

Elina Garanča

15 November (Friday) ——— 7.00 pm

Teatr Wielki – Polish National Opera
Moniuszko Auditorium
1 Teatralny Square

Hailed by *The New York Times* as the ‘finest Carmen in twenty-five years’. She specialises in roles of passionate women, although she can be heard in breeches and Wagnerian parts as well. Elina Garanča will inaugurate the *Eufonie* festival with a programme featuring an array of female characters: caring, torn between affection and duty and deceptive *femmes fatales*.

Concert programme

Antonín Dvořák
(1841–1904)

Overture
from the opera *Armida* (1817)

Julie’s lullaby ‘Synáčku, můj květe’
from Act III of the opera *The Jacobin*,
Op. 84 (1888)

Jules Massenet
(1842–1912)

Méditation
from the opera *Thaïs* (1894)

Camille Saint-Saëns
(1835–1921)

Dalila’s aria ‘Mon coeur s’ouvre
à ta voix’ from Act II of the opera
Samson et Dalila, Op. 47 (1877)

Bacchanale
from Act III of the opera
Samson et Dalila, Op. 47 (1877)

Charles Gounod
(1818–1893)

Balkis’ cavatina ‘Plus grand, dans son
obscurité’ from Act III of the opera
La reine de Saba (1862)

Three pasodobles from Spain:

Pascual Marquina Narro
(1873–1948)

Pasodoble *España Cañí*
(ca. 1923)

Santiago Lope Gonzalo
(1871–1906)

Pasodoble *Gerona*
(1904)

Manuel Penella Moreno
(1880–1939)

Pasodoble from the opera
El gato montés
(1916)

Georges Bizet (1838–1875)
excerpts from the opera *Carmen* (1875):

Carmen’s aria ‘L’amour est un enfant
de Bohème’ from Act I

Prelude to the opera

Carmen’s habanera ‘L’amour
est un oiseau rebelle’ from Act I

Entr’acte before Act III

Carmen’s seguidilla ‘Près
des remparts de Séville’ from Act I

Entr’acte before Act IV

Carmen’s aria ‘En vain pour éviter
les réponses amères’ from Act III

Entr’acte before Act II [MS1]

Carmen’s gypsy song ‘Les tringles
des sistes’ from Act II

Performers:

Elina Garanča
mezzo-soprano

**Orchestra of the Teatr Wielki –
Polish National Opera**

Karel Mark Chichon
conductor

Elīna Garanča

They suffer, they cry, they die, but they also fight with great courage for what they believe in. Admired, stunning the imagination. Heroines. Some were supposed to lead by example, while others just the opposite – they were used as a warning to show that choices defying social norms lead to an inevitable catastrophe. Julie, Balkis, Dalila and Carmen. A devoted mother, a ruler torn between duty and affection and two *femmes fatales* with completely different motivations. Women's roles are diverse. These four are interconnected by one stage and one voice: Elīna Garanča.

Guardian of the hearth and the home. From the very beginning of the opera, Julie – the heroine of Antonín Dvořák's *The Jacobin* – has been supportive, full of hope and inner strength.

She believes in reconciliation between her husband Bohuš and her father-in-law – the count. Her courage comes out of love for the family. The turning point in this history is the lullaby 'Synačku, můj květe' sung by her in Act III. Thus, she evokes in the count memories of his deceased wife (who hummed the same melody to their son), which tugs at his heartstrings. Thanks to Julie's actions, he decides to reconcile with his son.



Antonín Dvořák

author unknown

Although today *Samson et Dalila* is the most important opera in the catalogue of works by Camille Saint-Saëns, initially no French opera house wanted to stage it. The work was first presented to the public by Franz Liszt in Weimar. The title character – driven by a desire for revenge for despised love, offended pride and (to a lesser extent) the defeat of her people – wants revenge on Samson. She uses her magnetism – she tempts and seduces her lover to ultimately lead to his fall. At the beginning of Act II, Dalila is thirsty for revenge, singing, 'to satisfy my hatred, I must enslave him.' When Samson appears

