

ROLE OF COUNT DE GRIEUX IN J. MASSENET'S *MANON*

by

JUSTIN JOSEPH WELSH

B.Mus., UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, 2002

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF MUSIC

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
(School of Music)

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

April 2004

© Justin Joseph Welsh 2004

Library Authorization

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the head of my department or by his or her representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Justin Welsh

Name of Author (please print)

April 21st 2004

Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

Title of Thesis: Presenting the role of Counte de Grioux
from Jules Massenet's Manon.

Degree: Masters in Music : Opera performance Year: 2004

Department of Music

The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, BC Canada

ABSTRACT

The thesis for the Master of Music degree in Opera consists of the performance of a major role in one full opera production in the first or second year.

I performed role of Count De Grioux in Jules Massenet's *Manon* on the 6th of March 2004.

For this role, I had to present myself as an older gentleman of a distinguished class. Since, I myself am still a young man of 23, I had to use my imagination, stage experience and technique to give a great portrayal of this middle-aged gentleman. Through my training, voice color and stature, I was able to give the audience the idea of myself being the significant father of one of the main characters.

Even though I am using the role of Count De Grioux as my thesis, during rehearsals and production I also had to play another character that was completely the opposite. The Count could be considered extremely serious and sure of himself in his ways and virtues. However, the other character that I was required to play, Lescaut, cousin of Manon, could be interpreted as careless, reckless and a man of the world.

Since these are not the virtues of such a man as the Count I had the unique challenge of separating the two mentalities and voice colors even though they were the same

voice type. The Count must have a strong, powerful even commanding voice to show his quality and status. Lescaut however is more laid back must be portrayed in a more easy going manner. With this problem of double role, it made my thesis role of the Count more challenging and gave me an opportunity express my talent and ingenuity.

Massenet's

MANON



The Chan Shun Concert Hall

March 4, 5, 6, 7 2004



The Chan Centre

theatre
at UBC

theatre
at **UBC**



MANON

By Jules Massenet

Opera in 5 Acts with 6 Scenes
Text by Meilhac and Gille
Based on the story by the Abbé Prévost

With the UBC Opera Ensemble &
The UBC Symphony Orchestra

Premiere, Opera-Comique, Paris, January 19, 1884

Conductor Norbert Baxa
Director Nancy Hermiston
Music Director Richard Epp
Set and Costume Design by Alessia Carpoca
Lighting Design by Jeremy Baxter

There will be two twenty- minute intermissions

Chan Shun Concert Hall

March 4, 5, 6, 7, 2004

This production is made possible by generous assistance through
the Chan Endowment Fund of the University of British Columbia



A Message from the Director of the UBC School of

Dear Friends of the School of Music, Fans and Followers of UBC Opera. We are excited and very proud to welcome you to another opera production here on the University of British Columbia campus. Tonight's performance of *Manon* promises to be another example of what has become an important aspect of the cultural and artistic life in Vancouver and in the growing "campus town". Tonight's production is yet another wonderful cooperative event between the Department of Theatre, Film and Creative Writing and the School of Music, and we thank the faculty, staff and students who continue to support our efforts. Who can deny the success of the wonderfully-trained singers who are winning major competitions, making Metropolitan Opera debuts, finding themselves engaged in opera houses around the globe? How exciting and rewarding it is to watch the growth and development of a singer from the tentative first appearances in a minor role in a production to a full-fledged star only a few short years later. Tonight, the brilliant voices of the UBC Opera Ensemble in combination with the well-trained, responsive University Symphony Orchestra and the brilliant musical direction of our guest conductor from the Czech Republic, Norbert Baxa and a timeless and beautifully dramatic score promise an unforgettable evening. We hope you are ready to be transported effortlessly away from the day-to-day for a few brief moments. Enjoy, and please come back again.

