



The Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra | The Jerusalem Opera Singers Conductor: Omer Arieli

# Loyalty and Betrayal

Thérèse Raquin by Aharon Harlap Libretto: Dana Gur Based on the book by Émile Zola

**Opera Pieces** 



23.2.2023





#### IN MEMORY OF DANA GUR

Dana in her room, at her student apartment in Jerusalem. Sounds of the flute are coming from her room.

I am drawing Dana standing, sitting, or as she plays the flute. This was the beginning of a true friendship until her untimely death, twenty years ago.

Dana was a poetic figure: she played the flute, sang, created puppet shows, taught music, and arranged music festivals.

Sergey Lazarev, her partner, wrote the music for her puppet shows.

Dana will be always remembered by me and by her many friends with love!

#### Orna Millo



Dana, oil on paper, 100 X 70 cm, Orna Millo, 1973

**Loyalty and Betrayal** – a conceptual pairing so paramount to all of life's arenas – personal, social, political, cultural and more. Opera, as a mirror image of life itself, deals at great length with these two concepts: loyalty between couples, friends, to one's country, to one's conscience – the list is endless. And betrayal, in all its complexities and resulting repercussions, is the conceptual opposite.

Following the Jerusalem Opera's production last November of the opera "Il Tabarro", in collaboration with the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra – an opera dealing with the question of loyalty and the consequences of betrayal – we are continuing with the theme and bringing the opera "Thérèse Raquin". This opera also deals with loyalty and betrayal between couples.

The Israeli composer Aharon Harlap composed the music to the libretto in Hebrew, written by Dana Gur, based on the book by the same name by Émile Zola.

In the first part of the evening, the singers of the Jerusalem Opera will perform arias and ensembles from well-known operas, concerning the subjects of Loyalty and Betrayal.

#### The performance will be in the presence of the composer Aharon Harlap.



The opening pages of the first edition of "Thérèse Raquin", signed by the author, Émile Zola, 1868

# 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.

**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, Dina Avni, Avraham Hominer, Ruhama Freund, Peter Kals, Willys S. Kals, Deborah Goldstein.

L'opéra de Jérusalem remercie la fille de Madame Yvette Brunschwig pour le don qu'elle a fait en souvenir de sa mère, chanteuse d'opéra et musicienne accomplie. The Jerusalem Opera thanks the daughter of Mrs. Yvette Brunschwig for the donation she made in memory of her mother, an accomplished opera singer and musician.

**Our volunteers:** Debbie Azran, Francoise Cafri, Gulie Chamiel, Shlomo Fox, Ruth Schiller, Joe Weizman, Yair Marocco, Tuvia Blubstein, Zakai Ben Chaim, Yehuda Armoni.

L'opéra de Jérusalem remercie la publiciste Laura Sitbon pour son aide dans la promotion de Thérèse Raquin dans les différents médias.

The Jerusalem Opera thanks the publicist Laura Sitbon for her help in promoting Thérèse Raquin in the various media.

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" and "Il tabarro". 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.

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# Loyalty and Betrayal – Opera Pieces

#### Puccini – Manon Lescaut

Premier performance: Torino, 1893

#### Duet: Mima Millo, Gideon Dabi

The young and beautiful Manon Lescaut was supposed to have entered a convent in accordance with the wishes of her late father.

Her brother saves her from this fate. He has made a pact with the old rich man Geronte de Ravoir, according to which he will get the sister and the brother will also get his reward. Immediately after meeting with Geronte, Manon meets the student Renato des Grieux and falls in love with him: she leaves the old man and follows her heart. However, because Grieux is penniless, she leaves him and returns to be the mistress of Geronte.

In this aria she is living in Geronte's home but she is loveless. She misses her lover Grieux whom she abandoned without proper explanation and longs to return to him.

#### Mozart – Don Giovanni

Premier performance: Vienna, 1787

#### Trio: Esther Kopel, Matan Gendelman, Oshri Segev

The cheating and deceptive ways of Don Giovanni continue and his newest plan is to seduce Donna Elvira's servant girl.

