Suor Angelica by Giacomo Puccini

It is a fascinating read!

Suor Angelica was first produced at the Metropolitan Opera. It is a beautiful opera that is relevant to today’s world.

Chelsea Opera Spotlight – Fall 2015

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John Geller, Gerald Potter, Directors
Samuel McCoy, Music Director/Principal Conductor (ex-officio)

For more information, write chelseaopera@aol.com or call 212-260-1796.

Visit www.ChelseaOpera.org for ticket information and to sign up for our mailing list.

Chelsea Opera Awarded National Endowment for the Arts – Art Works Grant #2

For the second time in as many years, Chelsea Opera has been awarded a major grant from the National Endowment for the Arts – Art Works program. And again, this $10,000 grant must be matched dollar for dollar!

Glory Denied was first produced by Chelsea Opera in 2010. Those connected with the production found it to be life-changing.

“There are so many aspects of Glory Denied which continue to change me,” explains co-founder/co-producer Leonarda Priore. “To be so moved on the wings of such glorious music through difficult subject matter is a gift on so many levels. One might argue that revisiting painful subjects can keep us stuck in the anguish of the experience and perpetuate the trauma. I see it instead as an opportunity to become more aware and to learn from the far-reaching effects to all of those who serve our country wherever, whenever and for whatever... I thank you.”

The opera is gripping for two primary reasons. First, it relates the heart-wrenching story of Jim and Alyce Thompson. Returning to America after nearly nine years as a POW in Vietnam camps, he finds his wife has been unfaithful to him, totally contradicting his memories of the idealized woman he held in his mind as he was tortured and confined to cages too small to sit up in. Thompson’s memories of his imprisonment along with his inability to adjust to an American culture that is completely changed from the one he thought he knew contribute to their failed reconciliation.

The second reason this opera is so compelling is the music. Before writing Glory Denied, his first opera, composer Tom Cipullo’s primary focus was on writing song literature. He has written hundreds of songs and consequently, he knows and understands a singer’s voice. His music can be painfully beautiful because of its delicate lyricism, but at another turn, jagged and uncomfortable in order to mesh with the brutality of the story.

Chelsea Opera has been awarded a $10,000 NEA grant in support of the November production of Glory Denied. For every donation above $10,000 NEA grant in support of the November production of Glory Denied.

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PO Box 277 - Old Chelsea Station
New York, NY 10113-0277

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CHELSEA OPERA AWARDED NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS – ART WORKS GRANT #2

NEA ART WORKS GRANT #2 AWARDED TO CHELSEA OPERA – GLORY DENIED by TOM CIPULLO

For tickets and more information, visit www.ChelseaOpera.org.

Peter Kendall Clark as Younger Thompson
Kate Obeij as Older Alyce

Martha Guth as Older Alyce

Brandon Snook as Younger Thompson

Tom Cipullo

Performances will be given at St. Peter’s Church in Chelsea on Thursday, Nov. 12 at 7:30pm and Saturday, Nov. 14 at 2:00pm.

For tickets and more information, visit www.ChelseaOpera.org.
RECAP TOSCA

Tosca was one of our biggest undertakings. Special funding from the H.O. Peet Foundation allowed us to expand the chamber orchestra to 23 in order to achieve the rich, luscious Puccini sound we all love, conducted by Maestro Samuel McCoy. A cast of 17 principal singers and their covers, supplemented by 17 ensemble singers, produced a glorious sound in St. Peter’s Church in Chelsea for three performances.

Volunteer Spotlight – Juli Borst

Juli Borst is a busy singer who volunteers to help promote Chelsea Opera’s events and performances with very imaginative postings on Facebook. She has sung in numerous concerts and was featured in CO’s 2011 production of Lee Hoiby’s one-act opera, This is the Bell speaking, playing the roles of Mother/Allison.

Why did you decide to become a singer? Do you remember a stop motion animated image on Sesame Street that sang Carmen’s “Habanera”? That was my first exposure to opera. It was beautiful and I wanted to do that! Later the nun at my parochial school told me my voice was pretty, which sealed the deal. I’ve never found anything I like to do better.

What has been your favorite role? (Why?)

My favorite role of all time is The Composer in Ariadne auf Naxos. Richard Strauss gives lush, complex harmonies, dramatic leaps and jumps, and soaring lyric lines which are the closest thing to flying with two feet on the ground, if you ask me. Added is a character with scenery chewing dramatic turns (a rarity for mezzos), who storms off the stage, papers flying, and who doesn’t even have to come back in Act 2?

How do you sustain yourself between singing jobs?

Like many, many singers, I have a day job, currently at a law office. I’ve had a variety of temporary and permanent NYC office jobs around singing. All of them employed other artists as well: singers, actors, directors, writers. We’re very employable. The steady job I’ve had since arriving in NYC is a church job, singing with music director Gwen Toth first at St. Francis of Assisi Church, then Immanuel Lutheran Church.

You’ve produced some inventive postings for Chelsea Opera’s Facebook page. How do you find them?

I try to relate elements of the production or event to current events (such as a news story about the history of tequila for the recent Midsummer Margs), and cross-reference them with things close to home, like New York City locations or history (such as the New York origins of the story in The Face on the Barroom Floor). With New York’s rich cultural history, this is pretty easy to do! I try to make posts that offer a little something special, that are hopefully interesting, while promoting Chelsea Opera.

Mezzo soprano Juli Borst has performed with Tanglewood Music Center, Chelsea Opera, dell’Arte Opera Ensemble, Des Moines Metro Opera, NYVO National Company, and Chautauqua Opera, among others. Favorite roles include Der Komponist, Siebel, and Cherubino. Recent roles: Julia in Kirke Mechem’s The Rivich and Lucia in Rossini’s La gazza ladra, both with Brom Opera.

RECAP A DISTANT LOVE/QUINCY

Thanks to its first grant from the National Endowment for the Arts – Art Works program, Chelsea Opera toured its production of A Distant Love: Songs of John and Abigail Adams for a performance on Father’s Day in the Carriage House behind the Adams’ family home at the Adams National Historical Park in Quincy, MA. Words cannot express how profound this experience was for the singers, the tech crew and the audience, one of whom wrote: “The production made real, vulnerable, likeable, loving human beings out of a Founding Father who has been portrayed almost exclusively as an austere, self-involved prude, and his awesome wife”. Chelsea Opera hopes to take this compact opera to other venues beyond NYC in the future.

CURTAIN CALL – TAKE A BOW

After eleven years of service to Chelsea Opera, the Board of Directors announces that Lynne Hayden-Findlay will be retiring effective January 1, 2016. While Lynne will continue to be a part of the Chelsea Opera family, she will be looking forward to having more time to travel, reconnect with family and do further research on her ancestry.

Lynne has handled many administrative duties along with co-founder Leonarda Priore, and has directed many of the company’s productions including a world premiere and several New York premieres. Lynne will be directing our twelfth season opener this November, Glory Denied by Tom Cipullo. This production will be accomplished with funding assistance from the company’s second NEA – Art Works grant. We are grateful for all of Lynne’s service and want postcards from every port.

Back: Terry Quinn, Robert Aaron Taylor, Samuel McCoy, Caroline Keithn (ANHP)
Front: Leonarda Priore, Victoria Tralongo, Gary S. Fagin, Lynne Hayden-Findlay

Audience members enjoy a sweet treat and a little apple cider during the intermission, compliments of the Park Rangers.