on stage, her face changes. She cleverly hides her intentions. In the aria 'Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix', Dalila seduces Samson, who has just confessed his love for her. She convinces him of her feelings and wants him to assure her that he will never leave her side. She envelops him in her seductive aura. In an extremely picturesque way, Saint-Saëns shows the complexity of the situation in which the protagonists found themselves. The calm, delicate passage accompaniment in the second

stanza is interspersed with descending, chromatic sequences in flutes and clarinets, which spoil the idyllic image offered to Samson by Dalila, pointing to her insincere intentions. Saint-Saëns based the exclamation 'réponds à ma tendresse, verse-moi l'ivresse' ('respond to my tenderness, fill me with ecstasy') on descending chromatic steps; the call ultimately breaks Samson's strong will, thanks to which Dalila achieves her goal and takes revenge on her former beloved.



Camille Saint-Saëns

Carl Reutinger

'Do you have to stop being a woman to be a queen?' this is the question posed by Balkis, the heroine of Charles Gounod's opera. The Queen of Sheba is torn between duty and affection. She arrives in Jerusalem to meet Soliman, who is promised her hand. The fiancé, wanting to dazzle her, shows her a wonderful temple, the construction of which he commissioned from Adoniram – the royal architect and sculptor. Balkis, fascinated by the creator, begins to feel affection for him. The queen faces a dilemma – to follow her heart or to fulfil her duty? The aria 'Plus grand, dans son obscurité' is a monologue of the heroine confronting her problems. On the one hand, she cannot forget Adoniram and his gaze, she is not able to stop admiring him, and on the other hand, she feels the burden of her duty. She wants her heart to submit to responsibility. She wants to forget about the object of her emotions, although she feels that she is not able to. Eventually, it is her heart that wins the battle. However, the lovers are not destined for a happy ending. Death is waiting not for the Queen of Sheba, but for her beloved.

Seductive, mysterious, courageous, uncontrollable.

Undoubtedly, one of the most impressive opera heroines. Valuing freedom above all else, disregarding conventions, exploiting men as they exploit women. Carmen. A woman who cannot be tamed. Originally assessed as a negative figure – seducing an unfortunate man, distracting him from his transcendental quest. Her death crowning the opera used to be considered a deserved punishment. Nowadays, the heroine's story is read anew. One can see her as a person looking for her way in the world, guided by her happiness. The melodies sung by Carmen tempt, seduce the listener, but are also defiant. Their rhythm emphasises the exoticism of the heroine, her being aware of her body. The most famous arias are defined by dance terms: *habanera*, that is music or dance from Havana; *seguidilla* – Spanish folk dance performed with castanets and guitar.

There is a different story behind each of the female incarnations that Elīna Garanča will present this evening. Interestingly, only one of them was written by a woman – Marie Červinková-Riegrová, author of the libretto for the opera *The Jacobin*. The heroines constitute an interesting collection and will undoubtedly take the audience on an unforgettable journey from sunny Seville, through Jerusalem, to Czech landscapes.



Charles Gounod

author unknown



Jules Massenet

Eugène Pirou



Georges Bizet

Étienne Carjata

Dominika Olender

Elīna Garanča – mezzo-soprano



☐ Sarah Katharina

With a remarkable career spanning decades, Elīna Garanča is a mezzo-soprano of international acclaim. Her journey from Riga, Latvia, to the world's most prestigious opera houses has been

marked by exceptional artistry and dedication. Garnering critical acclaim and captivating audiences worldwide, she has become a prominent figure in the realm of classical music.

Among other roles, she is particularly famed for her portrayal as Bizet's

Carmen, the NY Times named her 'the finest Carmen in twenty-five years...'. Recent highlights include her debut as Judith in Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle* at Teatro di San Carlo and in the concert version with the MET Orchestra at Carnegie Hall as well as on tour in South Korea and Japan. Last year, she made her debut at the Bayreuth Festival in the role of Kundry, becoming the first Latvian female singer to perform on this prestigious stage.

As an exclusive artist with Deutsche Grammophon (DG), after her nine solo albums, she released her first solo song album, followed by the

album *Live from Salzburg*, which was released in December 2021, documenting two exceptional events at the Salzburg Festival in the summers of 2020 and 2021 with the Vienna Philharmonic and Christian Thielemann.

