

Puccini LA BOHEME

Realism, humor help LA BOHEME succeed

"SCHENECTADY – Teatro Lirico d'Europa's production of Puccini's **LA BOHEME** on Sunday night at Proctor's Theatre was one of the most spontaneous performances seen in a long time. Artistic director Giorgio Lalov got his singers to communicate with each other in a realistic and often lighthearted fashion rather than just have them focus on projecting their voices. To be sure, all the singers were strong and the two female leads, Elena Razgulyieva as Mimi and Larissa Yudina as Musetta, had big voices that soared. It was a pleasure to watch the *opera* unfold. It also helped that the supertitles often had humor that made the capacity crowd laugh. The camaraderie of the four men seemed real and they all sang well together. Baritone Ilia Pavlov as Shaunard and bass Mikhail Kolelishvili as Colline each had substantial arias. Kolelishvili's aria in the final act was especially smooth and resonant. As lovers, Gonzalez and Razgulyieva had a sweet chemistry and their voices blended well. Razgulyieva's voice was clear, strong and gained strength as she went up. Her top notes were often thrilling. Because she also took her time in her arias and made the orchestra follow her, listeners could savor Puccini's melodies better. Gonzalez sometimes let loose when he hit his many top notes but other times he seemed to be holding back. He was fervently convincing when he needed to be, though. Yudina stole more than Marcello's heart. Dressed in a beautiful black dress and tossing her blond curls, she was a charismatic and marvelous coquette with a voice to match. Her famous aria in the second act was a highlight. The chorus also did nicely. Vailntin Topencharov conceived appropriate sets and costumes were in a green, white and plum palette. The back scrim's scene

was especially evocative of a cold winter storm. The orchestra was enthusiastic and supportive."

THE DAILY GAZETTE – Geraldine Freedman – November 2006

About Teatro Lirico LA BOHEME in Durham, NH

"The performance of LA BOHEME was fantastic. The ovation went on for quite some time. Our audience especially loved Mimi and Rodolfo. As usual, the crew was great to work with. We really appreciate having your company come to UNH. Thank you again."

Mary De Turk – Johnson Theatre

University of New Hampshire – Durham, NH

LA BOHEME – Opera Done Just Right

"PCA Great performances has brought Teatro Lirico D'Europa to Merrill Auditorium often enough so that the company has earned a good reputation. The audience was in excess of 1,700 including 2 rows of obstructed view seats. This particular road show was even better than Teatro Lirico's usually high professional standard, and drew a long standing – ovation. What made this production stand out was its emotional realism. Everything contributed to the emotional effect – the stark wintery scenery, the costumes, the acting, the well played score with full orchestra, even the choreography, which contrasted the clownish antics of the four friends with the unfolding tragedy. As Mimi, Elena Razgulyieva was simply outstanding in this role. She has a glorious voice that she can modulate to the exact tone appropriate to the scene. She is one of the few to play Mimi who leave no doubt about why Rodolfo should fall in love at first sight. Tenor Evgeny Akimov as Rodolfo was excellent. He is also a good actor and his interactions with Mimi were entirely believable. Musetta, Liubov Metodieva and Marcello, Vladimir Samsonov was also well sung and acted-

light, humored and with a caring undertone. Even the walk on roles made a significant contribution to the atmosphere. PCA Great performances 75th anniversary is more than living up to its expectations."

PORTLAND PRESS HERALD – Christopher Hyde

Theater is Transforming the City

The popular Teatro Lirico D'Europa's rendition of Puccini's **LA BOHEME**. A magnificent performance was presented to a large and appreciative audience whose thunderous standing applause was a well-deserved tribute to this outstanding operatic production.

THE STANDARD TIMES – Ronald Souza – December 2005

"Teatro Lirico D'Europa brought a meat-and potatoes version of **LA BOHEME** to a sold out McCallum Theatre Sunday. As Rodolfo, Evgeni Akimov gave a stalwart performance that rattled the rafters with his pure tone and fine enunciation. His top range was thrilling. This is a tenor whose voice soars with spine-tingling fortitude. Olga Cherisheva's Mimi proved fully capable of the role's high tessitura demands. Marina Viskvorkina was radiant in the irresistible "Musetta's Waltz" gliding over the high tones with enviable dexterity and leading the chorus to a festive ending. The supporting cast was equally adept. Viacheslav Pochapsky's deep bass gave a dramatic heft to the philosopher Colline. Marcello was sung with robust fervor by Vladimir Samsunov. The chorus has always delivered a satisfying sound and conductor Krassimir Topolov kept the tempi zipping along in this production that brought a standing ovation from the sated audience."

