

THE JERUSALEM OPERA
THE JERUSALEM
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Il Tabarro
by
Giacomo Puccini
Libretto: Giuseppe Adami

Based on
Didier Gold's
"La houppelande"

CONDUCTOR: OMER ARIELI
STAGE DIRECTOR: DANIEL LASRY

November 2022



THE JERUSALEM FOUNDATION
مؤسسة صندوق القدس
הקרן לירושלים



האופרה הירושלמית
THE JERUSALEM OPERA

“Il Tabarro” (The Cloak) is a short opera in one act of dark colours, but very powerful and impressive. It is the first of three short operas in the series known as “Il trittico” (the trio) which Puccini completed in 1916. The premier performance of “Il trittico” took place in the Metropolitan Opera of New York only in 1918, due to the constraints of the First World War.

After the premier performance, Puccini made a number of changes in “Il Tabarro”, and it was first performed in this final version in Rome in 1922. Since then, “Il Tabarro” has been performed as an independent entity in all the important opera houses around the world, with the participation of leading opera singers and under the baton of some of the best conductors.

Background:

Paris, 1910. The opera takes place amidst merchant vessels anchored on the banks of the River Seine. Stevedores covered in sweat and the flowing river are the backdrop. The opera encapsulates one small vignette, a true microcosm of life.

A barge is anchored by the jetty. Michele, the owner of the barge, his young wife Giorgetta and a few stevedores are the main characters in this story encompassing a few hours only – from the setting of the sun into the night, which concludes with a chilling drama.

This performance of “Il Tabarro” marks one hundred years since the opera was first performed in the final version known today.



The first poster for the opera at the Metropolitan, New York, USA, 1918

Acknowledgements

We wish to acknowledge our appreciation over the years to: Murray Newman and Harry Koster, who established the Koster-Newman Award for Young Artists – outstanding students in the Vocal Department of the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance – through the Jerusalem Foundation, Canada, in memory of their parents, Anna and Herman Newman and Shoshana and Morris Koster. The recipients of the award for 2022 are Romi Zelig, Rania Ateek and Shlomit Kovalski.

Our patrons and the friends of the Jerusalem Opera: Julie and Jacob Schorr (Gold Sponsors), Altschuler Shacham Foundation and owners Gilad Altschuler and Kalman Shacham (Gold Sponsors), Arnold and Victoria Kisch, Tammy Ben David, Haya and Jaakov Zerem, Susan and Jacques Gorlin, Yehuda and Nurit Rosenberg, Yaacov and Ora Ringel, Adina and Jonathan Halevy, Leah and Moshe Felber, Ruth Iskin, Gabi Raubitschek, Rocky and Heshie Billet, Ayala and Yair Marocco.

Our volunteers: Debbie Azran, Francoise Cafri, Gulie Chamiel, Shlomo Fox, Ruth Schiller, Joe Weizman, Tuvia Blubstein.

All the opera lovers, patrons and friends of the Jerusalem Opera, who prefer to remain anonymous, whose generous donations and constant support have enabled us to realize the dream of creating and sustaining opera performances in Jerusalem.

The Jerusalem Opera was first established in November 2011 with the main goals of presenting opera productions of the highest quality in Jerusalem and promoting Israeli artists.

The Jerusalem Opera's main productions are: the operas by W.A Mozart "Don Giovanni", "The Marriage of Figaro", "The Magic Flute", "Così fan tutte", as well as the operas by G. Puccini "Madame Butterfly", G. Rossini "The Barber of Seville", E. Humperdinck "Hansel and Gretel", J. Haydn "La Canterina", C. Gounod "La Colombe" in an Israeli premiere, G. Verdi "Rigoletto" and "La Traviata", G. Donizetti "L'elisir d'amore", the French operettas "Le mariage aux lanternes" by Jacques Offenbach and "Une éducation manquée" by Emmanuel Chabrier, both Israeli premieres, "The Diary of Anne Frank" by G. Frid, "La Contadina" by J. Hasse, an Israeli premiere.

