhelmed with patriotic fervour, the old man eagerly drains the jug of wine. When he is drunk, Aurelia manages to lock him in the dungeons and free the Count.

*A chamber in Vernazzo's house.*

[2] Eleonora is grateful for the safety Vernazzo's house affords her, [3] but is worried about her husband and longs to be reunited with him. Albino and Aurelia arrive with the welcome news that he has been freed. Full of gratitude and joy, the Countess forgives Aurelia for betraying her.

*A market square in Palermo.*

[4] Procida arouses his compatriots' patriotic fervour by singing a *siciliana*. He tells them about the ambush from which the King of Aragon's fleet will launch an attack when Charles and his army return from Naples [5] and gets the Sicilians to commit to joining the uprising. When Fondi arrives, Procida tells him where Eleonora is and about the tolling of the bell for Vespers as a signal for the attack on the occupying forces. [6] French soldiers are celebrating their country's renown. Drouet, who is trying to recapture Fondi, provokes the Sicilians. [7] The solemn Easter procession ensures calm for the time being, and the Sicilians ask Heaven for mercy. [8] Eleonora and Fondi have taken their places in the procession. Drouet spots

the veiled Countess and tears the veil from her face. Fondi rushes out and stabs him to death in cold blood. At the same time, the vesper bell tolls and the people turn on the French. While the occupying forces are defeated after some hard fighting, Charles's fleet can be seen in the distance going up in flames. 9 With the watchword 'Sicily will be free!' Procida raises a song

of victory. All process elatedly towards the open sea. The French troops can now be seen at close quarters being pushed back to their ships in battle formation and defeated. Finally, the French fleet is blown up.

**Reto Müller**

*Translation: Sue Baxter*



### **Matija Meič**

Matija Meič studied at the Blagoje Bersa Music School, at the Zagreb Music Academy and at the Vienna University for Music and the Performing Arts. During his studies he made his debut as Levi in Zajc's opera *Nikola Šubić Zrinjski* at the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb. His repertoire there has included Figaro, Schaunard, Belcore and Blagoje. At the Dubrovnik Summer Festival he sang Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*), with which he made his debut in 2015 at the Munich Gärtnerplatz Theatre. He has won various prizes and in 2014 sang Don Alvaro in *Il viaggio a Reims* at Rossini in Wildbad.



### **Silvia Dalla Benetta**

The soprano Silvia Dalla Benetta completed her vocal studies with a distinction at the Benedetto Marcello Conservatory in Venice. Success at the 2004 Festival della Lirica in Sanremo led the way to an international career and collaborations with distinguished directors and conductors. In the 2014–15 season she made her coloratura debut in *Nabucco* in Malta. She appeared in Catania as Fiorilla and in Nice as Semiramide. In 2016 she sang in *Les Huguenots*, having appeared the previous autumn in Sassari in Rossini's *Elisabetta, regina d'Inghilterra* and in Lucerne as *Norma*.



### **César Arrieta**

César Arrieta was born in 1990 in Venezuela and since 2005 has appeared as a soloist with leading orchestras at concert halls and opera houses in his own country. He studied at the Simón Bolívar Conservatory in Caracas. Since 2012, he has continued his training with the distinguished tenor Ryland Davies. He has sung not only in Spain but in Amsterdam, Brussels, Lisbon, Riga and Verona, and widely across Europe. He made his debut in Madrid as Don Ottavio and Tamino with the Moncloa Society of Music and as Florville in Rossini's *Il signor Bruschino* with the Gulbenkian Orchestra in Portugal.



### **Danilo Formaggia**

Danilo Formaggia studied piano and singing in Milan and made his debut in 1996 at the Festival dell'Opera Buffa in Paisiello's *Le due contesse* and in Cimarosa's *I due baroni di Rocca Azzurra*. He has performed in a wide repertoire of operas with his most recent roles including Alfred (*Die Fledermaus*), Roberto (*Maria Stuarda*), and Alfredo (*La traviata*), among others. He has appeared in the major opera houses of Italy as well as at Leipzig Opera, the Opéra de Monte-Carlo, the Sydney Opera House and the Festspielhaus Baden-Baden. His recordings include *Die Zauberflöte* under Claudio Abbado and Piccinni's *La buona figliuola*, among others.



## Ana Victória Pitts

Ana Victória Pitts was born in 1991 in Belém (Brazil), studying there and at the Conservatory of Music in Rovigo, Italy. She made her professional debut in Belém at the age of 19 as Lodo (*Dido and Aeneas*) and her European debut in 2014 in *The Water Babies* by Paolo Furlani. Her appearances since have included Der Trommler (*Der Kaiser von Atlantis*), Hänsel (*Hänsel und Gretel*), Flora (*La traviata*), Tisbe (*La Cenerentola*) and in Mozart's *Requiem*, among many others. She made her debut at the Opéra de Lyon in February 2018 as Vecchietta/Duchessa in *La bella dormiente nel bosco*.