Don Giovanni prefers to arrive in simple apparel, so the two switch clothes. As they are doing so, Donna Elvira appears on the darkened balcony above them and reveals that her heart still belongs to Don Giovanni, despite his unfaithfulness.

Don Giovanni assures her that he still loves her and asks for forgiveness. He decides to seize the opportunity and to send Leporello to seduce Donna Elvira and leave the premises, so that he can begin to entice her servant girl.



#### **Beethoven – Fidelio**

Premier performance: Vienna, 1805

#### The Canon Quartet: Mir ist so wunderbar ("A wondrous feeling fills me")

#### Mima Millo, Deema Azar, Matan Gendelman, Oshri Segev

Leonore, Florestan's wife, tries to help him escape from jail where he has been imprisoned by his enemy. To accomplish this, she masquerades as a young man by the name of "Fidelio" in order to become a guard at the prison.

Marzelline, the daughter of Rocco who is the head guard at this same jail, is the girlfriend of Jaquino, who holds the keys to the jail cell. Marzelline falls in love with Fidelio, without knowing that she is really a woman. Jaquino proposes marriage to Marzelline, but she refuses and Jaquino is hurt and insulted.

In the end things work out: Florestan is freed from jail, much to the delight of Leonore/Fidelio. Marzelline is left with no choice but to relinquish her love for Fidelio and to marry Jaquino, and Jacquino wins back his lover. Everyone is happy and they sing the quartet together about the glorious feeling of their hearts – each for a different reason.

The opera celebrates the ideal of love and loyalty in marriage, depicted in the very name of the opera "Fidelio – oder die eheliche Liebe" (The Triumph of Marital Love) and the assumed name of the main character "Fidelio" – loyalty. Donizetti – Anna Bolena

Premier performance: Milano, 1830

#### Finale

#### Mima Millo, Rona Shrira, Hanan Leberman, Lev Elgardt

The opera depicts the final days of the marriage between King Henry VIII of England and his wife Anna Bolena (Anne Boleyn). Anna's charm has diminished in the eyes of King Henry VIII and he wishes to marry his newest love, Jane (Giovanna) Seymour. Mark Smeaton, the court musician, who has been in love with Anna for the past year, sees this as his opportunity to win her. He cooperates with the King and they concoct a false accusation against Anna: that she has been unfaithful to the King and for this she is sentenced to death.

In the finale of the opera, Anna is in her cell in the Tower of London, surrounded by her ladies in waiting and she has gone mad with sorrow. She dreams that this is her wedding day to the King, but upon hearing the cannon and the roll of the drums, she regains her sanity and understands that this is actually the marriage declaration of King Henry VIII to Jane Seymour. She does not beg God for a fair trial nor vengeance against the new couple. She only asks for mercy and forgiveness and then loses consciousness. The guards enter and take her to her execution.

### Thérèse Raquin – Synopsis

The events take place in the home of Madame Raquin in Paris, in the 1860's.

#### Background prior to the beginning of the opera:

Madame Raquin has adopted her niece Thérèse who has been orphaned from the age of two. Thérèse grows up together with her sickly cousin Camille. Thérèse and Camille are like brother and sister: they played together and even slept in the same bed. When Thérèse turns eighteen, Madame Raquin marries her to her son Camille, in order to assure that she stays by his side as his caregiver who will attend to all his needs.

#### Act One

Madame Raquin, Thérèse and Camille are living in an apartment above Madame Raquin's store. Every Thursday evening, friends of the family come over to play the game of dominoes, and to provide some escape from their boring and gray lives. Those who attend: Grivet - a retired clerk; Michaud - a retired police officer; Grivet's son Olivier and his wife Suzanne. These visits are no relief to Thérèse, who has been suffering from a heavy feeling of despair for many years. One special evening, a childhood friend of Camille joins the group - Laurent. This stranger ignites Thérèse's curiosity. Laurent, who has tried his luck in the past as an artist, arrives to paint Camille's portrait. He comes to the Raguin household more and more frequently in order to complete the portrait and Thérèse hypnotically observes his progress. Laurent understands her feelings and her despair. He cold-heartedly decides to seduce her and Thérèse willingly accepts his advances.

