

Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society
(66th Season)

ASSEMBLY HALL

Sunday, 16th November, 1969
at 3 p.m.

A I D A
(Verdi)

The National Federation of Music Societies, to which this Society is affiliated, gives support towards the cost of these concerts with funds provided by the Arts Council of Great Britain. Support is also given by the Corporation of Royal Tunbridge Wells

Programme and Notes - - - 1/-

CHARACTERS

AIDA, daughter of Amonasro and captive slave of

Amneris *Catherine Duval*
(Soprano)

RADAMES, Captain of the Guard ..

Ninian Walden
(Tenor)

AMNERIS, daughter of the King of Egypt ..

Jean Allister
(Mezzo-Soprano)

THE KING OF EGYPT

Anthony Williams
(Bass)

AMONASRO, King of Ethiopia

John Lawrenson
(Baritone)

PRIESTS, PRIESTESSES, MINISTERS, CAPTAINS,
SOLDIERS, PEOPLE, SLAVES, PRISONERS, ETC.

THE ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS CHORAL SOCIETY
(Chorus Master : Derek Watmough)

ORCHESTRA

(Leader: Peter Mountain)

(By permission of the B.B.C. Training Orchestra)

Conductor : **TREVOR HARVEY**

CONTENTS

PRELUDE

ACT I

1. INTRODUCTION (King and Radamès)
2. ROMANCE (Radamès) "Hail, heavenly Aida !"
3. DUET (Amneris and Radamès) "With a strange new delight"
4. TRIO (Aida, Amneris and Radamès) "Yes, I weep"
5. SCENE AND CONCERTED PIECE (King, Radamès, Aida, Amneris and Male Chorus) "Know that for urgent cause"
6. SOLO (Aida) "As victor then return !"
7. SCENE OF THE CONSECRATION AND FIRST FINALE (King, Radamès, Amneris and Full Chorus) "O mighty Phtha !"

ACT II

8. INTRODUCTION (Amneris and Female Chorus) "Who now shall praise ?"
9. DUET (Amneris, Aida and Full Chorus) "In love's sweet phial"
10. FINALE (King, Radamès, Amneris, Aida, Amonasro and Full Chorus) "Glory to Egypt !"

ACT III

11. ROMANCE (Aida) "Land of my fathers"
12. DUET (Aida and Amonasro) "Here ! my father !"
13. DUET (Aida and Radamès) "Hearken, Aida"
14. TRIO AND FINALE (Aida, Radamès, Amonasro, Amneris, King) "But tell me: by what path"

ACT IV

15. DUET (Amneris and Radamès) "Now is the priestly council met"
16. SCENE OF THE JUDGMENT (Amneris, King and Male Chorus) "O jealous gods !"
17. DUET AND FINALE (Aida, Radamès, Amneris and Full Chorus) "The fatal stone above me slowly closes"

Verdi's AIDA was composed, in response to a request from the Khedive of Egypt, for production at the opera-house at Cairo on the occasion of the opening of the Suez Canal. The work was first performed in Cairo on December 24, 1871, and before long it had become a popular favourite in all the great operatic centres of the world. In some respects, AIDA forms the culmination of the nineteenth century movement towards "Grand Opera", of which Meyerbeer had been the chief exponent, for the work abounds in broad, stirring melodies, elaborate ensembles, striking and exotic instrumental effects and pageant-like scenes which were unequalled in any previous work of the French or Italian repertory.

It is a story of conflict, love and patriotism, set against the background of war between Egypt and Ethiopia in the time of the Pharaohs. The handsome young soldier Radamès is appointed Commander of the Egyptian Army and he is consecrated to the service of his country before the battle. Unfortunately Radamès is in love with Aida, who is daughter of Amonasro, King of Ethiopia, but she is a prisoner of the Egyptians and is serving Pharaoh's daughter Amneris as a slave. Amneris is also in love with Radamès and as the two women are on opposing sides he is tricked into giving away the secrets of the battle he is to wage against the Ethiopians. As a result he is convicted of treason and condemned to be buried alive. In the last scene of the Opera he is seen walled up in a tomb, and laments that he will never see Aida again, but suddenly he finds to his horror that she has hidden herself in the tomb with him in order that they should die together. Despite the gloomy subject, Verdi pours into this Opera some of his most glorious music.