## Dario Russo

Dario Russo made his solo debut in Rossini's *Petite messe solennelle* in 2005. He sang in the European premiere of the opera *Colombo* by António Carlos Gomes at the Teatro Massimo Bellini in Catania, where he also appeared in Bellini's *Zaira*. He also sang in Bellini's *La sonnambula* in Tokyo. His recent roles include Banco in Verdi's *Macbeth* and Lorenzo in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* under Donato Renzetti in Genoa. Among his many roles, he has sung Colline in *La Bohème* in Trieste, Timur in *Turandot* in Oviedo, and Ramfis in *Aida* at the Teatro Lirico in Cagliari.



## Sara Bañeras

Sara Bañeras studied in Barcelona where she graduated in 2013. She studied the Suzuki method of singing from early childhood and has participated in masterclasses with Montserrat Caballé and Renata Scotto, among others. In 2014 she made her debut as Amore in *Orfeo ed Euridice*, Miss Rowan in *The Little Sweep*, Madame Silberklang in *Der Schauspieldirektor* and Frasquita in *Carmen*. Her repertoire includes Despina, Pamina, Semiramide and Zerlina, among many others. In 2015, after success in the Mirna Lacambra Competition, she was awarded a scholarship by the Sabadell Opera Academy, with an engagement as Marcellina in *Le nozze di Figaro*.



## Carlos Natale

Carlos Natale completed his operatic training with distinction in Buenos Aires and at the Salzburg Mozarteum. In 2000 he made his debut at the Teatro Colón in Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen*. He made his Italian debut in 2007 at the Teatro dell'Opera in Rome in the role of Edmondo in *Manon Lescaut*. He sang Clistene in Leo's *L'Olimpiade*. In 2010 he won the Lieder Prize at the Gut Immling International Lions Singing Competition and was awarded the scholarship of the Bayreuth Festival. His recordings include Pizzetti's *Assassinio nella cattedrale* and the Lichtenthal version of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*.



## Sara Blanch

Sara Blanch studied singing at the Sabadell Conservatory and at the Liceu Theatre Conservatory, Barcelona. Since 2013 she has undertaken major roles including Oscar (*Un ballo in maschera*) and the title role in Donizetti's *Rita*. For the Pesaro Rossini Festival she sang in the Accademia Rossiniana the parts of Delia and the Contessa di Folleville in *Il viaggio a Reims*. She made her debut at Rossini in Wildbad as Elvira in *L'Italiana in Algeri* and as Aurelia in Lindpaintner's *Il vespro siciliano* and won the Audience Prize of the Bel Canto Academy.



## Daniele Caputo

Since 2010 Daniele Caputo has sung in the symphonic choir laVerdi, including performances of Britten's *War Requiem* at La Scala, Brahms's *Schicksalslied* and Prokofiev's *Ivan the Terrible* under Zhang Xian and *Carmen* under Patrick Fournillier. He was a pupil of Armando Ariostini and centred his repertoire on the operas of Mozart and Rossini. At the Teatro Don Bosco in Pavia in 2013 he sang in *La traviata* and in *Rigoletto*. In 2014 he sang Schauand (*La Bohème*) in Crema. With laVerdi choir under Ruben Jais he has undertaken solo parts in the *St Matthew* and *St John Passions*.



## Marco Simonelli

Marco Simonelli made his stage debut as Filiberto in *Il signor Bruschino*, with other roles including The Bonze (*Madama Butterfly*), Sparafucile (*Rigoletto*) and Masetto (*Don Giovanni*). In 2014 he sang in *Il trittico* at the Gran Teatro Puccini in Torre del Lago as well as Sergeant in *La Bohème*. He has since sung Uberto in Pergolesi's *La serva padrona*, and the title-role in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. In 2013 he performed a Mozart recital with the Abruzzi Symphony Orchestra and, in the same year, Rossini's *Petite messe solennelle* in Lucca.



## Damian Whiteley

Damian Whiteley was a member of l'Académie Européenne de Musique, and appeared in Peter Brook's production of *Don Giovanni* conducted by Claudio Abbado/Daniel Harding at the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence and subsequent world tour. At the Pinchgut Opera in Sydney he sang Caronte and Plutone in Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* and Isménor in the first Australian performance of Rameau's *Dardanus*. He has worked regularly with William Christie and Les Arts Florissants, with roles including a Sailor in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* at the Opéra Comique in Paris and elsewhere.



## Gheorghe Vlad

The tenor Gheorghe Vlad was born in Romania and started his career as a singer in Bucharest. He made his operatic debut in 2009 at the Bucharest National Opera, singing Carlino in Fioravanti's *Le cantatrici villane*. In 2012 he made his bel canto debut there, singing Don Ramiro in *La Cenerentola* and Nemorino in *L'elisir d'amore*. Since 2013 he has been a member of the Hamburg Chamber Opera, singing Lindoro in Rossini's *L'Italiana in Algeri* and Dimsdale in Kroll's *The Scarlet Letter* during his first season. He made his debut at the Rossini in Wildbad Opera Festival in 2014 as Adelberto in *Adelaide di Borgogna* and as Geroldo in Morlacchi's *Tebaldo e Isolina*.