Warm Wishes,

Jesse Read
Director, School of Music

A Message from the Head of Theatre, Film & Creative Writing

The Department of Theatre, Film, and Creative Writing is honoured to again be part of the School of Music spring opera. The artistic, scholarly, and practical collaboration between students, faculty, and staff in Music and Theatre has been a satisfying and rewarding experience over the years, and it's a pleasure to see this latest exciting result of that collaboration onstage at the Chan Centre in a wonderful production featuring distinguished guest artists and extraordinary student performers.

Robert Gardner
Department Head
Theatre, Film and Creative Writing

A Message from Head of Opera



Welcome to this very special evening of opera. The UBC Opera Ensemble is pleased to present this masterpiece of the French operatic repertoire. We have performed this opera in 2002 and 2003 in Usti nad Labem, where it was produced especially for us as a showcase for our Ensemble members. We are delighted that Maestro Norbert Baxa, who was the conductor for the Usti performances, will lead this production as well. Our audiences will remember him from last year's performance of the Czech masterpiece, *The Bartered Bride*. Mr. Baxa is one of the Czech Republic's youngest and most successful General Music Directors. This year we are also delighted to have the renowned Czech tenor Ales Briscein. Ales, who is one of his country's leading tenors, has appeared in France, Italy, Germany and Japan. His appearance with the UBC Opera Ensemble marks his Canadian debut. We are very privileged and proud to have him as one of our cast members.

Another favourite tenor of the UBC Opera Ensemble is Keith Klassen. Keith also sang in the 2002 production of *Manon* in Usti and returns to us for these performances. He will join the Ensemble on this year's tour, singing the role of Rodolfo in *La Bohème*.

We will return to the Czech Republic this year to perform *Eugene Onegin*, in Russian, under the baton of Maestro David Agler and *La Bohème*, in Italian, under the baton of Maestro Baxa. Your attendance and support of our productions makes this wonderful European experience possible for our students. These trips have had a significant impact on the development of our young singers. This year has seen many of our young talent winning major competitions, engagements and contracts with companies throughout Europe, Canada and the United States. I hope that you will continue to enjoy the energy, talent and exceptional voices of these wonderful young singers and through your attendance at our performances support their journey to the professional world of opera.

Enjoy the performance and many thanks for choosing opera at UBC.

Nancy Hermiston
Head of Opera and Voice

Norbert Baxa - Conductor



Norbert Baxa, the gifted young Czech conductor, is currently the General Music Director at the Usti nab Labem City Theatre in the Czech Republic. Mr. Baxa was appointed there in 1999, and at the age of 24, was the youngest music director ever appointed in a major Czech house.

Mr. Baxa began his training at the prestigious Bratislava Conservatory as a singer and conductor, and continued his studies at the Music Academy in Prague. He worked as guest singer for the Prague Chamber Choir and as a vocal coach and accompanist for singers. He graduated in 1998 and was awarded the "Red Diploma", the Academy's top honour.

In 1996, Mr. Baxa founded the progressive chamber music group CLUB 20, dedicating their performances to composers of the 20th Century. His extensive repertoire covers the operatic and ballet genres, with a special interest in the music of Czech and Slovak composers such as Smetana, Janacek and Martinu. In 2001, he conducted the European premiere of Robert Ward's *The Crucible* with a combined Canadian and Czech cast. Mr. Baxa is a frequent guest conductor throughout the Czech Republic and Germany, and has appeared in Hungary, Spain and Japan.

UBC OPERA ENSEMBLE

To inform our patrons of upcoming events, we are preparing an opera-lovers email directory. If you wish to be added to our list, please see one of our students at the desk in the lobby. And, of course, any donations to the ensemble are always greatly appreciated. Thank you for supporting opera at UBC.

Singers for Hire

Soloists and Ensembles available for all occasions.

Let the magic of these talented young performers make your special occasion filled with memorable musical moments.

