

■ The 906th Orchard Hall Subscription Concert

Sun. 6 May 2018, 15:00 at **Bunkamura** Orchard Hall

■ The 907th Suntory Subscription Concert

Tue. 8 May 2018, 19:00 at Suntory Hall

■ The 117th Tokyo Opera City Subscription Concert

Thu. 10 May 2018, 19:00 at Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall

Myung-Whun Chung, conductor

Peter Seiffert, Florestan (tenor)  
Manuela Uhl, Leonore (soprano)  
Teruhiko Komori, Don Fernando (baritone)  
Luca Pisaroni, Don Pizarro (bass)  
Franz-Josef Selig, Rocco (bass)  
Sylvia Schwartz, Marzelline (soprano)  
Takashi Otsuki, Jaquino (tenor)

Takashi Baba, prisoner 1 (tenor)\*  
Satoshi Takada, prisoner 2 (bass)\*  
Tokyo Opera Singers, chorus<sup>(\*\*)</sup>  
(chorusmaster: Yuko Tanaka)  
Eisuke Sasai, speaker  
Masayasu Komiya, speech outline  
Kaoru Kondo, concertmaster  
Masayasu Komiya, supertitles  
Ayaka Fujiwara (Zimaku+), subtitles operator

Beethoven:

Opera "Fidelio" (concert-style opera with Japanese supertitles)  
(ca. 130 min)

Act I (ca. 72 min)

- "Jetzt, Schätzchen, jetzt sind wir allein."
- "O wär ich schon mit dir vereint"
- "Mir ist so wunderbar."
- "Gut, Söhnchen, gut, hab immer Mut."
- Marsch
- "Ha, welch ein Augenblick!"
- "Abscheulicher! Wo eilst du hin?"
- "O welche Lust"
- "Nun sprecht, wie ging's?" – "Ach, Vater, Vater, eilt!" – "Verwegner Alter!"

— intermission (ca. 15min) —

Act II (ca. 57 min)

- "Gott! Welch Dunkel hier!"
- "Wie kalt ist es in diesem unterirdischen Gewölbe!"
- "Nur hurtig fort, nur frisch gegraben."
- "Euch werde Lohn in bessern Welten."
- "Er sterbe!"
- "O namenlose Freude!"
- Verwandlung
- "Heil sei dem Tag," – "Wohlan, so helfet!"  
– "O Gott!"
- "Wer ein solches Weib errungen."

Presented by Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra  
Co-presented by Tokyo Opera City Cultural Foundation (5/10)  
Subsidized by the Agency for Cultural Affairs Government of Japan /  
The Mitsubishi UFJ Trust Foundation for the Arts(5/8)  
In Association with **Bunkamura** (5/6)



## The story of "Fidelio"

In a prison in a small town in Spain, a diligent and hard working young man is employed. His name is Fidelio. He is beloved by all and viewed as a future son-in-law by the jailor's family. However, Fidelio has a great secret. He is actually a woman disguised as a man. She is on a mission to rescue her imprisoned husband. Her name is Leonore.

To save her dear husband,  
she bravely fights for him and faces great danger.

With all-conquering faith in one another, the husband and wife triumph over vengeful evil in the end and banish oppression from the town, expressed in a chorus of joy at the end of the story.

"Fidelio" is Beethoven's message of love and courage to everyone.



THÉÂTRE LYRIQUE. — PREMIÈRE REPRÉSENTATION DE FIDELIO, OPÉRA DE BEETHOVEN. — 18 acte, 27 tableaux.

Act3 of Fidelio by Beethoven at the Théâtre Lyrique 1860

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## Program Notes

by April L. Racana

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May

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827):

Opera "Fidelio" (concert-style opera with Japanese supertitles)

Having completed only one opera, Beethoven would spend nearly a decade of his life from 1804-1814 writing and revising *Fidelio*. Originally titled *Leonore*, and based on the French drama of the same name by Jean Nicolas Bouilly, the story presents Florestan who has been wrongly and secretly imprisoned by a political rival Don Pizarro. Florestan's wife, Leonore, finds out where he has been taken and disguises herself as a young man, Fidelio, taking a job at the prison as an assistant to the jailer. Don Pizarro discovers that the Minister of Justice and his inspection team are due to arrive, and for fear of being found out, he decides it is necessary to kill Florestan to cover his tracks. But 'Fidelio' (aka Leonore) steps in and prevents her husband from being killed before the Minister and his team arrives, freeing Florestan and all the political prisoners.

The first version of the opera was completed in 1805 and premiered at the Theater an der Wien in Vienna on November 20th that same year. Beethoven revised the score the following year for a revival performance on March 29th, 1806, where he re-wrote the overture, presenting the version referred to as the *Leonore Overture No. 3* for the first time. Beethoven would go on to compose at least two more revisions of the Overture, finally settling on his fourth and final overture to *Fidelio*. The final (and third) revision of the entire opera was premiered on May 23rd, 1814.

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The *Leonore* Overture No. 3 is the version being performed for this concert series, and would become a work in its own right, often referred to as a symphonic poem, since the full range of the story is presented in dramatic musical terms. The overture opens with the dark descent into the prison dungeon, where reference is made to Florestan's aria, recalling happier times and hoping to be freed. This hope builds to more excitement and energy as the plot line unfolds, only to be suddenly interrupted by the sound of a trumpet off-stage, signaling the distant procession of the Minister and his team. The trumpet sounds again as the team nears the prison, this time signaling the ultimate downfall of Pizarro and the reuniting of Leonore and Florestan. Beethoven then presents a full recapitulation of the heroic themes to celebrate Leonore as the heroine, the freedom of Florestan, and their triumph over evil as the overture comes to a victorious and majestic close.

