

The writers of "Chopin and the Nightingale" are the founders of ICONS OF EUROPE, a not-for-profit association based in Brussels, Belgium. They use great culture as "a platform for inspiration and dialogue on societal issues: the new Europe, transatlantic relations, and tuberculosis." They donate proceeds that they receive from "Chopin and the Nightingale" toward global TB/HIV research.

Listed below are the most recent findings from ICONS OF EUROPE on the relationship between Frédéric Chopin and Jenny Lind.

Overturning longstanding assumptions and myths, the new research findings are well-documented. In summary:

Chopin had in 1848-1849 (after George Sand) a secret love affair with Jenny Lind, the soprano megastar and philanthropist known as The Swedish Nightingale. They met in London in May 1848 at the start of her opera tour of England, Scotland and Ireland. Wealthy, savvy and well-connected, Lind became quickly Chopin's financial and musical patron.

With the knowledge of Queen Victoria, Jenny Lind travelled to Paris in May 1849 in a secret but unsuccessful attempt to marry Chopin in a city riveted by revolution and street fights and a deadly cholera epidemic.

After Chopin's death and her own triumphal concert tour of America in 1850-1852 - during which she earned a huge amount of money and married her accompanying German pianist - Jenny Lind devoted the rest of her life to paying tribute to Chopin's music and enshrining his legacy.

Using the ancient symbols of Orpheus and St. Cecilia, Jenny Lind stimulated the development of a mythological framework in which Chopin's music and their romance became sources of inspiration for composers, poets, painters and sculptors in La Belle Époque - e.g. Liszt, Stravinsky, Sullivan, Wagner and Wilde as well as exiled Polish artists.

All along, Jenny Lind made an elaborate cover-up of her true relationship with Chopin in complicity with their friends as well as patrons such as Queen Victoria and her family, and later the Tsar in St. Petersburg, members of The Saturday Club in Boston, and Princess Edmond de Polignac (Winnaretta), Paris. These patrons also supported the creation of memorials for Chopin (e.g. at his birthplace, Parc Monceau in Paris, and Lazienki Park in Warsaw) and for Jenny Lind at Westminster Abbey.

Friday, July 25: 7:30 PM Sunday, July 27: 2:00 PM \$20

"Chopin and the Nightingale"

*A Dramatic Reading With Music
By Cecilia and Jens Jorgensen*

U. S. PREMIERE

**With the Lake George Theater Lab
Lindsey Gates, Artistic Director**

Directed by Rosemary Address
(A member of the Society of Stage Directors
and Choreographers)

Technical Direction by Chris Fitzgerald,
Centerstage Production Services

"Chopin and the Nightingale" chronicles the newly-discovered romance between an ailing Frédéric Chopin and the "Swedish Nightingale", soprano Jenny Lind. The story unfolds using original quotes from Chopin's letters to family and friends. They mirror to a surprising degree quotes taken from Hans Christian Andersen's story, The Nightingale, a tale that Andersen wrote in 1843 as a tribute to Jenny Lind.

CAST

Narrator
Chopin
Jenny Lind
Pauline Viardot

Jay Riedl
Christopher Johnson
Megan Weston
Gisella Montanez Case