



Opera Rara recordings

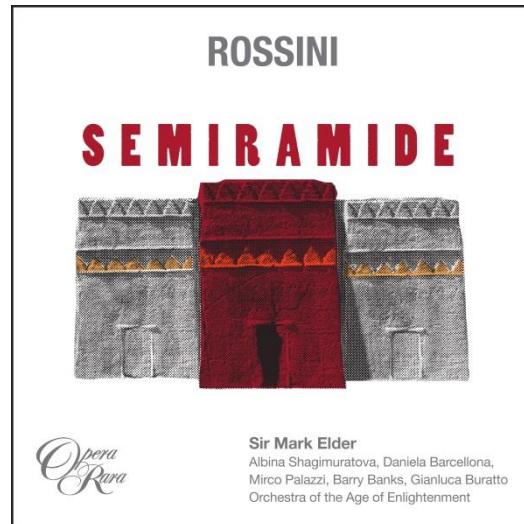
## ROSSINI: SEMIRAMIDE

Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment

Sir Mark Elder, conductor

ORC57 – RELEASE DATE: FRIDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2018

*Albina Shagimuratova; Daniela Barcellona; Mirco Palazzi; Barry Banks;  
Gianluca Buratto; Susana Gaspar; David Butt Philip; James Platt;  
Opera Rara Chorus*



On Friday 7 September, Opera Rara will release Rossini's last Italian opera, *Semiramide* (watch the *Making of Semiramide* video [here](#)). In this, the company's tenth complete opera recording by Rossini, Artistic Director Sir Mark Elder leads the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment in its fifth collaboration with Opera Rara, following the success of Offenbach's *Fantasio* and Donizetti's *Les Martyrs*, both International Opera Award-winning releases. Albina Shagimuratova sings the title role and is joined by Daniela Barcellona as Arsace, Mirco Palazzi as Assur and Barry Banks as Idreno. *Semiramide* will be the first Opera Rara recording distributed worldwide by Warner

Classics as part of their new partnership with the company announced earlier this summer.

An immediate success at its première in 1823 at Venice's Teatro La Fenice, *Semiramide* was kept in the public consciousness through much of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by leading sopranos of the day such as Adelina Patti and Nellie Melba – singers who thrived on tackling the challenging part of the Queen of Babylon. Rossini wrote some of his most demanding vocal music for the title role, which he created for his wife Isabella Colbran. The opera was also at the forefront of the revival of Rossini's serious operas in the 1960s and 1970s, during which time the famous Decca recording featuring Joan Sutherland as *Semiramide* and Marilyn Horne as *Arsace* was released.

Fifty years on, Opera Rara has tried to make the opera speak in a different way by recording the work without any of the cuts that have accompanied almost all modern revivals, and by using historical instruments. This will also be the first studio recording of the opera for over twenty years. As *The Times* commented on Opera Rara's performance at the 2016 BBC Proms, "*Conducting from a score as thick as a brick, Mark Elder didn't waver either, as he passionately drove the cast, the spirited Opera Rara Chorus and the OAE... Rhythms were urgent, instrumental tones piquant right from the overture's honeyed quartet of natural horns... Elder's forces have just finished a studio recording of this tragic fiesta, so keep your eyes open.*"

The brain-child of Patric Schmid and Don White, Opera Rara has been in the business of bringing back forgotten operatic repertoire since its conception in the early 1970s, with the *bel canto* repertory as a particular focus. The company's latest project was the world première of Donizetti's *L'Ange de Nisida* in collaboration with the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Sir Mark Elder conducted two concert performances on 18 and 21 July, starring Joyce El-Khoury, David Junghoon Kim, Vito Priante, Laurent Naouri and Evgeny Stavinisky. A live recording will be released in 2019.

For a review copy or further information:  
Ginny Macbeth/Moë Faulkner: 020 7251 9448  
moe@macbethmediarelations.co.uk  
opera-rara.com

Phone: +44 (0)20 7251 9448  
Email: info@macbethmediarelations.co.uk

Registered in England  
Company No. 7752339

Macbeth Media Relations Ltd  
23 Pear Tree Street  
London EC1V 3AP