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Casts for the Verdi Premieres in London (1845-1977), Part 2

by Martin Chusid

15. June 22, 1876 Aida (Cairo, 1871). Covent Garden

Adelina Patti (Aida)
Ernestina Gindele (Amneris)
Ernesto Nicolini2 (Radames)
Francesco Graziani2 (Amonsaro)
Feitlinger (King)
Capponi• (Ramphis)
Bianca Bianchi (High Priestess)
Enrico Bevignani, cond.

1 cast from review in the Illustrated London News of July 1, 1876, and from Figaro as reported in Dwight’s Journal of July 22, 1876
2 second husband of Adelina Patti; sang Fenton at US premiere of Falstaff, February 4, 1895
3 see also Trovatore and Don Carlo I
4 probably Giovanni Capponi who sang Philip in the Italian premiere of Don Carlos (Bologna, 1867)


Marie Louise Swift (Leonora)
Italo Campanini• (Alvaro)
Antonio Galassi• (Carlo)
Behrens (Guardiano)
Zelia [Gillibert] Trebelli-Bettini• (Preziosilla)
Giuseppe Del Puente (Melitone)
Luigi Arditi•, cond.
James Henry Mapleson•, impresario

1 cast from review in The Athenaeum (June 26, 1880. I am indebted to Tom Kaufman for bringing this review to my attention as well as the Dwight’s Journal citation in 15)
2 sang role in US premiere of revised Forza, see also US premiere Otello
3 sang Iago in US premiere of Otello
4 sang role in premiere of first version also
5 see note I vespri siciliani (no. 11)
6 impresario for Ballo and Forza I

17. July 5, 1889 Otello (Milan, 1887). Lyceum

Francesco Tamagno• (Otello)
Victor Maurel• (Iago)
Giovanni Paroli• (Cassio)
Durini (Rodrigo)
Alessandro Silvestri (Lodovico)
Marini (Montano)
Aurelia Catanéo (Desdemona)
Emilia Mattiuzzi (Emilia)
Franco Faccio•, cond.

1 cast from program and libretto at EThC
2 sang at world premieres of Otello, Don Carlo II, and Simon II
3 sang at world premieres of Falstaff, Otello, and Simon II, also Falstaff at US premiere
4 sang at world premieres of Otello and Falstaff
5 conducted European premiere of Aida and world premiere of Otello
18. May 19, 1894 Falstaff (Milan, 1893). Covent Garden\(^1\)

Antonio Pini-Corsi\(^2\) (Ford)
Giulia Ravogli (Quickly)
Umberto Beduschi (Fenton)
Arturo Pessina (Falstaff)
Olga Olghina (Nannetta)
Emma Zilli\(^2\) (Alice)
Aurelia Kitzu (Meg)
Paolo Pelagelli-Rossetti\(^2\) (Bardolfo)
Vittorio Arimondi\(^2\) (Pistola)
Luigi Mancinelli\(^3\), cond.
Sir Augustus Harris, impresario

\(^1\) cast from program and review in *The Sketch* of May 30, 1894, both at EThC
\(^2\) also sang role at world premiere
\(^3\) also conducted US premiere

19. June 1, 1933 Don Carlos II (Milan, 1884). Covent Garden\(^1\). In Italian translation

Gina Cigna (Elisabetta)
Nini Giani (Eboli)
Ulisse Lappas (Carlo)
Giacomo Rimini (Posa)
Fernando Autori (Filippo)
Giulio Tomei (Il grande Inquisitore)
Samuel Worthington (Un frate)
Jennie Maude (Tibaldo)
Harold Wilton (Il Conte di Lerma)
Luigia Cilla (Un araldo reale)
Sir Thomas Beecham, cond.

\(^1\) cast from the program at EThC. Included Fontainebleau scene and ends with Philip handing over Carlo to the Grand Inquisitor. See article by Francis Toye in *The Morning Post*, Thursday, May 25, 1933

20. October 27, 1948 Simon Boccanegra (revised version, Milan, 1881). In English as Simone Boccanegra at Sadler’s Wells\(^1\)

Frederick Sharp (Paolo)
Arnold Matters (Simone)
Howell Glynns (Fiesco)
Douglas Craig (Pietro)
Joyce Gartside (Amelia)
James Johnston (Gabriele)
Michael Mudie, cond.
John Moody,\(^2\) producer

\(^1\) translation by Norman Tucker
\(^2\) see also *La battaglia di Legnano* and *Macbeth* I