The productions of the Jerusalem Opera are staged to highly professional standards and enjoy enthusiastic response from both public and critics.

The Jerusalem Opera receives financial support from the Jerusalem Municipality and from the Israel Ministry of Culture and Sport. However, the future of this inspirational and important initiative depends on the generosity of supporters of culture and others who regard opera as an important piece in the cultural mosaic of Jerusalem, the capital city of Israel.

The Executive Committee:

Adv. **Fern Braniss**, Chair | **Manon Weizman**, Producer, Founder
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Synopsis

Paris 1910.

A barge is docked by a jetty on the river Seine.

The sun is setting. The stevedores have finished unloading the barge and their day's work. Their life is difficult and hopeless. They remember with longing times past in the quarters of a thrilling Paris and dream of a quiet life in a small house in the country. But nowadays the day is dark from the break of dawn and even the comfort of love is fleeting and achieved only through deceit. They drown the bitterness of their lives in drink and prefer not to think.

Giorgetta, the young wife of Michele, who is twice her age and the owner of the barge, is having an affair with Luigi, a young stevedore. Michele suspects that his wife is unfaithful and tries to rekindle their love by reminiscing about pleasant times during the previous year, when their baby was still with them and the three of them were happy together under the cover of his cloak. But the memory only further pains Giorgetta. She rejects his affections and enters their compartment.

Night falls but Giorgetta is sleepless and awaits Luigi, who is to arrive upon seeing their agreed signal – a match glowing in the dark. Michele, who is hurt and angry, remains outside and lights his pipe. He turns over in his mind every possibility of who the man that has seduced his wife could be, and plans his revenge.

Luigi, seeing from a distance the flame of Michele's pipe, mistakenly thinks that this is the signal he has been awaiting. He hurries to the barge but is caught by Michele. Michele forces Luigi to admit his love for Giorgetta, then strangles him to death and hides his body under his cloak.

Giorgetta comes out of their compartment and asks Michele for forgiveness, but finds to her shock the body of Luigi under the cover of her husband's cloak.

Notes on Michele's Major Aria "Nulla!...Silenzio!"

The idea of the opera as a microcosm, a brief interlude against the backdrop of the natural course of life, is boosted through a number of elements characterizing the constant flow of the existential condition: the sun sets, the seasons of the year change and autumn approaches. This is the infinite and continual circle of the cosmos, as symbolized by the constant flow of the river, which is like the eternal cycle of life. The music box also depicts a similar motion and motif: the player turns the handle over and over and the melody plays and repeats itself again and again.

At the height of the action, Michele's major and moving aria, which he sings from the depths of his heart, depicts a vortex. This vortex is also circuitous, but somehow different, sudden and aggressive: the direction of the movement is opposite to the constant forward direction of life and the river. It is convoluted and tangled, forcibly stopping the perpetual forward motion. It cuts and pulls everything with it downwards, to the bottom of the river bed, to the end.

The dizziness of the vortex symbolizes Michele's emotional upheaval: his love for Giorgetta, the extreme trauma her adultery has caused him, the terrible urge to seek revenge through the death of the man who seduced her - while realizing that this will bring upon him terrible consequences which he is however willing to accept.

Death is the only solution that Michele finds in the whirlpool of his emotions ("peace can only be found in death"). In anger and desperation, he calls to the unknown lover to join him and plunge together into the depths of the vortex. He knows that his death will follow the murder of the lover: an act which like the vortex, violently ends the flow of life and symbolizes the diving into oblivion.

The music serves to accompany and emphasize the dizziness of the whirlpool with its circuitous and repetitive motif.

After the first performance of the opera, Puccini made changes in the opera, inter alia, substantial changes in this aria.

In the original version of the aria, Michele turns to the river and contemplates deep sentiments about its eternal nature ("Scorri, fiume eterno!"). In the revised edition, Puccini changes the aria completely: Michele no longer has any sentiments about the river. Instead, Puccini portrays Michele's doubts about the identity of the lover and raises several names and possibilities. Even though he is unable to point to the actual identity of the lover, Michele plans his revenge and calls to the anonymous lover to descend together with him in the whirlpool down to the riverbed.