After eight months: Thérèse and Laurent are having a stormy love affair in the Raquin apartment for quite some time. Laurent realizes that he is in love with Thérèse and the two feel Camille's presence as a burden. They begin to think of getting Camille out of the way.

#### Act Two

After a year: it has been a year since Thérèse and Laurent actually played out their plan to get rid of Camille; a year since they drowned him in the river during a boat cruise they all took together and they portrayed his death as an accident. The two meet less frequently during this year so as not to raise any suspicion of foul play, but on this night they are together: the night they are to be married. They hope that their marriage, even though it is based on their terrible secret, will calm the horrible nightmares that they both suffer since the murder. But Camille's spirit continues to haunt them and they begin to grow distant from each other.

In this situation, the only character that comes between them is Madame Raquin, who gives each one separately a bit of respite. However, her health is deteriorating since the death of her son and she is now paralysed and mute as a result of a stroke. When this last comforting role is taken from them, and out of a feeling of repulsion that they feel for one another and the madness that engulfs them, they admit the truth of the circumstances of Camille's tragic death in the presence of his mother Madame Raquin.

When the friends of the family arrive again on Thursday evening for the traditional game of dominoes, the paralysed Madame Raquin attempts to no avail, by using her one finger, to expose the murderers of her son to the guests (one of whom is a retired police officer). The mutual suspicion between Thérèse and Laurent and their constant fear that their crime will be exposed, brings them to the realization that they will have no rest unless one of them dies. After the guests leave, each one plans to murder the other, but in the end both of them perish: Thérèse and Laurent each commit suicide.

# The Composer's Remarks

Many years ago, I read the novel "Thérèse Raquin" by the French writer Émile Zola and I was immediately fascinated with the possibility of turning it into an opera and employing all the dramatic components of the work: obsessive love, adultery, murder and suicide.

The composing of opera poses many challenges. First of all, one must find musical concepts that portray the characters in the novel and their special leitmotifs. Secondly, the creative work must be interesting enough from a musical point of view to hold the attention of the listeners from its beginning until its conclusion as an entire unit. The libretto is of course of central importance as an inspiration to the composer.

In 1995, the New Israel Opera announced a competition for original opera works. I approached Dana Gur and asked her to take upon herself the difficult and complex task of writing the libretto. By virtue of her sharp intellect, understanding and great talent, she succeeded in creating a compact plot which has both dramatic intensity and comic interludes, serving as a break from the tragedy in which the work is enveloped.

# I dedicate the opera "Thérèse Raquin" to the memory of Dana Gur, who passed away from illness twenty years ago.

The opera "Thérèse Raquin" was first performed in the Israel Festival, Jerusalem, 2005 and conducted by the composer.



Publication for Thérèse Raquin – ca. 1867

# Aharon Harlap



Aharon Harlap, one of Israel's most prominent composers and conductors, was born in Canada, where he began his musical career as a pianist. He completed his studies in music and mathematics at the University of Manitoba, Canada in 1963 and in 1964 immigrated to Israel. He furthered his studies in composition and conducting at the Tel Aviv Academy of Music, Royal College of Music, London, England and at the Vienna Academy of Music, Austria with Maestro Hans Swarovsky.

His orchestral compositions have been performed by all of the major orchestras in Israel including the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. His chamber and orchestral compositions

have been performed throughout the world, namely in Canada, the USA, Europe and recently in St. Petersburg, Russia and Bangkok, Thailand.

He is the recipient of many prizes including the prestigious ACUM (Authors and Composers in Israel) award for "Life Achievement" in 2008 for his contribution to music in Israel as a composer, conductor and teacher. He was also awarded the "Prime Minister's Composition Prize" in 1999 and again in 2014. In 2020 Harlap was awarded the Dr. Tzipora Jochsberger Prize for Life Achievement in the creation of Jewish Art Music.