THE DESERT SUN – Jeff Britton – February 2005

LA BOHEME A Stunning Success

"Teatro Lirico D'Europa had a stunning success Saturday evening with a production of Puccini's **LA BOHEME** that would have satisfied the most ardent opera fan. Here was a production in a classic style with solid acting and depth of sound, both of which stirred the musical soul of an audience so intensely satisfied. Artistic director Giorgio Lalov has the gift of "assemblage d'art". Veselina Vasileva's Mimi was outstanding from the start with clarity and pitch "to die for" coupled with a fragile image created from inner strength. Vladimir Samsonov's Marcello was totally convincing and his detachment/attachment with the Musetta, Liubov Metodieva, a conflicted siren in her own right with a voice to match. The last scene, wonderfully staged and powerfully sung, brought the production to a pinnacle. The chorus sang very well. Super-titles, as ever, helpful, were especially well done and excellently timed. Musetta was outlandishly stunning in act 2. Kudos to Hristo Sarafov, who comically played Benoit and Alcindoro as well as to Viacheslav Pochapsky who played a strong, philosophical Colline. November 2005 will witness the return of Teatro Lirico D'Europa to the Center for the Performing Arts. We cannot wait."

THE STAR (Chicago Heights) – D. K. Luksetich – February 2005

DAYTONA BEACH SYMPHONY SOCIETY

"**LA BOHEME** was a WONDERFUL night in Daytona Beach. The theater was packed and everyone LOVED the opera. It was a major triumph!!!! People were crying with the emotional impact of the wonderful singers. Not only were the voices spectacular, but also the acting was superb. Kudos to you all. Thank you, thank you for a perfect evening. Daytona Beach is a happier place thanks to Teatro Lirico."

Carolina Anderson, GM – Daytona Beach Symphony Society

“We just had a lovely after-performance visit with Giorgio and lead singers. **LA BOHEME** was a fantastic performance! We loved the singers, their acting, everything about it. We had about 600 kids there, and they were eating it up. How about that for the next generation of opera buffs!!! We had a full house and it was such a great success. Mimi's voice was amazing, Musetta of course stole the show with her great voice and antics, and Rodolfo was wonderful not only for his voice, but he was such a fine actor as well. We are just so grateful to have had your company here. Thanks go out to you and Giorgio for all of the dedicated work you have put into bringing good opera out to where we are. It was wonderful!!!!”

Nancy and Dallas – Daytona Beach Symphony Society

LA BOHEME – Clearwater Florida – March 2010

“Wonderful reaction to the show (**LA BOHEME**) on Saturday eve, especially for Mimi (Melliangee Perez). A number of standing ovations and wonderful comments as people were leaving the theatre. Another wonderful Teatro Lirico experience!” *Robert Freedman, RUTH ECKERD HALL, Clearwater, FL*

“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

“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 Cattanach, GM

Touhill Performing Arts Center, St. Louis, MO - October 2009

Dark, deadly, tragic, but LA BOHEME is for lovers

"**LA BOHEME** was performed at the Touhill Performing Arts Center on Wednesday, October 22 at 7:30 p.m. by 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 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 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.”

THE CURRENT, St. Louis, MO –Matthew B. Haunted

Arts and Entertainment - October 2009

Jaw-dropping performances from an outstanding cast send this LA BOHEME into the stratosphere!

“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.”