21. March 31, 1960 Macbeth (revised version, Paris, 1865).\(^1\) Covent Garden\(^2\)

Tito Gobbi (Macbeth)
Joseph Rouleau (Banquo)
Brian Wright (Fleance, mimed part)
Amy Shuard (Lady Macbeth)
Edgar Boniface (Servant)
Beaufays Milton (Duncan, mimed part)
André Turp (Macduff)
John Dobson (Malcolm)
Noreen Berry (Lady-in-waiting)
Glynne Thomas (1st Apparition)
Jean Holmes (2nd Apparition)
Celia Penney (3rd Apparition)
Rhyderch Davies (Doctor)
Francesco Molinari-Pradelli, cond.
Michael Benthall, producer

\(^1\) first performance of *Macbeth* II in England at Glyndebourne, May 29, 1938 conducted by Fritz Busch. Program with cast at EThC. See also no. 29, *Macbeth* I
\(^2\) cast from program at Archive, AIVS
22. March 21, 1961 Un giorno di regno or Il finto Stanislao (Milan, 1840). St. Pancras Town Hall by the Impresario Society

Eric Garrett (Barone di Kelbar)
James Atkins (La Rocca)
Patrick Costeloe (Delmonte)
John Hauxvell (Cavaliere di Belfiore)
Alfred Hallett (Edoardo di Sanval)
Bettina Jolic (Marchesa del Poggio)
Cynthia Jolly (Giulietta di Kelbar)
Dennis Catlin (Conte Ivrea)
Hans Ucko, cond.
Michael Geliot, producer

1 cast from copy of program in Archive, AIVS

23. May 8, 1961 La battaglia di Legnano (Rome, 1849). In English as The Battle at Sadler's Wells by the Welsh National Opera

Hervey Alan (von Friedrich, orig. Barbarossa)
Ronald Dowd (Arrigo)
Ronald Lewis (Rolando)
Heather Harper (Lida)
Cecil Bridge (1st Resistance Leader, orig. I. Console di Milano)
Donald Campbell (2nd Resistance Leader, orig. II Console di Milano)
David Hartley (Mark, orig. Marcovaldo)
Jean Evans (Imelda)
David Harding (An Officer, orig. Scudiero &/or Araldo)
Glanville Davies (Meyer, orig. Il podestà di Como)
Charles Grove, cond. with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra
John Moody, producer

1 translation by Nell and John Moody. Cast from program at EThC. First performance in Britain at Cardiff, October 3, 1960, same company
2 see also Simon Boccanegra II and Macbeth I


Anne Edwards (Mina)
Nasco Petroff (Aroldo)
Michael Maurel (Egberto)
Joseph Beachus (Godvino)
Noel Mangin (Briano)
Jennifer Cox (Elena)
David Fisher (Jorg, mimed part)
Gerold Gover, cond.
John Cox, producer

1 revision of Stiffelio (Trieste, 1850); first performance of Aroldo in the British Isles, Wexford, Eire, late 1959
2 cast from program at Archive, AIVS
3 see Il corsaro

25. March 15, 1966 Il corsaro (Trieste, 1848). St. Pancras Town Hall by Opera Viva

Donald Smith (Corrado)
Noel Noble (Giovanni)
Jeannette Sinclair (Medora)
Pauline Tinsley (Gulnara)
Bryan Drake (Seid)
Joseph Beachus (Selimo)
Dennis Conway (Eunuco)
Peter Lea (Servant to Seid)
Leslie Head, cond.
Tom Hawkes, producer

1 cast from Festival program at Archive, AIVS
2 see Aroldo
3 see also Aziza

Gene West (Carlo VII)
Alan Charles (Giacomo)
Donna-Faye Carr (Giovanna)
William Elvin (Delil)
Paul Sherrell (Talbot)
Graham Treacher, cond.
Pauline Stuart, producer

Royal Academy of Music

1 concert performance November 4, 1963 at Kensington Town Hall by the Kensington Choir and Orchestra and the Opera Viva chorus, conducted by Leslie Head. Copy of program at Archive, AIVS claims this to be the “first performance in Britain”

2 cast from copy of program at Archive, AIVS

3 sang part March 20 and 25; Anthony Feltham sang the part on March 23 and 27

27. February 10, 1970 Alzira (Naples, 1845). In English at the Collegiate Theatre by the University College Opera Society

