

A Holiday with Charlotte Paulsen



**Featuring Mezzo-Soprano
Charlotte Paulsen**

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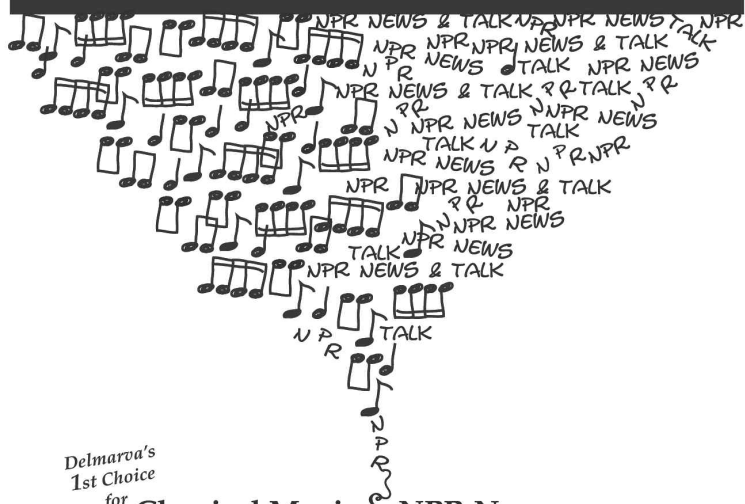
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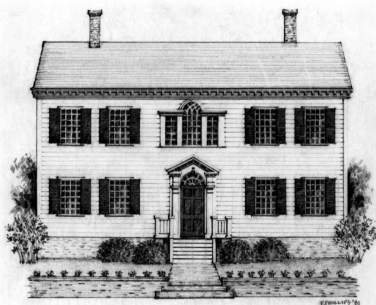
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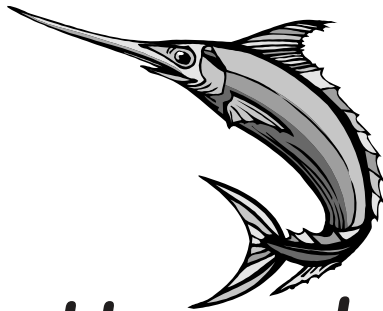
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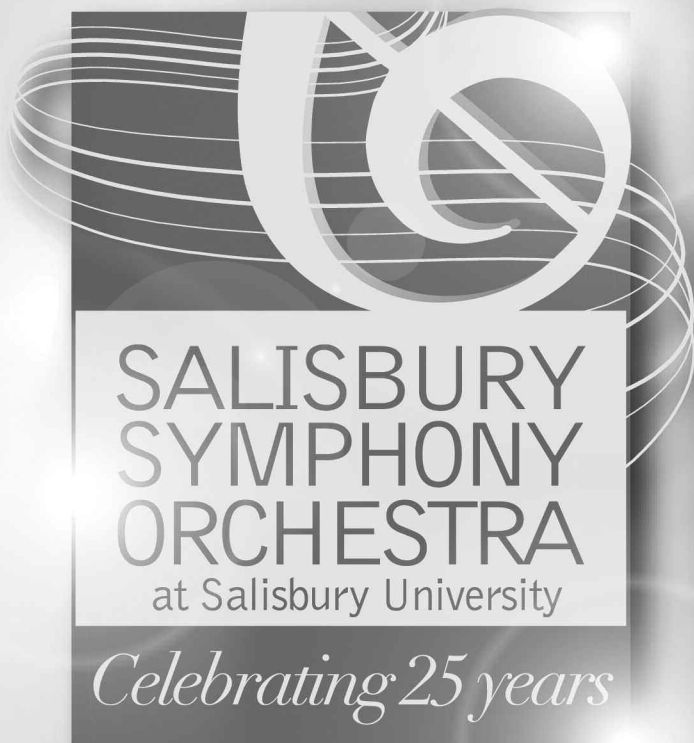
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Charlotte Daw Paulsen, mezzo-soprano

