

TEATRO LIRICO D'EUROPA – LA BOHEME

Jenny,

We loved **La Boheme**! Mimi's voice was perfect for her role and Musetta wowed all the young people at the pre-concert talk. Elena did a great job with the talk and was so personable. Everyone was so gracious. We look forward to having you here again.

Regards, Maureen, Susan and Don

Warfield Concerts Committee

October 2009

Jenny,

The performance (of **LA BOHEME**) was wonderful and enjoyed by all that attended.

The company received a standing ovation that lasted for at least four minutes.

John Cattanaach, GM

Touhill Perf. Arts Center, St. Louis, MO

October 2009

Dark, deadly, tragic, but 'La Boheme' is for lovers

Matthew B. Haunted

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THE CURRENT, St. Louis, MO

"La Boheme," was performed at the Touhill Performing Arts Center on Wednesday, Oct. 22 at 7:30 p.m. An opera after Louis-Henri Murger's "Scènes de la vie de bohème," it was performed by the European opera touring company Teatro Lirico D'Europa. And an excellent performance this touring company presented. Encore, encore, encore.

Where to start a very, positive review is difficult. It is a tragedy about talented, but broke, starving and dying French artists in the 1800s. But the main theme in this opera is amour, or love. These singers communicated this greatest of emotions excellently throughout the entire performance.

The characters of Rodolfo the poet (tenor Orlin Goranov) and his lover Mimi (soprano Elena Razgylaeva), a seamstress, spoke of their love for each other so well. They start off just meeting accidentally, but it is clear from the beginning they are enamored with each other. From coy looks to accidental touches, they fall head-over-heels for each other. It was exciting to see two performers carry out their craft so well.

Then you have the painter Marcello (baritone Marian Jovanovsky) and his former lover, and soon to be lover all over again, Musetta (soprano Snejana Dramcheva). These two are at each others' throats when the audience first meets them. Musetta arrives with another man, wealthy and elderly Alcindoro (baritone Hristo Sarafov) but cannot stop trying to get Marcello's attention.

Musetta describes Marcello as just a "house painter." Marcello calls Musetta, a "hellcat." But that is all a farce. These two cannot keep their true thoughts, revealed in actions, hidden from the audience. Musetta even pulls the stunt of sitting down, pulling up her full-length dress and flashing her legs.

This is totally effective for her in winning the complete attention of Marcello. You can almost see his heart stop. They then are once again in each others' arms and are throughout the balance of the opera. Another aspect of this love and caring in the opera is shown by each friend's treatment of their companions. It is an emotion so well imparted at the end when Mimi is dying and all of them are so distraught.

Mimi needs medicine but they are all monetarily broke. But in a sacrificial move similar to O. Henry's "Gift of the Magi," Musetta sells her prized earrings. Another friend Schaunard (baritone Plamen Dimitrov), a musician, pawns his long beloved overcoat, a sacrifice for a dying friend.

The orchestra, conducted by Krassimir Topolov, produced the greatest of music while never drowning out the vocalists. The sets were crisp and clean, even though they move with the opera company as they travel. It felt very much as if Paris was in St. Louis, Mo., at the Touhill PAC. The costumes were first rate in every respect. The "hellcat" Musetta's flaming red dress in the beginning set her apart from every character on the stage. Mimi's green dress, although weathered, fit her character to a "T." And the male starving artist's clothing made you feel as if you were in Paris in the 1800s

OperaOnline.us

Worldwide reviews for a worldwide audience

Puccini **La Boheme** - Teatro Lirico D'Europa - October 30, 2009

Jaw-dropping performances from an outstanding cast send this "Boheme" into the stratosphere.

By: Paul Joseph Walkowski
OperaOnline.us

The Boston audience at Friday evening's performance of Puccini's "La Boheme" at Emerson's Cutler Majestic theater were treated to what one rarely sees in a performance, jaw- dropping perfection, and I use that description decisively.

