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WORLD
PREMIERE
RECORDING

ROBERT KURKA

**THE GOOD
SOLDIER
SCHWEIK**

CHICAGO OPERA THEATER



CD 1

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There are few great archetypes in mankind's history: Don Quixote, the noble and eternal romantic; Don Juan, the endless seducer; Ulysses, the never ending voyager; Faust, the man obsessed with the power of eternal knowledge. From the 20th century comes Chaplin's comic vagabond, who wanders forever in vain through machines, poverty, and love. Everyone instantly recognizes the human condition in each of these figures. To this list we can add another contemporary archetype: Schweik, the eternal survivor. For over a century, Schweik has been portrayed in literature, film, theater, art, and opera — not to mention his role in philosophic and political speculation. His legacy as a creative inspiration to writers, artists, and filmmakers — from Joseph Heller's *Catch 22* to Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse 5* — continues to this day.

Jaroslav Hašek, practical joker, bohemian pub-crawler, and soldier-survivor, wrote *The Good Soldier Schweik*, a comic masterpiece of a novel that simultaneously hit the funny bone and sore nerve of post-war Europe. Within a year of publication, it had been translated into 18 languages (now 50), and the character of Schweik was legend. He was the perfect metaphor for a conflict that was "The Great War" to those who commenced

it, but merely "World War I" — one in a series — to those who survived it. It is a curious historical twist that Hašek was born in Prague the same year as Franz Kafka (1883). They also died within a year (1923-1924). One can easily imagine *The Trial's* Joseph K. being led across the Charles Bridge up towards the castle, passing Schweik being led across the bridge toward New Town.

Robert Kurka, composer of the opera *The Good Soldier Schweik*, was born to a Czech father and Czech-American mother (with Czech parents) in Cicero, Illinois. Growing up in a (then) thriving Czech immigrant community, he was intimately familiar with the seminal novel. He knew exactly what he was doing when he chose Schweik as a musical subject; it was not just a technical exercise in composition. Schweik for the Czechs is like Don Quixote for the Spanish: The Czechs remember with pride the frustrated Russian general's exclamation during the "Prague Spring" of 1968: "Nothing but a nation of Schweiks."

Who is this Schweik and what is he trying to do? This is a puzzle to everyone he encounters on his journey through the jails, asylums, taverns, and battlefields of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. To some he is an imbecile; to others a spy, to still

others he seems a loyal servant of the state. Schweik, however, shares a key ability with Chaplin: He can come out of nowhere, open his bag of tricks, pretend to do exactly what's asked of him for a time, and then move on. This non-conformist's appearance of conformity offers an answer to a very immediate and pressing problem: how to survive a not-so "Great" War that involves 70 million combatants and leaves nine million dead. "Great times call for great men," we are told in the opera's prologue; but Schweik shows that "just a common man" can prove "Greater than Alexander the Great." Unlike the kings and generals we read about in the history books, who have the deck stacked in their favor, Schweik is completely vulnerable to life's game of chance. His ability to survive and even thrive against all odds is the ultimate testament to man's freedom.

Kurka co-wrote the acid but humorous libretto to the opera *Schweik* with Lewis Allan (a pseudonym used by Abel Meeropol, best known for writing the anti-lynching song *Strange Fruit*, and for adopting the sons of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg). It commences, like the novel, during "a glorious summer all over Europe." It was, in fact, one of the loveliest on record in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the heir to the Holy Roman Empire. It seems an impossible task to translate World War I into an opera that can at the same time convey the historic, tragic, and "divine"

comedy of that event. But one is in good hands. Kurka's understanding of Hašek's comic universality is evidenced by his inspired choice to use a small (sixteen instrument) orchestra comprised exclusively of brass, winds, and percussion, and to build his themes on march rhythms, folk music, syncopated jazz, and a neo-classical format. Equally important, Kurka understood his central character. In his words: "Schweik is crazy like a fox. His optimism manages to remain indestructible and triumphant."

The premiere of Kurka's *Schweik*, at the New York City Opera, elicited alternating puzzled and ecstatic reviews in the musically provincial New York of 1958. The reaction to the production in Europe was not sanguine, however; it was historic. It was immediately staged by two opera houses of the first rank: the Komische Oper in Berlin under the legendary Walter Felsenstein and the Dresdener Oper. In its 1997 article on Kurka's *Schweik*, the *Metropolitan Opera Guide* declared: "Save for those of Philip Glass, few American operas since Virgil Thomson's have gathered such a cult following." It has enjoyed close to 100 different productions throughout the world in more than a dozen languages. Chicago Opera Theater has offered two productions in the last twenty years.

What seemed avant-garde in New York in 1958

now falls well within the mainstream. No reviewer today would complain (as a major one did at *Schweik's* premiere), "Where are the violins?" In the 1920s and 1930s, composers in Paris and Berlin set the foundations for a new modernist form of musical theater: Kurt Weill with *Mahagonny*, Igor Stravinsky with *L'histoire du soldat*, and Kurka's teacher, Darius Milhaud, with *Le boeuf sur le toit* and *La création du monde*. Kurka was a pupil of and natural heir to this now established theatrical tradition. Long before *Schweik*, operas such as Janacek's *The Cunning Little Vixen* and Berg's *Wozzeck* were presented as a montage of episodes. *Vixen's* Czech premiere, for instance, came in 1924. (It did not reach America, however, until 1965, when it was presented at New York's Hunter College.) Berg offered a straightforward explanation for his choice of an episodic montage: "I simply wanted to compose good music to develop musically the contents of George Buchner's immortal drama; to translate his poetic language into music." Kurka's translation of Hašek's *Schweik* involves this same kind of "simple," yet difficult to achieve, transformation.

One of the most important tools needed to implement this new kind of musical drama was identified from the beginning as the "singing actor." This new type of singer had to be familiar with classic forms as well as folk music, popular ballads, and jazz. Hybrids of these forms

are typically presented with an almost childish sophistication and sense of yearning for the past. The performer is required to portray the character in a milieu artistically sketched, in the 1920s and 1930s, by Picasso and Cocteau, rather than in realistic settings. At times, the performance is at the side or in the midst of modern dance choreography. For the premiere of *Schweik*, the New York City Opera found it necessary to recruit Robert Joffrey, one of the geniuses of modern dance, to develop sections of the opera. The resulting musically theatrical experience is the neo-realistic or surrealist reality that we take for granted today in modern dance, film, theater, and even opera.

For me, the most telling endorsement of Kurka's *Schweik* came at its birth: Of all the new operas premiered in 1958, *Schweik* was the only one immediately produced by Walter Felsenstein's Komische Oper in Berlin, then the world's preeminent theater built around the metamorphosis of the singing actor into an instrument of new theatrical magic. Felsenstein explained: "The aim of true Music Theater is to turn music and singing in the theater into a convincing, true, and utterly indispensable mode of human expression." His productions were legendary and brought people from all over the world to the Komische Oper. His commitment to Kurka's *Schweik* was a significant and timely gesture of enthusiasm and faith. It has proved prophetic.

Act 1 • Overture & Prologue

The Overture commences with a chiaroscuro of rousing military music, dissonant march, and lyrical melody that depicts Prague street life on the eve of war. After the overture, a character identified as “A Gentleman of the Kingdom of Bohemia” introduces Schweik: “Frank and sincere and straight as a rule. Modest and simple but nobody’s fool.” A newsboy announces the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand at Sarajevo.

Act 1 • Scene 1

Schweik’s apartment. Mrs. Muller, a cleaning woman, and Schweik banter to a jazzy syncopation. Their first words set the tone: Mrs. Muller: “So they killed Ferdinand!” Schweik: “Which Ferdinand, Mrs. Muller? I know one who collects garbage and another drank hair-oil by mistake . . .”

Act 1 • Scene 2

The Flagon, a tavern. Schweik’s home away from home, the tavern has a secret service agent, Bretschneider, listening for disloyal talk. He quizzes the tavern keeper, Palivec, and Schweik and gets enough goods on both to justify their arrest. Schweik and Palivec are taken to Police Headquarters.

Act 1 • Scene 3

Police Headquarters. An orchestral pantomime dance of police activity is done with a strident style. A police officer reads the charges against Schweik, who is impressed by the litany and

immediately confesses to all of them: “Is there anything else you’d like me to sign . . .” He is taken to prison.

Act 1 • Scene 4

Prison cell. Prisoners, including Palivec, sing a vocal blues punctuated with groans, proclaiming their innocence. Schweik finishes the scene singing about the benefits of the wonderful new innovations in prisons that have replaced drawing and quartering. The police decide to have him examined by a team of psychiatrists.

Act 1 • Scene 5

Psychiatric office. Schweik is thrown in the middle of a maniacal trio of psychiatrists who blatantly contradict each other with overlapping questions and answers. Schweik’s nonsensical but assured answers to their nonsensical questions convince them that “the man must be committed to a mental institution.”

Act 1 • Scene 6

An asylum. Against the backdrop of a “pantomime of peculiar behavior,” Schweik’s paean to institutional life — “When you’re in here you can do anything, you’re free to laugh and dance and sing . . .” — is followed by a *furiant* (a lively Czech dance) in which all the patients join. All except Schweik eventually dance out of sight. Now Schweik is alone with a pair of doctors. There is a pantomime of a knee reflex exam.

Schweik then sings the haunting lament, “Who will go to the war when it comes?” Convinced that Schweik is only pretending to be feeble-minded, the doctors discharge him.

Act 1 • Scene 7

Schweik’s apartment and the street below. Back home, Schweik tells Mrs. Muller he has been drafted, and that he is prepared to serve despite a severe attack of rheumatism: “Except for my legs, I’m a fine piece of cannon fodder, and at a time when the country needs us most, every cripple must take his post!” In the First Act’s wild finish, Schweik parades through the streets in a wheelchair brandishing his crutches in the air and yelling “To Belgrade!” A crowd quickly gathers and joins in Schweik’s sardonic burlesque, enthusiastically cheering him on.

Act 2 • Prelude

A prelude with timpani suggests an army on the march that tries to keep its threatening force up to speed, but keeps deflating.

Act 2 • Scene 1

Field infirmary. Schweik has checked into the military hospital because of his rheumatism. The patients sing of their acts of self-mutilation in hopes of avoiding military duty as their fellow “malingerers” chime in with: “Hey diddle diddle . . . The doctors say he’s fit as a fiddle.” Follow-

ing a skeptical exchange with Schweik about the new soldier’s rheumatism, the head doctor launches into a sarcastic aria: “We know how to cure your ills in a most scientific way. For all malingerers we have met respond to treatment when you get an enema, three times a day.” The malingerers seem to get a break when the “large-breasted German dowager” Baroness Von Botzenheim enters praising Schweik and the other patients’ patriotism while lavishing them with delicious food and other goodies. As the patients devour their windfall, the head doctor explodes, exclaiming that their gluttony proves that their constitutions are strong enough for them to join the fighting. The malingerers are promptly marched to the guardhouse.