Charlotte Daw Paulsen possesses a voice described as unusually rich and complex. She received critical acclaim in *The New York Times* for her performance of Rossini's "Petite Messe Solennelle": "The real star, Charlotte Daw Paulsen, a mezzo-soprano with real contralto gravity and power in her lower register, in the *Aguns Dei*, her performance grew dramatic in the best sense and utterly gripping." She is frequently invited to perform works of depth and emotional expression, such as the New York premier of *Ei la vie l'emporte* by Frank Martin with I Cantori; *Women of Valor* based on Proverbs 31 by Andrea Clearfield with Lehigh Valley Chamber Orchestra; and the United States premieres of *Stabat Mater* and *The Armed Man a Mass for Peace* by Karl Jenkins.

She was chosen to sing the role of Der Trommler in *Der Kaiser von Atlantis*, as part of the 50th year memorial celebration for the victims of WWII. Her debut at Carnegie Hall was in the Mozart *Requiem*, under the direction of John Rutter. Known as a fine interpreter of Oratorio, she was hailed for her performance in *Messiah* recently performed in Lincoln Center and with Houston, Syracuse and Harrisburg symphonies as "an intense performer, with an unusual and distinctive voice, compelling and enormous in its lower register."

She performed the contralto role in *Elijah* with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir; 'Missa Solemnis' of Beethoven with Questra Sinfonica de Mineria, Beethoven's 9th with Huntsville Symphony, Mahler's *Ressurrection Symphony* with Louisiana Philharmonic. "No one was more exposed than Paulsen, a mezzo-soprano whose voice blossomed from whispers to vaulting arcs of sound as she wrung every ounce of feeling from 'Urlicht' [iResurrection Symphony]" said the *Times-Picayune*. For Verdi's *Requiem* with Eugene Symphony and Virginia Symphony, the *Virginia Pilot* said: "Paulsen carried the lower female part with strong tone and a more dire sense of the text. Her launching of the 'Lacymosa' quartet was a beautiful blend of voice and sorrowful expression." National Philharmonic at Strathmore Hall and Lancaster Symphony engaged her for Mozart's *Requiem*, Bach's *St. Mathew Passion* and his B minor in Wilmington at the Delaware Grand Opera House. Mussorgsky's "Songs and Dances of Death" and Mahler's "Das Lied von der Erde" with Xalapa Symphony Orchestra was mentioned in *Cubarte*: "fascinating interpretation, and wonderful sound." She has also performed Vivaldi's *Magnificat* and *Gloria* at Carnegie Hall, and recently Szymanowski's *Stabat Mater* in Count Basie Theater.

She performed *Carmen* with Opera Delaware, Ft. Wayne Philharmonic, Ashlawn-Highland and Metro Lyric Opera under the direction of Maestro Anton Coppola. "Charlotte Paulsen, cast in the title role of Bizet's *Carmen* is a winner on all counts. Her mezzo-soprano voice, still youthful but with several shades of duskiness, suits the role perfectly. She comports herself with feline grace and haughty self-absorption. She wears the costume alluringly," said the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*.

She sang Maddalena in *Rigoletto* with Piedmont, Fresno, Utah and Toledo operas She was heard as Third Lady in *Die Zauberflöte* and Second Maid in *Electra* with Baltimore Opera. She also sang Second Lady in *Die Zauberflöte* in Saarland, Germany, in Roanoke Opera; she sang Dorabella in *Così Fan Tutte* and elsewhere in Virginia with Virginia Opera as Edugie in Handel's *Rodelinda* and Emilia in *Otello*, *Hansel* in Ashlawn-Highland, Fenena in *Nabucco* with West Norway Opera. Paulsen performed with the Sarasota Opera and sang the roles of Mary in *Flying Dutchman*, Rosina and Siebel with Opera Music Theater International. Included among her repertoire of operatic roles are: Amneris in *Aida*; Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier*; Charlotte in *Werther*; Kostelnicka in *Jenufa*; Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro*; and *Cenerentola*.