Please call the UBC School of Music
Voice and Opera Division
822-8246

Guest Artists



Tenor Aleš Briscein

Originally he studied clarinet and saxophone and later operatic singing at the Prague Conservatoire (Prof. Dr. Milošlav Pošpíšil. He continued in his studies at the Western-Bohemian University in Pilsen. Since 1995 Mr. Briscein has been a Prague State Opera soloist. Within a short period of time there he learned several roles (Tamino from Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, Ferrando in *Così fan Tutte*, Almaviva in Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Jeník in Smetana's *The Bartered Bride*, Alfredo in Verdi's *La Traviata*, Lensky in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* winning a prize at the Opera festival 2003. He performed at prestigious festivals such as the Edinburgh International Festival and The Prague Spring Festival. He performs with eminent orchestras such as the Czech Philharmonic, the Scottish Royal National Orchestra and Virtuosi di Praga. He regularly guest performs in the Prague National Theatres. On a tour of Japan he introduced himself as Tamino in *The Magic Flute* and a year later as Kudrjáš in *Kát'a Kabanová* at a premiere of this opera together with the Tokyo Philharmonic. He has concertized many times in the Czech Republic as well as abroad (Germany, Austria, Italy, England, USA, Australia and Japan). Upcoming engagements includes The Paris Opera and Barcelona's Liceu.



Tenor Keith Klassen

Tenor Keith Klassen is an Honours graduate of the University of Toronto's Opera Division, where his credits include the title roles in *Albert Herring* and *Barbe-Bleue* and Ruggero in *La Rondine*. Previous roles include Rinuccio in Opera Nuova's Gianni *Schicchi*, Tamino in the Manitoba touring production of *The Magic Flute*, Rodney in the Fine Young Classics presentation of *Seven Stories* and he toured the Czech Republic as Des Grieux in Massenet's *Manon*. Mr. Klassen has also performed Jeník in a Vancouver production of *Bartered Bride* and Don Jose in Saskatoon Opera's and Toronto Summer Lyric Opera's *Carmen*. He appeared as Alexius in *The Chocolate Soldier* for Toronto Operetta Theatre and made his debut with Opera in Concert as Ivan Lykov in *The Tsar's Bride*. Mr. Klassen has also appeared in a number of productions for the Canadian Opera Company.

Cast

Thursday March 4th and Saturday March 6th.

MANON	Rhoslyn Jones
DES GRIEUX	Ales Briscein
LESCAUT	John Conlon
GUILLOT	Stephen Bell
DE BRETIGNY	Todd Delaney
COUNT DES GRIEUX	Justin Welsh*
(understudy)	Andrew Stewart
POUSETTE	Katie May
JAVOTTE	Dionne Sellinger
ROSETTE	Leah Field
INNKEEPER	David English
TWO SOLDIERS	
Kevin Lee	

David Mitten

Friday March 5th and Sunday March 7th.

MANON	Amy LaFroy
(understudy)	Jennifer Farrell
DES GRIEUX	Keith Klassen*
LESCAUT	Justin Welsh
GUILLOT	John Marino
DE BRETIGNY	Andrew Jameson
COUNT DES GRIEUX	Brent Calis
POUSETTE	Jennifer Farrell
JAVOTTE	Alison Nystrom
ROSETTE	Erinn Roberts
INNKEEPER	Mike Broder
TWO SOLDIERS	Kevin Lee
	David Mitten

* Appears courtesy of the Canadian Actors' Equity Association

LADIES CHORUS

Christina Avril, Jessica Bowes, Maria Christina Fantini, Brooke Harris, Chloe Hurst, Teiya Kasahara, Gina McLellan, Paula MacNeil Whitney Sloan, Lucy Smith, Evie Vassilikakis, Anna Whelan, Katherine Landry, Margo Le Vae, Vicki Lewis, Melanie McTaggart, Megan Morrison, Rose-Ellen Nichols, Kathleen Susak, Diana Wilder, Heidi Wood, Debbie Wong

MEN'S CHORUS

Brian Lee, Kevin Lee, John Marino, Mike Broder, Russell Cripps, Cory Esaryk, Darrell Croft, Riley McMitchell, David Mitten, Michael Mori, Scott Brooks, David English, John Hales, Bryn Jones, Kevin Loudon, Andrew Stewart

