

companies: Teatro alla Scala, Scarlatti Orchestra in Naples, the Swiss Italian Radio Orchestra, Teatro Regio di Parma, Claudio Monteverdi Orchestra, Haydn Orchestra in Bolzano, Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della RAI, Rome Symphony Orchestra.

Cristina Alunno mezzo-soprano after graduation she continued studying with Gabriella Morigi and she has taken master classes with Renata Scotto at the Accademia Santa Cecilia in Rome .She recently sang the title role of Dido in "Dido and Aeneas" by H.Purcell under the direction of Maestro Luca Giardini at the Teatro A.Bonci in Cesena,Italy and this will be repeated at the Ravenna Festival in April 2013. She performed in Madama Butterfly by G.Puccini under the direction of Maestro Paolo Olmi in Cesena. She has also performed in Der Abschied by G. Mahler, at the Palazzo Albrizzi in Venice. Cristina was Lola in the Cavalleria Rusticana by P.Mascagni, in Bologna , she has performed in La Finta Giardiniera by WA Mozart in Perugia ,Italy and has performed in concerts at the Palazzo Farnese in Rome, at the Auditorium Parco della Musica in Rome, at the Festival "Il Serchio delle Muse" in Lucca ,Italy, at the Teatro Chico Santa Cruz de la Palma, Canary Islands, and at the Ordem dos Medicos Concert Hall in Porto, Portugal.

Marco Simonelli graduated in singing at the Conservatory G B Martini in Bologna and continued his studies with Gabriella Morigi and with M° Luigi Roni.He has taken master classes with Renata Scotto at the Accademia Santa Cecilia in Rome. He performed Don Basilio in the Barbiere di Siviglia by Gioacchino Rossini at the Theatre Antoniano in Bologna and then Colline in La Bohème by G.Puccini directed by Agnese Sartori in Milan . He performed in various Italian cities including Bologna, the Auditorium of Santa Cecilia in Rome, the Villa Contarini Nenzi in Treviso and he was Don Alfonso in Lucrezia Borgia by G. Donizetti, and Sparafucile in Rigoletto by G. Verdi. Winner of the Arte in Canto Competition, in August 2012 he was Filibert in the Signor Bruschino by G. Rossini, conducted by M° De Lorenzo, under the artistic direction of Maestro Luciano Di Pasquale. In April, he was Uncle Bonze in Madama Butterfly by G. Puccini under the direction of Maestro Paolo Olmi.In September he performed in Gianni Schicchi at the Auditorium Parco della Musica, in Rome, conducted by M° Carlo Rizzari.

The Bel Canto Ensemble was founded in 2010 to promote Italian musical culture all over the world. In the first two years Bel Canto Ensemble performed in Belgium (Bruxelles), Canada (Moncton, Halifax), Croatia (Pula, Labin, Rijeka), Cyprus (Nicosia), France (Lyon, Andernos Les Bains, Bordeaux, Metz), Gabon (Libreville), Germany (Heidelberg), Malta (Victoria, Gozo), Morocco (Casablanca, Rabat), Nigeria (Lagos, Abuja, Port Harcourt), Romania (Cluj-Napoca), Russia (Moscow, Kaliningrad), Slovakia (Bratislava), Sweden (Göteborg), Switzerland (Biel), Turkey (Izmir) and Ukraine (Odessa). All the concerts were organized by prestigious cultural institutions, such as Dante Alighieri Society, Rome Opera House, Russian Culture Foundation, Kaliningrad International Film Festival, Nigeria Musical Society, Ministère de la Culture du Royaume du Maroc, National Academy of Performing Arts of Bratislava, Gaultiana Festival of Music, Opera Italia and many others, collaborating with international artists, such as Fatima Anyekema, John Lucien Eclou, Åsa Nordgren, Joseph Oparamanuike, Prisca Enyi, Alla Gavrilina, Zinaida Kovaleva, Zhang Miao, Huan Song, Emeka Nwokedi and the Muson Choir.