She was heard in recital at Saint Pauls Chapel, New York City; the Academy of Music, Philadelphia; St. Marks, Baltimore; and France, Luxembourg and Germany, where she recorded with Helmut Deutsch for Saarland Radio. Paulsen was awarded first place in the Liederkrantz Foundation Awards, Wagnerian Voice division. She was selected in Paris for the Pavarotti competition. She represented the United States in Zurich Switzerland, as part of the International Opera Studio. While performing with Zurich International Opera, she worked under the batons' of Harnoncourt, Bartoletti, Inbal and Von Dohanyi.

Paulsen was born in Philadelphia and holds degrees from The Peabody Conservatory of Music at Johns Hopkins University, Temple University and West Chester University, and honors from Salzburg Mozarteum, Zurich International Opera Studio, Tanglewood Festival and with Opera Music Theater International, under the direction of the late Jerome Hines. Currently she studies with Benita Valente.

In January and February 2011 she can be heard again in Carnegie Hall.

PROGRAM

Suite from the opera *Christmas Eve*by N. Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908)

I. Holy Night

II. Games and Dances of the Stars (Procession of the Comet;
Round Dance; Czardas & the Rain of Shooting Stars

III. The Devil's Christmas

IV. Polonaise

V. Procession to Midnight Mass and Carols

Prince Orlofsky's Song

from *Die Fledermaus*by J. Strauss Jr. (1825-1899)

"Adieu Forets" from *Jean d'Arc*by P.I. Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

Charlotte Paulsen, mezzo-soprano

— I N T E R M I S S I O N —

Selections from *Messiah*by G.F. Handel (1685-1759)

But who may abide the day of His coming

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion

Pifa

Thou art gone up on high

O Holy Nightby Adolphe Adam, arr. by Arthur Luck

White Christmasby Irving Berlin, arr. by John Moss

Charlotte Paulsen, mezzo-soprano

Trepak from *Nutcracker*by P.I. Tchaikovsky

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Song Text

Prince Orlofsky's Song

I like to invite guests,
One lives quite well at my house,
One enjoys oneself, as he likes
Often until the light of day.
Although I am bored most of the time,
Whatever one says or does;

"Adieu Forets"

And so the time has come!
Joan must submit to the divine will!
But why has fear crept into my soul?
My heart is tormented with pain!

Farewell, dear hills and fields!
Clear vale, my peaceful sheltering refuge,
Farewell!
You will not see Joan again!
Forever she bids you farewell, forever!

My friends, the meadows,
The trees, my little nurslings,
Ah, you shall bloom and fade without me!
Cool grotto, my rushing stream,
I am leaving you and will not come back
again!

Sweet places, where I knew such joy,
From this moment we are parted!
My flocks, I cannot protect you anymore!
You are destined to roam without a
shepherd!

In that, what I allow myself as host,
I will not tolerate in guests!
And should I see anyone looking bored
Here in my home,
I will seize him shamelessly

It has befallen me to lead another flock
On the bloodsoaked fields of war!
For the divine will has chosen me!
I am not drawn by vain pursuits!

Oh, God! My heart is open to you!
It yearns, it suffers!
It yearns and suffers!

Farewell forever, dear hills and fields!
My peaceful, sheltering vale, farewell,
farewell!
You will not see Joan again!
Forever she bids you farewell, forever!

My friends, the meadows,
The trees, my little nurslings,
You shall bloom and fade without me!
Cool quiet grotto, my rushing stream,
I am leaving you and will not come back
again,
Ever again!

Messiah

But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth?
For He is like a refiner's fire.

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain. O thou that
tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength, lift it up, be not afraid; say
unto the cities of Judah: Behold your God! Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the
glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He
gave His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, He hid not
His face from shame and spitting.

Thou art gone up on high; Thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men,
yea, even for Thine enemies, that the Lord God might dwell among them.

