

*Sensation
in the Salon*

Thursday 23rd September
Chelsea Theatre
Premiere concert at Chelsea Theatre
7 World's End Place, London SW10 0DR



Tait
Memorial
Trust

THE
CHELSEA
THEATRE

WILL R. BARNES
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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



Welcome back! We are delighted to have our second live concert in 18 months, in the newly renovated Chelsea Theatre. Our first was with Australian soprano, Miriam Allan at St Paul's Knightsbridge in May this year.

It's been an incredibly difficult time for all our artists, but we got to work early in the pandemic, establishing the Emergency Relief Fund, and identifying and supporting those with the greatest need. We couldn't have done it without our wonderful sponsors, and our loyal online audiences for our Tait Tuesdays series. It was an incredible amount of work, especially for our dedicated Administrator James Hancock, but we have survived!

Not only that, somehow we are ready to make awards for 2021, despite all the setbacks, and so on we go into our 29th year. The Tait was founded in 1992, inspired by my mother Lady Tait, who was our first Patron, then joined by Dame Joan Sutherland, and the rest is history.

Tonight, we are very excited to be in this new theatre, and are grateful to Trustee (theirs and ours!) John Rendall and the Board for hosting this first live concert! So a sensational first for Chelsea Theatre! We are also most fortunate to again have Ross Alley, who has devised and presented all seven of our annual "Salon" concerts, as well as pianist Chad Vindin as artistic director and accompanist. Also huge thanks to Rambert School for their superb contribution to the programme.

Thank you to our young artists who have been through difficult times, and I trust you will enjoy the program with our guest young artist, Rosie Noble Booth, from Rambert School, who will be performing a dance solo for us. I thank the Principal, Amanda Britton most sincerely for making this appearance possible.

Thank you Brad Cooper who managed to escape Australia via Germany; the wonderful Annabelle Traves whose online concert for us in April was a huge success; Corrine Cowling who performed in our Gala at Australia House during lockdown 2020...she recently sang a lead role with Opera North in their production of 'A Little Night Music'; and an exciting young tenor, Philip Costovski, winner of the Opera Foundation Award in Australia; and last but not least the talented young NSW bassoonist, Rebecca Allen who will charm you I am sure.

Isla Baring OAM

PROGRAMME NOTES



Sensation pertains to our five senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell – physiological responses to stimuli from the world we live in, yet “sensational” embraces so much more: something extraordinary, startling, even scandalous.

“Tonight, tonight won’t be just any night...” and so our programme begins with the balcony duet from *West Side Story* for Maria and Tony, their senses still quivering from meeting earlier that evening at the neighbourhood dance (“Tonight, tonight, it all began tonight, I saw you and the world went away...”).

Similarly, Handel’s *Semele* is delirious with sensual happiness in “Endless pleasure, endless love” when Jupiter reclines on her breast – little does she know what this serial philander’s long-suffering wife, Juno, has got planned for her! Meanwhile, in Strauss’ “*Heimliche Aufforderung*” (“The Invitation”), the opening rippling accompaniment is like a frisson, roller-coasting up and down the narrator’s spine in anticipation of a night of pleasure (“Ah! come, O wondrous longed-for night!”).

Our dreams often transport us to realms of the unconscious in which we surrender to imagined sensations of delight, captured so superbly in Fauré’s “*Après un rêve*” (“After a dream”) in which a young girl dreams about a romantic flight with her fiancé, away from the earth to the light but, when she wakes up to the bump of harsh reality, she longs to be back in the dream (see the accompanying handout for the text). Although one of Fauré’s most popular vocal compositions, “*Après un rêve*” is played tonight in a rapturous transcription for violin (you may also recall its performance on the cello at the wedding of Prince Harry to Meghan Markle).

“I sensed you in the light, in the air, in the perfume of flowers” sings the poet in Tosti’s “*Ideale*”. Coming to London in 1875, Tosti became singing master to Queen Victoria and her family, later joining the Royal Academy of Music as a professor and becoming a British citizen. (“Come back, dear ideal, for an instant to smile at me again”). Switching from Italian to French language we have the narrator’s image of his lover “Phidyle” peacefully lying in a luscious pasture of green whilst he gently hopes for her “loveliest smile and finest kiss to reward me for my waiting”.

PROGRAMME NOTES

Fantasiestücke, a title that Schumann was fond of since he used it in several works, promotes the fundamental Romantic notion that creative expression is the product of the artist's unrestricted imagination. They are fantasy pieces suggesting short, free-form character studies almost as "in the moment" improvisations revelling in sudden mood changes. Originally for clarinet and piano, Schumann also made an arrangement for cello and piano, while tonight it is for bassoon and piano. The first piece marked "tenderly, with expression" is lyrical and melancholy but its primary minor key eventually brightens into a major tonality while the third movement is marked "quick with fire" with impetuous outbursts contrasting with lyrical poise.

Jenő Hubay dedicated his Carmen: Fantaisie Brilliante to the Belgian virtuoso Henri Vieuxtemps and it is regarded as one of the most spectacular works for violin. Based on five numbers from the opera, it comes across as a concerto might. Separate movements are played without a break providing two great joys in particular: the exhilaration of virtuosic violin playing and the originality of Bizet's Carmen, with its underlying eroticism and tragedy.