This cast, this show, was simply astounding, led by an indefatigable and extraordinarily talented cast of three regulars with this company: award winning tenor Orlin Goranov, singing the role of Rodolfo, Russian soprano Elena Razgylaeva, singing the role of the fated Mimi, and Bulgarian soprano, Snejana Dramcheva, singing the role of the flirtatious Musetta, a part that she sang and acted with extraordinary depth and understanding.

Vocal heights were smashed, superb acting and stage presence were the order of the evening and all, especially the audience, which was clearly captivated and this reviewer who was truly impressed, had an all around hypnotic night.

Kudos, also to an outstanding ensemble cast, as well: Marian Jovanovsky, singing the role of Marcello, Plamen Dimitrov, singing the role of Schaunard, Konstantine Videv, singing the role of Colline, and the underrated and uniformly solid (and getting better) performance of Hristo Sarafov, singing the role of Alcindoro and Benoit – marvelous and wonderfully talented cast all.

The performing company, Teatro Lirico D'Europa, formed in 1988, is now on its eleventh major tour of the United States and going stronger than ever. I have followed this company when it might have been considered a distraction for the two Boston opera companies; now it stands as an equal in every respect, making it a touring company of note worth checking out. I loved this show and expect the rest of the country will, as well.

Dear Jenny,

(La Boheme in Boston) was GREAT AND WONDERFUL! My five fellow Sisters and I were very happy to be there. We had wonderful seats so that we could see nicely, no obstruction to sight. We were very pleased to be there and since some of the Sisters and I know the Italian language, they and I enjoyed the singing conversation of the singers. It was a very pleasant evening and there were many people in attendance. I was telling the Sisters about you and your company, etc., and of your great generosity and kindness. Craig, the nice young man to whom you spoke about our seating arrangement and who works at the theater came by to tell us of your recommendation that we have good seats. Thank you again very much for giving us the opportunity to have this cultural experience. I hope that all your remaining scheduled performances in various states have success. There certainly is much work involved in putting all these together for opera lovers. Again, thank you very much.

Prayerfully,

Sister Mary Paula Kolar, fsp.

October 2009

I loved it (**BOHEME IN BOSTON**) Loved it! Loved it! I got multiple chills from the gorgeous voices - I never tire of **La Boheme**. I wish you much success with it this weekend. I meant to tell you too, that I heard your ad on WCRB many many times...Thank you again, and please let me know when you'll be in Boston/New England, as I would like to take you both to dinner.

Richard Bojko

GM, Opera New Hampshire

October 2009

NEAR CAPACITY AUDIENCE CHEERS TEATRO LIRICO - LA BOHEME

On a cold and dreary Friday night (October 30, 2009) Teatro Lirico d'Europa brought its production of Giacomo Puccini's LA BOHEME to Emerson's Cutler Majestic Theatre in Boston. The brilliance of the singing warmed the heart of every opera-goer and the New England fall weather merely helped the near capacity audience commiserate with the Bohemians in their unheated garret.

Artistic Director Giorgio Lalov's traditional staging carefully followed the dictates of the score and that was a treat to be savored these days. Tenor Orlin Goranov as Rodolfo, the poet, and baritone Marian Jovanovski as Marcello, the painter, burned the former's play in a realistic stove. When their roommates, Schaunard and Colline, sung by Plamen Dimitrov and Konstantine Videv, joined them, they were an exuberant group with robust voices and tons of youthful energy.

Although Goranov is Bulgarian he has an Italianate sound coupled with a smooth legato that could melt the heart of any soprano. The fact that his is tall and slim also helps make

him a believable young lover. Petite soprano, Elena Razgylaeva was a delightful Mimi who sang sweetly of her lonely life embroidering flowers. She enchanted not only Rodolfo but the entire audience.