Harlap has represented Israel as an international choral judge at the "World Choir Games" (Interkultur) held in Korea, the USA, Austria, Germany, China and recently in Sochi, Russia and South Africa.

In May, 2016 Harlap's new orchestral work "Memoirs" was performed by the Dohnanyi-Budafok Symphony Orchestra, Budapest under the direction of guest conductor Roberto Paternostro.

In July 2017, Harlap's clarinet concerto was performed in Bangkok by the Thailand Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of chief conductor Alfonso Scarano, with the clarinet soloist Calogero Palermo, principal clarinetist of the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam, Holland.

From 1976 – 2018, Harlap was an Associate Professor in choral and orchestral conducting at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance. Since 1997, he is the Music Director of the Kefar Saba Chamber Choir in Israel.

In 2022, Harlap was awarded the prestigious Azrieli Prize for Jewish Music. Performances of the winning work "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee O' Lord" for soprano solo and orchestra will take place in Montreal, Canada, London, England and in New York, USA.

# The Participants

**Omer Arieli** Musical Director and Conductor **The Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra** 

#### The Singers

Mima Millo Gideon Dabi Rona Shrira Hanan Leberman

Lev Elgardt Matan Gendelman Oshri Segev Deema Azar Esther Kopel Thérèse Raquin Thérèse's lover Madame Raquin Camille, son of Madame Raquin and Thérèse's husband Grivet, a retired clerk Michaud, a retired police officer Olivier, Michaud's son Suzanne, Olivier's wife Soprano

# **Production Team**

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Gabriel Ebert, Matt Ryan and Keira Knightley in "Thérèse Raquin" movie, 2015. Photograph: Joan Marcus/AP



#### OMER ARIELI MUSICAL DIRECTOR, CONDUCTOR

Conducted the Dortmunder Philarmoniker, 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".



#### **GIDEON DABI** BARITONE

Gideon received his degree in Voice Performance from Rutgers University and a Master's in Music from Manhattan School of Music. He performs across a wide array of genres and styles. He regularly appears throughout the United States, Israel and Italy.

Among his roles: *Figaro* in "Le nozze di Figaro" by Mozart, *Zuniga* and *Morales* in "Carmen" by Bizet, *Marquis de la Force* in "Dialogues des Carmélites" by Poulenc, *Dandini* in "La Cenerentola" by Rossini, *Dr. Malatesta* in "Don Pasquale" by Donizetti and more.

A first-generation American fluent in Hebrew, Gideon was a soloist for Naxos' Grammy Awardwinning Anthology of Jewish-American Composers recordings. This is his premier performance with the Jerusalem Opera.



#### MIMA MILLO SOPRANO

Graduated from the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance and was a member of the Meitar Opera Studio.

She is a recipient of prestigious awards such as Kammeroper Schloss Rheinsberg 28th International Singing Competition 2018, and was a finalist in the Spazio Musica International Competition for the role of *Violetta* in "La Traviata" (Verdi) 2017. Recipient of scholarships in Germany in 2021-22, from the America-Israel Cultural Foundation, the Ronen Foundation and the IVAI International Opera Studio. She has also been awarded prizes in the 2002 Aviv Competition of the America-Israel Cultural Foundation, and more.

Lives in Germany and appears in Europe and Israel. She was a member of the Theater Bremen Ensemble and has made solo appearances with the Bremen Philharmoniker, Berlin Sinfonietta and other orchestras, with the Israel Symphony Orchestra Rishon LeZion, the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra and others.



#### HANAN LEBERMAN TENOR

Hanan is based in Jerusalem. He has sung the role of *Apprentice* in Wagner's "Die Meistersinger von Nürenberg" at the Glyndebourne Festival in England, *Tamino* in Mozart's "Die Zauberflöte" at Trentino Music Festival in Italy, and *Organ Grinder, Song Seller* and *Lover* in "Il tabarro" by Puccini with the Jerusalem Opera.