## Silvano Zabeo

Silvano Zabeo studied the piano with Marina Pasqualy, composition with Ugo Amendola and operatic repertoire with Piero Ferraris, and in 1989 served as musical assistant at La Fenice in Venice. Since 2010 he has worked at the Teatro Verdi in Trieste, where he also teaches at the Conservatory. He has an active international career as an accompanist and répétiteur, and as a stage director.



## Federico Longo

The conductor Federico Longo studied piano, composition and orchestral conducting in Pescara and Vienna, and with Gianluigi Gelmetti at the Accademia Chigiana in Siena, graduating with distinction. He collaborated with Gelmetti in opera productions at the Grand Théâtre de Genève, and in concert with orchestras including the Orchestre national de France, the orchestras of Covent Garden and La Scala, the Munich Philharmonic and with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra with which he made a number of recordings for the ABC Classics label. In Germany he conducted *Eugene Onegin* and *Sleeping Beauty* at the Opera House in Chemnitz, and with the Saxon Chamber Philharmonic took part in the reconstruction concert of the Frauenkirche in Dresden. He spent several years as music director of the Berlin-Brandenburg Chamber Philharmonic with which he made his debut at the Berlin Philharmonie in 2007. He has done much to promote contemporary music, conducting world premieres of works by composers including Marco Taralli and Gordon Kerry. For Rossini in Wildbad he conducted the festival concert in 2011 and Adam's *Le Châlet* in 2013.



## Camerata Bach Choir, Poznań

The Camerata Bach Choir was founded in 2003 by Tomasz Potkowski in Poznań. The members consist mainly of soloists from the Poznań Opera Chorus and the Kraków Philharmonic Choir. The choir collaborates closely with the Wrocław Philharmonic. The choir's repertoire includes works by Bach, Handel and Mozart. Since 2010 the choir has served as ensemble in residence for the Rossini in Wildbad Opera Festival. Currently choir master at the Gdansk Opera, Ania Michalak has been the choir director of Rossini in Wildbad since 2010.



## Virtuosi Brunensis

The Virtuosi Brunensis chamber orchestra was established in 2007 from two of the best known Czech orchestras – the Brno Janáček Theatre Orchestra and the Brno Philharmonic. Under the guidance of artistic director Karel Mitáš the orchestra has appeared, among other engagements, at the Bad Hersfeld Opera Festival and at the Rossini in Wildbad Opera Festival, where it has recorded Rossini's *Otello*, *L'Italiana in Algeri*, *Semiramide* and *Guillaume Tell*, Vaccaj's *La sposa di Messina* and Mercadante's *I briganti* for Naxos.

## Peter Joseph von Lindpaintner (1791–1856) Il vespro siciliano (Die sizilianische Vesper)

### Ein starkes Stück Stuttgarter Operngeschichte *Die sizilianische Vesper* von Peter Joseph von Lindpaintner

Der 14. Februar 1844 ist ein großer Tag im Leben des 1791 in Koblenz geborenen, königlich württembergischen Kapellmeisters Peter Joseph Lindpaintner. Genau 25 Jahre nach seinem Dienstantritt im Jahr 1819 wird Lindpaintner mit dem „Ritterkreuz der Württembergischen Krone“ ausgezeichnet, mit dessen Verleihung die Erhebung in den persönlichen Adelsstand verbunden ist. Damit würdigt König Wilhelm I. die Verdienste Lindpaintners um die Stuttgarter Hofoper, die dieser wieder auf das künstlerische Niveau der legendären Zeit Jomellis (1753-1769) an der Hofbühne des Herzogs Karl von Württemberg geführt hat.

Insbesondere das Orchester entwickelt er zu einem der besten Klangkörper Deutschlands. Felix Mendelssohn schreibt: „*Der Lindpaintner ist glaub' ich jetzt der beste Orchesterdirigent in Deutschland, es ist als wenn er mit seinem Taktstöckchen die ganze Musik spielte.*“ Lindpaintner verdankt dies in erster Linie der strengen Disziplin, die er bei Orchester und Sängern einführt. Aber er sieht sich nicht in erster Linie als Dirigent und Organisator sondern als Komponist, und seine Zeitgenossen sehen das auch so. Der Stuttgarter Hofkapellmeister wird von maßgeblichen zeitgenössischen Musikern (Spohr, Schumann) und Theoretikern (Marx) in der Hochzeit seines Wirkens als Hoffnungsträger unter den deutschen Opernkomponisten geachtet; Mendelssohn müht sich sogar persönlich um eine Aufführung seiner Musik in den Gewandhauskonzerten, und in den populären Gattungen Instrumentalkonzert und Ouvertüre gilt er unbestritten als Koryphäe.