UBC Symphony Orchestra - *Manon*

Violin 1

*Angela Hodgson
Mira Benjamin
Karen Mende
Erik Sum
Annelies Deacock
Jessica Deutsch
Hyunah Cho
Gigi Lau
Jessica Wan
Megan Wolfe

Violin 2

*Jenny Atkinson
Drie Ignas
Young Joo Tina Lee
Alana Chang
Jenny Hsu
Heather Wright
Theresa Choi
Elaine Griffiths

Viola

*Peter Ing
Genevieve McKay
Chantal Lemire
Isla Dowling

Cellos

*Sarah Tippett
Alex Sia
Regina Matthew
Sabrina Tsou

Bass

*Trevor Yeates
Salvador Pedraza
Adam Jones

Flutes

*Cheryl McHugh
Sara Kalke

Oboes

*Fleur Sweetman
Emily Sadlier-Brown

Clarinets

*Sam Davidson
Jeanette Searle

Bassoons

*Gwen Seaton
Rachel Fels Elliott

Horns

*Allison Zaichowski
Mindy Lian
Nick Anderson
Jessica Piper

Trumpets

*Chris Mitchell
Malcolm Aitken)

Trombones

*James Chilton
Caleb Mutch
Michael Schafer

Tuba

Dan Pain

Harp

Andrew Chan
Joy Yeh

Timpani

Bruce Henczel

Percussion

*Katie Rife
Soho Fujimoto

Production

Stage Manager	Alishia Harris
Assistant Stage Manager	Melissa Tsang
Assistant Stage Manager	Rosemary Morgan
Props Crew Chief	Amy Peradenic
Stage Crew	Adrienne Lister
Stage Crew	Siuling Leung
Lighting Designer	Jeremy Baxter
Asst. Lighting Design	Erin Harris
Lighting Operator	Crystal McConeghy
Head of Wardrobe	Parvin Mirhady
Surtitle Preparation	Megan Morrison
Surtitle Operator	Krzysztof Biernacki
Costumes	Robert Prince
Sewer	Connie Sia
Properties Supervisor	Janet Bickford
Properties Supervisor	Lynn Burton
Properties Assistant	Wendy Subity
Builder	Helina Patience
Builder	Melissa Tsang
Builder	Rosemary Morgan
Builder	Diana Domm
Wigs	Elke Englicht
Make up	Nel Volrich
Make up	Carmen Garcia
Make up Assistant	Weylon Aran
Production Manager	Jay Henrickson
TD, Carpenter	Elia Kirby
Technical Advisor	Ian Pratt
Opera Ensemble Technical Director	John Conlon
Opera Ensemble Technical Assistant	Andrew Jameson
Opera Ensemble Technical Assistant	David English
ATD Chan Centre	Owen Schellenberger

Plot Synopsis for *Manon*

Act One

In the courtyard of an inn in Amiens, two noblemen, Guillot and De Brétigny, and their actress friends, Poussette, Javotte and Rosette, loudly demand dinner from the innkeeper. The coach arrives from Arras. Curious villagers are joined by Lescaut, who is meeting his 15-year-old cousin Manon on her way to a convent on her parent's orders. She arrives, breathless with wonder at her first journey away from home. While Lescaut leaves to search for her luggage, Guillot sees her and offers her money "for a word of love". He is rebuffed with laughter, and mocked by his companions. He nevertheless tells Manon that his coach is at her disposal. Lescaut witnesses the end of the conversation and reproaches Manon for her lack of discretion, which threatens the family honour, then leaves her to gamble with his friends. Left alone once more, Manon casts envious glances at the actresses and their fine clothes, realizing sadly that prospects of a life of luxury will be shut off by the convent door. Des Grieux enters to await the coach that will take him to his father. Seeing Manon, he immediately falls in love with her. Des Grieux invites her to come with him to Paris. Manon returns his love and suggests that they take advantage of Guillot's carriage. They set off for Paris. Guillot is humiliated and swears revenge.