Hanan is a Rabbi and Cantor and travels frequently to serve and perform in synagogues in the United States.



#### **RONA SHRIRA CONTRALTO**

Graduated from the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music and a former member of the Meitar Opera Studio.

Winner of the Aviv Competitions (AICF, 2023). Finalist at Vincero (Italy 2022) a fellow of the Ronen Foundation (since 2021) and America-Israel Cultural Foundation (2023) alongside other awards and scholarships.

Among her operatic roles: *La voix de la mère* in "Les Contes d'Hoffmann" by J. Offenbach, *The old gypsy* in "Aleko" by Rachmaninoff, *Mamma Lucia* in "Cavalleria rusticana" by Mascagni, *Filippyevna* in "Yevgeni Onegin" by Tchaikovsky and more, and a soloist in various oratorios.



#### MATAN ABRAHAM GENDELMAN BASS

Has won scholarships from the Ronen Foundation, the America-Israel Cultural Foundation and the Israel Opera Arts Association.

His operatic repertoire includes *Don Alfonso* in "Così fan tutte", *Sarastro* in "Die Zauberflöte", *Bartolo* in "Le nozze di Figaro", *Commandatore* in "Don Giovanni" by Mozart, *Colline* in "La Bohème, *Spinellocio* in "Gianni Schicchi" by Puccini and more.

Matan sings with orchestras all over the country including the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, the Haifa Symphony Orchestra, the Ra'anana Symphony and the Israel Sinfonietta Beer-Sheva.



#### LEV ELGARDT BASS

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.

He has performed as a soloist with the Mariinsky Academy of Young Opera Singers. 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, *Talpa* in "II tabarro" by Puccini with the Jerusalem Opera, *an old gypsy* in "Aleko" by Rachmaninoff.



DEEMA AZAR SOPRANO

A Master's degree graduate at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance (JAMD).

In 2020 Deema won second prize at the Ada Brodsky Art Song competition at JAMD and received the special Shlomo Hed Award. She is also the winner of a scholarship from the America-Israel Cultural Foundation.

Her operatic repertoire includes: *Pamina* and *Second Boy* in "The Magic Flute", *Susanna* and *Barbarina* in "Le nozze di Figaro", *Clorinda* in "La Cenerentola" by Rossini and more.



#### **OSHRI SEGEV BARITONE**

Born in Israel, Oshri began his artistic career as a concert pianist and graduated on the Dean's list from the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music, Tel Aviv. He studied opera at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance. He is the recipient of the 2013 – 2014 America-Israel Cultural Fund Scholarship, the Ronen Foundation Scholarship, 2018, and the Koster Newman Scholarship for Young Artists, 2018.

Sings with the Israel Opera, the Jerusalem Opera, the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and others and under the batons of Zubin Mehta, Kurt Masur, Daniel Oren and others. He participated in the Jerusalem Opera's premier production of "Don Giovanni" in the role of *Don Ottavio*, as well as in the operas "The Marriage of Figaro", "Così fan tutte" by Mozart and "The Barber of Seville" by Rossini. His other roles include: *Ramiro* in "La Cenerentola" by Rossini, *Nemorino* in "L'elisir d'amore" by Donizetti, *Tamino* in "The Magic Flute" and more.



#### ESTHER KOPEL SOPRANO

Esther has a master's degree from the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance with honors. She won the first prize in the Buchman-Heiman competition.

With the Jerusalem Opera she sang the role of *The Mother* in Humperdinck's "Hansel and Gretel" and *Countess Ceprano* in Verdi's "Rigoletto". Also, she performed as soloist with the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra. Esther sang *Marcellina* in Mozart's "Le Nozze di Figaro" with the Haifa Symphony Orchestra, and *Nedda* in "I pagliacci" by Leoncavallo in Taranto opera festival in Italy.