

IGOR STRAVINSKY BY PABLO PICASSO

CSO
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Newsletter

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Ravel and Mahler Masterpieces in Conductors Masterclass II

CSO music director Maestro Ahmed El Saedi was always keen, not only to promote classical music in Egypt via regular concerts, but also held masterclasses and workshops for young talents including Egyptian and foreign conductors.

Two concerts are dedicated to such activity and in the second, Egyptians **Shady Hanna, Mohamed Ahmed, Boulos Bola** along with American **Mary Box** shared the podium. The concert on April 1st starts with Ravel Rhapsodie espagnole. The composer's extraordinary ability to create seemingly authentic Spanish music drew the admiration of no less an authority

than the peerless Spaniard, Manuel de Falla. After the intermission, the second part consists of Mahler 4th symphony, his shortest, with a style consciously archaic in its evocation of classical models. The entire work, in fact, grew out of the final movement, which Mahler originally composed for his orchestral song collection of poems from Das Knaben Wunderhorn (The Young Boys' Magic Horn) and performed here by soprano **Mona Rafla**. At any rate, the other movements were extrapolated from this long and joyful folk song. This in part explains the relatively lighter mood of the symphony.



Mona Rafla

Solo Soprano in Mahler 4th symphony on April 1st

Stravinsky Oedipus Rex: the eternal Greek myth revived.

The 29th concert offers the audience a unique experience coupling an Egyptian contemporary composition with one of the 20th centuries landmark choral works.

Between Dusk and Dawn, a symphonic poem inspired by the story of Raya and Sekina, brought to his composer Nader Abbassi a Swiss award and an offer to expand the composition into a ballet, the recording of which he also conducted.

The work consists of an introduction and two movements. The introduction represents the two sisters through the flute and the fagot. The second movement resembles the fall of the victim. The last one is to say that the effect of pain that had been experienced throughout their life, could not be relieved through newly acquired jewels. Their way of life has been altered forever, to become an endless vicious cycle.

Oedipus Rex subtitled an "Opera-Oratorio after Sophocles," has been recognized as one of the high points of Stravinsky's work. Sophocles drama tells of an entire family's attempts to ignore their terrible fate, while at the same time they cannot avoid it.

Stravinsky's setting is to a text written by Jean Cocteau in French, was then translated into Latin. The parts of the narrator are to be spoken in the language

of the audience, while the chorus sings in Latin.

For Stravinsky, this work was one of the important works that started his 'neo-classical' period. Neoclassicism was, for the 20th century, rather like the Renaissance was for the 16th century: a time to return to aesthetic precepts from past times: order, balance, clarity, economy, and emotional restraint. In many ways it was a reaction to the extreme emotions of Romanticism and a way of calming the craziness of the early 20th century experimenters.

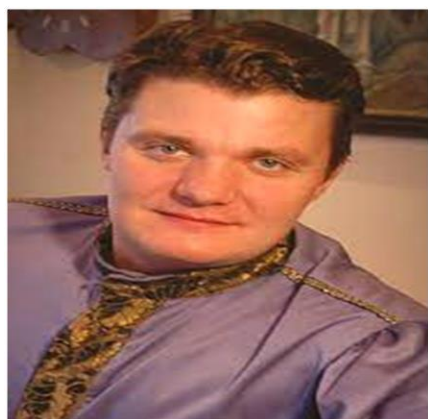
If we look at Stravinsky's neo-classical style as using composers from the past as the springboard to his new sounds, as in his use of the music of Pergolesi for his ballet Pulcinella, it is the inspiration of Verdi that comes to the fore in this, one of Stravinsky's most powerful operatic works.

The soloists on the 29th are Mezzo-Soprano **Yulia Sarasova** as Jocaste, Tenor **Dmitry Rozvizev** as Oedipus, Bass-Baritone **Reda El Wakil** as Creon, Tiresias and the messenger, Tenor **Amr Medhat** as the shepherd and **Ghada El Wakil** as the narrator accompanied by A Cappella choir under Choir Master **May Gvineria**. Maestro **Nader Abbassi** will conduct this timeless masterpiece.

THE SOLOISTS



Yulia Savrasova
Mezzo-Soprano



Dmitry Rozvizev
Tenor



Reda El Wakil
Bass-Baritone