

**REVIEWS AND COMMENTS FROM WINTER 2010 USA TOUR – 54  
performances**

**Teatro Lirico D'Europa/Mozart Festival Opera**

**Verdi's LA TRAVIATA**

Touhill Perf. Arts Center, St. Louis, MO – Jan. 2010

“Jenny, The performance (of **LA TRAVIATA** was wonderful! We had many positive comments from patrons at the end of the night. They enjoyed the production thoroughly.”

John Cattanach, GM

Touhill Perf. Arts Center

St. Louis, MO

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**Verdi's LA TRAVIATA**

Touhill Perf. Arts Center, St. Louis, MO – Jan. 2010

“Throughout the opera (**LA TRAVIATA**) the music conducted by Krassimir Topolov was first-rate. The instrumentals, the sets and the onstage work of Snejana Dramcheva (Violetta) was impeccable, her acting believable. When she was onstage, she compelled attention with her personality, performance and beauty. Her costumes were knockouts as well.”

St. Louis Classical Examiner - Bill Townsend

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**LA TRAVIATA – McCallum Theatre, Palm Desert, CA – Feb. 2010 – SOLD OUT!**

“Wonderful performance (of **LA TRAVIATA**)! Thank you again. Looking forward to Turandot next year!”

Mitchell Gershenfeld

Director of Presentations and Theater Operations

McCallum Theatre, Palm Desert, CA

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**LA TRAVIATA – Cerritos, CA – Feb. 2010**

Teatro Lirico D'Europa's “La Traviata” February 13, 2010

**La Traviata Translates: Tragic Love at Cerritos**

By Glen Creason

“It might be appropriate that Teatro Lirico D'Europa staged the great Giuseppe Verdi's “La Traviata” on lover's weekend at the Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts. Like many well aimed cupid's darts and valentine sentiments La Traviata starts with grand hope but ends in a heap of regrets and sorrow. While love may be divine and the bond between Violetta and Alfredo seems eternal, the soap opera-esque intrigues that keep them apart in this life end up making a grand statement of fidelity but then again somebody is dead at the final curtain. Despite the agonizing d'amor the music and

singing along with dazzling costumes make for a rewarding day at the old operatic heartbreak hotel.

This company has visited Cerritos several times before and the principals are all top drawer to match the memorable arias contained in this most popular work. Ms. Dramcheva (Violetta) was especially impressive in this monumentally demanding role that sees her singing throughout the two and a half hours of the unraveling of her undoing. In Act II the happy couple is cohabitating blissfully but in opera bliss is often obliterated, as is this state by the father of Alfredo who fears the breakup of his family because of this tryst. Baritone Peter Danailov was excellent in the thankless role of the father and indeed his "Dite alla giovine" is the persuader that moves Violetta to make the ultimate sacrifice for her love. While she pretends to leave him for her former lover she suffers terribly as heard in "Amami Alfredo" that demonstrated some of the soprano's finest singing."

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**LA TRAVIATA** – Cedar City, UT – Feb. 2010

"Jenny,

The show (**LA TRAVIATA**) was just marvelous. The audience was amazed at the musicianship of both singers and orchestra. I think that there were at least 5 curtain calls from a standing audience. Thank you so much for sending us such quality. I look forward to working with you again."

David Nyman

Heritage Theatre, Cedar City, UT

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**LA TRAVIATA** – Naples Phil. – Feb. 2010

"Dear Jenny,

It was a great pleasure to attend the sold out performance of **LA TRAVIATA** at the Naples Phil. yesterday! Your sales are better than many other events there! Did you know that? Marina Viskvorkina is a world class Violetta and Rafafel Davila is a major opera star on the rise. We have seen him in Sarasota a lot. It was also great to see Gary Simpson as Germont. We know him and his wife, Kathy Olsson from Orlando Opera. See you all again soon in Naples for **RIGOLETTO!**"

Love,

Dr. Getraud Renner

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**LA TRAVIATA** – Wilmington Concert Ass. – Feb. 2010

"Wonderful. 830 seats filled (theatre seats 1016) and people leaping to their feet, with "brava, brava"! All the principals in very wonderful voice; costumes, set, all beautiful. Thanks so much!"

