

Kiri

KIRI TE KANAWA



SOPRANO RECITAL

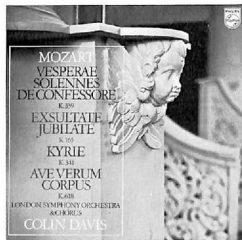
ASSOCIATE ARTIST: BARBARA CONNELLY

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Exsultate, jubilate
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Ave verum corpus**

NZBC

presents

KIRI TE KANAWA

in recital

with associate artist

BARBARA CONNELLY

Napier Municipal Theatre

Monday 10 July 1972



KIRI TE KANAWA

This now celebrated New Zealand soprano was born in Gisborne and began her musical studies at Auckland in 1958. A pupil of Sister Mary Leo, she won many prizes in New Zealand, including that of runner-up in the 1963 Mobil Song Quest and winner in 1965. Her success in the Antipodes then culminated in first place in the Melbourne Sun Aria and second place in the Sydney Sun Aria before she went to England under an Arts Council bursary in 1966.

During her four years of study at the London Opera Centre she appeared in many of their productions, including the title role in Anna Bolena, and while still a student undertook professional engagements with the Chelsea Opera Group and Northern Opera. She also sang Dido in Dido and Aeneas in Caen, Normandy, and gave concerts with the London Philharmonic. During the 1968/69 season she sang at London's Camden Festival, in opera recordings and in performances with the London Philharmonic and Joan Sutherland of Handel's Alcina.

In 1969 she was widely acclaimed in her homeland in the title role of Carmen for the New Zealand Opera Company production. Her next visit to New Zealand, in 1970, involved a successful concert tour before her appearances in Tokyo and Osaka during Japan's Expo '70.

At Covent Garden during the 1970/71 season her performances included roles in Turandot, Parsifal and Boris Godunov. She won high critical praise in the role of Xenia in the Boris production. However, her Covent Garden triumph came at the end of last year as the Countess in the production of Mozart's The Marriage of Figaro. Both critics and the public greeted her as a new opera star and the first night won acclaim from the international press, as well as from the London papers. Since, she has been featured in the London Sunday Times in a special article.

Now under contract to the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, she is appearing this season also in Jenufa, Don Carlos and Aida for the company. She has also been recording Parsifal in Vienna and just before this New Zealand tour she sang the role of Desdemona in Scottish Opera's production of Otello.

As well as recitals during this 1972 tour, she will sing in a number of NZBC orchestral concerts, including the role of Marguerite in The Damnation of Faust by Berlioz with the NZBC Symphony Orchestra.

PROGRAMME NOTES

CARA SELVE (Come, my beloved) (Atalanta)	-	-	-	Handel
LET THE BRIGHT SERAPHIM (Samson)				
ALLELUIA (Exsultate Jubilate)	-	-	-	Mozart

Atalanta, one of Handel's numerous Italian operas on mythological subjects, was performed at the Covent Garden Theatre, London, in 1736. The opera itself is very little known, but the aria *Cara Selve* has served to keep its name alive. It is a tender love song beginning "Come, my beloved! Through the sylvan gloom I wander day and night".

Let the Bright Seraphim is a brilliant and heroic showpiece from the oratorio *Samson*, which was first given, also, at Covent Garden, in 1743. The story is the familiar one, and the text was taken from Milton's *Samson Agonistes*. Samson, captured and blinded by the Philistines, pulls down their temple, burying himself and his enemies in the ruins. His friends perform the funeral rites, during which one of them, an Israelite woman, stands before her compatriots and sings, with electrifying effect, this song of triumph.

Mozart's Alleluia is the joyous finale to his early motet for soprano, *Exsultate Jubilate*. Rarely can so enchanting a composition have been based on a single word.

POLONAISE No. 6 IN A FLAT, Op. 53	-	-	-	Chopin
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The polonaise and the mazurka are the best known of Polish national dances, and to the world in general each of these forms conjures up the name of Chopin. His very first published piece was a polonaise, and he reverted to this form throughout his career as pianist and composer. Chopin's polonaises have an aura of pride and stateliness, embodying the spirit of this ancient processional dance of the Polish nobility. The *A flat Polonaise*, known as the "heroic" or "military", is probably the best known of all, the most splendid and impetuous.

FOUR LAST SONGS	-	-	-	-	-	Richard Strauss
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Fruhling (Spring)
September
Beim Schlafengehn (Going to Sleep)
Im Abendrot (In the Sunset Glow)

It was well said that Richard Strauss had a lifelong love affair with one medium — the lyric soprano voice. In opera after opera by this composer, our thoughts turn at once to the leading soprano role; sometimes there are two or even three in the one work. Similarly with his songs, an overwhelming number have been associated with great sopranos of his own and later generations. The first of these was his own wife, Pauline de Ahna, who excelled in both opera and lieder. Small wonder then, that towards the end of his life, Strauss composed his four last songs for soprano. They were written between 1946 and 1948. *Im Abendrot*, which is usually sung last, is a setting

of a poem by Eichendorff; the other three are to poems by Strauss's friend Herman Hesse. The first performance was given by the great Norwegian soprano Kirsten Flagstad, with Wilhelm Furtwangler conducting, at the Royal Albert Hall, London, in May 1950. (Strauss had died in September of the previous year.) Since that time the songs have passed into the concert repertoire and have been sung by virtually every lyric soprano of note. The music has been described as autumnal, but also vivid with the freshness of spring.

SPRING

In half light I waited, dreamed all too long,
Of trees in blossom,
Those flowing breezes,
That fragrant blue and thrush's song,
Now streaming and glowing
From sky to field
With light overflowing.
All these charms are revealed.
Light gilds the river,
Light floods the plain,
Spring calls me
And through me there quivers
Life's own loveliness.
Life's own sweetness returned again!

