

**San Francisco Conservatory of Music
Opera & Musical Theater Program**

***Die Fledermaus*
(*The Bat*)**

**Music by Johann Strauss II
Libretto by Karl Haffner and Richard Genée
English Translation by Marcie Stapp
Dialogue by Jose Maria Condemi**

**Jose Maria Condemi, *director*
Curt Pajer, *conductor***

Sun Ha Yoon, *piano*

**Saturday, April 3, 2021, 7:30 PM
Recorded at the Caroline H. Hume Concert Hall
March 21 and 22, 2021**

Cast

(in order of vocal appearance)

Alfred	Christopher Wall
Adele	Natalie Harris
Roselinde	Emma McAlister
Gabriel	Alexander Granito
Dr. Blind	Adam Lowe
Falke	Marcus Lonardo
Frank	Keaton Brown
Orlofsky	Chen Holtzman
Ida	Nicole Koh
Yvan	Sergey Khalikulov

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Scenic Designer	Steven Kemp
Costume Designer	Nikki Anderson-Joy
Lighting Designer	Matthew Antaky
Wig and Makeup Designer	Heather Sterling
Assistant Director	Sergey Khalikulov
Production Assistants	Kyle Tingzon
	Katherine Ahmann
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Hair and Make-Up Artists	Heather Sterling
Lighting Technician	Cassie Barnes
Supertitle Preparation	Ted Zoldan
Head Electrician	Marc Campisi
Camera Operators	William Childs
Audio Engineer	Emily Paulson
Electrician	Kale Sasseman
Video Editor	Frederic Boulay
Asst. Video Editor	Samir Arora

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Sun Ha Yoon
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SYNOPSIS

Vienna, New Year's Eve, 1933

ACT I

At the posh house of Gabriel von Eisenstein and Rosalinde, his wife.

Outside the Eisensteins' apartment, the tenor Alfred serenades his old flame Rosalinde, who is now married to Gabriel von Eisenstein. Adele, Rosalinde's chambermaid, wonders how to get the night off to attend a glamorous New Year's Eve ball to which her sister has invited her. She tells her mistress she must visit a sick aunt, but Rosalinde refuses to let her go. Alfred appears and declares his love to Rosalinde, who resists him until he begins to sing. Hearing someone coming, she sends Alfred away, but not before he has convinced her to let him return later. Eisenstein and his lawyer, Blind, arrive from a session in court: Eisenstein has been sentenced to eight days in jail for striking a police officer and must begin his term that very night. He furiously dismisses Blind. His friend Falke urges Eisenstein to delay going to jail until morning and instead join him at the ball, which is being given by the wealthy Prince Orlofsky. Falke tells Eisenstein to bring along his infamous pocket watch to charm the ladies. Rosalinde joins Adele in a bittersweet farewell as her husband heads off to "prison." Angry at Eisenstein's deception, she then tells Adele to go see her "aunt" and receives the ardent Alfred. Their rendezvous is interrupted by the prison warden Frank, who has come to arrest Eisenstein. Rosalinde persuades Alfred to preserve her good name by posing as her husband, and Frank carts Alfred off to jail.

ACT II

Later the same evening. At the lavish villa of Prince Orlofsky.

While his guests enjoy the champagne and the food, Orlofsky doubts that Falke's promised evening of entertainment will brighten his spirits. Adele arrives—to the surprise of her sister Ida, a dancer, who claims she never invited her. Ida worries Adele isn't classy enough to attend the ball, so they decide to present her as a Russian actress named Olga. Orlofsky proclaims his guests should behave however they want and do anything they like. Eisenstein enters, posing as a Frenchman, per Falke's instructions. He immediately identifies Adele as his wife's maid, but she laughs him off. Frank arrives, also posing as a Frenchman, and he and Eisenstein become fast friends. Frank is so smitten with Ida and "Olga" that he pretends to be a theatrical producer to impress them. Finally Rosalinde arrives, disguised as a Hungarian countess. Angry to spot her husband flirting with her maid, she sings an impassioned ode to her betrayed homeland. When a smitten Eisenstein starts flirting with her, she manages to steal his pocket watch. The crowd toasts drink, and love until the stroke of midnight, when the new century begins. The guests dance through the night. As the clock strikes six, Eisenstein, whose attempts to retrieve his watch from Rosalinde have failed, rushes off to jail with Frank.

ACT III

At the local jail.

Back at work at the jail, Frank is bothered by the nonstop singing of Alfred in cell number 12. Ida and Adele arrive, per Falke's instructions. Adele hopes Frank might further her stage aspirations. Frank sends them off and then admits Eisenstein, who says he has come to serve his sentence. He is surprised to learn his cell is already occupied by a man who claims to be him and who was found in his apartment with Rosalinde. Blind arrives, claiming

he was summoned by the man in cell 12 to handle a case of false arrest. Determined to get to the bottom of the matter, Eisenstein snatches Blind's cloak, hat and glasses, to disguise himself as the lawyer and confront the impostor. At that moment, Rosalinde tries to secure Alfred's release and asks "Blind" to press divorce charges against her errant husband, but is offended when the "lawyer" seems to take Eisenstein's side. Dropping his disguise, Eisenstein accuses his wife of promiscuity, at which point Rosalinde produces his watch. Both lament the impasse at which they've arrived, admitting that divorce would be a shame, since they really do love each other. Falke arrives with Orlofsky to gloat over the success of his plan. Rosalinde forgives her husband and they decide to go on a belated honeymoon, which Orlofsky is willing to pay for. All sing a final paean to the joys of champagne as the madcap evening comes to a rousing conclusion.