Charles Kerry (Alvaro)
Christopher Bellamy (Gusmano)
Richard Holden (Ovando)
Gordon Wilcock (Zamoro)
Christopher Poll (Ataliba)
John Arom (Otumbo)
Catherine Duval (Alzira)
Audrey de Lema (Zuma)
George Badacsonyi, cond.
Tom Hawkes, producer

1 translation by Ewa Czaykowska; cast from copy of program at Archive, AIVS

2 see also Stiffelio and Macbeth I

28. February 14, 1973 Stiffelio (Trieste, 1850). In English at the Collegiate Theatre by the University College Music Society

Anne Conoley (Lina)
Jill Thomas (Dorotea)
Stuart Kale (Stiffelio)
Peter Lyon (Stankar)
James Anderson (Raffaello di Leuthold)
Ralph Seed (Jorg)
Stephen Dean (Federico di Frengel)
George Badacsonyi, cond.

1 translation by Sarah Leftwich

2 see also Macbeth I

3 see also Alzira and Macbeth I

29. February 18, 1976 Macbeth (first version, Florence, 1847). In English at the Collegiate Theatre by the University College London Opera

Jonathan Summers (Macbeth)
Bud Lawrence (Banquo)
Janet Jacques (Lady Macbeth)
Derek Blackwell (Macduff)
Stephen Dean* (Malcolm)
Josi Gros (Lady-in-waiting)
Martin Weightman (Doctor)
Ian Wintersgill (Murderer)
David Phillips
Lisa Otten-Barry { Apparitions)
Nicola Jenkins
Marc Hutchinson (Duncan, mimed part)
Sue Whittingham (Fleance, mimed part)
Michael Donnall (Servant to Lady Macbeth)
David Phillips (3rd Lord)
Stan Krol (1st Soldier)
George Badacsonyi,* cond.

John Moody, producer

1 first performance in the British Isles, Dublin, Theatre Royal, March 30, 1859, and in England, Manchester, Theatre Royal, September 1859, with Pauline Viardot-Garcia as Lady Macbeth in both
2 Translation by Nell and John Moody
3 cast from program at EThC
4 see also Stiffelio
5 see also Alzira and Stiffelio
6 see also Simon II and La Battaglia di Legnano

Additional Notes

The first performance in England of an opera by Verdi in English was sung to J. Wrey Mould’s translation of Ernani at the Surrey Theatre, November 1, 1851. This translation was published in a piano-vocal score by T. Boosey & Co., London, preface dated October 23, 1851. Other English translations sung in England during Verdi’s lifetime as follows:

Il trovatore, Drury Lane, 1856, transl. by Charles Jefferys
La traviata, Surrey Theatre, 1857, transl. by T. H. Reynoldson
Luisa Miller, see below
Aida, Her Majesty’s, 1880, transl. by H. Hersee
Otello, Manchester, 1892, transl. by Francis Hueffer
Falstaff, Lyceum Theatre, 1896, transl. by W. B. Kingston, rev. F. Hart; Royal College of Music performance

most of the above information from Edward J. Dent’s article, “Verdi in inglese,” Rassegna Musicale (1951). Rigoletto was performed in French at Her Majesty’s in 1853.

Additions to Part I

10. The first performance of Luisa Miller or Love and Intrigue in London took place on June 3, 1858, at Sadler’s Wells, and therefore preceded the Her Majesty’s performance previously listed by five days. English translation by Charles Jeffreys. Cast from a playbill at EThC: Miss Dyer (Luisa), Else Poma (Duchess Frederica), Annie Leng (Laura), Borrani (Count de Walter), Bartleman (Wurm), Edmund Rosenthal (Miller), F. Morrow (Anselmo), Henry Haigh (Rodolpho), J. H. Tully (impresario). Also on the program was the operetta Swiss Swains, music by Alex Lee.

12. Ballo. Edourd Gassier (Sam), apparently the husband of Josefa Fernandez Gassier (Oscar), see also Forza I; Patey (Tom). Additions to the cast from a review in The Athenaeum (June 22, 1861), courtesy of Tom Kaufman.

In addition to Institute members Tom Kaufman, mentioned above, I should like to thank the following for providing materials or information: Andrew Porter, Harold Rosenthal of Opera magazine, Kensington Davison of the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, Helen Salomon of the English National Opera (formerly Sadler’s Wells), Mr Langden of the St. Pancras Library, and Robin Golding of the Royal Academy of Music.