In Act II we met the temperamental Musetta, compellingly sung by soprano and costume designer, Snejana Dramcheva, who looked every inch the nineteenth century fashion plate. The sets and most of the costumes were designed by Giorgio Lalov, but Musetta's gowns were the soprano's own designs. This multi-talented artist played her character as a softhearted ingenue with an anger problem and sang her aria with lustrous tones as she rekindled her love affair with Marcello, sung by the bronze voiced Jovanovski.

It's rare to find such luxurious casting as Jovanovski's Marcello and Dimitrov's Schaunard. They brought in the warmth of the sun with their singing. Completing the male quartet was the dark bass voice of Konstantine Videv. He was a little older and more sedate than the others and that provided a good contrast. Veteran singing actor Hristo Sarafov played the cameo roles of Benoit, the alcoholic landlord and Alcindoro the "sugar daddy" with deft comic touches and a resonant baritone sound.

The story was portrayed with tremendous emotional power and at the moment Mimi died, you could feel the impact of the tragedy throughout the house. As a result, the audience began to clap and yell "bravo" as the curtain started to descend and **kept on applauding for more than five minutes.**

I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to see more than one cast sing this production. Meliangee Perez, who sang Mimi on Saturday, was somewhat softer in her approach and she showed more signs of her fatal illness from the start. She has a strong voice and great command over its technique. As a result, she could bring her pianissimo down to a fine filament of golden sound and then raise the decibel level to a magnificent forte. **MUSIC AND VISION DAILY** – Susan Hampton – October 31, 2009

MOZART FESTIVAL OPERA – DON GIOVANNI

A very fine DON GIOVANNI at the Garde Arts Center in New London, CT last Friday night 23 October. **This might have been the best Mozart Festival Opera/Teatro Lirico d'Europa offering of all the many that we've heard.** As usual, Giorgio Lalov's stage direction gave us true characters and, in the case of DON G, a compelling dramma giocoso. Valentin Topencharov's unit set with facades of eighteenth-century buildings at each side connected by an arch worked for all scenes, including the last, where Topencharov's lighting turned red (with steam/smoke) to foreshadow hell when the Commendatore appeared at Don G's dinner.

Stefano De Peppo sang the title role with rich tone and real expressiveness. His well-paced "Fin ch'han del vino" and lyrical "Deh vieni alla finestra" were highlights of the evening. This handsome singer embodied the aristocratic seducer perfectly.

The three women were in command of their roles. Puerto Rican soprano Meliangee Pérez had the power and agility for Donna Anna. Russian soprano, Elena Razgylaeva's beautiful tone was spot-on for Elvira. She was so lovely that I wondered

why the Don didn't leave his ways and stick with her. Bulgarian mezzo Viara Zhelezova sang Zerlina with real flair--both "Batti, batti" and "Vedrai, carino" were moving--and acted throughout with comedic spirit.

Hristo Sarafof, whom we've heard in many roles with this company, acted and sang Leporello convincingly. David Adam's Don Ottavio was more of a mensch than one or two others I've seen. His "Il mio tesoro" navigated the fioritura pretty well. I hope that New York City Opera gives us as good a DON GIOVANNI as this one on 8 November. Mozart Lyric Opera sets a high level.

OPERA L – John Deredita – Oct. 2009

Hello Jenny -

What a truly awesome and splendid performance of **Don Giovanni** you provided Opera New Hampshire last night! Even our hardest "critics" came to me at intermission and described it as flawless, wonderful voices, characters working with and off of each other beautifully...Thanks again for your continual wonderful performances. Next up:

Rigoletto!

Richard Bojko

President, Board of Directors

Opera New Hampshire

Palace Theatre, Manchester, NH

MOZART FESTIVAL OPERA – LE NOZZE DI FIGARO

Jenny, everything went well. (**NOZZE DI FIGARO**)

Thanks for providing us with a great company and performance.

Kimberly Earnest

Assistant Director/Account Executive

University Concert Series

Columbia, MO