Afra AL-Abdulla was born in Dubai and studied Fashion Design at the Istituto di Moda Burgo in Milan, Italy as she considered it to be the best place to develop her talent and be creative. As a growing influence within the UAE, Afra has developed a classic, modern and youthful fashion line. Influenced by her work and studies in Milan, Afra designed the outfits worn by the soprano Monica De Rosa McKay and the baritone Giuseppe Deligia for tonight's Rigoletto concert continuing the successful collaboration of these two Dubai based professionals from previous concerts and thus providing another splendid example of the growing connection between Dubai, a vibrant city of the future, and Italy, a nation rich in history and culture.

09 November 2012 - 09 December 2012

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Rigoletto

di G. Verdi

in Forma di Concerto

performed by

Giuseppe Deligia (Baritone)
Monica De Rosa McKay (Soprano)
Graziano Schiavone (Tenor)
Cristina Alunno (Mezzosoprano)
Marco Simonelli (Bass)
accompanied by The Bel Canto Ensemble
Narration by Alessandra Priante



Thursday 22nd November, at 8pm

DUCTAC' s Centrepoint Theatre, Dubai

Saturday 24th November, at 8pm

Emirates Palace Auditorium, Abu Dhabi

This event will mark the opening of the Italian Cultural Days in Abu Dhabi, organized by the Cultural Office of the Italian Embassy to the UAE



RIGOLETTO

Opera in three acts by Giuseppe Verdi.
The Italian libretto was written by
Francesco Maria Piave based on the play
Le roi s'amuse by Victor Hugo.

Duke of Mantua, tenor Graziano Shiovone
Rigoletto, the Duke's jester baritone Giuseppe Deligia
Gilda, his daughter soprano Monica De Rosa McKay
Sparafucile, an assassin bass Marco Simonelli
Maddalena, his sister mezzo-soprano Cristina Alunno
Count Monterone, baritone Marco Simonelli
accompanied by The Bel Canto Ensemble
Ivan Nardelli (Flute)
Antonio Arcuri (Clarinet)
Massimo Celiberto (Horn)
Andrea Mazza (Bassoon)
Alessandro Vuono (Piano)

Narration By

Alessandra Priante, the cultural attache' for the Gulf Area

Synopsis

Place: Mantua
Time: the Sixteenth century

Act 1

Scene 1: A room in the palace

At a ball in his palace, the Duke sings of a life of pleasure with as many women as possible: "Questa o quella" ("This woman or that"). He has seen an unknown beauty in church and desires to possess her, but he also wishes to seduce the Countess of Ceprano. Rigoletto, the Duke's hunchbacked court jester, mocks the husbands of the ladies to whom the Duke is paying attention, and advises the Duke to get rid of them by prison or death. Marullo informs the noblemen that Rigoletto has a "lover", and the noblemen cannot believe it. The noblemen resolve to take vengeance on Rigoletto. Subsequently Rigoletto mocks Count Monterone, whose daughter the Duke had seduced. Count Monterone is arrested at the Duke's order and curses the Duke and Rigoletto. The curse genuinely terrifies Rigoletto. Thinking of the curse, Rigoletto approaches his house and is accosted by the assassin Sparafucile, who walks up to him and offers his services. Rigoletto considers the proposition but finally declines; Sparafucile wanders off, after repeating his own name a few times. Rigoletto contemplates the similarities between the two of them: "Pari siamo!" ("We are alike!"); Sparafucile kills men with his sword, and Rigoletto uses "a tongue of malice" to stab his victims. Rigoletto opens a door in the wall and returns home to his daughter Gilda. They greet each other warmly: "Figlia!" "Mio padre!" ("Daughter!" "My father!"). Rigoletto has been concealing his daughter from the Duke and the