The revised aria constitutes a significant contribution to the denouement of the plot. This being said, the river still remains constantly in the background. It can be understood from this why Puccini used the image of a whirlpool to symbolize Michele's emotional state and his vengeful deeds.

It is interesting to note that the original version has not been lost and in some editions of the recording of the opera it is performed as an addendum at the end of the opera.

About the process Michele undergoes in his decision to kill his wife's lover

Michele is not a cuckolded husband who decides on the spur of the moment to murder his wife's lover. He undergoes a process which leads him to this fateful decision:

His duet with Giorgetta is full of great sorrow and pain because of her gradual distancing from him. He loves her and tries to bring her closer to him, but her rejection of him increases his anger and despair and eventually he stoops to calling her "sgualdrina" (whore). Such a derogatory term said out loud, clearly indicates a change in his relationship to her and the direction of his thoughts. The dark music that comes after this truly reflects his difficult emotions.

He once again recalls their love for one another. Puccini presents this through the song of the two lovers – who may not exist in reality but constitute the memories of love playing in Michele's mind. This further exacerbates the pain and sorrow he feels with the estrangement from Giorgetta, like a knife in his heart, which motivates him to plan his actions.

And then the blast of the trumpet from the nearby barracks calls for lights out – Il silenzio. At this point Michele has already finalized his plan of revenge. So the trumpet call is not only for lights out in the barracks at nightfall; it symbolizes a time of finality in general, a total moral decline in light of Michele's decision to kill his wife's lover, a decision which reflects the complete loss of all moral values.

However, there may be another meaning to the blast of the trumpet: this is the TUBA MIRUM – the trumpet call which symbolizes the day of reckoning, the day that Michele will be called upon to answer for his decision to take the life of another.

The gray dusk, the somber and dark music, the quiet of the pier empty of people – all lead to the moment when Michele will execute this most terrible of acts.

In his monumental aria, Michele is already at peace with his decision. He is pained and hurt because of Giorgetta, but he still loves her and will not do anything to hurt her. All of his anger is turned towards her lover. He wonders who he is, but in any event he knows that he will kill him and this act will decide his fate and death as well.

The Participants

Omer Arieli, Musical Director and Conductor

Daniel Lasry, Stage Director

The Singers:

Daniel Luis de Vicente – Michele

Yasmine Levi-Ellentuck - Giorgetta

Vitaliy Kovalchuk – Luigi

Noa Hope – Frugola

Marc Shaimer – Tinca

Lev Elgardt – Talpa

Hanan Leberman – Song Seller, Organ Grinder, Lover, Backstage Tenor

Rita Tawil – Lover, Seamstress

Tehila Serri Medvedeva – Backstage Soprano, Seamstress

David Kovenski, Ehoud Yaari – Stevedores

Production Team

Producer – **Slava Kozodoi**

Costumes, Set and Props – **Shira Wise**

Lighting and Sound – **Evgeny Yanov, Liora Nachmani**

Video Production – **Udi Alfasi Tranquilo Productions**

Still Photography – **Elad Zagman**

Graphic Designer – **Revital Toren**

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Marketing – **Golan Rise, Bimot Digital**

Site and Media – **Yaniv Kuris**

Surtitles – **Liora Nachmani, Fern Braniss, Omer Arieli**

Surtitles Projectionist – **Daniel Lasry**

Rehearsal Pianist – **Raymond Goldstein**



Boats Photograph by Eugène Atget (1857–1927): Photographes De Paris



OMER ARIELI MUSICAL DIRECTOR, CONDUCTOR

Conducted the the Dortmunder Philharmoniker, the American Symphony Orchestra, the Orchestra Maderna and most Israeli orchestras.

Worked as coach and conductor in many theatres and festivals in Austria, Germany and Italy.

The winner of first prize in international competitions ("Belvedere" – Vienna, EAJC – Paris).

Lecturer at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance, where he teaches various courses.

