

Florestan
a prisoner

Alan Razzak
tenor

Leonore
his wife, under the name of Fidelio

Kristin Ebner
soprano

Rocco
a jailer

Seweryn Ropenga
bass

Marzelline
his daughter

Nicole Tschaikin
soprano

Jaquino
assistant to Rocco

Benjamin Telmányi Lylloff
tenor

Don Pizarro
governor of the prison

Benoit Pitre
baritone

Don Fernando
the King's minister

Stefan Tolksdorf
baritone

First prisoner

Kai-Uwe Dücke
tenor

Second prisoner

Tobias Faku
bass

Narrator

Portia Tarumbwa-Strid

Chorus
soldiers, prisoners, townspeople

International Schiller Institute Chorus

Chorus Master

Lotta Thronell-Hartmann

Conductor

Sergej Strid

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The Schiller Institute

MUSIKABEND

Fidelio

Leonore, oder Der Triumph der ehelichen Liebe
Leonore, or The Triumph of Married Love

Op. 72

Ludwig van Beethoven

In the Verdi tuning,
A=432 Hz

Performed in German with English supertitles

**30TH ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE OF THE SCHILLER INSTITUTE
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2014 • FLÖRSHEIM AM MAIN, GERMANY**

Fidelio (1814), Beethoven's only opera, celebrates the triumph of justice, love and freedom over tyranny, injustice and political persecution, a theme dear to the great German composer.

The plot:

Leonore, disguised as a man (under the name Fidelio, from the latin *fidelis* which means faithful, loyal, strong and truthful), enters the prison of Don Pizarro in order to free her husband Florestan, who has been unjustly imprisoned for fighting oppression.

In order to get access to Florestan, she wins the favour of Rocco, the jailer, and his daughter Marzelline. Although Marzelline is promised in marriage to Jaquino, she falls in love with Fidelio, thinking she is a man. All four characters express their divergent views in the famous quartet *Mir ist so wunderbar*.

When the Prime Minister Don Fernando, who knows Florestan and esteems him as an honest man, announces he will visit the prison, Pizarro fears that he will free Florestan, and unmask the evil scheme that brought him to prison. Thus, the evil Pizarro plans to kill the innocent political prisoner.

Leonore/Fidelio convinces Rocco to let all the prisoners out into the fresh air in order to find her husband, who turns out not to be among them. The famous prisoners' chorus *O welche Lust*, sung at this point of the opera, reminds us of another famous prisoners' chorus, *Va Pensiero* in Verdi's *Nabucco*, for its intensity and its dynamic from pianissimo to fortissimo.

At this point, Leonore finds Florestan in a dark dungeon, where he whispers her name and calls her his angel. She decides to confront Pizarro, who is determined to kill both husband and wife. Only the arrival of the Prime Minister Don Fernando, announced by trumpets, stops the evil murders and frees Florestan.

A note on the historical background:

The opera *Fidelio* was inspired by *Léonore ou l'amour conjugal* (Leonore or marital love) by Jean-Nicolas Bouilly, who based himself on his own experience as prosecutor for the Tribunal of the French Revolution in Tours. According to historian Donald Phau ("Fidelio: Beethoven's Celebration of the American Revolution," in *Campaigner* magazine, August, 1978) the true story inspiring Beethoven's *Fidelio* is that of Adrienne Lafayette, the wife of the Marquis de Lafayette, who had been a hero of the American Revolution.

Adrienne went into an Austrian prison in Olmuetz, to rescue her husband, who was held there in solitary confinement from 1792 to 1797. He had been imprisoned there by the Austrians as part of a secret arrangement between England, Austria and Prussia, on orders of British Prime Minister William

Pitt (Pizarro). Adrienne arrived at Olmuetz in October 1795, and remained there, in the prison with her two daughters, until Lafayette was freed in September 1797, largely due to the international pressure catalyzed by Adrienne's heroism.

Among those who sent letters to Austria's Emperor Francis II seeking his release were United States President George Washington, and the French scientist, military strategist and great republican leader Lazare Carnot, known as the "organizer of victory" against the oligarchy.

Its importance for us today:

The Europe of the Congress of Vienna, of the British Empire and its tyrannical domination over continental Europe, is not so far removed from the Europe we have today, and the tyranny of the Troika (European Union, ECB and IMF) which holds all European countries hostage to its policies of austerity.

For us in the Schiller Institute, Beethoven's *Fidelio* can be considered a metaphor of how the courage and determination of relatively few men and women all over the world can free Europe from the dictatorship of the Troika and lead it to a better world and a more just economic and social system.

Liliana Gorini

ACT I

- Ouvertüre
- Jetzt, Schätzchen, jetzt sind wir allein
- O wär ich schon mit dir vereint
- Mir ist so wunderbar
- Hat man nicht auch Gold beineben
- Marsch
- Ha, Welch ein Augenblick
- Jetzt, Alter, jetzt hat es Eile
- Abscheulicher, wo eilst du hin
- O welche Lust
- Verwegener Alter
- Leb wohl, du warmes Sonnenlicht

Intermission

ACT II

- Gott, Welch Dunkel hier
- Er sterbe! Doch er soll erst wissen
- Ach, du bist gerettet
- Es schlägt der Rache Stunde
- O namenlose Freude
- Heil sei dem Tag
- Des besten Königs Wink und Wille
- Er sucht der Bruder seine Brüder
- O Gott, Welch ein Augenblick
- Wer ein holdes Weib errungen