Act 2 • Scene 2 (A)

The guardhouse. Behind bars, Schweik sings the gently flowing song: “I always thought the army was the place to settle down.” His fellow prisoners join in an ironic ode to army life: “Oh the army, the army, it’s a hell of a hell of a life. If a bullet gets me, send a medal to my wife.”

Act 2 • Scene 2 (B)

The guardhouse chapel. The men sit below the pulpit in their underwear scratching their backs and checking for fleas. Chaplain Otto Katz berates them for their sinfulness, causing Schweik to sob in repentance. When the Chaplain questions the sincerity of Schweik’s

conversion, Schweik admits: "I confess you're right, but . . . I figured you needed a reformed sinner." The Chaplain hires Schweik on the spot as his orderly.

Act 2 • Scene 2 (C)

Schweik's term in Otto Katz's employ is short lived as the Chaplain immediately loses Schweik to Lieutenant Henry Lukash in a game of cards.

Act 2 • Scene 3

Lt. Lukash's apartment. Lt. Lukash quickly comes to regret his victory. When Lukash arrives home at the end of Schweik's first day in his service, Schweik announces he decided to open up the birdcage to acquaint the cat and the canary together, but "the cat gobbled her up to the last tail feather." So Schweik chased the cat out and "picked up a dog to take his place." The door opens and an immense dog bounds out, jumping all over Lukash. After Schweik manages to subdue the dog, he informs Lukash that his (Lukash's) girlfriend Katy "came in with her bags to stay." But not to worry, Schweik says: "I figured you didn't want to get mixed up, so I sent for her husband to get things fixed up." A romantic waltz trio with Schweik, Lukash, and Katy is interrupted when Schweik sics the playful dog on Katy. Next, the dog's true owner, Colonel Kraus von Zillergut, comes to reclaim his pet. When Katy's husband arrives to try to reclaim her, the scene climaxes in a wildly comic sextet including well-timed inter-

jections from the dog. Before running after his dog, which has chased Katy out into the street, the Colonel orders Lukash (and, by extension, Schweik) to the front.

Act 2 • Scene 4

Train compartment. On the express train to the front, Schweik needles a bald-headed man whom he believes to be an old acquaintance: "A doctor once wrote that loss of hair showed mental disturbance under there." The bald-headed man turns out to be General von Schwarzburg "on special inspection duty." He takes exception to Schweik's comments, but saves his real fury for Lukash, for allowing his orderly to be so familiar. When Lukash comes to, in turn, bawl out Schweik, he salutes elaborately in response. As Schweik's hand descends, however, it catches the emergency brake handle causing the train to come to a screeching halt. The Head Guard catches Schweik red-handed (still holding onto the emergency brake for balance) and leads him away while Lukash continues on board the train.

Act 2 • Scene 5

Café terrace. Lukash is writing a note to a potential new inamorata in the café of a small town near the front. The romantic letter-writing music is frequently interrupted by Lukash's lewd asides — set to jazzier music. Just as the Lieutenant finishes his note, Schweik appears at the door,

causing Lukash to recoil in horror. Nonetheless, Lukash gives the love letter to Schweik for delivery to Madame Kakonyi, "and no one else."

Act 2 • Scene 6

Street in front of The Red Lamb, a tavern. On his way to "Sixteen Soprony Street" to deliver the letter, Schweik runs into his old friend, Voditchka, who persuades Schweik to postpone his errand so they can go to the tavern to celebrate their reunion. Inside The Red Lamb, the patrons sing of the joys of "carefree land" and dance a polka. Eventually, Schweik and Voditchka emerge, none too steadily, to deliver the love note. When they knock, however, it is Mr. Kakonyi who answers and suspiciously grabs the letter out of Schweik's hand. The ensuing tussle for possession of the letter becomes a complete free-for-all as people pile into the street to join the mêlée. Schweik ultimately gets the letter back, immediately puts it in his mouth, and furiously chews and swallows it while the brawl continues unabated.

Act 2 • Scene 7

A dugout at the front. After thanking Schweik for disposing of the letter, Lukash gives the soldier his orders: front line patrol. The scene then changes to the front itself: "A scene of stark devastation. Jagged stumps of trees jut from the ground. One or two black skeletons of trees are silhouetted against the menacing sky. The stench of decay from shallow burial

pits is almost palpable." Into this hell wanders a group of "ragged soldiers." They sing a moving chorus about the emptiness of dying in war: "No sound of drums when they come . . . no flags at the gate." Eventually, the soldiers all collapse on the stage as Schweik and his patrol mate, Sergeant Vanek, arrive. When Schweik refuses to follow either Lukash's instructions or the map, Vanek declares, "I got no more time to waste on you" and goes off. Alone, Schweik sings the lyrical pastoral, "I'll take a quiet road," at the end of which he asserts, "For birds and butterflies I won't need my gun." He leaves his gun behind and, in a manner reminiscent of his comedic cousin Chaplin, ambles along down the "wrong" road into the distance. The Gentleman of Bohemia from the beginning appears and reports some unconfirmed Schweik sightings since the day he "just disappeared." The Gentleman concludes by predicting that Schweik's spirit will endure: "In one place or other he's sure to be found. I wouldn't be surprised if he's somewhere around."

Dennis Moyer is a director, author, adaptor, and translator. His directorial credits include a theatrical adaptation of the novel The Good Soldier Schweik and his own translation of Maxim Gorky's The Lower Depths. Mr. Moyer has a career long history of directing Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot, from Frankfurt to San Francisco. He now lives in Paris.

T H E G O O D S O L D I E R S C H W E I K

An Opera in Two Acts

Libretto by Lewis Allen — Music by Robert Kurka — From the novel by Jaroslav Hašek

The Cast

Gentleman of Bohemia	Actor
Joseph Schweik, the Good Soldier	Tenor
Mrs. Muller, the cleaning woman	Soprano
Palivec, the tavern landlord	Baritone
Bretschneider, the secret policeman	Tenor
Police Officer	Bass
A Guard	Tenor
1 st Psychiatrist	Tenor
2 nd Psychiatrist	Baritone
3 rd Psychiatrist	Bass
1 st Doctor	Tenor
2 nd Doctor	Baritone
A Sergeant	Tenor
An Army Doctor	Baritone
The Baroness Von Botzenheim	Contralto
Otto Katz, Army Chaplain	Tenor
Lt. Henry Lukash	Baritone
Fox, a dog	Actor
Katy Wendler	Soprano
Col. Kraus Von Zillergut	Bass
Mr. Wendler	Tenor
General Von Schwarzburg	Baritone
Voditchka, Schweik's old pal	Actor
Mr. Kakonyi	Actor
Madame Kakonyi	Actress
Sgt. Vanek	Actor

Prisoners, Malingers, Wounded Soldiers, Consumptive, Baroness's Retinue, Tavern Patrons, Guards,
Suspects, Train Passengers, Asylum Attendants and Inmates

The action of Act I takes place in Prague, of Act II at the Austro-Hungarian frontier in the year 1914.

1 OVERTURE

PROLOGUE

A gentleman of the kingdom of Bohemia steps out before the curtain.

2 Gentleman of Bohemia

(Speaking in Czech)

Dámi a Páni! Velka doba dáva velké lidi,
a zde je doklad o tom . . .

(Stops in confusion)

Oh! Excuse me, please! I keep forgetting I'm not
in Prague before the First World War!

(He makes a new start)

Ladies and gentlemen,

Great times call for great men

And this is the gist of our story,

There are modest, unrecognized heroes

Without Napoleon's glory,

Simple and plain and quite unassuming

And yet we venture to state,

These are the men born again and again —

And women,

(He tips his hat and bows graciously)

Greater than Alexander, the Great.

And such a man, just a common man,

The kind it's easy to like,

The sort I'd say you could meet everyday

Was a very plain fellow called Schweik.

Schweik, Schweik,

The Good Soldier Schweik,

The kind of fellow

That fellow-men like,

Frank and sincere

And straight as a rule,

Modest and simple,

But nobody's fool.

(He bows and leaves. A newsboy is heard hawking his papers.)

Newsboy's Voice

Yuxtra! Yuxtra! Read all about it! Archduke Ferdinand assassinated at Sarajevo! Read all about it! Yuxtra! Yuxtra!

ACT ONE - SCENE ONE

**Schweik's flat in Prague, June 28, 1914.
Schweik is seated on a chair. Mrs. Muller, the cleaning woman enters.**

3 Mrs. Muller

So they killed Ferdinand!

Schweik

Which Ferdinand, Mrs. Muller?

I know one who collects garbage

and another drank hair-oil by mistake.

Neither would be much loss.

Mrs. Muller

No, the Archduke Ferdinand, the fat one.

Schweik

Good God! That's a fine thing, Mrs. Muller!

Mrs. Muller

He was shot at Sarajevo with a pistol.

He was riding in a fancy car.

Schweik

Imagine that, in a car,
riding in a fancy car.

A gent like him can sport a car.
How lucky all those Archdukes are!
He goes along and never thinks
a pleasant ride will be his jinx.
Did he suffer long, Mrs. Muller?

Mrs. Muller

He was done for on the spot.

Schweik

I bet you the guy who did the job
wasn't just dressed like any old slob.
I'll make you a bet the feller was dressed,
all dressed up in his Sunday best.
You can't get near a real big man
unless you're dressed up spic and span.
You've got to wear a silk top hat
or else they'll nab you just like that.

Mrs. Muller

There was a whole lot of them, Mr. Schweik.

Schweik

Why sure there was.
When all's said and done
two heads are always better than one.
One person gives one bit of advice,
another gives another, so it works out nice.
You take my word and I'm willing to bet it,
there's plenty more who are waiting to get it,
the Czar and Czarina are gonna get shot
and even, believe me, though let's hope not,
the Emperor himself!
I heard a chap in the saloon
say they would all get knocked off soon

and all their brass, high-muck-a-mucks,
wouldn't save them for a million bucks.

Mrs. Muller

He was riddled with bullets,
they pumped the whole lot into him,
Mr. Schweik.

Schweik

That was mighty quick work,
a mighty good shot,
but I'd use a Browning for a job like that.
In a couple of minutes more or less,
you could shoot twenty Archdukes, Oh yes,
thin or fat, thin or fat,
twenty Archdukes, thin or fat.
Now I'm off for the tavern, Mrs. Muller,
but I'll be right back.
(As he goes off)
A cat may look at a King,
a cat may look at a King, they say,
but ev'ry dog, ev'ry dog,
ev'ry dog — has his day.

ACT ONE • SCENE TWO

“The Flagon,” A tavern. Palivec, the landlord, is washing glasses at the bar. Bretschneider, a plainclothes policeman on secret service work is drinking a glass of beer. Schweik is seated at a table looking through the newspapers.

4 Bretschneider

We're having a very fine summer,
a very fine summer, don't you think?

Palivec

It stinks.

Bretschneider

That's a fine thing they've done for us
at Sarajevo,
a fine thing, don't you think?