SEPTEMBER

These mournful flowers
Rain drenched in the coolness are bending.
While summer cowers mute
As he waits for his ending.
Gravely each golden leaf
Falls from the tallest Acacia tree;
Summer marvels and smiles
To see his own garden
Grow faint with grief.
Ling'ring still near the roses
Long he stays
Longs for repose
Languid, slow to the last
His weary eyelids close.

ON GOING TO SLEEP

Now the day has wearied me,
All my gain and all my longing
Like a weary child's shall be.
Night, whose many stars are thronging;
Hands now leave your work alone;
Brow, forget your idle thinking;
All my thoughts, their labour done,
Softly into sleep are sinking,
High the soul will rise in flight,
Freely gliding, softly swaying,
In the magic realm of night.
Deeper laws of life obeying.

IN THE SUNSET GLOW

Here both in need and gladness
We wandered hand in hand.
Now let us pause at last above the silent land.
Dusk comes the vales exploring,
The darkling air grows still;
Above two skylarks soaring in song their dreams fulfil.
Draw close and leave them singing
Soon will be time to sleep.
How lost our way's beginning
This solitude how deep,
O rest so long desired,
We sense the night's soft breath,
Now we are tired, how tired!
Can this perhaps be death?

Interval

O QUANTE VOLTE (Oh how often) (The Capulets and the Montagues)

Bellini

ACH, ICH FUHL'S (Ah, I feel it) (The Magic Flute) - Mozart

JEWEL SONG (Faust) - - - - - Gounod

Bellini's opera, *The Capulets and the Montagues*, was, of course, an early nineteenth century work on the ever fruitful subject of Romeo and Juliet. It was performed at Venice in 1830, just one year before his masterpiece *Norma*. The libretto, which had already been used by another Italian composer was by the famous poet Felice Romani. This aria, which is sung by Juliet early in the opera, is in the composer's most elegiac vein. The young girl laments the news that Romeo has been banished from Mantua, and is filled with foreboding at the thought of her threatened marriage to the nobleman Paris, who is her parents' choice.

The *Magic Flute*, half pantomime, half serious allegory, is the most puzzling of Mozart's operas, because it alternates between two extremes in a bewildering way. On its more serious side, it deals with a number of "trials" to be undergone by two young lovers, Tamino and Pamina, before they can finally be united. This plaintive, deeply moving aria is sung by Pamina at a point where she is convinced that her lover is indifferent towards her:

"Ah, I feel that love's joy is vanished forever.

Tamino, see my tears! If you feel no longing,

I must find repose in death."

The *Jewel Song* comes in the garden scene of Gounod's famous opera, *Faust*. Marguerite is sitting at her spinning wheel, dreamily recalling a handsome young cavalier whom she has seen at the village fair. Suddenly she sees a casket on her doorstep (left by Faust, of course,) and excitedly draws out the jewels it contains. Unable to resist them, she adorns herself and bursts into this brilliant aria.

RITUAL FIRE DANCE - - - - - Falla

This dramatic piece comes from the ballet, *Love the Magician*, composed by Manuel de Falla and performed in Madrid during World War I. A young and beautiful gypsy girl is haunted by the spectre of her dead lover, but escapes the attentions of this troublesome ghost by persuading another girl to accept its amorous attentions. The *Ritual Fire Dance*, performed to conjure up the spirit of the dead lover, soon establishes a pounding rhythm which has helped to make it a favourite concert piece. Although written first for the orchestra, it is extremely effective as a piano solo.

I HEARD YOU SINGING - - - - - Eric Coates
THE LAST ROSE OF SUMMER - - - - - Traditional
I KNOW WHERE I'M GOING - - - - - arr. Herbert Hughes
ON WINGS OF SONG - - - - - Mendelssohn

Eric Coates was one of the most accomplished composers of light music produced by the generation which grew up before World War I. He had long experience as an orchestral player and this showed up in his many descriptive suites and other orchestral works. Coates was also a notable song writer, and the present example is typical of his fluent style and real gift for melody.

The next two songs are both familiar and traditional. The Irish poet Thomas Moore (1779-1852) wrote the words and, according to some authorities, the tune of the *Last Rose of Summer*, which was incorporated by Flotow into his opera *Martha*. *I Know Where I'm Going* has been arranged by another Irishman, the critic and musicologist Herbert Hughes.

Mendelssohn's charming songs are less frequently heard nowadays than they once were, but there will always be a place for *On Wings of Song*, which is surely the favourite of them all, and which was once equally well known as a violin solo.

(Programme notes by John Gray)



BARBARA CONNELLY has had a long professional association with Kiri Te Kanawa which began with the *Sun Aria* contests in Sydney and Melbourne in the mid-60s. This was followed by concert work as her accompanist in Hawaii, Los Angeles and throughout New Zealand. A student of Sister Mary Leo in the art of accompanying, Barbara Connelly in 1955 went to London under scholarship to study at the Royal Academy. Whilst abroad she also studied at the Paris Conservatoire, was the winner of a number of awards and performed with major orchestras. Currently she teaches in Auckland.

Direction: NZBC
Concert Manager: G. E. Perry

Kiri on record



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An LP recording made by Kiri Te Kanawa with the NZBC Little Symphony during a return visit to this country for Festival appearances at the Bowl of Brooklands, New Plymouth. Kiri was ecstatically received by crowds of fifteen thousand and these concerts are beautifully recorded here for posterity. "Love and Music", "Mimi's Farewell", "One Fine Day"; other arias from Faust, Die Fledermaus, Turandot and Barber of Seville.

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