(Courtesy of the Metropolitan Opera, adapted for this production)

Program Notes

Johann Strauss II

Born: Oct 25, 1825; Vienna

Died: June 3, 1899; Vienna

Die Fledermaus (1874)

Librettists: Carl Haffner (1804-1876) and Richard Genée (1823-1895)

Johann Strauss II, the celebrated “Waltz King,” first became acquainted with all manner of Viennese ballroom dances through the compositions of his father, Johann Strauss I (1804-1849), himself a prolific composer of dance music. Johann II and his younger brothers were exposed to a wide variety of music within their family residence, where their father’s orchestra rehearsed. Despite the fact that his father had intended a more comfortable life for him as a banker, Johann II decided to end his formal education in 1843 to pursue a musical career. This move became definitive when his parents divorced and the elder Strauss left the family to live with his mistress, leaving him to provide for the family.

In August 1844, Strauss received a public entertainment license and employed an orchestra of 24 musicians. He made his public debut as a composer and conductor at Dommayer’s Casino and was offered the honorary position of Bandmaster of the 2nd Vienna Citizens’ Regiment the following year. When his father died in 1849, Strauss was able to merge their two orchestras and take over many of his contracts, cementing his eminence in Vienna as a conductor and composer. Together with his brother, Josef, Johann held sway over Vienna’s dance music scene from the late 1850s–1870s. Demand for their services reached its height during the annual Carnival season, when they were expected to provide music for the city’s numerous balls. During this period, Strauss made great strides in the composition of dance music, particularly the Viennese waltz, expanding upon the form that his father had

Program Notes Continued

already solidified. It was also during this era that Strauss composed his most famous waltz, *On the Beautiful Blue Danube* (1866). Although Strauss began to experiment with composing operettas around 1850, his first stage work, *Indigo und die vierzig Räuber*, was not produced until 1871. In the 1850's-1860's Viennese theater managers became frustrated by Jacques Offenbach's dominance of the stage, as well as the exorbitant fees associated with purchasing the rights to his music. They turned to Strauss, who would go on to compose around twenty operettas, of which three were internationally successful during his lifetime: *Die Fledermaus* (1874), *Eine Nacht in Venedig* (1883) and *Der Zigeunerbaron* (1885).

Die Fledermaus is based on a French Vaudeville play, *Le Reveillon* (1880), by Henri Meilhac (1831-1897) and Ludovic Halévy (1834-1908); it was translated as a stage play by Carl Haffner (1804-1876). The setting of a French réveillon (French supper party) created staging challenges, so Richard Genée (1823-1895) shifted it to a Viennese ball in his libretto for Strauss.

Unsurprisingly, the score is dominated by dance forms. The Overture itself is a patchwork of dances that weave in and out of one another seamlessly. The entire operetta is a seduction of the senses; Strauss lures us into a world of Viennese opulence where champagne flows freely and the dancing never ends. It is fitting, then, that throughout the opera the waltz often represents seduction or deceit. At the end of Act 1, in "Drink my darling, drink with me," Alfred attempts to seduce Rosalinde with a waltz. In Act 2, when Eisenstein recognizes his maid, Adele, at Orlofsky's ball, she maintains her deception with the famous "laughing" aria, "My dear Marquis, clearly you see," which is also a waltz. Although the waltz is the dominant type of dance in *Die Fledermaus*, Strauss shows himself to be a masterful composer of further dances. In Act 2, Rosalinde, disguised as a Hungarian countess, sings the aria, "Sounds of my homeland," in the form of a csárdás, a folk dance traditional to Hungary.

Program Notes Continued

True to its form, her song begins slowly and wistfully but spins into a fiery conclusion.

The operetta, which Strauss composed in just 43 days, premiered in Vienna at the Theater an der Wien on April 5, 1864. Its infectious score and copious dance material was extremely well received. Although there were only 16 Viennese performances during its first season, it was an immediate international success, with performances in Berlin and Hamburg that July. By November, it was also running in Budapest and New York, bringing its total performances in 1874 to 68. It hasn't left the stage since. It was beloved in Strauss's time as a diversion from recent hardships such as the Panic of 1873, and it is still very popular today, both as a diversion from our own harsh realities and as a glittering example from a bygone era of champagne and ballrooms.

Erica Williams, B.M., '20



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*If we have made a mistake in our listings, please accept our apologies and let us know at 415-503-6210 or giving@sfcmedu.edu so we may correct it.

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