The concert arrangement that we are singing today was prepared by Sir Malcolm Sargent in order that concertgoers who are unable to see the Opera in all its magnificence might not lose the opportunity of hearing the superb music.

The cast of principals today is an international one:—

Catherine Duval is an Australian who studied voice and piano at the Melbourne Conservatoire and sang with the Australian Opera Company for three years in a variety of roles, coming to Europe in 1965 and winning the Arts Council of Great Britain grant for study in Milan. In 1968 she won the Sir Thomas Beecham award for young professionals and three international contests in Italy and one in Holland. Under her maiden name of Catherine Ryan she has appeared in Tunbridge Wells with the Maidstone Opera Group, first in 1968 in *Cavallera Rusticana* and this year in the role of Cho Cho San in *Madam Butterfly*.

Jean Allister is Irish, and one of our finest Mezzo Sopranos. She is very well known and much admired here having appeared with this Society previously in Verdi's *Requiem*, *The Dream of Gerontius*, *The Messiah* and *The Music Makers*: she is sure of a warm welcome.

Ninian Walden was born in New Zealand and was a principal with the New Zealand Opera Company, singing throughout Australasia until he came to England recently. Since then he has appeared in many roles with leading Opera Companies, including The Welsh National Opera and The Glynebourn Touring Opera. He also appeared in Tunbridge Wells last year singing the principal role in *I Pagliacci* with the Maidstone Opera Group.

John Lawrenson is also very well known in Tunbridge Wells, having appeared previously as *Elijah* and also in *Messiah*, *Hiawatha* and in a broadcast concert with the B.B.C. Concert Orchestra a few years ago. He is a frequent performer on both radio and television.

Anthony Williams is at present playing principal roles with the Welsh National Opera Company, to whom we are indebted for his release today. He last appeared with this Society in *The Creation* some years ago and is a former Army Officer, whose rich bass voice enabled him to give up a military career and become a professional singer.

C.W.

The Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society has about 125 members and at the present time there are no vacancies for sopranos or altos, although a waiting list has been formed. Tenors and basses are still very welcome and interested singers should please apply to:—

The Secretary, Mr. Cyril Wood, 45 High Street, Tunbridge Wells. (Telephone: 23264) for further details.

Subscription is £2 2s. 0d. per annum and rehearsals are held at Christ Church Hall, High Street, Tunbridge Wells on Mondays from 7.00 to 9.00 p.m. Entrance is by private audition.

The Society is greatly indebted to its Patrons and Vice-Presidents for their support, which helps to bridge the serious gap between income and expenditure which nearly always arises in giving choral concerts. It is hoped that all those interested in the performance of choral music will become Vice-Presidents by contributing two guineas a year.

Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society

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LAMBERHURST CHORAL SOCIETY

SUNDAY, 30th NOVEMBER, 1969 at 3.30 p.m.

Lamberhurst Parish Church

FAURE

Requiem

BACH

Cantata No. 11 (Praise our God)

MONTEVERDI

Beatus Vir.

DR. THORNTON LOFHOUSE

SIR WILLIAM MCKIE

(*Harpichord*)

(*Organ*)

Conductor : MONICA MORLAND

Admission by Programme 12/6, 10/-, 7/6 and 5/-

ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Sunday, 7th December, 1969 at 3 p.m.

ASSEMBLY HALL

Shrovetide Fair, from Petrouchka

Trumpet Concerto in E Flat

Academic Festival Overture

Symphony No. 5 in E Minor

Stravinsky

Haydn

Brahms

Tchaikovsky

Solo Trumpet: DAVID MASON Conductor: **JOHN LANCHBERY**