FRED WHARTON

Keenan Auditorium

Wilmington, NC

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David Nyman

Heritage Theatre, Cedar City, UT

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**LA TRAVIATA and FLEDERMAUS** – Vail, CO – Feb 2010

“Jenny...The **La Traviata** was beautiful. Very well received. I was speaking with a woman from the DC area who said this was the first time she ever cried during Act 3 in all of the times she'd seen Traviata. **Die Fledermaus** also well received and lots of fun. Thanks for everything!”

Kris Sabel, Executive Director – Vilar Perf. Arts Center

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**LA TRAVIATA**, Sunrise Theatre, Ft. Pierce, FL – Mar. 2010

“Hi Jenny! What a voice on that Violetta! WOW! I've seen some great opera from you guys but that was a truly superlative Traviata!

”Marty Petlock -- Sunrise Theatre. Fort Pierce, FL

**AND**

“Jenny! **Traviata** was just another incredible show from two incredible people.....you and Giorgio. The audience loved it (and so did Marty...I believe he sent you an email)...hence our booking the three shows next year. Thanks for the follow-up Jenny. You a very good at what you do.”

Cheers! John Wilkes, GM, Sunrise Theatre, Ft. Pierce, FL – Mar. 2010

**Verdi's RIGOLETTO**

Peabody Auditorium, Daytona Beach, FL – Jan. 2010

1600 seats sold

“Dear Jenny,

We just returned from the wonderful **RIGOLETTO**. Everyone loved it.

Gilda, Rigoletto, the Duke...everyone was great. We thought the sets and costumes were so beautiful. We also had a delightful time afterward at the reception, sharing a table with Giorgio and “Gilda,” exchanging a lot of funny incidents “on the road.” We are so glad to have such a great working relationship with you and your company...we feel blessed, so thank you!”

Love,

Nancy and Dallas Weekly, Daytona Beach Symphony Society

**RIGOLETTO** – Peabody Auditorium, Daytona Beach, FL, Feb. 2010

“Dear Jenny,

**RIGOLETTO** was FABULOUS!! I have had so many people tell me how much they loved it. And you sent us the most wonderful cast! I can’t thank you enough. Lyle Sunderland will have the DVD ready by the end of the week and will mail it to you. I’m sure you will be very pleased. I’m very excited about having TWO operas next season. LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR and BUTTERFLY. Wow! Thank you again for making Daytona Beach a happy cultural place.”

Carol Anderson, GM Daytona Beach Symphony Society

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**RIGOLETTO** – NEW LONDON, CT - Feb. 2010

“Jenny. Last night was a glorious night! The costumes were beautiful and the sets lovely. The audience gave Rigoletto A STANDING OVATION – both after the performance and in the lobbies while they left to face the freezing night air, and this morning. I have received phone messages and emails galore!”

Jeanne Sigel, Development & Marketing Director

Garde Arts Center

New London CT

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**RIGOLETTO** – Naples Philharmonic Naples, FL – Feb. 2010

“I was really happy with last night-particularly impressed with Nelson Martinez. Let’s stay in touch.”

Steven White

Artistic Director, Opera Roanoke

New York City Opera Conductor

**Metropolitan Opera Conductor**

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### ***RIGOLETTO – BALTIMORE***

#### ***Guest blog review of Baltimore Opera Theatre's 'Rigoletto'***

*A scheduling conflict prevented me from catching the second production in Baltimore Opera Theatre's inaugural season at the Hippodrome, so I asked local opera buff Andrew Pappas — I knew he'd bet there — to submit a report, which is below. **Tim Smith, The Baltimore Sun***

Thursday, March 11, 2010, at the Hippodrome Theater in Baltimore, an ample crowd of opera fans and would-be aficionados attended a production of Giuseppe Verdi's Rigoletto presented by Giorgio Lalov and Baltimore Opera Theatre. From the first notes of the overture to the final curtain there were abundant orchestral and vocal performance highlights to assure a successful evening. Led by conductor Krassimir Topolov, the

orchestra capably supported the vocal and dramatic achievements of the talented soloists and able chorus. For regional opera, the sets, costumes, and lighting were grand. The staging was remarkable. The appreciative audience rewarded the performers with boisterous applause throughout the evening. Any doubts that one might have held about the company prior to the performance were emphatically banished. This was a first-rate production.