OPERAON:LINE.US – Paul Walkowski – October 30, 2009

“I loved it (**LA 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 TEARO 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. *MUSIC AND VISION DAILY – October 2009*

"Teatro Lirico d'Europa presented a very well stage-directed, well sung **LA BOHEME** at the Garde Arts Center, New London, Connecticut. Artistic and stage director, and set and costume designer Giorgio Lalov gave us a compelling dramatic and comic rendering, with plausible, motivated characterization. For example, Musetta's "Quando m'en vo" did not have her going "soletta per la via" as just a diva singing her aria but cozying up to several men in the Momus crowd, giving Alcindoro and Marcello cause for alarm--the best staging I've seen of Musetta's Waltz. Character interaction, especially between Rodolfo and Mimi, was always at play with no stand-and-deliver. The unit set had at center a pair of large windows for the garret flat which became doors for Cafe Momus and the Act III tavern, for which they opened. Orlovskaya's pure, round-voiced column of soprano sound projected very well in Mimi's arias and the Act II ensemble. She is tall and attractive, and she related nicely to Bulgarian Orlin Gorlanov's also well-projected Rodolfo. Bulgarian soprano, Stanislava Ivanova's Musetta

was clear-voiced and appropriately lyric. She looked beautiful in the black dress for Act II and the pink one in Acts III and IV. "

OPERA L – February 2012 – John Deredita

"**LA BOHEME** went very well, thank you. The quality of the performance was excellent!"

Scott Seltzer, Programming Director

F.M. Kirby Center for the Performing Arts – Feb 2012

"**LA BOHEME** was great! We had a good house. Giorgio is so great to work with and a real delight. It is as if we have been friends forever. We talked about **MADAMA BUTTERFLY** for next year. It would again be in the month of February. Thanks for everything!"

David Nyman – Heritage Theatre, Cedar City, Utah – February 2012

"**LA BOHEME** and The **OPERA GALA** was outstanding, I believe the best ever! It was wonderful having selections from three diverse operas. All of the singers were good but the sopranos were particularly good this night. **BOHEME** was very well received. Several comments about how the company just continues to get better each year."

Kris Sabel, Alberto Vilar Center, Vail, CO – February 2012

"Tearo Lirico D'Europa has done it again! Another big success for Palmetto Opera and opera lovers in South Carolina. **LA BOHEME** was a stunning performance! The pairing of the incredible voices of tenor, Simon Kyung Lee (Rodolfo) and

soprano, Olga Orlovskaya (Mimi) was sensational. The supporting soloists of Teatro Lirico rounded out an amazing cast. Conductor, Krassimir Topolov was as usual, excellent. The packed house and continuous standing ovation made it clear that Saturday night was a night to be remembered. Thank you!"

*Kathy Newman, Chairman of Palmetto Opera
Koger Center, Columbia SC – Winter 2015*

LA BOHEME

"Mimi!" The moment Rodolfo shouted out, anguished and painful – moved the audience to tears. When the curtain came down, the audience responded with a long, standing ovation. It was the first time a full-scale opera was ever presented at The Pickwick Theatre as well as for Korean Community. Teatro Lirico D'Europa presented a traditional, full-throated, emotional performance with a great international cast, orchestra and chorus including a children's chorus. The main cast was exceptional. Rodolfo (Korean Tenor Simon Lee) sang with a vibrato and high notes reminding one of Jusse Bjorling (one of the great tenors in the 20 century) and made a great appearance on the stage. Mimi, soprano Olga Orlovskaya sang dramatically with great breath control. Rodolfo and Mimi tell the story of a heart breaking romance. The other couple presented wit seasoned with a sense of humor. Soprano, Stanislava Ivanova and baritone, Dobromir Momekov showed great vocal skill. Previously most of events in the Chicago Korean Community have been only popular music and some classical concerts but did not arrive to show the great elegance and high culture of the classical field. This **LA BOHEME** brought a magical evening, and officially presented for the first time, a full-scale production of opera performed with a stunning response from audience. We hope to see

many more of Teatro Lirico D'Europa's productions in the future!"

Myong Lim, Korea Daily News, Chicago – Winter 2015

"**LA BOHEME** was simply magnificent!! Thank you for making it possible to put a full- scale opera in our community for the first time. Many of the audience members said that they didn't believe this was possible and they were very happy. We look forward to seeing you next year!"

Grace IM, GM and Event Director

Pickwick Theatre, Park Ridge, Illinois – Winter 2015

"A splendid performance of **LA BOHEME** this evening at the Arcada Theatre...an opera written in the 1800s and still incredibly relevant in 2015! Really, this international presentation of **LA BOHEME** will rival any other show we have had here at The Arcada...INCREDIBLE! See you next season. Bravo!!"

