

Puccini – TOSCA

TOSCA Leaves Audience in a Good Mood, Wanting More!

"The traveling production of **TOSCA** by Teatro Lirico D'Europa left the CAPACITY audience in a good mood, wishing for more. Soprano, Victoria Litherland, was excellent in the title role. She has sung **TOSCA** before with the Austin Lyric Opera and last week was in Seattle, starring in **MANON LESCAUT**. She was paired well with tenor, Cesar Hernandez as Mario. Baritone, Vailry Ivanov was appropriately villainous as Scarpia, emphasizing the character's sadistic side rather than his mock piety. The secondary characters were well sung. The sets and costumes were first rate. Everyone deserved the long standing ovation at the final curtain."

PORTLAND PRESS HERALD – Christopher Hyde – February 2004

Teatro Lirico's TOSCA Comes Up Big!

"Everything about Friday's **TOSCA**, the outstanding final program in the Symphony Society's International Series, was big. From the moment the curtain rose, it was clear that the nearly 50 members of Teatro Lirico's orchestra were too many for Peabody Auditorium's pit. The result was a voluminous sound, just right for the outsized passions in the opera and for the singers who expressed them. Under the direction of Giorgio Lalov, the focus is always firmly on the romantic tragedy **TOSCA** represents. Teatro Lirico's cast, elegantly costumed and supported by an orchestra able to express the operas immense emotions, was tremendous in their ability to make every nuance felt. In the title role, the young American soprano shone. Pearce's voice, rich and warm, shifted with emotions that spanned the gamut, and her acting made marvelously theatrical gestures entirely believable. David Corman (Cavaradossi) and

Pearce were deeply affecting. Their stunning voices had the greatest impact. They were in every way, terrific."

DAYTONA BEACH NEWS JOURNAL – Laura Stewart – March 2004

TOSCA in MANCHESTER, NH – October 2007

"Thank you for an amazing and wonderful performance! Giorgio and your people are great to work with, as seconded by the Palace staff...all most accommodating. Your principle singers (and the rest) gave our audience what they came for – a truly wonderful operatic experience. We rec'd much positive feedback (even at intermission) and our supporters are looking forward to CARMEN and AIDA already! Please thank your principles for attending our post-opera reception. I hope that they experienced directly from the attendees the appreciation of the hard work that they put into their art, as well as the praise they deserved. We look forward to a nice, long relationship with you – and so do our audience!"

Richard Bojko, Director

Opera New Hampshire – Manchester, NH – October 2007

TOSCA in AMHERST, MA – November 2007

"We've had nothing but wonderful comments about the performance of TOSCA last Sunday!"

Halina Kusleika – Assistant Director of Programming

Fine Arts Center, University of Massachusetts – Amherst, MA

TOSCA in New London, CT – January 2008

“All your **TOSCA** cast were professionals! What lovely voices – I had spent the weekend in NY, came home yesterday at 2pm, went to the theatre, went home to change, went back to the theatre, had the opera dinner and **HAD TO STAY FOR THE WHOLE SHOW BECAUSE I LOVED IT!** Thank you for all your hard work in allowing us to present fabulous operas in New London, CT.”

Jeanne Sigal – Garde Arts Center – New London CT

TOSCA in BOSTON – January 2008

"Teatro Lirico D'Europa's **TOSCA** was the kind of production in which Puccini's villain (Baron Scarpia, lecherous chief of the Roman police) wipes a tear from the cheek of the heroine (opera star Floria Tosca) and then licks the tear off his finger. You've got to love it! I've sat through my share of boring, passionless Toscas and this one was neither. It was fun. Russian soprano Olga Chernisheva was a terrific Tosca, with her big voice (perhaps too big too much of the time) and glamorous looks, whether boiling over with misguided jealousy or nuzzling the painter Cavaradossi (even in church!), terrorized by her sadistic tormentor (Scarpia will stop torturing her lover only if she agrees to sleep with him) or plunging a knife into his loathsome heart. Her big aria, "Vissi d'arte" ("I lived for art") was more impressive than heartrending, but find me another soprano who can sing this demanding role so well and also look so convincing in it. As Scarpia, American bass-baritone William Powers, snarling a menacing laugh as the first-act curtain descended, was not the subtlest of actors. Chewing the scenery, silent-movie-style, seems to be his meat and potatoes, but he responded vividly to every phrase, and he's got the vocal chops. Handsome Bulgarian tenor Orlin Goranov was in better voice last

season as Butterfly's Pinkerton. Still, the basic timbre of his voice should be the envy of a lot of other tenors, and he and Chernisheva made a most convincing pair of lovers. As the Sacristan, Constantine Videv turned every fussy little gesture into a gem of comic characterization. And Giorgio Dinev was very creepy as Scarpia's henchman."

BOSTON PHOENIX – Lloyd Schwartz – January 2008

TOSCA at Lucas Theatre, Savannah, GA – January 2008

"(TOSCA) was very well received, a great night all around! I spoke with Giorgio briefly during load-in but I had to leave before the end of the show (battling bronchitis) so did not see him afterwards. Please pass on my thanks!"