Act Two

Manon and Des Grieux are sharing an apartment together in Paris. Des Grieux is writing a letter to his father, asking for permission to marry his love. Suddenly Lescaut, accompanied by De Brétigny in disguise, bursts in. While Brétigny pretends to counsel clemency, Lescaut's anger diminishes when he hears that Des Grieux is seeking his father's approval to marry Manon. Brétigny privately informs Manon that Des Grieux will be abducted on his father's orders. This is her chance of escape to a better life. The intruders leave, and Des Grieux goes to mail the letter. Manon struggles with herself, feeling unworthy of her lover and knowing that she will be unable to resist Brétigny's offer. She bids a sentimental farewell to the domestic scene. She does not warn her lover on his return and he is subsequently abducted.

Synopsis continued

Act Three, Scene One

There is merry-making in the Cours-la-Reine. De Brétigny and Manon enter together. She draws admiration from everyone and extols the pleasures of youth and the joys of her new life. Guillot continues to be intrigued. Manon overhears a conversation between Brétigny and the Count des Grieux, the chevalier's father. He reveals that his son is taking holy orders and is to preach his first sermon at St Sulpice later in the day. Manon asks the Count if his son has forgotten the cause of his misery, and he answers that he has. Abruptly Manon orders a coach to take her to St Sulpice. Guillot is publicly humiliated once more.

Act Three, Scene Two

In the church of St Sulpice, Des Grieux has just given an eloquent sermon. The congregation is quite taken with the new Abbé. His father is there and urges him to reconsider his decision to become a priest. Des Grieux insists that it is the only way that he can forget Manon. Manon has come to the church to find Des Grieux. She begs forgiveness, and with a few loving gestures, his reservations are dispelled. They express their love once again.

Act Four

Gamblers and professional card-sharpers including Lescaut gather at the Hôtel de Transylvanie. Guillot suggests a game to the honourable Des Grieux. He accepts, but is then accused of cheating. After delivering an ominous threat, Guillot leaves and then returns with the Count Des Grieux and the police. Manon and Des Grieux are arrested.

Act Five

Des Grieux has been freed, but Manon is sentenced to deportation. On the road to Le Havre, Des Grieux and Lescaut plan to rescue Manon by bribing a soldier in the escort party. The two lovers are reunited. Manon broken in body and spirit, begs Des Grieux's forgiveness for the shame she has brought him. She dies in his arms.

Upcoming Concert Listings ~ UBC School of Music

Fri Mar 5 @ 12 noon
 Music @ Main
 Student Highlights
 Main Library, Rm 502
 FREE

Mon Mar 8 @ 12 noon
 UBC Student Composers
 Recital Hall
 FREE

Wed Mar 10 @ 12 noon
 Wednesday Noon Hours
 Beth Orson, oboe
 Rita Costanzi, harp
 works by Bellini, Brod and Ravel
 Recital Hall
 \$4.00 at the door

Thur Mar 11 @ 12 noon
 Contemporary Players
 Recital Hall
 FREE

Thur Mar 11 @ 3 pm
 Concert & Masterclass with
 Dr. Jonathan Helton
 from the School of Music
 at the University of Florida
 Recital Hall
 Admission - FREE

Thur Mar 11 @ 8 pm
 Borealis String Quartet
 with Sadao Harada, cello
 works by Beethoven,
 Murphy & Schubert
 Recital Hall
 \$20/\$10

Fri Mar 12 @ 12 noon
 UBC Chamber Strings
 Recital Hall
 FREE

Mon Mar 15 @ 12 noon
 String Chamber Ensembles
 Recital Hall
 FREE

Wed Mar 17 @ 12 noon
 Wednesday Noon Hours
 Miranda Wong, piano
 Schubert Sonata in A Major, D. 959
 Granados Goyescas
 Recital Hall
 \$4.00 at the door