The role of Rigoletto was performed by young Verdi baritone Nelson Martinez, who began his career in Cuba and who, at this juncture, has sung several roles in a number of venues across this country and abroad. His voice is larger than life, deeply expressive throughout the entire vocal range of the role. From poignantly and plaintively delivered pianissimos to super-grand explosions of sound with power to spare, his dramatic emotional impact was always impressive. With his immense vocal and acting talents, he convincingly portrayed the old and deformed court jester, capable of hurling derisive insults himself, but profoundly vulnerable to the terrifying curse that humbles him and portends the tragic outcome that unfolds.

The Duke of Mantua was portrayed with vocal ease and a great deal of polish and swagger by Ukrainian tenor Igor Borko. With numerous credits in this country and abroad, Borko brought a wealth of experience and exceptional timbre and stamina to his impressive performance. Most notable were the Act I aria about a life of pleasure with as many women as possible (*Questa o quella* - "This woman or that") and the more famous Act III aria about the wonderful inconstancy of women (*La donna e mobile* - "Woman is fickle").

Gilda as sung by Puerto Rican soprano Magda Nieves was performed exactly as you would want. She was the epitome of youth and innocence. She was tender, pure, and articulate in vocal delivery and dramatic portrayal. I found her exceptionally demure and pleasing in her Act I aria in which she adoringly repeats the name of her newly found love, Gaultier Malde (*Caro nome* - "Dearest name").

Of the many others in the cast, William Powers, an American, as the assassin Sparafucile and Viara Zhelezova, from Bulgaria, who sang both Maddalena and Countess Ceprano, were standouts.

Lest you think I forgot, I must mention how well performed was the famous and abundantly loved quartet in the final act. The four singers gave a spacious and well tendered account, each voice given its perfect due. This was opera at its best!

-- Andrew Pappas

**Bizet's CARMEN - CLEARWATER FLORIDA – Feb. 2010**

“The Show (**CARMEN**) was wonderful as usual. We did 1518 SOLD. House looked good and as always cast was friendly and seemed to enjoy being here again.”

Bobby Rossi

Director of Entertainment

Ruth Eckerd Hall, Clearwater, FL

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**DIE FLEDERMAUS...Christopher Cohan Center, Cal Poly State**

San Luis Obispo, CA - Feb. 2010

“Dear Jenny and Giorgio,

Thank you very, very much for your time, work, and dedication to producing such GREAT opera, and helping our students get an idea of what it's like outside the next of college! The opera was truly one of the most entertaining I've heard (and that a lot!), and my husband, David (who is VERY critical) and I were thoroughly entertained the entire evening. All the singers were superb, and the Alfred particularly delightful. What a voice. Thank you, Giorgio, for wanting to come back again...the students are very excited about that. You have been a huge help. I'll keep in touch.”

Jacalyn Kreitzer, Cal Poly State U/SLO

Lecturer/Voice, Performance, Opera Thtre

Dram/Mezzo: Berlin, Met, Paris, SF, NYC Op.

Opera America Panel NATS, AGMA, AFTR

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**RIGOLETTO – Baltimore, MD – Mar. 2010**

“Dear Jenny,

I do not have words to describe RIGOLETTO. It was worth the trip. Everything was first rate. The sets were gorgeous, the voices unbelievable. I cannot imagine the talent it takes to put this all together. Peter and I truly enjoyed ourselves!”

Allison Tran

Baltimore, Maryland

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“Wow!!!! The performance (of **RIGOLETTO**) last night was absolutely incredible! The costumes, sets, music and of course the voices were wonderful. Gilda and Rigoletto were terrific! I heard so many favorable remarks just walking around during intermission, waiting in line for the ladies room, etc.! Also overheard some opera technical voice talk that I could tell was very favorable... just a banker here ... but I know it impressed a group who really knows their opera stuff! The audience went NUTS! I'm sure you all got to see the standing ovation ... pretty impressive! Bet you get a lot of good write-ups today! You all must be on cloud nine!

Thank you!”