Sein Verhältnis zu Stuttgart bleibt während der Dauer seines 38-jährigen Wirkens jedoch stets ambivalent. Er ist sich bewusst, dass das lutherisch geprägte und in künstlerischer Sicht provinzielle

Stuttgart einen schlechten Ausgangspunkt für eine Komponistenkarriere darstellt, vor allem wenn es um die Oper geht. König Wilhelms nüchterne Sinnesart, seine mäßigen Leidenschaften, seine Abneigung gegen jeglichen Prunk und seine ganz auf das Pragmatische gerichtete Religiosität: All diese Eigenschaften wirken wie ein Spiegel der geistigen Atmosphäre, die das alltägliche Leben in der Residenzstadt prägt. Ein Enthusiasmus für die Kunst ist nicht auszumachen; das Publikum sitzt für gewöhnlich auf seinen Händen. Doch Lindpaintners Amt in Stuttgart ist gut honoriert, und seine Stellung ist viele Jahre lang dank seiner ausgezeichneten Beziehung zum König unangefochten. Tatsächlich hat Lindpaintner mehrfach die Gelegenheit, nach Berlin, Dresden, München oder Wien zu wechseln. Mehrfach steht ein Wechsel kurz vor dem vertraglichen Abschluss, aber stets setzt sich sein Hang zur Bequemlichkeit und Sesshaftigkeit durch. Stuttgart wird für ihn zum goldenen Käfig.

Trotz der hohen Belastungen durch den Dienst am Hoftheater arbeitet er mit Feuereifer an seiner Komponistenkarriere, vor allem auf dem Gebiet der Oper. So kommen bis zum Ende seines Lebens (1856) einundzwanzig Opern verschiedenster Gattungen zustande, ein ganzes Kompendium der zu seinen Lebzeiten im Trend liegenden Opernformen, von der Opera seria (*Demophoon* 1810, später unter dem Einfluss der Erfolge Rossinis umgearbeitet in *Timantes* 1819) über die deutsche romantische Oper (*Sulmona* 1823, *Der Bergkönig* 1825, *Der Vampyr* 1828), die deutsche Spieloper (*Die Macht des Liedes* 1836, *Libella* 1855), die große historische Oper (*Die Genueserin* 1838, *Die sizilianische Vesper* 1843, *Giulia oder die Korsen* 1853) bis zur repräsentativen Festoper zur Einweihung des umgebauten Hoftheaters (*Lichtenstein* 1846).

Die Vielseitigkeit der Opernproduktionen Lindpaintners ist unter anderem auch Ausdruck für das Dilemma, in dem die deutschen Komponisten

in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts stehen: Welchen Weg zu einem spezifisch deutschen Opernwerk sollen sie einschlagen? Das Publikum, an dessen Vorlieben das Repertoire weitgehend ausgerichtet ist, bevorzugt hauptsächlich Opern französischen oder italienischen Ursprungs, die zu drei Vierteln die Spielpläne beherrschen. Die Kritik und verbreitete theoretische Schriften verlangen dagegen einen eigenen deutschen Weg, der letztlich immer wieder in Werke mündet, die die sinnlichen Bedürfnisse der Zuhörerschaft ignorieren. Auch Lindpaintner muss, etwa mit seiner *Sulmona*, die Erfahrung machen, dass allzu großer Anspruch einem Erfolg eher im Wege steht. Er geht danach andere Wege: Mit seinen historischen Opern versucht er, im Gefolge Aubers, Rossinis und Meyerbeers endlich den Durchbruch zu schaffen. Er schreibt: *„Ich unternahm es, meine Hand an ein Werk der größeren Gattung zu legen, und wollte es versuchen, das deutschen Volkes Herz und Ohr durch populär-fassliche Melodien zu gewinnen.“* Das Werk, über das er hier schreibt, ist seine Große heroische Oper in 4 Akten *Die sizilianische Vesper*, die den erfolgreichen Aufstand der Sizilianer gegen die Herrschaft der Franzosen unter Karl von Anjou im Jahr 1282 zum Thema hat.

Tatsächlich liegt der Typus der in Paris zur Blüte gekommenen Großen historischen Oper bei den führenden deutschen Opernkomponisten am Ausgang der 1830er Jahre voll im Trend. Insbesondere die Werke Meyerbeers, noch dazu eines Landsmannes, werden in den 1840er Jahren für die führenden deutschen Opernkomponisten zum Vorbild, von dem man sich Impulse für die Schaffung einer modernen deutschen Oper erhofft. Und so schreiben Marschner, Lachner, Lindpaintner und Wagner alle ihre Versionen der Großen historischen Oper. Von diesen dürfte Lindpaintners Oper dem Modell Meyerbeers am entschiedensten gefolgt sein. Spezifisch deutsche Elemente sind in diesem Werk in seiner nach dem damaligen Verständnis avancierten Harmonik, der mithilfe von Durchführungselementen stark angereicherten Orchestersprache und den immer wieder auftauchenden volksliednahen

Strophenliedern auszumachen, die beim deutschen Publikum sehr beliebt sind. Trotzdem bleibt der Eindruck einer im Gesangsmelos eher französisch-italienisch grundierten Oper bestehen. Lindpaintner gelangt trotz einer eklektischen Grundhaltung zu einem durch individuelle Abänderungen der verwendeten Modelle überzeugenden Ergebnis, bei dem er die von der jeweiligen dramatischen Situation erforderlichen modernen Stilmittel seiner Zeit einsetzt.