Thu Mar 18 @ 12 noon
 Chamber Choirs of UBC
 The Chan Centre
 FREE

Thu Mar 18 @ 12 noon
 UBC Chinese Ensemble
 Recital Hall
 FREE

Mon Mar 22 @ 12 noon
 UBC Student Composers
 Recital Hall
 FREE

Wed Mar 24 @ 12 noon
 Wednesday Noon Hours
 Alan Matheson Nonet
 The Birth of Cool and Beyond...
 Recital Hall
 \$4.00 at the door

Thu Mar 25 @ 12 noon
 UBC Symphonic Wind Ensemble
 The Chan Centre
 FREE

Fri Mar 26 @ 12 noon
 Recital Hall
 Contemporary Players
 FREE

Fri Mar 26 @ 8 pm
 UBC Symphonic Wind Ensemble
 The Chan Centre
 FREE

Mon Mar 29 @ 12 noon
 UBC Percussion Ensemble
 Recital Hall
 FREE

For the Chan Centre for the Performing Arts

Acting Managing Director	Sid Katz
Director of Facilities and Operations	Cameron McGill
Assistant Technical Director	Owen Schellenberger
Director of Programming & Administration	Joyce Hinton
Programming Coordinator	Wendy Atkinson
Events Manager	Lindsay Jameson
Director of Marketing & Customer Services	Marie Edwards
Head Lighting Technician	Andrew Riter
Head Audio Technician	Jay O'Keeffe
Systems Administrator	Ted Clark
Front of House Coordinators	Carl Armstrong
	Andrew Elliot
Concessions Coordinator	Nathan Lee
Ticket Office Manager	Donna Caedo
Financial Officer	Flora Lew
Financial Clerk	Laura Lee Samuels
Reception Clerk	Kim Claybo
Production Clerk	Sherri Fetterly
Tour Guide	Rachel Lowry

POV

PERSISTENCE OF VISION FILM FESTIVAL

Friday April 30 & Saturday May 1, 2004 7:30pm

www.film.ubc.ca/pov

**THE LADY
FROM
THE SEA**

*by Henrik Ibsen
adapted by Bryan Wade*

MARCH 18-27, 2004 7:30pm

TELUS STUDIO THEATRE

Acknowledgements

The David Spencer Endowment
Encouragement Fund

The Chan family

David Agler

Irving Guttman

Jesse Read

David Boothroyd

Craig Holzschuh

H. L. Vanderwoude

Vancouver Playhouse

Arts Club theatre

Vancouver Opera

Capilano College Stagecraft Department

Staff and Faculty of the Theatre at UBC

Staff and Faculty of the School of Music

Staff of the Chan Centre for the Performing Arts

Clarke's Audio/Visual

Brian Pollock

A special thank-you to the Vancouver Opera Guild for their
donation to this production.

Excerpt from Abbé Prévost's novel *Manon Lescaut*, the last part of a series called *Mémoires et aventures d'un homme de qualité*.

The vacation having arrived, I was preparing to return to my father, who had promised to send me soon to the Academy.

"My only regret on quitting Amiens arose from parting with a friend, some years older than myself, to whom I had always been tenderly attached. We had been brought up together; but from the straitened circumstances of his family, he was intended to take orders, and was to remain after me at Amiens to complete the requisite studies for his sacred calling. He had a thousand good qualities. You will recognize in him the very best during the course of my history, and above all, a zeal and fervor of friendship which surpass the most illustrious examples of antiquity. If I had at that time followed his advice, I should have always continued a discreet and happy man. If I had even taken counsel from his reproaches, when on the brink of that gulf into which my passions afterwards plunged me, I should have been spared the melancholy wreck of both fortune and reputation. But he was doomed to see his friendly admonitions disregarded; nay, even at times repaid by contempt from an ungrateful wretch, who often dared to treat his fraternal conduct as offensive and officious.

"I had fixed the day for my departure from Amiens. Alas! that I had not fixed it one day sooner! I should then have carried to my father's house my innocence untarnished."