Sandy

Sandra B. Leerhoff

Vice President and Strategic Finance Officer

Sun Trust Bank, Baltimore, Maryland

“Jenny! **RIGOLETTO** was fabulous, fantastic, breath-taking! Strahotno!!! This is the best opera I have ever been to!!! I loved the singing, the acting, the costumes, the decors, everything...! You guys did an amazing job and everybody asked when the next opera will be. One of Anna’s friends had brought with her another American couple and everybody wanted to know when there will be more such high-class operas. I told them that this was the last one for this season, but I hope next year you will be able to do many more... Thank you for the pleasure and recharging my spiritual body with such high vibes!!”

Regards

Milena Koshar

**Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson, Inc.**

Baltimore, MD

**RIGOLETTO** – Baltimore

Hi Jenny,

Just a big thank you for RIGOLETTO. We loved every minute of it-a real treat!

Dana Slater

WYPR – Baltimore, MD

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**RIGOLETTO** – Palace Theatre, Manchester, NH – Mar. 2010....“The performance (of **RIGOLETTO** was wonderful! The cast superb, and the sets beautiful. Our audience loved your Rigoletto! Thank you for a great season ending performance, and we look forward to M. Butterfly and Turandot next season (we had many subscribers sign up last night already!) Thanks

Richard Bojko

GM, OPERA NEW HAMPSHIRE

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**DIE FLEDERMAUS** – Prescott, Arizona – Feb. 2010

“The performance was very well received; singers, set, and costumes all well done. They thought the final act was hilarious.”

Susan Garner

Artistic Programming Coordinator

Yavapai College Community Events, Prescott, AZ

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**MOZART FESTIVAL OPERA – NOZZE DI FIGARO** – Mar. 2010

Jenny,

The opera and your cast were all very good! We saw more young people this year, which is a trend I hope continues, as we need to bring new people to the Opera. Thanks for all your help...

Mark Thomas

Director of Programming

F.M. Kirby Center, Wilkes Barre, PA

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**MOZART FESTIVAL OPERA – DON GIOVANNI**

Marshall Artists Series presents Mozart's '**Don Giovanni**'

The Herald-Dispatch – Mar. 2010

“HUNTINGTON -- They say the show must go on, and the Marshall Artists Series presentation of Mozart's "Don Giovanni" did just that after a brief delay caused by a power outage Monday evening. The performance, which was scheduled to begin at 8 p.m., was delayed when power went out just before 7 p.m. But devoted Marshall Artists Series ticket holders and opera fans flooded 4th Avenue sidewalks and waited in the dark, cheering when the lights came on shortly after 8 p.m. The patrons had good reason to be thrilled that the show went on. "Don Giovanni" is often hailed as the greatest of all operas, and it is the first time in more than 40 years that it has been performed in Huntington. About 1,200 people attended the two-act opera, which is based on the true-life story of the aristocratic, yet wicked and debauched Don Juan of Seville. The opera was performed by the Mozart Festival Opera, which made its U.S. debut in 2003. The title character of Don Giovanni was portrayed by Stefano De Peppo.”

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**DON GIOVANNI** – Newberry Opera House, SC – March 2010

“It was fabulous -- I had people come up to me and say they could not believe this was happening in SC. Thanks! -- I can't wait for TOSCA”

Deborah Smith

NEWBERRY OPERA HOUSE, NEWBERRY, SC

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**DON GIOVANNI** – Jacksonville, FL – Mar. 2010... “I and two of my staff saw the production and felt that it was very well done! Maybe one of the finest that you have sent our way. I spoke to several of our patrons at intermission who also felt the same way – the consensus was all the leads had strong voices. I thought the leads were very animated and this is a show that requires good comedic acting as well as the singing. Stefano was a real treat for the pre-performance chat. We had over a 130 for his presentation & had to bring in more chairs. They loved him – what a treat. Thank you for arranging this for us.”

Milton A. Russos

Executive Director

The Artist Series, Broadway in Jacksonville - Presented by Florida State College

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**LA BOHEME** – Clearwater Florida – Mar. 2010

“Wonderful reaction to the show on Saturday eve, especially for Mimi. A number of standing ovations and wonderful comments as people were leaving the theatre. Another wonderful Teatro Lirico experience!”

Best always - Robert Freedman – RUTH ECKERD HALL