Lindpaintner erhält das Libretto des opern-unerfahrenen Heribert Rau Anfang 1842 und beginnt sofort mit Skizzen zur Oper. Die eigentliche Komposition schreibt er im Juli und August 1842 während der Theaterferien in Langenargen am Bodensee, wo er regelmäßig seinen Sommer verbringt. Daheim in Stuttgart instrumentiert er die Oper im Winter 1842/43 und schließt die Partitur am 29. Januar 1843 ab. Die Ouvertüre schreibt er erst wenige Wochen vor der Premiere; sie trägt das Datum vom 24. April 1843. Die Uraufführung findet am 10. Mai 1843 statt. Die Rezension einer bekannten Musikzeitschrift von der Premiere belegt den enthusiastischen Erfolg der Oper:

*„Stuttgart, den 10. Mai. Gestern wurde hier im königl. Hoftheater zum ersten Male Lindpaintners neue Oper: Die sizilianische Vesper gegeben. Wenn nicht zu leugnen ist, dass Lindpaintner früher stets eine ziemlich mächtige Opposition fand und dass das Stuttgarter Publikum im Allgemeinen ein sehr kühles ist, das sich nur selten aus seiner teilnahmlosen Ruhe heraus begibt, so bringt es dem verdienstvollen Autor doppelt Ehre, wenn seine neue Oper mit einem Beifall, mit einer Wärme aufgenommen wurde, die bisher hier unerhört war und sich während der ganzen Aufführung erhielt und steigerte, so zwar, dass, was hier überhaupt noch nicht vorgekommen, der Komponist am Schlusse des Werks stürmisch hervorgerufen ward.“* Allein im Premierenjahr kommt es in Stuttgart zu vier weiteren Aufführungen. Andere Städte folgen: München, Hamburg, Kassel, Braunschweig, Coburg, Breslau und Dresden. Das Werk wird der größte Erfolg Lindpaintners nach

seinem *Vampyr* (1828). Doch nachdem die Oper die ersten Schritte einer erfolversprechenden Karriere gemacht hat, wird es aus bisher unerforschten Gründen still um sie. Die Zeit des Vormärz läuft auf die Revolution 1848/49 zu; da sind Stücke mit einer Revolutionsthematik bei den Behörden nicht opportun. In Stuttgart kommt es zu insgesamt acht Aufführungen bis zum Jahr 1845, eine gute Zahl für ein neues Werk in dieser Zeit. Danach tritt im Theaterbetrieb aufgrund des Neubaus des Hoftheaters eine Pause ein, und das wiedereröffnete Theater wird 1846 wiederum mit einer neuen Oper Lindpaintners - *Lichtenstein* - eingeweiht. Darüber gerät *Die sizilianische Vesper* in Vergessenheit. Die Jahre danach sehen Lindpaintners Karriere im Abstieg begriffen. Es kommt zu Differenzen mit dem neuen Intendanten, seine Kompetenzen werden beschnitten. Ein Absprung aus Stuttgart gelingt dem gebrochenen Lindpaintner nun nicht mehr; sein Pensionierungsgesuch wird abgelehnt. Lediglich seine Autorität als erfahrener Orchesterleiter bewahrt ihn vor einem tieferen Abstieg. Lindpaintner stirbt am 21. August 1856 nach einem Herzinfarkt in Nonnenhorn am Bodensee. In Stuttgart kommt es noch zu einer Gedenkfeier, bei der sein *Vampyr* 1856 zum letzten Mal erklingt. Danach wird dort keine seiner Opern mehr gespielt.

Zahlreiche Besuche verbindet Lindpaintners Lebensweg mit der Kurstadt Bad Wildbad, wo er des Öfteren zur Erholung weilte, so auch kurz nach den aufreibenden Wochen der Vorbereitungen zur

Premiere der *Sizilianischen Vesper*. Belegt ist dies durch handschriftliche Eintragungen Lindpaintners im handschriftlichen Klavierauszug, den er im Mai und Juni 1843 in Wildbad fertigstellt. Aber nicht nur diese lokalgeschichtliche Kuriosität prädestiniert gerade dieses Werk für eine Aufführung beim Belcanto-Festival *Rossini in Wildbad*. Man kann daran erkennen, wie viel Belcanto in der deutschen Oper der vorwagnerschen Epoche steckt, die in ihrer Vielfalt im heutigen musikalischen Bewusstsein völlig unbekannt und durch *Fidelio* und *Der Freischütz* absolut nicht adäquat in den Spielplänen repräsentiert ist. Lindpaintner ist ein großer Rossiniker und ist entscheidend an der Etablierung des Opern Rossinis im Repertoire des Stuttgarter Hoftheaters beteiligt. Wie ein roter Faden zieht sich durch Lindpaintners Opern eine Neigung zur Italianità. Nicht zufällig erscheinen die Klavierauszüge einiger seiner Opern mit deutschem und italienischem Text. *Rossini in Wildbad* hat sich dafür entschieden, Lindpaintners *Sizilianische Vesper* als *Il vespro siciliano* in der italienischen Übersetzung Wilhelm Häasers, eines literarisch ambitionierten Sängers am Stuttgarter Hoftheater, zu spielen. Dabei wurden zahlreiche Striche, die in dem alten Klavierauszug (Schott) eingegangen sind, im Rahmen einer kritischen Edition der Oper wieder geöffnet und das Werk zum ersten Mal nach dem Autograph als Orchesterpartitur veröffentlicht.