Conductor of the "Jerusalem Amateur Orchestra" and the "Jerusalem Oratorio Choir".



DANIEL LASRY STAGE DIRECTOR

Daniel holds a B.A. from the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance and an M.A. from the Royal Conservatoire of Antwerp, Belgium. After completing her studies in Europe, she was accepted into a variety of programs such as a specialty in drama and opera, in Bel Canto, and participation in the young singers and musicians program in the Royal Theatre of La Monnaie in Brussels, Belgium.

Daniel has studied and worked in Israel and abroad in different aspects of opera production, including all aspects of independent opera performances, with different musical companies.



DANIEL LUIS DE VICENTE BARITONE

Born in Florida, USA, studied at the University of South Florida. Guest engagements have taken him to Italy where he performed in opera houses such as the Teatro La Fenice, Teatro Verdi Trieste, Teatro Filarmonico di Verona, and others.

His repertoire includes the title role in **Rigoletto**, *Jago* in **Otello**, *Paolo Albiani* in **Simon Boccanegra** and *Giorgio Germont* in **La Traviata** by Verdi, *Gianni* in **Gianni Schicchi** and *Michele* in **Il tabarro** by Puccini, *Leporello* in Mozart's **Don Giovanni**, *Marcello* in **La Bohème** and *Sharpless* in **Madame Butterfly** by Puccini, and other roles.



YASMINE LEVI-ELLENTUCK SOPRANO

Born in Israel. Graduated from the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance and the Brooklyn College Music Conservatory. She was also a member of the Opera Studio at the Israeli Opera.

A prize winner of the Elizabeth Connell Competition in Sydney, Australia and a recipient of the Wagner Society in New South Wales. Won prizes from the Metropolitan Opera National Council Competition in New York, the Gerda Lissner Foundation, Giulio Gari Competition and Licia-Albanse-Puccini foundation in New York. She has received grants from the Ronen Foundation and Keren Sharet in Israel.

Her opera performances include the title role in **Madame Butterfly** (Puccini), the *first lady* in **The Magic Flute** (Mozart) at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, *Leonora* in **Il Trovatore** (Verdi) and *Fiordiligi* in **Così fan Tutte** (Mozart), and more.

Her concert repertoire includes: Beethoven's **9th Symphony**, Strauss's **Four Last Songs**, and more works.

VITALIY KOVALCHUK TENOR

Born in the Ukraine. After completing his studies there he moved to Italy and studied in G. Verdi Conservatory in Milan. Among his teachers in master classes were Montserrat Caballé and Vladimir Chernov. Appears in numerous opera houses in Europe and around the world, and in festivals such as The Arena di Verona. Among his roles are: *Mario Cavaradossi* in **Tosca**, *Calaf* in **Turandot**, *Rodolfo* in **La bohème**, *Pinkerton* in **Madama Butterfly** and *Michele* in **Il tabarro** – by Puccini, *Il duca* in **Rigoletto** and *Radames* in **Aida** by Verdi, *The Pretender – False Dmitry* in **Boris Godunov** by Mussorgsky, *Turiddu* in **Cavalleria rusticana** by Mascagni and more. Appears in many concerts in Italy and in other countries.

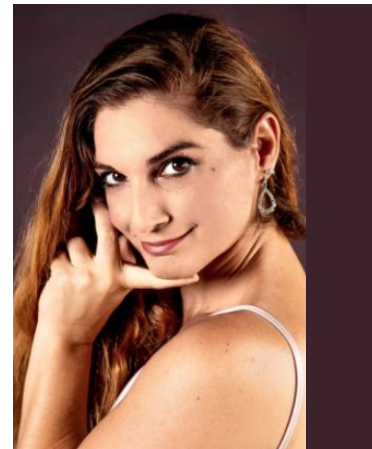


NOA HOPE MEZZO SOPRANO

Graduated from the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance. She received prizes in various competitions and performs as a soloist in many productions and concerts all over Israel.

Her repertoire includes *Baba* in Menotti's **The Medium**, *Rosina* in Rossini's **Il barbiere di Siviglia**, *Suzuki* in Puccini's **Madame Butterfly**, *Cherubino* in Mozart's **Le nozze di Figaro** and others.

