

LIVE FROM LINCOLN CENTER
December 31, 1998, 8-10 PM
New York Philharmonic Year's Eve Gala

Program:

R. Strauss: Excerpts from *Der Rosenkavalier*

Rosenkavalier Walzes, arr. Otto Singer and Josef Doebber

"Mir ist die Ehre" (Act II)- Angelika Kirchschrager, Heidi Grant-Murphy

"Hab' mir's gelobt"/"Ist ein Traum"-

Deborah Voigt, Angelika Kirchschrager, Heidi Grant-Murphy

Intermission

J. Strauss, Jr. & Josef Strauss: *Pizzicato - Polka*

J. Strauss, Jr. "Wiener Blut" from *Wiener Blut*- A. Kirchschrager

Perpetuum Mobile, Op. 257

"Draussen in Sievering" from *Die Tanzerin Fanny Elssler*- Heidi Grant-Murphy

Egyptian March, op. 335

"Csardas" from *Die Fledermaus*- Deborah Voigt

On the Beautiful Blue Danube, Op. 314

Radetzky March

Thunder and Lightning Polka

Auld Lang Syne

Program Notes by MARTIN BOOKSPAN

For many years, New year's Eve has been a special time at the New York Philharmonic- and also at LIVE FROM LINCOLN CENTER, for we have been privileged to have brought many of those Gala concerts into your homes.

The 1998 New year's Eve Gala promises to be particularly memorable. Kurt Masur, the Orchestra's Music Director, will conduct a program of music by three Strausses, only two of whom are related (Johann Strauss, Jr., known everywhere as "The Waltz King", and his father, Johann Strauss, Sr.). the third Strauss is Richard, and the entire first half of the program will be devoted to music from Richard Strauss' operatic masterpiece, "Der Rosenkavalier", with three remarkable singers as soloists: soprano Deborah Voigt singing the role of the Marschallin; soprano Heidi Grant-Murphy as Sofie; and mezzo-soprano Angelika Kirchschrager as Octavian.

The program begins with the Act II waltzes from the opera, music at once familiar and beloved. We then move on- and "move" is the correct verb- to one of the most moving scenes in all opera, the Presentation of the Silver Rose. Sophie, the radiant daughter of a social climber named Faninal, has become engaged to the rather boorish Baron Ochs, whom she has never met. Acting as

courier for Ochs is his young cousin, the Count Octavian, who arrives bearing a ceremonial silver rose for the bride-to-be. Needless to say, it's love-at-first-sight for Sophie and Octavian, and they sing a rapturous duet. The part of Octavian is one of opera's most famous "trouser roles", sung by a woman in a man's clothing.

From there, we skip to near the end of the opera, to the final trio, in which the three principals,- the Marschallin, Sophie, and Octavian- each express their innermost feelings. The Marschallin had earlier become one of Octavian's willing conquests, but she now renounces her interest in him, as she knows he is in love with Sophie. Octavian, for his part, sings of his love for Sophie, but he is mindful of the pain his new love is causing for the Marschallin. And Sophie somewhat naively sings of her love for Octavian. As the Marschallin leaves, Sophie and Octavian sing of their good fortune: "Ist ein Traum", "It is a dream".

There must have been something magical in the air of Europe in the years 1909-1910, when Richard Strauss composed "Der Rosenkavalier"; for while he was at work on this opera in Germany, at precisely the same time in Russia, Igor Stravinsky was working on his score for the great ballet "The Firebird"; in England, Sir Edward Elgar was at work on his Second Symphony; in France, Ravel began sketching out "Daphnis and Chloe"; in Austria, Schoenberg was shaking up the establishment with "Five Pieces for Orchestra"; in Italy, Puccini was putting the finishing touches on "The Girl of the Golden West"; and in Finland, strange and enigmatic sounds were whirring in the head of Jean Sibelius, sounds which ultimately became the Fourth Symphony. Those two years may constitute the end of one era and the beginning of another; Mahler died at the end of 1911, pretty well ending the musical aesthetic of the 19th Century. And if Strauss' "Der Rosenkavalier" was one of the last manifestations of that aesthetic, what a glorious summation it is! So, with this rapturously beautiful music, ends the first half of our live broadcast of the New York Philharmonic's New Years Eve Gala.

The dynasty of the Vienna Strausses began with the birth, in 1804, of Johann Strauss, Sr., popularly known as "The Father of the Waltz". He achieved considerable fame as a conductor and composer, but contracted Scarlet fever from one of his children and died at the ridiculously young age of 45. However, music was in the Strauss genes, and the family tradition was carried on by all three of Strauss' sons: Johann, Jr. (born 1825), Josef (born 1827), and Eduard (born 1835). By far the most gifted was Johann, Jr., and the second half of our 1998 New Year's Eve Gala will be devoted almost entirely to music by him.

Waltzes, Quadrilles, Polkas, Marches, and Galops flowed virtually nonstop from the pen of Johann Strauss, Jr., along with an impressive group of operas and operettas. On our LIVE FROM LINCOLN CENTER program, Angelika Kirchsclager will give us a with-words version of the familiar waltz from the operetta "Wiener Blut", and Deborah Voigt will offer the provocative "Czardas" from "Die Fledermaus". Heidi Grant-Murphy will sing "Draussen im Sievering",

a little-known but charming piece from "Die Tänzerin Fanny Elssler".

For its part, the Philharmonic opens the second half with one of the collaborative works in the Strauss canon: Johann, Jr. and Josef together wrote the "Pizzicato Polka", which as the title suggests, features the stringed instruments of the orchestra plucked, not bowed, throughout this brief and humorous work. And those two words apply as well to "Perpetuum Mobile". Once again, the title tells all: this music repeats and repeats and never comes to an end; it simply stops. In Vienna, it is traditional for the conductor, when he stops the music, to say "und so weiter," or "And so on..." And there are more works by Johann Strauss to enjoy on this concert, which is the first new year's Eve concert to be conducted by Kurt Masur since he became the orchestra's Music Director. It promises to be one of the highlights of the musical season, so be sure to see it all on PBS on December 31st, LIVE From Lincoln Center!