Elīna Garanča has been the recipient of numerous national and international awards, greatly cherishing the title of *Kammersängerin* bestowed by the Wiener Staatsoper for her devotion to the House, singing over one hundred and sixty performances of eighteen roles since her debut in the House in 2003.

Karel Mark Chichon – music director and conductor



☐ Marco Borggreve

British conductor Karel Mark Chichon continues to thrill international audiences with his temperament, passion and musicianship. In recognition of his services to music, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth

II of England made Chichon an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) in June 2012. In 2016, he was elected a fellow of the Royal Academy of Music in recognition of his achievements within the profession. Born in London in 1971, Chichon hails from Gibraltar. He studied at the Royal Academy of Music (London). In May 2017, he was appointed chief conductor and artistic director of the Orquesta

Filarmonica de Gran Canaria, a position in which he has been renewed three times until the 2026–2027 season. His previous positions include chief conductor and artistic director of the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra (2009–2012) and chief conductor of the Graz Symphony Orchestra (2006–2009). From 2011 to 2017, he was chief conductor of the Deutsche Radio Philharmonie Saarbrücken Kaiserslautern, enjoying critically acclaimed seasons and receiving praise for his profound interpretation of a wide repertoire and transformative music-making with the DRP. A further testament to his outstanding partnership with the DRP has been the unanimous critical success of the first three albums of the complete orchestral works

of Dvořák for the label Hänssler Classic. Critics said 'Karel Mark Chichon scores significantly over several esteemed rivals' and praised these first three releases as 'the finest versions available'. In 2016, he made a highly acclaimed debut at the Metropolitan Opera New York with *Madama Butterfly*, which included one broadcast live in HD in two thousand cinemas in sixty-six countries throughout the world. He has recently conducted *La traviata* at the Metropolitan Opera and is part of the exclusive group of directors who return regularly to the venerated coliseum, where he has directed *Madama Butterfly*, *La traviata*, *Rigoletto* and soon *La Bohème*. He is also a regular Deutsche Grammophon recording artist, for which he has recorded five albums and a DVD.

The Teatr Wielki – Polish National Opera Orchestra

The history of the Warsaw opera orchestra goes back to the time it was associated with the National Theatre run by Wojciech Bogusławski. The orchestra was then led by two outstanding Polish conductors and composers: Józef Elsner and Karol Kurpiński. The latter also became the first director of the newly-opened Teatr Wielki in 1833. Later, its orchestra was led by a prominent Italian conductor, Jan Quattrini, and the father of Polish national opera, Stanisław Moniuszko. In the early 20th century, they were succeeded by such conductors as Emil Młynarski, Artur Rodziński and Zdzisław Górczyński. After the sad interlude of WWII, the orchestra entered the arduous process of revival and improvement, finally becoming the biggest Polish opera

orchestra, which allows it to undertake versatile and challenging artistic assignments. The orchestra may boast collaborations with such excellent Polish conductors as Witold Rowicki, Bohdan Wodiczko, Jan Krenz, Jerzy Semkow, Mieczysław Mierzejewski, Henryk Czyż, Antoni Wit, Jerzy Maksymiuk, Bogusław Madey, Antoni Wicherek, Robert Satanowski, Kazimierz Kord, Grzegorz Nowak, Andrzej Straszynski, Tadeusz Wojciechowski and Jacek Kasprzyk. The orchestra has also performed under renowned international conductors on numerous occasions. The orchestra has toured extensively abroad, performing opera and ballet productions, symphony concerts in Berlin, Bonn, Bregenz, Brussels, Bucharest, Lisbon, Luxembourg,

Madrid, Monte Carlo, Moscow, Paris, Sofia, Tel-Aviv and lately in over a dozen Japanese cities. It has performed at festivals in Xanten, Carcassonne, Thessaloniki and Mai Festwoche in Wiesbaden, where in 1972 it won the Golden Feather for its rendition of Verdi's *Otello*. The orchestra has made a number of recordings (Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, Brahms' Symphony No. 2, Moniuszko's *Halka* and *The Haunted Manor*, Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*, Gounod's *Faust* and excerpts from Verdi's *Il trovatore*). The ensemble has also given numerous symphonic and oratorio concerts, performing works by such composers as Mozart, Rossini, Beethoven, Chopin, Brahms and Mahler.