rest of the city, and she does not know her father's occupation. Since he has forbidden her to appear in public, she has been nowhere except to church and does not even know her own father's name. When Rigoletto has gone, the Duke appears and overhears Gilda confess to her nurse Giovanna that she feels guilty for not having told her father about a young man she had met at the church, but that she would love him even more if he were a student and poor. As she declares her love, the Duke enters, overjoyed. Gilda, alarmed, calls for Giovanna, unaware that the Duke had sent her away. Pretending to be a student, the Duke convinces Gilda of his love: "E il sol dell'anima" ("Love is the sunshine of the soul"). When she asks for his name, he hesitantly calls himself Gualtier Maldè. Hearing sounds and fearing that her father has returned, Gilda sends the Duke away after they quickly trade vows of love: "Addio, addio" ("Farewell, farewell"). Alone, Gilda meditates on her love for the Duke, whom she believes is a student: "Gualtier Maldè!... Caro nome" ("Dearest name"). Later, a preoccupied Rigoletto returns: "Riedo!... perché?" ("I've returned!... why?"), while the hostile noblemen outside the walled garden (believing Gilda to be the jester's mistress, unaware she is his daughter) get ready to abduct the helpless girl. Convincing Rigoletto that they are actually abducting the Countess Ceprano, they blindfold him and use him to help with the abduction: "Zitti, zitti" ("Softly, softly"). With her father's unknowing assistance Gilda is carried away by the noblemen. Upon realizing that it was in fact Gilda who was carried away, Rigoletto collapses, remembering the curse.

INTERVAL

Act 2

The Duke's Palace

The Duke is concerned that Gilda has disappeared: "Ella mi fu rapita!" ("She was stolen from me!") and "Parmi veder le lagrime" ("I seem to see tears"). The noblemen then enter and inform him that they have captured Rigoletto's mistress. By their description, he recognizes it to be Gilda, and he rushes off to the room where she is held: "Possente amor mi chiama" ("Mighty love beckons me"). Pleased by the Duke's strange excitement, the courtiers now make sport with Rigoletto, who enters singing. He tries to find Gilda by pretending to be uncaring, as he fears she may fall into the hands of the Duke. Finally, he admits that he is in fact seeking his daughter and asks the courtiers to return her to him: "Cortigiani, vil razza dannata" ("Accursed race of courtiers"). The men beat up Rigoletto after his attempt to run into the room in which Gilda is being held. Gilda rushes in and begs her father to send the people away. The men leave the room believing Rigoletto has gone mad. Gilda describes to her father what has happened to her in the palace: "Tutte le feste al tempio" ("On all the blessed days"). In a duet Rigoletto demands vengeance against the Duke, while Gilda pleads for her lover: "Sì! Vendetta, tremenda vendetta!" ("Yes! Revenge, terrible revenge!").

Act 3

A street outside Sparafucile's house

A portion of Sparafucile's house is seen, with two rooms open to the view of the audience. Rigoletto and Gilda, who still loves the Duke, arrive outside. The Duke's voice can be heard singing "La donna è mobile" ("Woman is fickle") laying out the infidelity and fickle nature of women. Rigoletto makes Gilda realize that it is the Duke who is in the assassin's house and that he is attempting to seduce Sparafucile's sister, Maddalena: "Bella figlia dell'amore" ("Beautiful daughter of love"). Rigoletto bargains with the assassin, who is ready to murder his guest for money, and offers him 20 scudi for killing the Duke. He orders his daughter to put on a man's clothes in order to prepare to go to Verona and states that he plans to follow later. With falling darkness, a thunderstorm approaches and the Duke determines to remain in the house.