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## Die Handlung

Sizilien 1282: Zur Hofgesellschaft Karls von Anjou, der Sizilien seit 16 Jahren regiert, zählen der heimische Conte di Fondi und sein Rivale, der französische Marquis de Drouet. Fondi hat den König erzürnt, indem er von einer Brautwerbung für ihn bei Eleonora ohne die ersehnte Frau zurückgekehrt ist. Karl ahnt nicht, dass Fondi sich selbst in Eleonora verliebt und sie heimlich geheiratet hat.

### CD 1

#### 1. Ouvertüre

#### 1. Akt

In Fondis Schloss. 2. Während bei einem Gelage die französischen Ritter ausgelassen trinken, machen die anwesenden Sizilianer gute Miene zum bösen Spiel. 3. Der Gastgeber weicht Étendarts Frage nach dem Verbleib seiner Frau aus. 4. Zur Ablenkung singt er ein Troubadourlied. 5. Das Treffen verläuft in angespannter Atmosphäre. Bellecour provoziert die Sizilianer mit einem Toast auf Karl von Anjou und bedroht sie, als sie nicht darin einstimmen. Mit seiner Autorität als Gouverneur von Sizilien kann Étendart eine Eskalation verhindern. 6. Nach dem Weggang der Franzosen versichert Fondi seinen Landsleuten, den Feind mit vermeintlicher Freundschaft täuschen zu wollen. 7. Er bekennet sich zum Befreiungskampf seines Vaterlandes. 8. Den Verdacht der vier sizilianischen Edlen (Vernazzo, Sanseverino, Barbiano und Ruffo), dass es nur ein Lippenbekenntnis sein könnte, zerstreut Fondi, indem er Procida aus einem Versteck herauskommen lässt. Der vom König Verbannte will als verkleideter Mönch den Widerstand anführen und die Insel unter den Schutz Aragoniens bringen. 9. Alle schwören, Sizilien von den Franzosen zu befreien. 10. Albino bringt die bestürzende Nachricht, dass Karl selbst im Anmarsch ist. 11. Procida macht sich und den anderen Mut, bevor er wieder durch die Geheimtür verschwindet. 12. Eleonora stürzt aufgelöst herein. Sie hat von Celinda erfahren, dass Fondi beim König in Ungnade gefallen ist. 13. Fondi gesteht ihr die Vorgeschichte ihrer Heirat. Die vier Edlen bestärken das

Paar in seiner Liebe und wollen sich für seinen Schutz aufopfern. 14. Als sie allein sind, bittet Fondi seine Frau um Verzeihung dafür, dass er sie wahrscheinlich um den Thron gebracht hat. 15. Doch Eleonora verachtet den Tyrannen und bekennt sich voller Liebe zu Fondi, der ihre Liebesschwüre erwidert. 16. Die Edlen kehren zurück, um vor der Ankunft des Königs zu warnen. Eleonora schlägt vor, ihre Zofe Celinda als Fondis Frau auszugeben, und zieht sich zurück. 17. Das französische Gefolge und die Sizilianer lassen den König hochleben. Dieser verlangt, Fondis Frau zu sehen, um die er nach Aussage Drouets betrogen wurde. Als Fondi Celinda präsentiert, durchschaut Karl die Finte, da sie nicht der Beschreibung Eleonoras entspricht. 18. Fondi und die Umstehenden sind konsterniert, Karl tobt innerlich und Drouet freut sich über den Coup. Der König lässt die beiden Rivalen bewachen, während er selbst die echte Eleonora aufspüren will. 19. Karl schwört demjenigen Rache, der ihn hintergangen hat.

### CD 2

#### 2. Akt

Vor Fondis Schloss. 1. Das sizilianische Volk hat sich zum Tanz versammelt, während französische Soldaten in einem Zelt Spottlieder singen. Procida geht als Mönch verkleidet umher und wiegelt das Volk gegen die Franzosen auf. Vernazzo kann die Lage beruhigen. Der König tritt hinzu, gefolgt von Drouet, Fondi und anderen Edlen, und erkundigt sich nach des Volkes Begehren. Dem Ruf nach Gerechtigkeit begegnet er mit dem Befehl, die erregte Menschenmenge zu entwaffnen, die sich unter Flüchen und heimlichen Drohungen entfernt. Fondi bittet, da die Suche nach seiner verborgenen Frau erfolglos blieb, den Verräter zu bestrafen, der ihn in Misskredit gebracht habe. Karl gewährt Fondi wieder seine Gunst und verbannt Drouet.