Performs regularly in the productions of the Jerusalem Opera and in numerous productions of the Israeli Opera.





MARC SHAIMER TENOR

Born in Russia and made Aliya in 1990.

For many years Marc Shaimer was a regular at the Israeli Opera, where he appeared as a chorus member and also as a soloist.

Also performed many roles with different opera projects and orchestras — the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra, Haifa Symphonic Orchestra and others.

His repertoire includes: *Il Duca* in Verdi's **Rigoletto**, *Rudolfo* in Puccini's **La Bohème**, *Tonio* in Donizetti's **La Fille du Regiment** and others.



LEV ELGARDT BASS-BARITONE

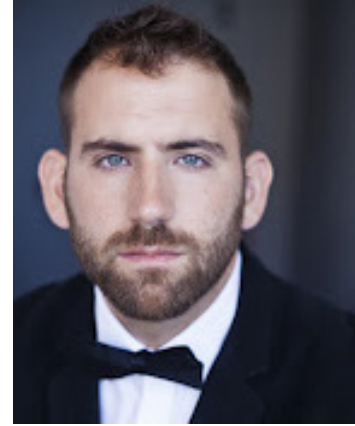
Lev was born in Russia and immigrated to Israel. He is a graduate of the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory, the St. Petersburg Conservatory and the Mariinsky Theatre Academy of Young Opera Singers.

He is the recipient of the first prize in the 2004 Kiev International Vocal Competition; the Grand Prix at the Golden Hanukkah International Vocal Competition (Berlin, 2008); second prize at the International Rimsky-Korsakov Young Opera Singers Competition, 2016.

His repertoire includes *the Water Goblin* in Dvorak's **Rusalka**; *Zuniga* in **Carmen** by Bizet; *Don Fernando* in **Fidelio** by Beethoven; *Masetto* in **Don Giovanni** by Mozart and others. This is his debut performance with the Jerusalem Opera.

HANAN LEBERMAN TENOR

Has sung the role of *Apprentice* in Wagner's **Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg** at the Glyndebourne Festival in England and the role of *Tamino* in Mozart's **Die Zauberflöte** at Trentino Music Festival in Italy. He is a Rabbi and Cantor and travels frequently to serve and perform in synagogues in the United States. This is his debut performance with the Jerusalem Opera.



RITA TAWIL SOPRANO

A third year student at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance.

Her repertoire includes *the Aunt* in **Madame Butterfly** by Puccini; *Margot* in Lehar's **The Merry Widow**; *the first child* in Mozart's **The Magic Flute** and *the first wood spirit* in Dvorak's **Rusalka**.





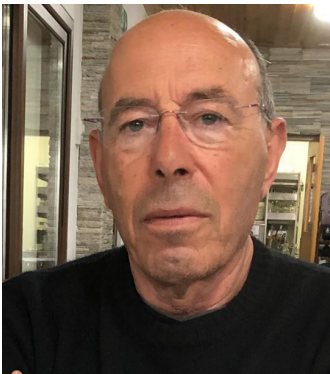
TEHILA SERRI MEDVEDEVA SOPRANO

A graduate of the Ankor Choir. Has participated in many musical projects and recordings. She is the first prize winner in the Chestnut Piano International Piano Festival in Kiev.



DAVID KOVENSKY BASS-BARITONE

A bass baritone singer in the Jerusalem Oratorio Chamber Choir. He has participated in the choirs of the Jerusalem Opera's productions of Rossini's **The Barber of Seville**, Mozart's **Così fan tutte** and **The Magic Flute**.



EHOUD YAARI BASS

Appeared in the roles of *the Bonzo* in **Madame Butterfly** by Puccini and *Antonio* in **Le Nozze di Figaro** by Mozart with the Jerusalem Opera as well as in various concerts in Israel with orchestras and choirs alongside well-known artists. His teachers include Nili Harpaz, Jeff Francis and Omer Arieli.