Sparafucile assigns to him the ground floor sleeping quarters. Gilda, who still loves the Duke despite knowing him to be unfaithful, returns dressed as a man. She overhears Maddalena begging for the Duke's life, and Sparafucile promises her that if by midnight another can be found in place of the Duke, he will spare the Duke's life. Gilda resolves to sacrifice herself for the Duke and enters the house. She is immediately mortally wounded and collapses. At midnight, when Rigoletto arrives with money, he receives a corpse wrapped in a sack, and rejoices in his triumph. Weighting it with stones, he is about to cast the sack into the river when he hears the voice of the Duke singing a reprise of his "La donna è mobile" aria. Bewildered, Rigoletto opens the sack and, to his despair, discovers his mortally wounded daughter. For a moment, she revives and declares she is glad to die for her beloved: "V'ho ingannato" ("Father, I deceived you"). She dies in his arms. Rigoletto's wildest fear materializes when he cries out in horror: "La maledizione!" ("The curse!")

ARTIST'S BIO

Monica De Rosa McKay is an Italian lyrical soprano who graduated "cum laude" at the G.B. Martini Conservatory of Bologna in Italy under the guidance of Maestro Leone Magiera. She continued studying with Maestro Luciano Pavarotti and Maestro Carlo Bergonzi and at the Accademia Musicale Chigiana of Siena, Italy. She has obtained notable success and critical acclaim performing in concerts and giving recitals in various Italian cities: Ravenna, Bologna, Milan, Modena, Parma, Florence, Siena, Naples, and was at the Teatro Comunale di Bologna for three years. Since 1993 she has travelled extensively throughout the world living and performing in many countries including France, England, Mexico, Venezuela, USA and Italy. She currently resides in Dubai, UAE. Since becoming resident in Dubai, Monica has performed in a variety of operatic concerts and Gala's to much public acclaim.

Giuseppe Deligia Sardinian born he studied music and opera with Veronica Dunne and at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin. He has taken master classes with Sir Thomas Allen and Dennis O'Neill. He has also recently attended master classes with Mirella Freni at the Centro Universale del Bel Canto in Modena, Italy. Among the conductors he has worked and had master classes with are Vladimir Jurowski, Robin Ticciati, Sir Mark Elder, Maurizio Benini, Sir Charles Mackerras, Kirill Karabits, Jiří Bělohlávek, Emmanuelle Haïm and Stéphane Denève. Giuseppe regularly appears in concerts internationally, most recently performing the step-out Baritone 1 role for Mahler's Das Klagende Lied with the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Maestro Vladimir Jurowski at the Royal Festival Hall. He has sung roles from Bellini, Donizetti, Mozart, Puccini and Rossini among others. Specializing in the Verdian repertoire, Giuseppe has performed in the role of Rodrigo in Don Carlo, Ford in Falstaff, the title role in Macbeth, Iago in Otello, Count Ceprano in Rigoletto, and Count Anckarström in Un ballo in Maschera.

Graziano Schiovone studied singing with Maestro C. Desideri at the Conservatory S. Cecilia in Rome. In 2009 he performed in Les Dialogues des Carmélites by Poulenc, Euryanthe by Weber, Italiana in Algeri by Rossini, Death in Venice by Britten, Rigoletto by Verdi in Mantua, with Plácido Domingo under the direction of Z. Mehta – Project of the Academy Teatro alla Scala in Milan and in Don Giovanni at the Pacini Festival, in Pescia. He performed in Le Convenienze e Inconvenienze Teatrali by Donizetti at the Teatro alla Scala. He debuted in 2010 as Rodolfo in Bohème by Puccini and performed in the Petite Messe Solennelle by Rossini, and Verdi's Attila at the Verdi Festival, in Parma. In 2011 he performed in the Mozart's Requiem and was Dorvil in La scala di seta by Rossini. In 2012, he was Conte d'Almaviva, in the Barbiere di Siviglia. He toured Europe and America, working with directors such as A. Veronesi, M. Couraud, C. Paradiso, R. Palumbo, R. Clemencic, R. Abbado, A. Allemandi, Gustav Kuhn, Guidarini, Zubin Mehta, Steven Mercurio, Diego Fasolis, Francesco La Vecchia, J. Mauricio Galindo, orchestras and internationally renowned opera