Palivec

Oh, I don't stick my nose
into things of that sort,
No siree, I'll be hanged if I do.
Nowadays, it's as much as
your life may be worth
To get mixed up like that, I tell you.
Things like that aren't meant for the likes of us.
It's none of our business, I think.
Yes, things like that aren't meant for the likes
of us
Unless we want to land in the clink.

Bretschneider

You used to have the
Emperor's picture up there,
right up there, it was hanging up that high.

Palivec

Yes, that's right, it was
hanging up there, it is true.
But I took it away and here's why.
The flies were all putting their trademark on it,
so I put that beautiful portrait away.
With horseflies up there getting awfully familiar,
I just was afraid of what people would say.

Bretschneider

That business at Sarajevo,
it was done by the Serbs.

Schweik

You're wrong there, you're wrong there.
And I'll tell you why,
It was done by the Turks
Which you cannot deny,
If my theory works
It was done by the Turks
As the Archduke came riding by.
You see now, you see now,
It's plan as your nose,
The Turks were the losers
As history shows,
We just took their land
So they shot Ferdinand
And that's the way history goes.

Bretschneider

That's all well and good, Mr. Schweik,
but you will admit it's a great loss,
a great loss to Austria.

Schweik

Oh, there's no denying it's a very great loss,
To lose a man who's born for royal rule.
We can't replace our Archduke Ferdinand
With any old sort of any damn fool.
If war would break out right this very day,
I'd volunteer to march up straight to my death,
I'd shove my head right in the cannon's mouth
And serve the Emperor to my last breath!
Do you imagine that our glorious Emperor
Would put up with this petty sort of thing?
Do you imagine that our glorious Emperor
Will wait to hear the heathen bullets sing?
Oh, you mark my words,
I'm telling you straight,
A bang-up fight is what we're headed for,

I see it clear, as sure as fate,
The Emperor wants a great, big war!

I . . .

Bretschneider

You've said enough!
Now, I have something to say to you!
Come over here.
(*Moves away with Schweik and shows his badge*)
You're under arrest!
I'm taking you to police headquarters!

Schweik

There must be some mistake! I'm innocent!

Bretschneider

That's what you think!
May I inform you that in the last few moments,
you've committed several penal offenses,
including high treason!

Schweik

You don't say!
(*To Palivec*)
I've had five beers
and a couple of sausages with a roll.
Now let me have a slivovitz and I must be off.
I'm arrested.

Palivec

Arrested!

Bretschneider

(*To Palivec*)
Are you married?

Palivec

Yes.

Bretschneider

Can your wife carry on the business
during your absence?

Palivec

Yes.

Bretschneider

That's all right then, Mr. Palivec.
Tell your wife to step this way.
Hand the business over to her.

Palivec

What did I do? What did I say?
I've been so careful!

Bretschneider

That's what you think!
I've got you for saying that the flies left their
trademark on the Emperor!
You'll have all that stuff knocked
out of your head!
(*Bretschneider leaves with Schweik and Palivec.*)

ACT ONE • SCENE THREE

Police Headquarters

- 5 ***Pantomime dance in which suspects are hauled in for interrogation, official documents stamped, and the prisoners dragged out.***

(*Schweik is shoved in.*)

6 **Schweik**

Good evening, gentlemen,
I hope you're all well.

Police Officer

Wipe that idiotic smile off your face!

Schweik

I can't help it, sir,
I mean my face.

I was let out from the Army
on account of being weak-minded, sir,
officially discharged
as a chronic case.

Police Officer

Is that so?!

The record shows you've got
your wits about you, all right!
I'll read the charges against you!

Disorderly conduct,
resisting an officer,
disturbing the peace,
inciting to riot,
endangering security,
conspiring rebellion,
and high treason!

Now, what have you got to say for yourself?

Schweik

That's a lot of charges, sir,
quite a long string.
I guess what I've got
is too much of a good thing.

Police Officer

So you admit it's true, do you?

Schweik

Oh, yes sir, I'll admit anything.
It's easy to see you've got to be strict.
If you ain't strict, why where would we be?
It's like when I was in the Army...

Police Officer

Shut up! Sign this paper!

Schweik

Yes sir.

(He signs)

Is there anything else you want me to sign
or shall I come back tomorrow at nine?

Police Officer

Don't you worry!

You'll be taken to Criminal Court
in the morning.

Schweik

What time, sir?

You see when I've got a date to keep,
I certainly wouldn't want to oversleep.
I sure wouldn't want to miss it for anything...

Police Officer

Get out!

(They drag Schweik out.)

ACT ONE • SCENE FOUR

A cell. Prisoners are seated around. Schweik is thrown into the cell.

7 **Schweik**

(To the prisoners)

Good evening, ev'rybody,
it's been a lovely day.

(No reply)

May I ask why you are here?

Palivec

That Sarajevo affair.

4th Prisoner

That Ferdinand business!

3rd Prisoner

That Archduke!

2nd Prisoner

That shooting!

1st Prisoner

That murder!

1st Prisoner

A day before the Duke was shot
I treated a Serb to pretzels and beer,
Last night the cops broke down my door,
They beat me all up and dragged me here,
| But I'm innocent, I'm innocent, I'm innocent,
| I'm innocent, I'm innocent!

Palivec and other prisoners

I'm innocent, I'm innocent, I'm innocent,
| I'm innocent, I'm innocent!

4th Prisoner

I was just sitting playing at cards,
With some of my friends, not saying a thing,
I won a trick, a lucky trump,
And I hollered out, "Bang, goes the King!"
| But I'm innocent, I'm innocent, I'm innocent,

I'm innocent, I'm innocent!

Palivec (et al)

I'm innocent, I'm innocent, I'm innocent,
| I'm innocent, I'm innocent!

8 Schweik

We're all in a hell of a mess,
in a hell of a mess are we,
but nothing can happen to you
and nothing can happen to me,
Nothing can happen to any of us,
we won't be here too long,
I've no doubt that we'll get out,
but again, I may be wrong.
For why do we have police,
the government spies and such?
To throw us in the jug
if we open our mouths too much.
If the times are so dangerous and bad
that a Duke can get himself shot,
don't be surprised if we're penalized
and they leave us here to rot.
Oh, we're all in a hell of a mess,
in a hell of a mess are we,
but nothing can happen to you
and nothing can happen to me,
They're making all the fuss
to do the Duke up brown
and put on a show before they go
and bury him underground.
Oh, we're all in a hell of a mess,
in a hell of a mess are we,
but the more of us there are,
the happier we'll be!
Palivec
Oh God! What's going to happen to me?

What will they do to me here?
What will they do?

9 **Schweik**

It's great fun.
They drag you in,
holler and shout,
punch you around
and kick you out.
In the old times
it was a lot worse,
you walked in
and came out in a hearse.
I once read in a book
where it said
you had to dance on red-hot iron
and drink molten lead.
You were shot or hanged,
burned or slaughtered,
and as a special event,
drawn and quartered.
They split you open
or chopped your head,
you might be innocent
but you were also . . . dead.
There's no quartering here
or things of that kind,
it's improved for our benefit
I'm glad to find,
We've got a mattress,
a table, a seat,
they bring us soup and water
and bread to eat,
the slop pot is right there
under your nose,
a lot of progress
is what it shows.

(Two guards enter.)

Guard

Schweik! Come on!
You got to be examined again!
(The guards march off with Schweik.)

ACT ONE · SCENE FIVE

Another room in Police Headquarters, the Commission of Medical Authorities, comprising of three extremely serious gentlemen representing three distinct schools of thought with regard to mental disorders are in debate.

10 **1st Psychiatrist**

The ego and the Id, the Totem and Tabu,
I tell you the Unconscious
is controlling what you do!

3rd Psychiatrist

No! No! No! No!

1st Psychiatrist

Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes!

2nd Psychiatrist

You're both wrong! You're both wrong!

1st Psychiatrist

Freud says behavior of King or Duke
or commoner
Is based on understanding of hysterical
phenomena!

3rd Psychiatrist

It's all somatic!

2nd Psychiatrist

You're both erratic!

3rd Psychiatrist

Somatic! Somatic! Somatic! Somatic!

2nd Psychiatrist

Erratic! Erratic!

1st Psychiatrist

Ev'rything is sex, sex, sex,
which we consciously suppress!

2nd Psychiatrist

The more I hear your theory,
I like it less and less! I like it less and less!
I like it less and less!

3rd Psychiatrist

You're both wrong, you're both wrong, the
whole thing is a mess! The whole thing is a
mess! The whole thing is a mess!

1st Psychiatrist

Which we consciously suppress,
which we consciously suppress!

1st Psychiatrist

Ev'rybody, ev'rywhere is getting more neurotic!

2nd Psychiatrist

You're anti-sex, you're anti-sex
and that's unpatriotic! And that's unpatriotic!
And that's unpatriotic!
Patriotic! Patriotic! - triotic! - triotic! - triotic!

3rd Psychiatrist

You're doctrinaire, Herr Professor,
your argument's chaotic! Your argument's
chaotic! Your argument's chaotic! Chaotic!
Chaotic! Chaotic! Chaotic! Chaotic!

1st Psychiatrist

Getting more neurotic!
Getting more neurotic! Neurotic!
Neurotic! Neurotic! Neurotic! Neurotic!

1st Psychiatrist

I refer you to Freud's "Jahrbuch für
Psychoanalytische und Psychopathologische
Forschungen"! —

2nd Psychiatrist

So how would you explain what happened to
the Archduke at Sarajevo?! —

3rd Psychiatrist

I disagree with both of you!
I disagree with both of you! I disagree! —

(The guards and Schweik enter.)

Schweik

Gentlemen! Long live our Emperor, Franz Josef!
*(The three psychiatrists stare at Schweik, look
meaningfully at each other, and then turn their
attention decisively to him.)*

1st Psychiatrist

Be calm, we'll just ask you a few questions.

2nd Psychiatrist

Do you believe in the end of the world?

Schweik

If worse comes to worst,
to believe it, I'll have to see it first.

3rd Psychiatrist

Could you measure the diameter of the globe?

Schweik

Not me, sir, I couldn't measure its middle,
but gentlemen, now I'll ask you a riddle:

There's a house with three stories
with eight windows on each,
on the roof are two gables
and two chimneys upreach,
on each story two tenants
and two doors on each side, —
and now, gentlemen, tell me in what year
the house-porter's grandmother died?

(The psychiatrists give each other corroborative glances.)

2nd Psychiatrist

How much is twelve thousand eight hundred
and ninety seven, times thirteen thousand eight
hundred and sixty three?

Schweik

Seven hundred and twenty nine.

1st Psychiatrist

Well now, I think that's quite enough.

Schweik

Thank you, gentlemen,
it's quite enough for me, too.

1st Psychiatrist

(To the guards)

You can take this prisoner back to
where he came from.

(Schweik exits with guards.)

1st, 2nd & 3rd Psychiatrist

We're not here to deplore it, abhor it, or pity it,
But examination shows
that Josef Schweik is an idiot!

1st Psychiatrist

Yes! Yes!

2nd Psychiatrist

An idiot! An idiot!

3rd Psychiatrist

Yes! Yes! Yes!

