

Canadian Opera Returns

PRESENTING - THE BAT

The Story



Cornelis Opthof as Baron Eisenstein and Sheila Piercey as Adele the Mayservant.

Cornelis Opthof came to Canada from Holland in 1949, and five years later embarked on a singing career. He studied on scholarships for two years at the Royal Conservatory Opera School and won the CBC Classical Talent Festival in 1960. He is active in radio and television, has appeared at Stratford and in the Vancouver International Festival this past summer. This will be his seventh year with the Canadian Opera Company. He sings the role of Marcello in *La Boheme* and on tour Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* and Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus*.

Sheila Piercey came from Nova Scotia on scholarship to the Royal Conservatory. She has performed successfully on many occasions with the CBC, the opera department of the Banff School of Fine Arts and Toronto Melody Fair. She has sung with the Stratford Music Festival and during this past summer has been with the Brunswick Summer Players, Brunswick, Maine, singing the title role in *Fanny and Resi* in *The Great Waltz*. This is her seventh season with the Canadian Opera Company, when she sings Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* and Adele in *Die Fledermaus* on the Company's eastern and western



John Arab as Alfred, is here seen wooing the Baroness Rosalinda, played by Heather Thomson, while Frank (William Copeland) and Frosch (Ron Hastings) look on.

Into the drawing room of Baron von Eisenstein, a wealthy Austrian, floats at the beginning of Act I, the voice of an opera singer, Alfred, a former admirer of Eisenstein's beautiful wife, Rosalinda. His serenade, however, is almost lost on the maid, Adele, who has just received an invitation from her sister to a ball. Adele pleads with her mistress that she is needed by a sick aunt, but Rosalinda refuses Adele's request for the evening off because a special dinner must be prepared that evening for the Baron who is due to serve a week's sentence in jail for having insulted an official.

Eisenstein comes in with his stuttering lawyer, Dr. Blind, with whom he is extremely annoyed as he failed to get him off the charge. A good friend, Dr. Falke, appears. He has a grudge against the Baron, who once forced him, after a masquerade ball, to go through the streets in broad daylight, dressed as a bat. He intends to pay him back and, as the first step, he persuades the Baron to postpone going to jail. He advises him to go instead to an extravagant party at Prince Orlofsky's. The Baron leaves, presumably for prison; Adele goes to "visit her sick aunt"; while Rosalinda is joined by Alfred for the supper prepared for Eisenstein.

Frank, the prison warden, calls in, on his way to Orlofsky's party, to escort the Baron to prison. He mistakes Alfred for Rosalinda's husband as he is by now garbed in the Baron's dressing gown and nightcap, so poor Alfred is taken off to prison after receiving a "wite-y" kiss from Rosalinda.

Act II starts with a gay party in full swing at Prince Orlofsky's Palace. Prince Orlofsky welcomes his guests. He begs everyone to do what he likes best. Among the special guests — besides Falke and Eisenstein — are the prison warden, Frank, the maid, Adele, and, to complete the joke, Rosalinda, who appears masked and disguised as a Hungarian countess. Falke introduces Adele as an actress, Eisenstein as Marquis Renard, and Frank as Chevalier Chagrin. Adele, in a dress of Rosalinda's is recognized by Eisenstein, but pertly laughs her way out of the situation. Rosalinda has been tipped off by Falke as to where her husband is and she flirts with him outrageously. Eisenstein, failing to recognize his own love-y wife in her disguise, is soon captivated by her charms. She succeeds in stealing his valuable watch, to use later when she may need it for her cause.

When the clock strikes six in the morning, the Baron and Frank — by this time quite tipsy — remember they should be at the prison. They stagger away and Falke gleefully thinks of the embarrassing situation they will face at the jail the morning after the night before.

The night has been as confusing for Frosch, the drunken jailer, as it has been for the prison warden. In his office comes Adele to begin Act III. Frank had been very attentive to her at the ball. Rosalinda appears, hoping to rescue Alfred and to divorce her husband. Eisenstein arrives to begin serving his sentence, and learns of his wife's flirtation with Alfred, but his wrath is soon cooled when she produces the watch. All the guests at the ball appear and Falke explains that he devised the whole plot as a practical joke.

Everything ends on a gay note with a sing in praise of champagne and the Baron is finally led to his cell to serve his sentence.

The leading characters are Alfred, sung by John Arab, Adele the Maid, sung by Sheila Piercey, Rosalinda, sung by Heather Thomson, and Baron Eisenstein, Rosalinda's husband, sung by Cornelis Opthof. The opera will be presented by the Canadian Opera Company in Fredericton High School Auditorium at 8:15 p. m. on Monday, 17 February, 1964.

Tickets will available free to students on and after Tuesday, February 11 from the Dean of Men's Residence Office in McConnell Hall.

HELMER

Talks and Plays  
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Memorial Hall, 8:15 p. m. Wednesday, 12 February. Admission free to students and series subscribers by ticket available from Residence Office on and after Thursday, 6 February.

...tours. She will sing this latter role with the Canadian Opera Company when *Die Fledermaus* is presented here on Monday, 17 February, 1964, at 8:15 p. m.

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