Madame Bovary: Her Story in Music – A Night at the Royal Concertgebouw and Beyond

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Amsterdam, 4 December 2025 – On 6 November 2025, the Royal Concertgebouw hosted a mesmerising live performance of Madame Bovary: Her Story in Music, bringing Gustave Flaubert's iconic heroine to life in a fusion of classical composition, operatic storytelling, and lyrical narrative.

The evening offered a rare and intimate glimpse into the artistry behind the project, as Anna Majchrzak, star soprano of the André Rieu Orchestra, performed the full suite of songs from her latest album. Guests experienced firsthand the rich emotional tapestry woven throughout the album, alongside behind-the-scenes insights into the collaborative process that brought this reinterpretation of Flaubert's literary masterpiece to life.

The evening also drew an extraordinary group of guests from across the cultural and media landscape. Among those in attendance were Hans van Veggel of the Joop van den Ende Foundation; acclaimed composer Ferdi Bolland, known for creating Falco's Amadeus; Jeroen Schuiten from NOS's Nieuwsuur; renowned presenter Ivo Niehe of Ivo op Zondag on NPO1; and Dick Bakker, conductor of the Metropole Orkest.

For those who would like a brief look at the live performance, a short event excerpt is available here: https://vimeo.com/1140488264/f34286aab8

The performance forms part of a larger creative vision, the album itself, which continues to resonate with listeners globally. Released on 26 September 2025, the album stands as Anna Majchrzak's most ambitious project to date, combining musical virtuosity with emotional storytelling to explore the inner life of one of literature's most complex characters.

Bridging Literature and Modern Music

The album, Madame Bovary: Her Story in Music, reimagines Flaubert's 1857 novel as a contemporary song cycle. Each track traces the emotional journey of Emma Bovary, from youthful dreams and desires to heartbreak and longing, offering listeners a fresh, immersive experience.

Award-winning Dutch composer Piet Souer crafted evocative musical arrangements that blend classical traditions with cinematic textures. Grammy-nominated lyricist Mary Susan Applegate contributed deeply resonant lyrics, allowing each song to capture Emma's inner voice in a way that is both authentic and accessible. Together, their collaboration with Majchrzak creates a seamless intersection of music and literature.

This approach invites audiences to experience Emma Bovary's story in a new light. By translating the novel's emotional depth into music, the project opens classical storytelling to contemporary listeners, making Flaubert's timeless themes of longing, passion, and self-discovery feel immediate and personal.

A Musical Interpretation of a Timeless Story

The album's compositions explore the full spectrum of human emotion. From quiet introspection to soaring vocal climaxes, each song reflects the complexity of Emma Bovary's character. The project balances technical precision with raw feeling, creating a work that is cinematic in scope yet intimate in its expression.

Listeners are invited not only to enjoy the music but to connect with Emma's journey on an emotional level. Themes of desire, disillusionment, and the universal search for meaning resonate across generations, demonstrating the enduring power of classical music when intertwined with literature.

Anna Majchrzak: A Voice for Emma

Anna Majchrzak brings extraordinary depth and nuance to the role of Emma Bovary. As a soprano with the André Rieu Orchestra, she has performed for millions worldwide, from Vienna to Buenos Aires, earning praise for her luminous tone and expressive authenticity.

In this project, Majchrzak's performance transforms literary introspection into vibrant musical storytelling. The album, recorded in the Netherlands with a world-class ensemble, exemplifies her dedication to combining technical excellence with emotional resonance. Through her voice, Emma Bovary's internal struggles are given life, making her story accessible to both classical music enthusiasts and literary audiences alike.

Majchrzak's connection to the project is deeply personal. The emotional resonance of Emma's story and the creative collaboration with Souer and Applegate have shaped a body of work that reflects both the power of classical music and the timelessness of human emotion.

The Cultural Significance

Madame Bovary: Her Story in Music sits at the intersection of literature, music, and performance, demonstrating how classic storytelling can be reinterpreted for contemporary audiences. By bringing Emma Bovary's journey into song, Majchrzak and her collaborators bridge the 19th century and the modern era, making complex emotions tangible and engaging.

The project highlights the relevance of interdisciplinary creativity in today's cultural landscape. It speaks not only to lovers of classical music and opera but also to those discovering Flaubert for the first time. This approach underscores the value of bringing traditional narratives into dialogue with modern performance, fostering fresh engagement with timeless stories.

Album Details

- Album Title: Madame Bovary: Her Story in Music
- Release Date: 26 September 2025
- Artist: Anna Majchrzak
- Composer: Piet Souer
- Lyricist: Mary Susan Applegate
- Label: Top Stop Music
- Streaming: Available on Spotify, YouTube, Apple Music Classical, and all major platforms

Looking Ahead

While the Royal Concertgebouw performance was a milestone in bringing Madame Bovary: Her Story in Music to life, the album itself remains the heart of this ongoing creative journey. Available on all major streaming platforms, it continues to reach audiences worldwide, inspiring features, interviews, and in-depth cultural coverage.

Future projects will expand upon this fusion of literature and music, offering audiences innovative ways to experience classical storytelling through contemporary performance. The album not only solidifies Anna Majchrzak's reputation as a visionary interpreter of art and emotion but also exemplifies how interdisciplinary projects can breathe new life into timeless narratives.

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