1st, 2nd & 3rd Psychiatrist

So there's only one solution,
harmonious solution,

The man must be committed
to a mental institution.

You're so right! So right! So right!

The man must be committed
to a mental institution!

ACT ONE · SCENE SIX

The Insane Asylum. Attendants wait on Schweik hand and foot. In the background, a few other patients are going through a pantomime of peculiar behavior.

¶ Schweik

I never felt so good before,
a man can't ask for more,

when you're in here you can do anything,
you're free to laugh and dance and sing,
you get three meals each day
and no one here cares a hoot what you say,
nothing you do can rile 'em
in this peaceful, nice asylum.
La la la la la la la . . .
They tend me night and day,
I'm shaved and bathed in such a royal way.
Oh, I am so content,
free food and no rent,
and I just hope it will last forever.

12 FURIANT

(Schweik and the other patients go into a furiant — a Czech dance. The other patients dance out of sight and Schweik is left alone. Two doctors suddenly appear.)

13 1st Doctor

Achtung!

2nd Doctor

Sit down!

(Pantomime: Schweik sits on a chair. The doctors examine him then move away for a brief argumentative conference with much gesticulation.)

14 Schweik

Who will go to the war when it comes,
Who will march to the fife and drums,
Who will cling to the soldier and sigh,
Kiss him and cry,
and sadly wave him a last goodbye,
Sadly wave him a last goodbye.
Home the hero comes with fife and drums

and bright medals for his prize,
Home the hero comes,
no arms, no legs, no eyes . . .
Who will go to the war when it comes,
Who will march to the fife and drums,
Who will cradle the children and moan,
Weep all alone for one who soon
will lie cold as stone,
Cold as stone . . .
(The doctors look at each other with raised eyebrows.)

15 2nd Doctor

Have they ever examined the state of your mind?

Schweik

In the Army, they said I was balmy,
and that's what you'll probably find.

1st Doctor

It seems to me you're a malingerer!

Schweik

Oh, no sir! I'm no malingerer.
The Army officially reported me
as not "all there,"
I'm feeble-minded fair and square.

1st & 2nd Doctor

You're a malingerer!

1st Doctor

Attendant!

(An attendant rushes up.)

Give this man his clothes and discharge him!
(The doctors cast a crushing glance at Schweik.)

The attendants take hold of him.)

Schweik

(Resisting)

I want my lunch first! I want my lunch first!

I want my lunch!

(Attendants carry Schweik off as he resists.)

A man can't be thrown out of an insane asylum without having lunch first! I want my lunch!

I want my lunch! My lunch!

ACT ONE • SCENE SEVEN (Part 1)

Schweik's flat. Schweik is lying in bed with an attack of rheumatism.

16 Schweik

(Holding a letter in his hand.)

Mrs. Muller!

Come here a minute, Mrs. Muller!

(Mrs. Muller enters)

Schweik

I'm going to join the Army. I got my draft call.

Mrs. Muller

Dear me!

What are you going to do there, Mr. Schweik?

Schweik

Fight!

Austria's in a bad way
and things are looking black,
instead of moving forward,
the Army's moving back,
so though rheumatism has got me
and this attack's the worst,

for my beloved country,
the draft can have me first.

Mrs. Muller

But you can't walk!

Schweik

That doesn't matter, Mrs. Muller.
I'll join the Army in a wheelchair
and you'll wheel me there.

Mrs. Muller

I better call a doctor!

Schweik

Don't bother, Mrs. Muller.

Except for my legs,

I'm a fine piece of cannon fodder,

and at a time when the country needs us most,
ev'ry cripple must take his post!

17 Schweik

Oh, the gen'ral and the colonels
and the majors and the rest,

They ride behind their privates
but they really look the best,

With their medals and their ribbons
and their sabers flashing by,

And their handsome, prancing horses
with their tails way up high!

Hup hup hup hup hup hup hup!

(By the end of the first stanza, Schweik has gotten very fierce and martial while Mrs. Muller grows more and more distressed.

By the end of the second stanza, Schweik is standing on his bed in a frenzy.)

Oh, the cannon balls are falling

and the blood is flowing fast
For soldiers of the infantry
this day will be their last,
But the gen'ral's and the colonels
and the majors bravely fly
On their handsome, prancing horses
with their tails way up high
Hup hup hup hup hup hup hup! etc.
(Mrs. Muller rushes out completely distraught.)

ACT ONE • SCENE 7 (Part 2)

The street below Schweik's flat. Mrs. Muller appears pushing a wheelchair in which Schweik sits brandishing a pair of crutches. A crowd forms.

18 Schweik

(Shouting and brandishing his crutches)
To Belgrade! To Belgrade!
(The crowd gradually falls into the spirit of Schweik's sardonic burlesque and spurs him on with applause and cheers.)
To Belgrade! To Belgrade! etc.

Everyone

To Belgrade!

CD 2 • ACT 2

1 PRELUDE (March)

ACT TWO • SCENE ONE

An infirmary. Several beds on which are lying malingersers, consisting of Palivec, the prisoners we saw previously in a cell, and

Schweik, a newcomer. On another bed lies a dying consumptive, wracked with coughing and groans. An enema bag hangs over each bed.

2 Consumptive

(Coughs and groans)
O-o-oh!

Palivec

I can't stand it any more!

1st Malingerer

Me, too. I'm going to join my regiment.

Consumptive

(Coughs and groans)
O-o-oh!

1st Malingerer

(Indicating the consumptive)
He's going to go "bye-bye" soon. There's a rattle in his throat. That will be the third this week.
(To Schweik)
What's wrong with you?

Schweik

I've got rheumatism.
(They all laugh with hollow amusement, even the dying consumptive.)

1st Malingerer

It's no use coming here with rheumatism. It stands as much chance as having corns.

3 Just look at me.

What do you see?

I'm as anemic as a man can be.
Half my stomach's missing
And five ribs are cracked,
But the doctors say
I'm just putting on an act.

Malingersers

Hey diddle diddle,
Hey diddle diddle,
The doctors say
He's as fit as a fiddle.

3rd Malingerer

I had the hope
If I chewed some soap,
I'd froth at the mouth
And be safe as the Pope.
I went into a spasm
And howled and bit,
But the doctors said
I was absolutely fit.

Malingersers

Hey diddle diddle,
Hey diddle diddle,
The doctors say
He's as fit as a fiddle

2nd Malingerer

I drank strychnine,
You should have seen
The way I puked and turned all green.
I dosed myself with poison
Until almost dead,
"You're in perfect shape,"
Was what the doctors said.

Malingersers

Hey diddle diddle,
Hey diddle diddle,
The doctors say
He's as fit as a fiddle.

4th Malingerer

If you want to know,
I chopped my toe
And the big one, too,
So I wouldn't have to go.
I got a dozen fractures
And I broke my spine
But the doctors said
My physique was fine.

Malingersers

Hey diddle diddle,
Hey diddle diddle,
The doctors say
He's as fit as a fiddle.

(A doctor and a medical corps Sergeant with a notebook enter. The malingersers sit up stiffly. The doctor and Sergeant go from bed to bed.)

4 **Sergeant**

Achtung!
Kovarick.

1st Malingerer

Present, sir.
(The doctor looks him over.)

Doctor

Enema . . . and aspirin.

Sergeant

Kotatko.

2nd Malingerer

Present, sir.

Doctor

Stomach to be rinsed out . . . and quinine.

Sergeant

Palivec.

Palivec

Present, sir.

Doctor

Enema and aspirin.

Sergeant

Schweik.

(To doctor)

A new malingerer, sir.

Schweik

Present, sir. — I ain't a malingerer, sir.

Doctor

What's the matter with you?

Schweik

Beg to report, sir,
I've got rheumatism.

5 Doctor

Aha, rheumatism!
A terrible disease,
It affects all your joints,
There's pain in your knees.

Schweik

Yes, sir, something fierce.

Doctor

You can hardly walk
Or move about,
At the very moment
When a war breaks out!
It's such a coincidence,
And I can bet,
You're quite disappointed
And so upset!

Schweik

Oh, yes sir, you're right.
It's a horrible shame,
When I'm rarin' to fight,
To be crippled and lame!
I feel just terrible!

Doctor

I can imagine!
In peace time, of course,
You sing another note,
You skip around
Like a blithering goat!
We'll soon have you up
And marching away! —
(To Sergeant)
Give him an enema
Three times a day!
(The Sergeant goes out. The doctor addresses all the malingerer.)

Doctor

In trying to evade
The military draft,

Unpatriotic scoundrels all malingering
By feigning deaf and dumb
Pretending to be daft
Or bashing in a toe or trigger finger.
It's only sabotage
No matter what you cry
Of rupture, diabetes, rheumatism,
We just put on the screws
And then you can't deny
Your malady is lack of patriotism.
Oh, we know how to cure your ills
In a most scientific way,
For all malingerers we have met
Respond to treatment when you get
An enema three times a day.
You all have got two ears,
You all have got two eyes,
You've arms and hands
and feet that come in twos,
And if you should get shot
Für Kaiserreich und Gott! —
Too bad you only have one life to lose!
You draftees have to learn
One simple army rule,
You're born to get a uniform and gun,
And when it comes to war,
Nobody plays the fool,
When bugles blow, it's ev'ry mother's son!
Yes, we know how to cure your ills
In a most scientific way,
For all malingerers we have met
Respond to treatment when you get
An enema three times a day.
Achtung!
(The malingerers straighten up.)
Turn over!
(They take the enema position. The Sergeant

suddenly reappears at the door.)

Sergeant

Get under cover,
The lot of you
Or I'll knock the stuffing
Out of you!
And keep your dirty feet
Under the sheet,
There's someone important
You're goin' to meet!
Schnell!
Achtung!
(The malingerers catapult themselves under the blankets. A big-bosomed German dowager enters followed by a procession. The Sergeant leads her to Schweik's bed.)

- 6 Baroness von Botzenheim,
Here is Schweik.
As you can see
He is bearing up
Patiently.
(The Baroness goes down to Schweik's bed.)

Baroness

Brave soldier, cripple soldier,
I come to see you.
I read in the paper
The brave t'ing you do.
You are so eager
To do your share,
You answer the draft
In an old wheel chair.
(She strokes his face)
I bring you somet'ing
To eat and drink.
You are a brave soldier

Is what I t'ink.

(To her footman)

Johann, kommen sie her.

(The footman pulls a large hamper toward the bed. The Baroness's lady companion sits down on Schweik's bed and smooths the straw pallet behind him. The Baroness takes the gifts from the hamper — roast fowls, sausages, bottles of wine, packets of cigarettes, boxes of candies and cakes, hair brushes, manicure sets, toothbrushes, toothpaste, and white lilies in flower pots. The lady companion props Schweik up and sheds tears. The malingerers are hypnotized.)

Schweik

My God!

What a windfall!

(Apologetically for the Baroness)

I mean to say:

Thank the Lord

For these blessings all,

And humbly pray . . .

Malingerers

Amen!