Ein Garten. 2. Drouet sinnt auf Rache. Er weiß, dass Aurelia, die für ihn schwärmt, eine Zofe der Gräfin ist; mit falschen Hoffnungen will er sie als Verräterin gewinnen. 3. Er schwört, nicht zu ruhen, bis sein Gegner fällt. 4. Der Page Albino hofft auf ein Stelldichlein mit Aurelia. 5. Er erwartet diesen

Augenblick mit Herzklopfen. 6 Drouet macht sich über den Jüngling lustig, und die hinzukommende Aurelia schickt den Pagen weg. 7 Aurelia gibt sich den Liebesschwüren Drouets hin. Sein Heiratsversprechen kann er aber nur einlösen, wenn er die Gunst des Königs wiedererlangt. Aurelia willigt ein, ihm und dem König die echte Eleonora heimlich zu zeigen. Albino hat beide belauscht und eilt, Fondi zu benachrichtigen.

*Ein Turmzimmer in Fondis Schloss.* 8 Eleonora erwartet in ihrem Versteck den Gatten. 9 Sie singt eine traurige Ballade. Unterdessen betritt Aurelia mit Drouet und dem König unbemerkt eine Galerie im Hintergrund. Endlich erscheint Fondi. 10 Die beiden Liebenden vergessen einen Augenblick ihre Sorgen. Fondi hat die Warnung Albinos nicht ernst genommen und frohlockt über Karls bevorstehenden Untergang. 11 Doch auf einmal tritt der König wutentbrannt hervor. Drouet triumphiert, Aurelia bereut ihren Verrat, Eleonora fleht um Gnade. Soldaten mit Fackeln und die vier Edlen kommen hinzu. Fondi kann sie davon abhalten, in dieser aussichtslosen Situation einzugreifen, und lässt sich abführen.

### CD 3

#### 3. Akt

*Vestibül im Schloss.* 1 Albino ist tief bedrückt, weil er seine Liebe und seinen Gebieter verloren hat. 2 Die reumütige Aurelia kommt hinzu. Gemeinsam beschließen sie, Graf und Gräfin zu retten.

*Saal in Fondis Schloss.* 3 Die Hölfige huldigen dem König, der Fondis Besitz konfisziert und den Grafen eingekerkert hat. Vor seiner Rückkehr nach Neapel gibt er ein großes Fest. 4 Tänzerinnen und Tänzer führen einen Pas de six auf. 5 Aurelia wirft sich vor dem König nieder und fleht um Gnade für ihre Gebieterin. Karl verlangt, dass sie Eleonora zu ihm bringe. 6 Allein geblieben, gibt Karl seinem Verlangen nach Eleonora Ausdruck. 7 Diese erscheint und weist das Angebot des Königs zurück, Fondis Leben gegen ihre Hand zu tauschen. Sie erinnert ihn an seinen Mord an Konradin, dem letzten Hohenstaufen. Karl wird an seinem schwachen Punkt getroffen und von

der grässlichen Erscheinung des getöteten Konradins gequält. Er verzichtet auf Eleonora und übergibt die Gräfin an Drouet, bevor er nach Neapel zurückkehrt. 8 Aurelia wirft Drouet seine falsche Liebe vor und wird von ihm verhöhnt. 9 Eleonora und Aurelia erkennen die Unerbittlichkeit des Schergen, der seinerseits über die Tränen der beiden Frauen lacht. 10 Als er Eleonora abführen will, tritt ihm Procida im Mönchsgewand entgegen und lässt ihn durch eine Schar Vermummter in Schach halten, während er sich eilig mit Eleonora entfernt.

### CD 4

#### 4. Akt

*Im Vorraum des Kerkers.* 1 Der Kerkermeister schickt sich an, dem gefangenen Fondi das Essen zu bringen. Er wird von Aurelia besucht, die vorgibt, ihn mit französischem Wein am Fest teilhaben zu lassen. Von patriotischen Gefühlen übermannt leert der Alte den Weinkrug in vollen Zügen. Aurelia gelingt es, den Betrunkenen selbst in den Kerker einzuschließen und den Grafen zu befreien.

*Zimmer im Haus Vernazzos.* 2 Eleonora ist dankbar, dass sie in Vernazzos Haus in Sicherheit ist. 3 Sie macht sich aber Sorgen um ihren Gatten und ersehnt ein Wiedersehen. Da bringen Albino und Aurelia die gute Nachricht von seiner Befreiung. Voll Dankbarkeit und Freude verzeiht die Gräfin Aurelias Verrat.