**Act I** then opens with Jaquino (the turnkey) and Marzelline (the jailor's daughter) singing a duet, he expressing his desire to marry her, and she declining since she has since fallen in love with Fidelio, not knowing 'his' true identity. Marzelline is then left alone and sings of her hopes for happiness with Fidelio [*O wär' ich schön mit dir vereint* — 'Oh, if I were already one with you']. Rocco (the jailer) enters looking for Fidelio at the same time 'he' returns from a trip to the blacksmith. The four characters soon break into song in one of the highlights of the opera, a quartet in canon [*Mir ist so wunderbar* — It is so wonderful to me]. Each of them singing of their own perspective of 'wonder': Marzelline dreaming of her hopes for happiness, Jaquino expressing his jealousy, Rocco singing of the happiness of the young couple, and Leonore 'wondering' about what lies ahead.

Rocco then presents what is often referred to as the 'gold' aria where he intones the difficulties of being poor and sings the praises of gold [*Hat man nicht auch Gold* — 'If one doesn't also have money']. Fidelio immediately counters by stating that love is much better than gold, as she requests to help Rocco with his work with the prisoners in order to be able to try to locate her

husband. As the two prepare to descend to the dungeon, and Marzeline begs Fidelio not to go, the three of them sing as a Trio expressing their various contrasting emotions. The sounds of a march announce the entrance of Pizarro who is told of the impending arrival of Don Fernando, (the Minister of Justice) to investigate the stories of abuse at the prison. Pizarro then decides that Florestan must die since Don Fernando thinks he's already dead. Singing his aria over string tremolos, Pizarro reveals his most evil side [*Ha! Welch ein Augenblick!* — 'Ha! What a moment!'].

Pizarro orders that trumpets be sounded to warn him of Fernando's arrival and then offers money to Rocco to kill Florestan. The two sing a duet, with Rocco refusing and Pizarro determining to commit the murder himself, both set in their ways, but Rocco ordered instead to dig a grave in preparation. Leonore has overheard this entire exchange and sings both a Recitative and Aria [*Abscheulicher!* — 'Abominable one!'] expressing her disdain for Pizarro as well as her determination to save the prisoner, the music aptly reflecting her various moods throughout.

In the Finale of Act I, Leonore and Marzeline urge Rocco to allow the prisoners to come up to the courtyard for some fresh air and sunlight, which he agrees to for all of the prisoners except the one lone prisoner. Another highlight of this act is often referred to as the Prisoner's Chorus where the men express their joy at having a brief moment of freedom while also singing of caution at being discovered. Leonore searches the faces of each of these prisoners hoping to find her husband while the prisoners sing [*O welche Lust* — 'Oh, what joy']. Marzeline and Jaquino announce the return of Pizarro who is furious when he discovers the prisoners have been let out of their cells and orders them back. They sing farewell to the sunlight [*Leb' wohl* — 'Farewell'] as Rocco and Leonore prepare to descend further into the dungeon.

At the opening of **Act II** we finally meet Florestan and hear him sing of his despair in the aria [*Gott! Welch Dunkel hier!* — 'God, What

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darkness here!'], but then closes with a vision of hope, his wife appearing as an angel leading him to Heaven. Leonore and Rocco arrive preparing to dig the grave. In a Trio the three sing of their compassion for each other, Rocco having offered Florestan a drink, Leonore offering him some bread, and Florestan expressing his gratitude. Pizarro arrives ordering Fidelio to leave, but 'she' hides instead, eventually intervening when Pizarro attempts to stab Florestan, revealing her identity [*Töt erst sein Weib!* — 'Kill his wife first!']. The trumpet then sounds, announcing the arrival of Don Fernando. Leonore and Florestan have been saved and reunited, singing [*O namenlose Freude!* — 'Oh nameless joy!'].

In the finale of Act II everyone is gathered in the castle courtyard, with Don Fernando freeing all the prisoners and recognizing his old friend Florestan whom he thought was dead. Rocco tells how Leonore came to Florestan's rescue, after which she then removes her husband's chains. Pizarro is led away as all join in the closing chorus in celebration of the heroine, as well as in tribute to love and justice [*Wer ein solches Weib errungen* — 'He who has won such a wife'], which aptly includes a reference to Schiller's Ode to Joy.

**Original work:** Jean Nicolas Bouilly *"Léonore, ou l'Amour conjugal"*

**Libretto:** Joseph Sonnleithner, Georg Friedrich Treitschke

**Work composed:** "Leonore" (1<sup>st</sup> revision) 1804-1805 / "Leonore" (2<sup>nd</sup> revision) 1806 / "Fidelio" 1814

**World premiere:** "Leonore" (1<sup>st</sup> revision) 20, Nov. 1805, at Theater an der Wien / "Leonore" (2<sup>nd</sup> revision) 29, Mar. 1806, at Theater an der Wien / "Fidelio" 23, May. 1814, at Theater am Kärntnertor

**Instrumentation:** piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 2 trombones (3 trombones in "Leonore" overture No. 3), timpani, strings / banda: trumpet

**April L. Racana** / Music Specialist at Nishimachi International School where she has taught since 1992. She completed her undergraduate studies at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana (BS/Piano Pedagogy) and her graduate studies at San Francisco State University (MA/Music), as well as a post-graduate fellowship at Northwestern University, and the Japan Studies Program at International Christian University.