(Schweik bows his head. The other malingerers follow suit, their eyes on the hamper. Schweik grabs a whole fowl and begins devouring it, passing the other birds and sausages out among his bedmates. The Doctor is ready to burst but controls himself. The Baroness, her lady companion, and footman distribute the presents among the malingerers.)

Baroness & others

Brave soldiers,

Brave, brave soldiers,

Going off to war,

Going off to war,

Day and night,

Night and day

While you fight

We will pray,

God knows what you're fighting for.

Chicken and wine, and

Cigarettes,

Toothbrush, hairbrush,

Manicure sets,

Cake and candy,

Chocolat,

And a white lily

In a flower pot,

(The Baroness and her retinue start going out)

Fur Kaiser,

Und Vaterlandt

Und fur Gott!

(They exit.)

Doctor

(Exploding)

Schweinen!

Pigs!

Gluttons!

You don't appreciate

All the things I do,

I keep you on a diet

And enema you!

(To Schweik)

You lummox!

(To others)

If you had any sense

You wouldn't stuff

Your stomachs!

You'd have realized

This would prove

If you eat like a pig
You're able to move, —
And if you can move
You've got enough starch
To get in line and march!
Achtung!
(The malingerers jump up and get in line)
Heraus,
Marsch!
(They march out.)

ACT TWO • SCENE TWO (A)

Schweik, in underwear, is behind bars. Near him, similarly undressed, are the other malingerers.

7 Schweik

I always thought the Army
Was the place to settle down,
You drill and drill and drill and drill
And then you sleep.
But when you're in the Army
And the bullets fly aroun',
They dig and dig and dig and dig
You six foot deep.

Schweik and others

Oh, the Army, the Army,
it's a hell of a hell of a life,
If a bullet gets me, send a medal to my wife,
Oh, the Army, the Army,
it's a hell of a hell of a show,
When the drums are muffled
and the mournful bugles blow.

Schweik

I always thought the Army
Was the place to settle down,
You drill and drill and drill and drill
And then you sleep.
But when you're in the Army,
And the bullets fly aroun',
They dig and dig and dig and dig
You six foot deep.
(A Sergeant enters)

Sergeant

All right, on your feet,
You scabby vermin,
You're goin' to chapel
To hear a sermon!
(The Sergeant herds the men out.)

ACT TWO • SCENE TWO (B)

A chapel. Chaplain Otto Katz is in the pulpit. Schweik and the other malingerers in underwear are under the pulpit. Some are scratching themselves, picking noses, chewing cigarette butts, and bartering odds and ends.

8 Chaplain

Okay, let's pray! Now, altogether with me
To save your souls when resurrection comes . . .
You ox-head louts, you good-for-nothing tramps,
You pack of thieves, you scum,
You low-down bums!
Now pray!

Schweik

Say, he's all right!

Chaplain

I said pray!

All

Rumble, rumble, rumble, etc., etc.
Amen!

Chaplain

You brainless imbeciles, you've got a living soul
More precious than your hulk of flesh and
blood,
You've got a gift that comes from Heav'n above
And all you do is drag it, yes drag it in the mud!
Do you hear me down there,
You in the underwear!

Schweik

Beg to report, sir, we hear you.

Chaplain

Where was I?

Others

In the mud!

Chaplain

Pray, damn it all!
You blocks of wood,
You senseless clods,
Don't scratch your backs,
Don't look for fleas,
Get busy seeking God!
*(Schweik sobs and wipes his eyes with his fists.
Around him, the others show signs of gleeful
appreciation. The Chaplain comes down from his
pulpit and fixes Schweik with a distrustful eye.)*

Chaplain

I've been the chaplain here

For many years,
And no one ever yet
Shed any tears.
Now own up,
It's all pure sham,
Your sobs
Ain't worth a damn!

Schweik

Beg to report, sir,
I confess you're right,
But I liked your sermon
And I thought you were tight,
And I figured you needed
A reformed sinner, —
Your worship.
(The Chaplain gazes at him thoughtfully)

Chaplain

Get something on
Over your underwear.
I'll have you released
In my personal care.
You're now my orderly.

ACT TWO • SCENE TWO (C)

**Chaplain Otto Katz and Lieutenant Henry
Lukash are playing poker.**

9 Chaplain

(Throws cards down)
Why bless my soul, you dog, you've won again!

Lt. Lukash

Come on, once more. Let's play another roun'.

Chaplain

With what, Lieutenant Lukash? I'm wiped out!
I haven't got a crown!

Lt. Lukash

One turn of card,
The highest card for anything you've got,
I'll play you for your shirt, your shoes, your
pants,
Your crucifix!

Chaplain

All right, I'll stake my man,
My Schweik against
a hundred crown advance —

Lt. Lukash

Come on!
(Draws his card)
The King of Hearts!

Chaplain

(Draws his card)
My God! The Deuce of Spades!
(Calls)
Schweik!
(Schweik enters)
Forgive me, Schweik, you now belong to him!

ACT TWO • SCENE THREE

***Lt. Lukash's flat towards evening. An empty
bird cage. An empty cat's eating bowl. Schweik
is casually tidying up. Lt. Lukash enters.***

10 Lt. Lukash

Well, Schweik,
How'd things go today?

Schweik

Beg to report, sir,
The usual way,
Nothing extraordinary, —
Except the cat
Ate up the canary.

Lt. Lukash

How did that happen?!

Schweik

Oh, I opened the cage
To acquaint them together, —
The cat gobbled her up
To the last tail feather —

Lt. Lukash

What!

Schweik

I was just as mad as you are,
So I gave him a whack
And chased him out
And he hasn't come back —

Lt. Lukash

Schweik! I... I...

Schweik

I know how you feel, sir,
I can tell by your face,
But I picked up a dog
To take his place —
*(Schweik opens the door to the kitchen and a
huge dog bounds out in a very friendly spirit. He
leaps at Lukash trying to lick his face, barking
and bounding around playfully.)*

Dog

Arf, arf, arf!

Lt. Lukash

Schweik!... you... you...
Tie the brute up!

Schweik

He's very, very gentle, sir,
He's only a pup —

Lt. Lukash

Get him out of here!

Schweik

Here Max! — Max!
*(The dog tries to embrace Schweik and slobbers
all over him.)*

Dog

Arf, arf, arf! etc.
*(Schweik manages to push him into the kitchen
and shuts the door.)*

Lt. Lukash

(Ready to burst)
Schweik!

Schweik

Just one thing more, sir,
Happened today,
A young lady moved in
With her baggage to stay —

Lt. Lukash

What! — Where is she?!

Schweik

In your bedroom sleeping,
She left this note.
(Takes note from his pocket and reads)
"Dearest Henry,
My husband suspects me . . ."

Lt. Lukash

Give me that!
(He grabs it from Schweik and reads to himself)

Schweik

(Continuing from memory)
"Oh, I'm so unhappy, Henry dear,
You've got to let me stay a few days.
Your Beloved, Katy . . ."
I figured you didn't
Want to get mixed up,
So I sent for her husband
To get things fixed up —

Lt. Lukash

Schweik, are you an idiot?!

Schweik

Yes sir,
The doctors said —
*(Katy enters languorously from the bedroom. She
embraces Lt. Lukash who is not in the mood.
Schweik stands modestly by, all innocence.)*

Katy

Oh, Henry, darling, my sweetest boy,
My love, my life, my dear, —

Lt. Lukash

But Katy, please —

Katy

My only joy —

Lt. Lukash

But Kate, you can't stay here —

Katy

Now, I don't want another word,
I'll seal your lips like this —

(She kisses him)

Lt. Lukash

But listen, Kate —

Katy

I haven't heard.
Let's kiss and kiss and kiss and kiss.

Lt. Lukash

You simply cannot stay with me —

Katy

A day or two —

Lt. Lukash

Not even an hour —

Katy

You silly lad —

Lt. Lukash

You've got to hear my out —

Katy

I know what's troubling you,
You're just afraid your man

will think I'm bad —

Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha . . .

Schweik

(Joining in to be polite)

Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha . . .

Katy

I beg you, darling, I implore —

Lt. Lukash

I can't grant what you're pleading for —

Schweik

Since all is fair in love and war —

Katy

I'll die unless you bend —

Lt. Lukash

I'm sure your heart will mend —

Schweik

Here's what I recommend —

Katy

Oh, You don't love me any more —

Lt. Lukash

My dear, I'll see you to the door —

Schweik

She'll hop when Max starts to roar —

Katy

Farewell, this is the end —

Lt. Lukash

I've no more time to spend —

Schweik

A dog is a man's best friend —

(Schweik opens the door to the kitchen. The dog leaps out barking and gleefully bounding around. Katy runs from it screeching, scared out of her wits.)

Dog

Arf, arf, arf! etc.

Schweik

Now, Max — Go get 'er!
(To Lt. Lukash)
See! This works better!

(Colonel Kraus von Zillergut suddenly appears at the door. Schweik opens it. The Colonel strides in. The door is left open. The dog bounds joyfully to him. The Colonel pats him.)

[1] Col. Zillergut

Fox! Fox!
Come here, boy,
Good boy,
Good, good!
I looked for you
All over the neighborhood!
Good dog!
(Lt. Lukash comes to attention. The Colonel angrily confronts him.)

Col. Zillergut

Lieutenant Lukash, this dog belongs to me!

Lt. Lukash

(Dumbfounded)
Oh no sir!

Col. Zillergut

A stolen dog, I say,
How could you harbor a stolen dog,
My dog, my dog Fox!?

Lt. Lukash

I can explain, sir!

Col. Zillergut

You can explain
A stolen dog,
My dog, my dog Fox!?

Schweik

His name is Max —

Lt. Lukash

(Angrily to Schweik)
Schweik!

Col. Zillergut

Fox! Don't contradict me!
(A moment of deathly silence. Mr. Wendler, Katy's husband, appears at the open door. He is a mild-looking man, discreetly polite.)

Mr. Wendler

Excuse me. I hope I am not intruding.
My name is Wendler
I'm calling for my wife.

Katy

My husband, Mr. Wendler, —
Lieutenant Lukash.

Lt. Lukash

Colonel Kraus von Zillergut,
Mr. Wendler.

*(As the introductions are made, the gentlemen
click heels and bow stiffly. After the formalities are
over, Colonel Zillergut ignores Mr. Wendler and
turns his fury upon Lukash.)*

Col. Zillergut

Lieutenant Lukash!

12

It's conduct unbecoming an officer —
to steal his Colonel's dog!

Lt. Lukash

But sir! But Sir! I did not steal your dog!

Mr. Wendler

Katy are you coming? Don't make a scene.
Let's be genteel.

Katy

My head is drumming. I feel so sad.

Schweik

Things will soon be humming!
(To dog)
Down! Heel, Max!

Dog

Arf! Arf! Arf!

Col. Zillergut

By God! where is your honor, man!

Lt. Lukash

I swear!

Mr. Wendler

Your bags, where are your bags?

Katy

I don't care!

Schweik

They're in the bedroom.

Dog

Arf! Arf!

Col. Zillergut

Your regimental loyalty, integrity, esprit de
corps!