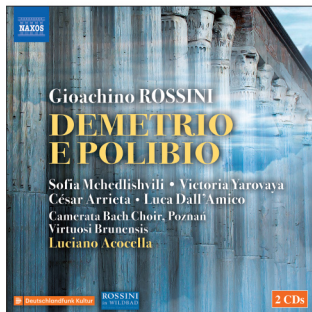
*Marktplatz zu Palermo.* 4 Procida weckt durch das Singen einer Siciliana die patriotischen Gefühle seiner Landsleute. Er erläutert den Hinterhalt, aus dem die Flotte des Königs von Aragonien eingreifen wird, wenn Karl mit seiner Armee aus Neapel zurückkehrt. 5 Er schwört die Sizilianer auf den Aufstand ein. Den hinzukommenden Fondi verständigt er über Eleonoras Aufenthalt und das Läuten der Vesperglocke als Zeichen für den Schlag gegen die Besatzer. 6 Französische Soldaten besingen den Ruhm Frankreichs. Drouet, der Fondi wieder in seine Gewalt bringen will, provoziert die Sizilianer. 7 Die feierliche Osterprozession sorgt zunächst für Ruhe und die Sizilianer bitten den Himmel um Gnade. 8 Eleonora und Fondi haben sich in

den Prozessionszug eingereicht. Drouet erblickt die verschleierte Gräfin und reißt ihr den Schleier vom Gesicht. Da stürzt Fondi hervor und erdolcht ihn kaltblütig. Gleichzeitig ertönt die Vesperglocke und das Volk attackiert die Franzosen. Während die Besatzer nach hartem Kampf überwältigt werden, sieht man auf dem Meer im Hintergrund die Flotte

Karls in Flammen aufgehen. ⑨ Mit der Losung „Sizilien wird frei!“ stimmt Procida den Siegesgesang an. Alle ziehen begeistert in Richtung offenes Meer. Man sieht von nahem die französischen Truppen in Kampfformation, die gegen ihre Schiffe abgedrängt und geschlagen werden. Schließlich fliegt die französische Flotte explodierend in die Luft.

**Reto Müller**

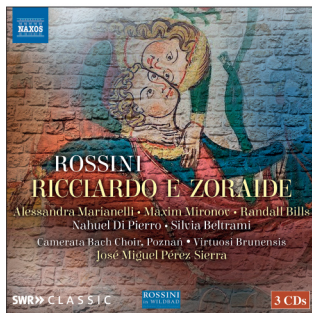
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PETER JOSEPH VON  
LINDPAINNTNER  
(1791–1856)

# IL VESPRO SICILIANO

DIE SIZILIANISCHE VESPER

MATIJA MEIĆ · SILVIA DALLA BENETTA  
DARIO RUSSO · DANILO FORMAGGIA  
CÉSAR ARRIETA · ANA VICTÓRIA PITTS

CAMERATA BACH CHOIR, POZNAŃ  
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Robert Schumann considered Peter Joseph von Lindpaintner the most promising operatic composer in the country, yet despite his 21 operas he has been almost forgotten. Like most leading German composers of his time he took Meyerbeer's historical grand operas, conceived in Paris, as his model. Set in Sicily at the dawn of the 1848 revolution, *Il vespro siciliano* ('Die sizilianische Vesper' / 'The Sicilian Vespers') is a dramatic four-act opera that reveals why he was held in such esteem by Schumann, Spohr and Mendelssohn: expressive harmonies, folksong-like strophic songs, rich orchestration, the use of the latest stylistic devices, and tuneful bel canto melodies that point to the work's Franco-Italian lineage.

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Peter Joseph von  
**LINDPAINTNER**

(1791–1856)

**Il vespro siciliano**

('Die sizilianische Vesper')

Opera in four acts (1843) • Libretto by Heribert Rau (1813–1876),

Italian version by Wilhelm Häser (1781–1867) revised by Reto Müller and Stefano Piana

Carlo d'Anjou ..... Matija Meić, Baritone  
Alphonse Drouet ..... César Arrieta, Tenor  
Il Conte di Fondi ..... Danilo Formaggia, Tenor  
Eleonora ..... Silvia Dalla Benetta, Soprano  
Aurelia ..... Sara Blanch, Soprano  
Albino ..... Ana Victória Pitts, Mezzo-soprano  
Guillaume l'Étendart; Visconte Vernazzo ..... Carlos Natale, Tenor  
Il Conte di Marche; Francesco Ruffo; Carceriere ..... Damian Whiteley, Bass-baritone  
Giovanni da Procida ..... Dario Russo, Bass

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**Virtuosi Brunensis (Karel Mitáš, Artistic Director)**

**Federico Longo**

Music Assistants: Silvano Zabeo and Marco Simonato

CD 1	1 Sinfonia	5:36	CD 2	1-11 Act II	48:07	CD 4	1-9 Act IV	37:52
	2-19 Act I	61:34	CD 3	1-10 Act III	48:26			

Recorded: 23, 25 July 2015 at the Trinkhalle, Bad Wildbad, Germany for the XXVII ROSSINI IN WILDBAD Festival (Artistic director: Jochen Schöneleber) • A co-production of Rossini in Wildbad (Artistic Director: Jochen Schöneleber) and Deutschlandradio Kultur • Producer: Roland Kistner • Engineers: Norbert Vossen, Siggie Mehne  
Editor: Dr. Anette Sidhu-Ingenhoff • Booklet notes: Volker Tosta • Cover design: Paolo Zeccara  
Special thanks to Carl von Württemberg, patron of this performance • A detailed track and cast list can be found inside the booklet • The Italian libretto may be accessed at [www.naxos.com/libretti/660440.htm](http://www.naxos.com/libretti/660440.htm)

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Playing Time  
3:21:25



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