Ron Onesti, President – Arcada Theatre, St. Charles, Illinois – Winter 2015

Bravo to this magical performance LA BOHEME

"Ft. Myers Community Concerts' second successful program following the dazzling opening concert of The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra with Pinchas Zukerman on Jan. 16 was a sparkling performance of Puccini's opera **LA BOHEME** performed by Teatro Lirico D'Europa. For those of you who might not be aware of this unique opera company, here are some background notes. Teatro Lirico D'Europa was created in 1988 by the late Yves Josse, a French arts promoter and Bulgarian opera singer who made his debut at Teatro alla Scala, Milan, at age 25 while participating in Scala's famous international training for young singers. The collaboration between Josse and Lalov was a huge success in a very

short time, resulting in tours with over 250 performances a season throughout France, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Spain, Italy, Sicily and Portugal at 180 different venues. Lalov created the sets and costumes for the productions and organized the chorus and orchestra in Bulgaria, central Europe and the United States. Josse booked the performances from his office in Paris. From the beginning the company established itself as highly competent, and the unusual multinational chemistry proved to be very popular. Teatro Lirico D'Europa has now completed over 4,000 performances worldwide, including 14 consecutive seasons in the USA. This is the opera company's 16th season in the US with performances of La Boheme, Carmen and concert performances of great moments in Italian opera from Broadway to opera. Bottom line this is a small but mighty opera company. The company of La Boheme was true to form with an international cast: I cannot even imagine what rehearsals are like with an international cast like that. Puccini's great opera about talented, broke, starving and dying French artists in 1840s Paris, the opera is still and always will be a paean of amour. Puccini writes love in terms of music that touches and sometimes breaks your heart.

The singing was wonderful, it all worked, making the Community Concerts' version **LA BOHEME** as magical as ever. Nothing can ever top the incredible Puccini score, which always works its enchantment on me; and though it was the very first opera I ever viewed at the Old Metropolitan Opera House at age 8, I wept then as I did last Wednesday night. As a matter of fact, the waterworks start every time (and there have been many) I get to hear this incredible music. The orchestra and its conductor played richly and fully, the leading artists were quite wonderful as was the singing chorus; as a matter of fact the entire production was an affirmation of the reviews this terrific company receives; which state that

this is a highly competent company, and the unusual multinational operatic talent along with the chemistry of this talented company has proven to be extremely popular with audiences, both European and American.

If last week's performance of **LA BOHEME** was any example, our Fort Myers audience gave Teatro Lirico D'Europa a four-star standing ovation, to which I can only add Bravo! Yeah! and Hip-Hip Hurray!"

Marsha Wagner, Island Reporter – CAPTIVA CURRENT

Sanibel-Captiva Islander

Performance at Barbara Mann Hall, Ft. Myers, FL – Winter 2015

"The audience cheered the performance of the cast of **LA BOHEME** last night at the Marina Civic Center. I saw several folks with tears in their eyes after the final scene-- ample testimony of the compelling acting ability of the principal performers. Cheers to Simon Kyung (Rudolfo), Olga Orlovskaya (Mimi) and Stanislava Ivanova (Musetta) for their powerful vocal performances. As I remarked to the gathering at the post opera reception, their voices rank along with the best that can be heard at the most prestigious opera houses in the world. Our gratitude to Teatro Lirico for bringing this wonderful production to Panama City."

Bob Borich, Talent Chairman

Panama City (FL) Music Association – Winter 2015

"**LA BOHEME** was excellent! The company was terrific, talented and professional. Let's do another show next season."

Penny Watkins, GM

Marshall Artist Series, Huntington, West VA – Winter 2015

"It (**LA BOHEME**) was wonderful! Our audience loved it! One of the best you've brought us, and that's saying something. We're looking forward to next season (**AIDA**) already!"

Mary Lee Mann – Ft. Myers Community Concerts

Barbara Mann Hall – Ft. Myers, FL – Winter 2015

"The show (**LA BOHEME**) was awesome and well attended! The audience loved it!" *Joyce Maddox, Operations Manager*

Miramar Cultural Center | ArtsPark Miramar, FL – Winter 2015

"**LA BOHEME** was WONDERFUL! A great crowd. Thank you for everything!"

Faith Wilson, Executive Director – Opera NH – Winter 2015