Time for something Australian and, what better and new to London, than award-winning Australian composer Sally Whitwell's setting of Shelley's "To Jane: The keen stars were twinkling", a hymn to Shelley's adulterous but unrequited love for Jane Williams. If only feeling could be brought into the union of music and moonlight, the poet wishes; if only Jane's feelings about him were of the same tone as the music and moonlight; if only his own disturbing feelings could be harmonized with the scene.

"No puede ser" ("It cannot be") is one of the most famous arias in the Spanish language. The handsome young fisherman Leandro wonders aloud if the mysterious Marola, the tavern-keeper, can really be so bad, could ever lie to him.

Written on a larger scale than his previous operettas, Giuditta was Franz Lehár's last and most ambitious work and, of all his works, it is the one which most approaches true opera, the resemblances between the story and that of Bizet's Carmen and its unhappy ending heightening the resonances. Perhaps the best known song in the work is the soprano aria "Meine Lippen, sie küssen so heiß", sung by Giuditta in the fourth scene: "My lips, they give so fiery a kiss!"

Can you feel the sensation?... Can you resist?

Ross Alley, London, September 2021

Seduction in the Salon

at Chelsea Theatre

Presented by Ross Alley
Artistic Director: Chad Vindin

Rebecca Allen, bassoon
Brad Cooper, tenor
Phillip Costovski, tenor
Corinne Cowling, soprano
Annabelle Traves, violin

Special Guest

Rosie Noble Booth
Soloist from Rambert School*

*Appears by kind permission of Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance
Principal, Amanda Britton

CONCERT PROGRAMME

CORINNE COWLING

& BRAD COOPER

“Tonight” from West Side Story

Music: Leonard Bernstein

Lyrics: Stephen Sondheim

CORINNE COWLING (soprano)

“Endless Pleasure” from Semele

Music: George Frideric Handel

Libretto: William Congreve

“Heimliche Aufforderung”

Music: Richard Strauss

Poem: John Henry Mackay

ANNABELLE TRAVES (violin)

“Après un rêve” (Gabriel Fauré)

PHILLIP COSTOVSKI (tenor)

“Ideale”

Music: Francesco Paolo Tosti

Poem: Carmelo Errico

“Phidylé”

Music: Henri Duparc

Poem: Leconte de Lisle

PHILLIP COSTOVSKI & BRAD
COOPER

“Agony” duet from “Into the Woods”
(Stephen Sondheim)

REBECCA ALLEN (bassoon)

Fantasiestücke für Fagott und Klavier, op. 73

(1st & 3rd mov'ts)

Music: Robert Schumann

ROSIE NOBLE BOOTH

Mañana

Music: “Mañana Iguana” by Bob McFerrin

Choreographer: Arielle Smith

ANNABELLE TRAVES (violin)

Carmen: Fantaisie brillante

Music: Georges Bizet, arr. Jenő Hubay

BRAD COOPER (tenor)

“Some world far from ours”

Music: Sally Whitwell

Poem: Percy Bysshe Shelley

“No puede ser” from La tabernera del Puerto

Music: Pablo Zorosalbal

Libretto: Federico Romero & Guillermo F-
Shaw

BRAD & PHILIP

“Agony” duet reprise from “Into the
Woods” (Stephen Sondheim)

CORINNE, BRAD & PHILLIP

“Meine Lippen sie küssen so heiss” from
Giuditta

Music: Franz Lehár

Lyrics: Paul Knepler & Fritz Löhner-Beda

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Acknowledgements:

Ross Alley
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Tait Committee
Tonight's soloists
Chad Vindin

On Sale: Signed and unsigned copies



I Have a Song to Sing (Viola Tait, edited by Elizabeth Kumm)

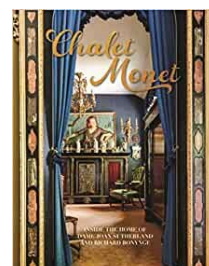
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Born in Pressburg (now Bratislava) to a Scottish family that returned to Scotland on the outbreak of WWI Viola Tait wrote, "We were neither rich nor poor, but my mother liked to think we were genteel." It didn't stop Viola planning a musical career, and after studying at the Scottish National Academy of Music, she parlayed a lucky break into first, the Carl Rosa Opera Company, then D'Oyly Carte. In 1939 she was invited to Australia and the Australian Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Company. Viola was dubious and wrote, "Certainly no one went to Australia just by chance. It was not on the way to anywhere and seemed like the end of the world to most people."

Chalet Monet:

Inside the home of Dame Joan Sutherland

In his charming, eloquent, conversational style, Richard Bonyng takes us inside the home he has shared with Dame Joan, and in so doing provides rare insight into the lives of two of the greatest international cultural icons in opera of all time.





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Djin-Djin, the Japanese Bogie Man, etc. (Christmas pantomime.)
Williamson, J. C. (James Cassius), 1845-1913; Royle, Bert
1895: Princess Theatre, Melbourne; 26 December 1895 - 14 February 1896
From Viola Tait collection National Library of Australia