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Program Notes

Suite from *Christmas Eve* by N. Rimsky-Korsakov

Rimsky-Korsakov wrote his opera *Christmas Eve* during the period 1894-1895, and it was premiered during the latter year. In 1903, he extracted this suite, which contains about a half-hour's worth of music from the opera. What is confusing to some listeners about the work is that it is often broken down in concert programs and on recordings into five, six or as many as nine sections, with translations of the individual numbers that can vary widely. The lovely music in the "Introduction," first heard on the horn, sets the stage for the Romantic character of the score here. The lively and playful music from the "Games and Dances of the Stars" is charming, as is the "Round Dance," which reprises the theme from the opening. The "Czardas" is joyous and, as so often with Rimsky-Korsakov's works, brilliantly and colorfully orchestrated. The "Devil's Kolyada" is sinister, but ultimately its menace has an almost fairy tale-like lightness. The "Polonaise" is graceful and stately, and the "Procession to Midnight Mass" is absolutely lovely and quite memorable, with the gently tolling bells deftly adding to the serene atmosphere at the quiet close. In the end, the music here is light and colorful, not as exotic as *Shéhérazade* or the Capriccio espagnol, but still with ethnic flavors and featuring Rimsky-Korsakov's usual brilliant scoring.

Prince Orlofsky's Song from *Die Fledermaus* by J. Strauss Jr.

The Vienna State Opera has offered an annual New Year's Eve production of *Die Fledermaus* since the early 1930s, both reflecting and reinforcing the work's status as the representation of all things Viennese. *Die Fledermaus* is based on a French vaudeville, *Le Réveillon* (1872), by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy. Strauss reportedly completed the music for the operetta in 42 days. The premiere took place in the Theater an der Wien on April 5, 1874 (Easter Sunday). Strauss' ability to characterize through music is at its finest in *Die Fledermaus*. The melody sung by the chorus as the curtain rises on Orlofsky's party in Act Two appears earlier when Adele, the maid to a baroness, reads the letter inviting her to Orlofsky's party and moments later when Baron Gabriel von Eisenstein is convinced to attend the same event. Act Two opens in an antechamber at the palace of Prince Orlofsky, the nobleman's guests, Adele and her cousin Ida among them, await the arrival of their host. Orlofsky enters, quite bored—even with one guest's promise of a comedy of errors. The prince proclaims his guests free to do anything that suits their fancy—"Chacun à son gout."

"Adieu Forests" from *Jean d'Arc*, by P.I. Tchaikovsky

Tchaikovsky's opera *The Maid of Orleans* is based on a play by Friedrich Schiller. It tells the story of Joan of Arc, the 15th century French heroine who helped free the citizens of Orleans and led French troops in battles with the English. *The Maid of Orleans* was the first of Tchaikovsky's operas to be performed outside of his native Russia. Tchaikovsky

conceived the title role for dramatic soprano, but revised it, as the first Joan was a mezzo soprano. Joan’s aria, “Adieu Forets,” is her acceptance of her calling and farewell to the country where she grew up.

Messiah by G.F. Handel

Handel became Kapellmeister to the Elector of Hanover in 1710. However, he spent years in London, becoming internationally famous as a composer of opera and oratorio. Handel’s most successful oratorio, *Messiah*, is narrative rather than dramatic. Handel described it as a “sacred oratorio,” and it is the only of his oratorios based on the New Testament. He composed the entire oratorio in only 24 days, despite recent poor health, and conducted its premiere in 1741. From 1750 until his death, Handel conducted annual performances of *Messiah* for charity at the Foundling Hospital. His last public appearance was at such an event, only eight days before his death.

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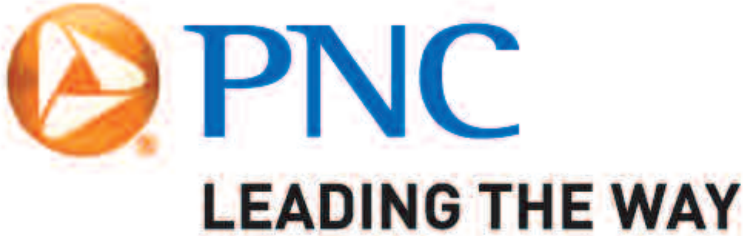
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