Lt. Lukash

I don't know how he came to me!

Mr. Wendler

She ran away from me three times before!

Katy

Why don't you let me be!

Schweik

This will be fun to see! It sounds to me like a
fife and drum corps!

Dog

Arf!

Col. Zillergut

Upon my life!

Lt. Lukash

What a life!

Mr. Wendler

She's my wife!

Katy

Storm and strife!

Schweik

Drum and fife!

Dog

Arf! Arf! Arf!

Col. Zillergut

When you get to the front, young man,

Lt. Lukash

I'm not the kind of man

Mr. Wendler

Last spring it was another man,

Katy

I'm sorry this affair began!

Schweik

I taught one dog a stunt,

Col. Zillergut

You won't have time to play a trick such as this!

Lt. Lukash

Who ever would have done a thing such as this!

Mr. Wendler

It always happens in the Spring!

Katy

Oh — My heart is sick!

Schweik

To lift his paws and pray.

Dog

Arf! Arf!

Col. Zillergut

Stealing a dog from your superior officer

Lt. Lukash

No sir, I never stole your dog!

Mr. Wendler

He was a gay young dog,

Katy

Don't act superior!

Schweik

Teaching a cat or canary,

Col. Zillergut

Is not like stealing a kiss!

Lt. Lukash

No sir not like this!

Mr. Wendler

A wink, a hug, a kiss.

Katy

My head is reeling!

Schweik

Is not as easy.

Dog

Arf! Arf! Arf!

Col. Zillergut

You reprobate, you scoundrel,
to what extent can villains go!

Lt. Lukash

If you will wait I will explain! No!

Mr. Wendler

A reprobate, scoundrel, a villain — Oh!

Katy

I hate you! My life is spent in prison — Oh!

Schweik

Our late canary was eaten up by pussy — Oh!

Dog

Arf! Arf! Arf!

Col. Zillergut

My God! where is your honor, man!

Lt. Lukash

I swear I didn't do it!

Mr. Wendler

A cad, he had no honor!

Katy

(To Lukash)

You're no gentleman!

Schweik

The cat just pounced upon 'er

Dog

Arf! Arf!

Col. Zillergut

Who ever would have dared to think a man
could sink so vilely low!

Lt. Lukash

I never! never! no, never, no!

Mr. Wendler

It started with a wink, I think. Oh!

Katy

If you allow my husband to let them think
about me so!

Schweik

And gobbled her all up in a wink!

Dog

Arf!

Col. Zillergut

As steal my dog! Steal my dog! Steal my dog!

Lt. Lukash

Stole your dog! Stole you dog! Stole your

dog!

Mr. Wendler

The dirty dog! Dirty dog! Dirty Dog!

Katy

All men are dogs! All men are dogs!
All men are dogs!

Schweik

Cats ain't like dogs! Cats ain't like dogs!
Cats ain't like dogs!

Dog

Arf! Arf! Arf! Arf!

Dog

Arf!

Col. Zillergut

Lieutenant Lukash!
Tomorrow morning,
You'll be on your way,
Off for the front
At the break of day!

Katy

Oh, No!...

(Katy's wailing sets the dog off. He barks crazily and bounds about wildly, leaping for Katy. Katy runs out screaming, followed by her husband, both of whom are chased by the dog, who in turn is followed by the Colonel.)

Mr. Wendler

(To Lt. Lukash as he dashes out)
I'll send for her things in the morning!

Col. Zillergut

(Running after the dog)

Fox! Fox! Achtung! Achtung!

(Lt. Lukash and Schweik are left alone.)

Lt. Lukash

Schweik!

Do you know what "Off to the front" means?

Schweik

Oh, yes sir!

It'll be a great day

if you and me

was to die for the Emperor

and his family —

side by side!

(Lt. Lukash collapses into the chair.)

ACT TWO • SCENE FOUR

Budejovice Express, second class compartment and corridor. At one end is the guard's seat. An emergency brake handle extends down from the corridor ceiling. A sign reads "in case of emergency, pull handle down." Lt. Lukash is seated in the compartment opposite an elderly, stout gentleman, completely bald, reading a newspaper. Schweik stands modestly just inside the doorway, listening to a storm of abuse from Lt. Lukash.

13 Lt. Lukash

So you let one of our trunks get stolen!

That's a fine how-do-you-do,

You jackass, you!

Schweik

Beg to report, sir,

I guess it was took

when I didn't look,
by some crook.
They're always swiping stuff —

Lt. Lukash

Shut up, Schweik!
That's enough!
(Lt. Lukash angrily goes back to reading his copy of "Bohemia." Schweik looks over at the bald-headed gentleman.)

Schweik

Excuse me, sir,
ain't you Mr. Purkabeck?
You look so familiar
from above the neck . . .
(The bald-headed gentleman ignores the remark but his newspaper quivers a little.)
Believe it or not
but I once read
there's seventy thousand hairs
on a normal man's head . . .
(The newspaper shakes more violently.)
A doctor once wrote
that loss of hair
showed mental disturbance
under there
due to confinement.
(The bald-headed man jumps up in a fury.)

Bald-headed man

Marsch heraus, du Schweinsker!
(He hustles Schweik outward along the corridor.
Lt. Lukash is amused despite himself, enjoying
Schweik's discomforture. Schweik sits down in the
the guard's seat at the end of the corridor.
The bald-headed man returns to the compart-

ment in a rage.)

Bald-headed man

Allow me to introduce myself, sir!
I'm General von Schwarzburg
on special inspection duty!
Achtung!
(Lt. Lukash hops up and stands stiffly
at attention.)
Name and regiment!?

Lt. Lukash

Lieutenant Lukash,
Ninety First Regiment,
just transferred —

Bald-Headed Man

(Jotting it down)
I don't wonder!
I see that you allow your orderly
to fraternize with you —
you encourage your subordinate
to become too familiar —
you promote the dang'rous tendency
of equality —
thus inculcating revolutionary principles
of democracy!
Disgraceful behavior!
Dismissed!
(Lt. Lukash goes out as quickly as he can. He
finds Schweik seated contentedly by the window.)

Lt. Lukash

Schweik!
(Schweik stands up.)
Do you know who
that bald-headed gentleman was,

you idiot you?!
General von Schwarzburg!
Idiot!

Schweik

Beg to report, sir,
from above the neck,
he's the spittin' image
of Mr. Purabeck,
Sir . . .

Lt. Lukash

Shut up! You imbecile!
Stand at attention!
Ten paces!

Schweik

Yes sir.
*(Schweik makes a half-hearted attempt to
straighten up, moves back a pace or two, and
glances through the window.)*
Beg to report, sir,
we'll be in Tabor
in a minute or two.
Is there anything
I can get for you?
A little snack?

Lt. Lukash

Now listen, Schweik,
stay away from me,
do you understand?
Don't come near me,
do you understand?
Keep out of my sight —
do you understand?!

Schweik

Yes sir.
(Schweik salutes. As Lt. Lukash turns away, Schweik brings his hand down from the salute in an elaborate arc. His hand gets caught in the emergency brake handle. The train comes to a sudden stop with a wild shriek, throwing the passengers into unexpected postures.)

14 Passengers

What happened?
What's the matter?
Why'd the train stop?
What's wrong?
It's a wreck!
It's a bomb!
We're derailed!
Where are we?
O-O-O-O-O-h!
Oh, my God!
H-e—lp!
We're attacked!
Save me!
(The head guard and a railway man come running in. Schweik has kept a tight grip on the handle to keep from falling and is discovered in flagrante delicto.)

Head Guard

There he is!

Railway Man

He did it!

Head Guard

We got you!

Railway Man

Come on!

(They seize Schweik and hustle him out.)

Schweik

But I'm innocent!

I'm innocent!

I'm innocent!

(The starting whistle sounds and the train begins moving.)

(Voices from the crowd)

One

What happened?

Two

They caught a spy!

Three

He was taking photographs
of the railway station!

Four

No, he was following a
Colonel's wife!

Five

He was caught in the ladies' lavatory!

Schweik

(Offstage)

I'm innocent!

ACT TWO • SCENE FIVE

A private room in St. Stephen's Cross, a

small cafe in Budejovice. Lt. Lukash is writing a letter. A bottle of cognac is on the table. He is in a very good mood.

16 Lt. Lukash

(Writing)

Dear Madame, even though we've never met,

Last night, I saw you at the play

And couldn't help but notice you disagreed

With what your husband had to say

about that vulgar show . . .

(To himself)

I may as well lay it on thick.

What right has an old baboon like him

to have a luscious wife like her!

I quite agree with how you felt.

It pandered to a man's bestial source

And though your husband clapped and cheered,

The play he liked was cheap and coarse

and downright low . . .

She's got a damn fine figure!

(He takes a drink)

I hope you will pardon me this liberty

Of writing you sincerely from my heart,

But since my taste like yours is fine and pure,

Why can't we meet to share our thoughts on art?

Yours most sincerely, Lieutenant Lukash

(Takes another drink as he looks over his masterpiece)

It's not enough

I've got to add a good P.S.

I beg you, Madame, answer soon

To set the day I'm longing for!

Who knows when I'll be off for the front!

Who knows if I'll survive this war!

That's why I'm pleading so!

I want to take with me
A sacred memory
When I go!

16 (A knock at the door)

Come in!

(Door opens. Schweik stands there, his usual
innocent, benign-looking self.)

Schweik

Beg to report, sir, I'm back again.

(Lt. Lukash stares at him in disbelief and horror.)

Lt. Lukash

No! No! No!

Good God!

(Lt. Lukash's spirit and body seem to collapse.)

How did you manage to get here?!

Schweik

Beg to report, sir,

I walked in circles

from the time it began

with the lost trunk

and the bald-headed man —

They pushed me around

and all that stuff —

(Lt. Lukash resignedly comes to grips with
himself.)

Lt. Lukash

All right, Schweik,

that's quite enough!

Now that you're here

get the lead out of your feet, —

Take this letter

to 16 Soprony Street.

Give it to Madame Kakonyi

directly by hand,

and no one else
do you understand?

Schweik

Not even her husband?

Lt. Lukash

Especially not,

you God damn fool

or I'll have you shot!

Schweik

Beg to report, sir,

Now ev'rything's clear,

I'll get it all fixed up fine —

Lt. Lukash

Get out of here!

(Schweik goes out.)

ACT TWO • SCENE SIX

The sign reads "Soprony Street". At one end of the street is the door to a house marked "16". At the other end is the entrance to a tavern, "The red lamb". Schweik enters looking for house numbers and holding the letter in his hand with ostentatious care. Voditchka, another Czech soldier, enters from the other direction. They stop, stare and rush into each other's arms, clapping one another heartily on the back.

17 **Voditchka**

Schweik!

Schweik

Voditchka!

Voditchka

My old pall

Schweik

How happy I am to see you again!

Voditchka

Let's celebrate!

Schweik

No, I've got to deliver this letter.

Voditchka

Do it later.

Schweik

No, it's very important.

Voditchka

Why?

