**A LOOK BEHIND THE SCENES: COSTUMING AN OPERA**

What goes into costuming a show with 25 or more singers of varying sizes, some of which share both a role and the costume? Early on, Chelsea Opera was fortunate to learn about the TDF Costume Collection where professionally made costumes are available for low-fee, short-term rental.

The Costume Collections’ goods are rarely sized so each item must be measured in the hope of finding just the right fit, color and style for the character and the period. Each cast member then comes in for a private fitting at TDF’s West 26th Street site. If the costume doesn’t fit, the hunt begins anew, but this time with an urgency to find an immediate replacement: singers usually squeeze in the fitting on their lunch hour from their day jobs! Once all the costumes are selected, TDF draws up the rental agreement, often totaling more than $1,000. At the show’s end, costumes are cleaned and returned to TDF or to storage. When an opera is set in a more contemporary period, the city’s thrift stores become a great resource.

**A new American classic:**

**The Ballad of Baby Doe**

The 1880 American West is booming from silver ore-filled mines discovered daily. A 26-year old, petite, blonde arrives in Leadville, CO and meets Horace Tabor, 30 years her senior. Smitten, he finagles a divorce from Augusta, his wife of 23 years, and marries Elizabeth “Baby” Doe. This true story couldn’t be more dramatic if it had been written for a novel. It tells of Tabor’s rise to become one of the richest men in America and his sad fall into destitution, with the woman once labeled a shameless hussy always by his side. After his death, she became the bearer of his legacy until 1935 when she was found frozen to death, arms across her chest, having never given up hope that their beloved Matchless Mine would rise again! Don’t miss this 50th anniversary production of an amazing opera: The Ballad of Baby Doe.

**COMING SOON**

Tenor Luigi Boccia and Pianist Carmine Aufiero present a program of Paolo Tosti and other great Italian art songs. All proceeds from this performance benefit Chelsea Opera’s Production Fund.

**March 29, 2008 – 7PM**

**CELEBRATE THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NYC PREMIERE**

Chelsea Opera Presents

**The Ballad of Baby Doe**

May 15-17, 2008 – 7:30 PM

May 18, 2008 – 3:00 PM