Ken Carter, General Manager – Lucas Theatre – Savannah, GA

TOSCA at Keenan Auditorium, Wilmington, NC – January 2008

"(TOSCA) was a smash hit, with the audience standing and shouting and whistling, and their applause was no more than the company deserved for a truly wonderful production! Voices costumes, VERY good acting, great sets, and the Sofia Symphony played really well in very cramped conditions. I was particularly thrilled since this was the first of the productions I've booked through you actually to arrive here, and it bodes very well for the future. It was an absolutely sold-out house, by the way. Speaking of the future, perhaps we can begin to think about possible dates for your Moscow orchestra, and also to look at what operas are available for 09/10. It seems quite likely that I'll be taking two bookings from you again that season, and so I'd ideally like to start to set them up, so that I can then plan the other two events around them. Thank you, thank you, thank you!"

*Fred Wharton – Wilmington Concert Association
Keenan Auditorium – Wilmington, NC*

TOSCA in Cedar Falls, Iowa – February 2008

"All feedback I have heard this morning has been very positive. I have heard a number of compliments on the high quality of voices within the company, which is wonderful for us, as we have had negative experiences with opera companies in the past. We will be starting discussions for booking our 09-10 shortly. Please send me your offerings for 09-10 whenever you have that set."

Molly Hackenmiller-Gallagher – Bluedorn Performing Arts Center

TOSCA AND OPERA GALA – Vail, CO – February 2008

"Great audience response! The soloist for TOSCA were all terrific and the orchestra sounded the best it ever had!"

KRIS SABEL, Executive Director – Vilar Performing Arts Center – Avon, CO

TOSCA in Palm Desert, CA – February 2008

"Very nice production as always! Thanks for bringing it to us. Looking forward to your new production of Aida next year!"

*Mitchell Gershenfeld, Director of Presentations and Theater Operations
McCallum Theatre, Palm Desert, CA*

TOSCA in University Park, IL – February 2008

"Our Theatre Manager reports that the artist who played Flora (TOSCA) was fantastic, and the tenor was also equally amazing. Our audience wanted autographs from the cast, and apparently loved the show!"

*Burt Dikelsky, Executive Director – The Center for Performing Arts
University Park, IL*

TOSCA at Clemson University, Clemson, SC – February 2008

"TOSCA was absolutely fabulous – everything you said it would be, and I could not have been more pleased. Our house was about 80% full, in spite of terrible cold and rain. I was thrilled that people braved the elements to come to the performance. The singers were incredible and I could not believe how they projected. The acoustics in our hall are fabulous, and really showed off the singers to the max. I thought the orchestra was excellent as well. I was mesmerized from the opening chord and just did not want the evening to be over. Powers was fabulous – what a voice. I'm sure he and Jennifer Larmore are quite a pair, and that's an interesting bit of news for me to know that they are married because I was so taken with her at Spoleto in 2006.

When is Teatro Lirico in this area in 08-09? You really do have a wonderful company, and I have received amazing comments – one yesterday from a very snooty and critical patron who has seen many productions at the Met, and she told me that she could not find any fault with the company. My production supervisor said that your crew was very easy to work with and I love to keep him happy. Thank you for sending such a great show."

Lillian Harder – Brooks Center at Clemson University – Clemson, SC

Teatro TOSCA a must-see!

"Naples, Florida gave Teatro Lirico its best compliment Monday, standing through four finale bows after the company and three guest stars sailed through TOSCA at the Philharmonic Center for the Arts. When Michael Hayes – Mario Cavaradossi – sang his defiant "Vittoria! Vittoria!" the volume set a few ears ringing in the front rows. Hayes slipped commandingly into the role

of the ill-fated rebel sympathizer, stoking a beautiful voice with good dramatics. He delivered a wrenching execution-eve “E lucevan le stelle (And the stars were shining)” farewell and duet with Tosca, who has plotted, in vain, her lover’s escape. In the last two years, Teatro has been embedding guest stars into its productions and performing here with the Naples Philharmonic Orchestra, a double injection of quality. With Kallen Esperian in the title role, it was another high: a lyric soprano with the acting ability to be the spitfire Tosca. Esperian’s laurels, like Hayes’, are extensive. She has had to hold her own against Placido Domingo and the late Luciano Pavarotti, so she can be expected to inhale a role like this one, as she did Monday. Floria Tosca’s role isn’t a vocal gymnastic trial. But it’s full of emotional moments such as “Vissi d’arte,” a tearful rebuke to God for having left her in the clutches of Scarpia, the corrupt and lecherous chief of police. For those who don’t know the story line, God delivers, leaving a carving knife nearby for Tosca to plunge into her would-be rapist’s heart. Esperian delivered as well, singing a strong, poignant plea half-prone on the floor, and executing her tormentor ferociously. As Tosca kneels over the body, a horn report in the score sounds, and Esperian snaps her head up, hitting the audience full-force with a look of terror at what she has done. It’s a riveting scene. As Scarpia, William Powers sounds so much meaner than he looks. He’s got the requisite brutal baritone to make us squirm, deep and dark. Enabling this continuing roll toward professional perfection is the Philharmonic, under the baton of a veteran operatic conductor, Steven White. There’s no comparison between this orchestra’s ability and any other we’ve heard behind opera, which is going to be a fact of life with a full-time, professional symphony. The Phil’s operas are becoming can’t-wait-for-the-next-one quality.”