Schweik

That's a secret. It's from my Lieutenant Lukash to a lady, Madam Kakonyi.

(He nudges Voditchka)

She's got a husband.

Voditchka

We'll deliver it together later. Now, come on, let's celebrate.

(He takes the all too willing Schweik by the arm and they enter the tavern.)

18 Tavern Patrons

Fill up and drink up and fill up again
And look through the glass in your hand,
Oh what things you'll see when you're in care-free land,
Money will grow on the trees ev'rywhere
And sausage and big diamond rings.
We'll all get our share when pigs get wings.
Oh what things you'll see when you're in care-

free land,
We'll eat potatoes from dishes of gold
And we'll be as happy as kings.
We'll all get our share when pigs get wings.

19 POLKA

After the drinking song, Schweik and Voditchka join the tavern patrons in a polka. Suddenly, Schweik remembers the letter. The pals leave the tavern somewhat unsteadily, their arms around one another's shoulders, Schweik holds the letter with conspicuous concentration as they stagger toward the house marked "16".

20 Schweik

Sixteen Soprano, Madame Kakonyi

Voditchka

Madame Kakonyi, Sixteen Soprano

Both

Sixteen Soprano, Madame Kakonyi . . .
(They reach the house. Schweik rings the bell insistently. Voditchka knocks loudly, Mr. Kakonyi, a very proper looking older gentleman, excitedly appears and opens the door.)

Mr. Kakonyi

What in Heaven's name is the matter? What do you want?

Schweik

I've got a letter for Madame Kakonyi.
(Waves the letter)

Mr. Kakonyi

Let me have it.

Schweik

Nope. It's for Madame Kakonyi, — not for you!

Voditchka

Not for you!

Mr. Kakonyi

Oh, is that so!

(Mr. Kakonyi grabs the letter from Schweik's hand. Schweik snatches it back. Mr. Kakonyi seizes it again. He opens the letter and glances through it.)

Mr. Kakonyi

(In the midst of reading)

The scoundrel! The villain!

(Madame Kakonyi suddenly appears, frightened and distraught.)

Madame Kakonyi

What is it! What is it! What is going on?

Mr. Kakonyi

What is his name? I'll kill him!

(Mrs. Kakonyi screams. Schweik grabs the letter back. People run out of the tavern and from other streets to the scene of the incident. Mr. Kakonyi is trying to get at the letter, which Schweik is brandishing above his head.)

Mr. Kakonyi

The letter, the letter!

Get the letter away from him.

(An all-out tussle for possession of the letter ensues. Schweik puts the letter in his mouth and furiously chews and swallows it as the brawl

continues on.)

ACT TWO · SCENE SEVEN (A)

A dugout at the front. Makeshift table and chairs made out of boxes. Maps on table. Field telephone.

[21] Lt. Lukash

Well, Schweik,

There's no sense not talking to you.

We're at the front now

so we may as well let bygones be bygones.

Schweik

Yes sir.

Lt. Lukash

I'll admit I'm glad

you got rid of that letter.

It might have caused me

embarrassment and worse

what with the riot and all.

What did you do with it?

Schweik

I swallowed it.

Lt. Lukash

Swallowed the letter?

Schweik

Yes sir,

it's the least I could do for you.

I've swallowed so much

in the Army anyway.

Lt. Lukash

Schweik, you're a strange fellow.
If the war lasts long enough
and if we both live long enough,
I might even get to like you . . .
if only you weren't such an idiot.

Schweik

I'll say the same for you, sir,
(Lt. Lukash looks at him with fire in his eye.)
I mean —
if only you weren't an officer
and a gentleman . . .

Lt. Lukash

I understand perfectly.

Schweik

Well, anyway,
we're countrymen
and beg to report, sir,
being as how we see eye to eye
about this war,
I'd like to tell you how we can . . .

Lt. Lukash

No!
That's enough,
you've had your say,
now let's get on
with the order of the day.

Lt. Lukash

(Calling)
Vanek!
(Vanek, a Sergeant, enters.)

Vanek

Yes sir.

Lt. Lukash

You and Schweik
take a look at the map.
Here's how you go —
straight ahead
and then turn right.
(To Schweik)
Understand?

Schweik

Oh, yes sir.

Lt. Lukash

Front line patrol
is no tea party, Schweik,
so look sharp.
Good luck.
(Vanek and Schweik start to go out.)

Schweik

Good luck to you, sir.
(Turns)
You'll need it.

ACT TWO · SCENE SEVEN (B)

A scene of stark devastation. Jagged stumps of trees jut from the ground. One or two black skeletons of trees are silhouetted against the menacing sky. The stench of decay from shallow burial pits is almost palpable. It is a wilderness of death and destruction. A group of wounded soldiers wander in. They gradually collapse one by one as they sing.

22 **Soldiers (in various groups)**

Wait for the ragged soldiers,
watch for the ragged
men with their sunken faces
holding their blood-red
wounds with their hands.
No sound of drums when they come,
no trumpets blow when they come,
no flags at the

gate.

Wait for the ragged soldiers

Wait. . . wait and

watch for the ragged

watch for the tired

men marching slowly homeward

men . . . homeward

broken and weary army of

bound weary army of

men.

men with no banners only their silent

hate.

Wait for the army bearing anger

Wait for the ragged soldiers

Wait for the ragged

Wait . . . ragged

watch for the ragged

army of soldiers

men, angry men

men with the empty
men who are angry
men,

coatsleeves armless, legless, sightless
angry, angry
angry men, angry men

No sound of drums when they come,
No!

no trumpets blow when they come,
no flags at the gate.

Wait for the ragged soldiers,
watch for the ragged
men with their sunken faces
holding their blood-red
wounds with their hands.

*(The wounded soldiers lie motionless, strewn
across the stage. Schweik and Vanek, carrying
guns, appear.)*

23 **Vanek**

Now we go to the right.

Schweik

No, to the left.

Vanek

Lieutenant Lukash said straight ahead and then
right. You can see from the map that we've got
to go to the right like I said.

Schweik

Maps are sometimes wrong.

Vanek

You're crazy, Schweik.

Schweik

Well, if you won't take my word for it, Sergeant,
and you're so cocksure you're right,
well, we'll just have to part.

Vanek

Okay. I got no more time to waste on you.
(Goes off)

Schweik

(Calling out after him)
If you get into any trouble
just fire your rifle in the air
so I'll know where you are . . .
*(He watches the disappearing Vanek for a
moment and waves to him, then turns away.)*

24 Schweik

I'll take a quiet road where forget-me-nots grow,
Along a clear stream where soft breezes blow.
I'll take it easy for the rest of the day
And pick some meadow flowers on the way.
I'll take a quiet road and I'll lie in the sun,
For birds and butterflies, I won't need my gun.
*(Schweik takes the "wrong" road leaving his gun
behind.)*

EPILOGUE

The Gentleman of Bohemia appears again.

25 Gentleman of Bohemia

Schweik, Schweik, where did he go?
He just disappeared and that's all we know.
Some say they saw him at a much later day,
Sipping a drink at a little café.
And others will swear he was seen on the street
And lost in the crowd before they could meet.
Schweik, Schweik, The Good Soldier Schweik,

The kind of fellow that fellow men like.
In one place or other he's sure to be found.
I wouldn't be surprised if he's somewhere
around.

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*Some stage directions from the original libretto have
been omitted. Other directions and a few words have
been altered to reflect the circumstances of the Chi-
cago Opera Theater's March 2001 production and
what is heard on this recording.*

A B O U T C H I C A G O O P E R A T H E A T E R

Since its inception in 1974, Chicago Opera Theater (COT) has staged 23 American operas, given 30 Chicago professional premieres, employed thousands of Midwestern performers, and reached an audience of many thousands through its main-stage performances, regional tours, outreach programs, and telecasts on PBS.

American operas have been a key component in the Company's success, from *The Mother of Us All* in 1976 through *Shining Brow* in 1997 to *Akhmaten* in 2000 and *The Good Soldier Schweik* in 1981 and 2001. Chicago Opera Theater is also committed to bringing operatic premieres to Chicago, introducing works such as Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, Menotti's *The Consul*, Floyd's *Susannah*, and many others. COT has helped launch the opera careers of noted singers and directors such as Robert Orth, Nancy Gustafson, Richard Leech, Mary Zimmerman, and Frank Galati, who now work with opera and theater companies around the world.

The mission of Chicago Opera Theater is to advance opera as a vital, living art form, to develop young artists, and to expand the scope and diversity of the audience for opera. COT fulfills this mission through affordable tickets, unique repertoire, performances in intimate venues, and in-depth arts education and outreach programs.

In 1999, Chicago Opera Theater underwent a major internal reorganization, resulting in the appointment of Brian Dickie (pictured on right) as General Director. Mr. Dickie comes to Chicago Opera Theater with more than thirty years of experience in the opera field, including five years as General Director of the Canadian Opera Company and seven years as General Director of the world-renowned Glyndebourne Festival Opera in England. He is leading COT to its first-ever permanent home as the lead tenant in the 1,500-seat Chicago Music and Dance Theatre, set to open in Chicago's Millennium Park in late 2003.

Chicago Opera Theater has previously recorded Gian Carlo Menotti's *The Medium* for Cedille Records with a cast featuring mezzo-soprano Joyce Castle and soprano Patrice Michaels, with Lawrence Rapchak conducting.



Photo: Bob Fila (Courtesy of The Chicago Tribune)



ROBERT KURKA was born in Cicero, Illinois on December 22, 1921, and died in New York City on December 12, 1957. After studying violin with Kathleen Parlow and Hans Letz, he attended Columbia University, receiving his M.A. degree in 1948. Although largely self-taught, he studied composition briefly with Otto Luening and Darius Milhaud. From 1948 to 1951, he taught at the City College of New York and later at Queens College and Dartmouth University. He received commissions from the Little Orchestra Society, The Paderewski Fund for American Composers, and the San Diego Symphony Orchestra. He was co-winner of the George Gershwin Memorial Award in 1950 and received a grant from the National Institute of Arts and Letters in 1952. In 1951, he won a Guggenheim Fellowship, which was renewed the following year. Just months before his untimely death, Brandeis University presented him with its first Creative Arts Award "to a composer on the threshold of a promising career." Kurka completed *The Good Soldier Schweik* shortly before he died. The opera was given its premiere by the New York City Opera on April 23, 1958, at City Center.

One of America's most accomplished young conductors, **ALEXANDER PLATT** recently became *Resident Conductor and Music Advisor* to Chicago Opera Theater. Mr. Platt is currently the Music Director of the Marion Philharmonic in Indiana, and the Racine Symphony and Waukesha Symphony Orchestra in Wisconsin. He has also conducted the Houston Symphony Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra, Minnesota Opera, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, Skylight Opera Theatre, the Britten-Pears Ensemble in London, the City of London Sinfonia, and the Alberg Symphony in Denmark. Mr. Platt has received awards from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Yale University (where he founded his own orchestra during the course of his undergraduate studies) and a Marshall Scholarship to King's College, Cambridge.





JASON COLLINS (*Schweik*) made his Chicago Opera Theater debut in the title role of *The Good Soldier Schweik*. A native South Carolinian, Mr. Collins holds a bachelor's degree from the Juilliard School and is currently a member of the Curtis Institute of Music Opera Theater Program. At Curtis, he recently performed the roles of Nerone (*L'incoronazione di Poppea*) and Anatol (*Vanesa*). Other operatic credits include Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*), John Adams (*The Mother of Us All*), and Sam Kaplan (*Street Scene*) with The Juilliard Opera Center; the Aspen Opera Theater's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; and Eastman Opera Theater's production of *Dialogues of the Carmelites*. Mr. Collins has also appeared as tenor soloist in Mozart's *Requiem*, Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, and Schubert's *Mass in G*. Recent awards include the Alice Tully and Tatiana Troyanos scholarships and first prize in the 2000 Mario Lanza Competition.

MARC EMBREE (*Army Doctor/Lt. Lukash*), a singing actor equally at home in opera, oratorio, and musical theater, has performed with leading opera companies and orchestras throughout the world, including the New York City Opera, Chattanooga Opera, DaCapo Opera, and venues in Germany and Mexico. Recent performances include Carlos Chavez' *The Visitors*, Marc Blitzstein's *Regina*, Mahler's *Symphony No. 8*, and Berg's *Wozzeck*. A champion of contemporary opera, Embree created the role of William Emmons in the world premiere of *The Village Singer* by Stephen Paulus and was selected by Thomas Pasatieri for the New York premiere of his work, *Washington Square*.

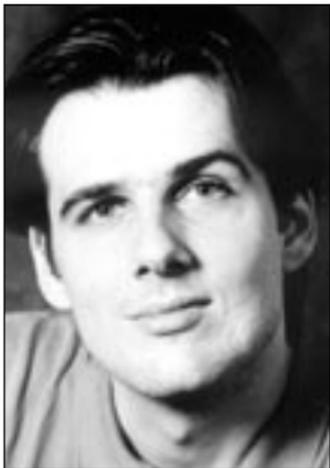




KELLI HARRINGTON (*Mrs. Muller/Katy*) is a native of Downers Grove, Illinois. She received both her Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Voice from Northwestern University. Among the roles she performed there were Pamina (*The Magic Flute*), Mimi (*La Bohème*), and Antonia (*Les Contes d'Hoffman*). After receiving a Professional Studies Certificate from the Manhattan School of Music, she returned to the Chicago area to sing with the Florentine Opera, Light Opera Works, and Chicago Opera Theater. The March 2001 production of *Schweik* marked Ms. Harrington's third appearance with Chicago Opera Theater; she had previously performed featured roles in *The Face on the Barroom Floor* and *There is a Garden*.

BUFFY BAGGOTT (*Baroness von Botzenheim*) is an alumnus of the Lyric Opera Center for American Artists. Her roles with Lyric Opera of Chicago have included Kate Pinkerton (*Madame Butterfly*), the Flower Maiden (*Parsifal*), Dryade (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), and the title role in *Carmen*. Ms. Baggott has also performed with the Santa Fe Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Los Angeles Opera, and Nevada Opera, as well as the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Ravinia Festival, and the Grant Park Music Festival. Recently engagements have included *Carmen* for both the Spokane and Festival Opera Companies, Tisbe (*La Cenerentola*) with the Los Angeles Opera tour in Hong Kong, and Mrs. Noah in the Chicago Opera Theater production of *Noye's Fludde*.





Born and raised in Germany, **TIMOTHY SHARP** (*Palivec*) made his American operatic debut in COT's 2001 production of *Schweik*. He studied voice with his mother, Norma Sharp, and interpretation with Hans Hotter, Brigitte Fassbaender, and Peter Schreier. He has performed in operas, oratorios, and solo recitals throughout Europe. Mr. Sharp's repertoire includes the title role in *Don Giovanni*, Figaro (*Barber of Seville*), Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*), Mercutio (*I Capuletti e Montecchi*), Marquis de la Force (*Die Fledermaus*), and concert works by German composers such as Bach, Haydn, and Brahms.

MARK CALVERT (*Chaplain/1st Psychiatrist*) is a recent alumnus of the Pittsburgh Opera Center where he performed the roles of Lindoro (*L'Italiana in Algeri*), Ernesto (*Don Pasquale*), Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*), and Tom Rakewell (*The Rake's Progress*). He appeared on the mainstage of Pittsburgh Opera in productions of *La Traviata*, *Werther*, *Le nozze de Figaro*, and *Tosca*. A graduate of the Yale Opera Program, Mr. Calvert has performed with companies across the country including the Santa Fe Opera, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, and the Lyric Opera Center for American Artists. He has also appeared in concert with ensembles including the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, Seattle Philharmonic Orchestra, Yale Symphony Orchestra, and Greenwich Choral Society.





WAYNE ALAN BEHR (*Bretschneider/1st Maligner*) made his operatic debut with the Goldovsky Opera Theatre on tour as Count Almaviva, Don Ottavio, Pinkerton, Rodolfo, and Alfredo. As a San Francisco Opera Young Artist, Mr. Behr performed the role of Hoffman (*Tales of Hoffman*) with Merola Opera, and toured the U.S. as Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*) with San Francisco Opera Center's Western Opera Theatre. In addition, he has sung leading roles with Lake George Opera, Chautauqua Opera, Baton Rouge Opera, Ohio Light Opera, New York Lyric Opera, and the Natchez Opera Festival. Mr. Behr holds BM and MA degrees in education and performance from Westminster Choir College and New York University.

A native of Pittsburgh, **ROBERT M. BOLDIN** (*1st Doctor/2nd Maligner/Dog*) received his BFA from Carnegie Mellon University in 1999 and completed his Master of Music degree at Northwestern University in 2001. He was featured as a young artist with the Chautauqua Opera Company and the Ashlawn Highlands Summer Music Festival. While at Northwestern, he appeared as Ezekiel Cheever (*The Crucible*) and Gobin (*La Rondine*) and performed the role of Francesco in the Light Opera Works' production of *Gondoliers*. Other operatic credits include *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, *Dido and Aeneas*, and Chicago Opera Theater's recent production of Philip Glass's *Akhnaten*.





A Chicago Opera Theater Young Artist, **STEPHEN NOON** (*Mr. Wendler*) has performed in numerous company productions. He holds Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Voice from Northwestern University. Past operatic roles include: Prunier (*La Rondine*), Rinuccio (*Gianni Schicchi*), Arnalta (*L'incoronazione di Poppea*), Giles Corey (*The Crucible*), Liveretto (*Lucrezia Borgia*), and Gastone (*La Traviata*). He performed in the Baroque vocal program at the 2000 Pacific Music Festival in Sapporo, Japan. His concert work has included J.S. Bach's *Magnificat* and *St. John Passion*, Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass*, Handel's *Messiah* and *Alexander's Feast*, and Mozart's *Requiem*.

AARON JUDISCH (*2nd Psychiatrist/2nd Doctor*) completed his graduate studies at Northwestern University, where he portrayed Bob (*The Old Maid and the Thief*), Thomas Putnam (*The Crucible*), and Marco (*Gianni Schicchi*). Other roles in his repertoire include Belcore (*The Elixir of Love*), and Dr. Falke (*Die Fledermaus*). In 2001, Mr. Judisch joined the Studio Artists Program at the Central City Opera in Colorado, as well as the Young Artist program with Chicago Opera Theater. He previously appeared in COT's production of *Akhnaten*.





CHRISTIAN ELSER (*General von Schwarzburg*) has performed with many regional companies and orchestras, including the DuPage Opera Theatre, Milwaukee Opera Theatre, Da Corneto Opera, L'Opera Piccola of Chicago, Southwest Symphony, and The Chicago City Symphony. His featured roles include Posa (*Don Carlo*), Germont (*La Traviata*), Zurga (*Les Pecheurs de Perles*), and Belcore (*L'Elisir d'Amore*). Mr. Elser has also been heard as a soloist on Chicago's *Live from Studio One* series (WMFT 98.7 FM), and with the Lyric Opera of Chicago chorus. The March 2001 production of *Schweik* marked his second appearance with Chicago Opera Theater.

A native of Mexico City, **ALVARO RAMIREZ** (*Police Officer/Colonel von Zillergut*) is an alumnus of the Alan Stone Debut Artist Series (1997-98) and the Glimmerglass Young Artist Program (1999). Recently, Mr. Ramirez appeared in the role of Raimondo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*) with the Skylight Opera Theatre in Milwaukee, Pagano (*I Lombardi*) with da Corneto Opera, and Mustafa (*L'Italiana in Algeri*) for Pamiro Opera in Green Bay, Wisconsin. He made his Chicago Opera Theater debut in 2000 in the double bill of Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* and Michael Ching's *Buoso's Ghost*.





Composer
**ROBERT
KURKA**
surrounded
by Josef Lada's
cartoons for
Jaroslav Hašek's
*The Good
Soldier
Schweik*,
December
1955

Photo: Gordon Parks/Timgfx, December 1955

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Robert Kurka (1921-1957)

THE GOOD SOLDIER SCHWEIK

<i>Schweik</i>	Jason Collins
<i>Lt. Lukash/ Army Doctor/ Gentleman of Bohemia</i>	Marc Embree
<i>Mrs. Muller/ Katy/ Ensemble Soprano</i>	Kelli Harrington
<i>Baroness von Botzenheim/ Madame Kakonyi/ Ensemble Mezzo</i>	Buffy Baggott
<i>Palivec/ Voditchka/ Ensemble Baritone</i>	Timothy Sharp
<i>1st Psychiatrist/ Chaplain/ Ensemble Tenor</i>	Mark Calvert
<i>Bretschneider/ Vanek/ 1st Malingerer/ Ensemble Tenor</i>	Wayne Alan Behr
<i>1st Doctor/ 2nd Malingerer/ Dog/ Ensemble Tenor</i>	Robert Boldin
<i>Mr. Wendler/ Guard/ Sergeant/ Mr. Kakonyi/ Ensemble Tenor</i>	Stephen Noon
<i>2nd Psychiatrist/ 2nd Doctor/ Ensemble Baritone</i>	Aaron Judisch
<i>General von Schwarzburg/ 3rd Malingerer/ Ensemble Baritone</i>	Christian Elser
<i>Police Officer/ 3rd Psychiatrist/ 4th Malingerer/</i>	
<i>Colonel von Zillergut/ Ensemble Bass</i>	Alvaro Ramirez

CHICAGO OPERA THEATERAlexander Platt, *conductor*

Mary Stolper *flute*, Jennifer Binney *piccolo*, Debra Freedland *oboe*, Joseph Claude *English horn*, Gene Collerd *clarinet*, Kathryn Pirtle *bass clarinet*, Amy Rhodes *bassoon*, Robert Broemel *contrabassoon*, Greg Flint/ Angela DeBoers/ Melanie Cottle *horn*, Ross Beacraft/ Matt Lee *trumpet*, Michael Folker *timpani*, Bruce Carver *percussion*

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