Harriet Howard Heithaus – NAPLES DAILY NEWS – February 2008

TOSCA – Flynn Theatre, Burlington, VT

“It was a very very good production. We were really thrilled. Olga was wonderful, as were all the principals. Great singing and really good acting as well. Jane and I couldn't have been happier. Thank you so much and kudos to the company and crew.”

Natalie – UVM Lane Series – Burlington, VT

Teatro Lirico gives compelling performance of TOSCA

“The touring company, which this season will put on at least 30 productions of the opera, always puts its best foot forward. For this show, the voices were uniformly big and solid and the acting frequently kept pace with the quality of singing. Russian soprano Elena Razglaeva as Tosca had a lovely even range, luscious tones, and a clarity to her phrasing that was appealing. All her arias were done well. She projected the greatest amount of emotion in her second act aria in which she asks God why He rewards her this way. She posed just long enough on the parapet before jumping at the end to allow the huge crowd to get caught up in the moment. There was good chemistry with the charming Bulgarian tenor Orlin Goranov as her lover Cavaradossi. His voice soared easily through his famous arias. He was also light on his feet and ambled about the stage in a comfortable and realistic way. Bass-baritone William Powers projected the lecherous, rapacious character of Scarpia through an expressive face and a nonchalant manner that quickly became malevolent. Except for his sardonic laugh at the end of Act I he never satirized Scarpia. Rather, he seemed to gather all the light around him like a black hole. His superb singing was smooth and elegantly phrased and he colored it with edge or crooned to good effect. Sets, by necessity, were basic but provided enough of a locale. Scarpia's red and orange “office” was more like Hades but the final parapet with the twilight/dawn light was evocative. The orchestra under Krassimir Topolov did well and gave the singers plenty of space. The principal clarinet was

particularly good in the opening of the final big aria in Act III. Supertitles, too, were cogent and well-timed.”

Geraldine Freeman – SCHENECTADY GAZETTE - March 2007

TOSCA – Flynn Theatre, Burlington, VT

“Everything went beautifully last night and we were very happy with the performance...excellent singing and acting. Please thank Giorgio for us!”

Jane Ambrose

Director, UVM Lane Series - Burlington, VT

TOSCA – NEW JERSEY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER – Newark, NJ

On behalf of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, I would like to thank you for Teatro Lirico D’Europa’s **TOSCA** on November 11, 2007. As expected, the performance was simply exhilarating for all the attendance. The 2007-2008 season mark the Tenth Anniversary of NJPAC. From the very beginning we set out to establish a world-class performing arts venue. Teatro Lirico D’Europa’s performance was certainly in the spirit of that mission. It’s no surprise that Jenny Kelly Productions and NJPAC have developed a great relationship through the years. Here’s to a future of many more memorable moments.

*Barake Sele, Assistant Vice President, Programming
New Jersey Performing Arts Center - November 2007*

“**TOSCA** was wonderful, which is the norm for one of your productions. Cheers!”

John Wilkes, GM – Sunrise Theatre – Ft. Pierce, FL – February 2013

"These are some of the comments I got back about **TOSCA**: "The 'set' was authentic-looking. The lighting was perfect! Tosca had a beautiful voice and the way she moved around the stage was graceful. Cavaradossi had a great voice. Baron Scarpia played the part of the infatuated jealous scoundrel very well. His lust for life and indulging in all that it has to offer including "all the beauties and wine..." would put George Clooney to shame! The live orchestra was magnificent and the choral singing in the background gave it an ethereal experience for the ear. Can't think of anything else to say, just that it was GREAT! I also heard from more than one person that Tosca has an amazing and powerful voice."

Jessica Gloria, Director – Miramar Cultural Center – February 2013

"**TOSCA** was a great production, a great success! The after-party was a big success, too and everybody enjoyed meeting Giorgio and the cast members. They were very nice to visit with us after the performance. Thank you for all you all did and do, Jenny. I announced next season's schedule in my welcome remarks and in the program, so we've officially started next season's promotion!"

Kathy Neuman, Chairman – Palmetto Opera

Performance at Koger Center Columbia, SC – March 2013

TOSCA AT ARCADA THEATRE

"All I can say, with the loudest voice I have, is GRAZIE!! This production of **TOSCA** was simply amazing! The attention to detail, the costumes, the incredible set pieces, the absolutely amazing orchestra and the voices...oh those voices!!! I actually brought in vocal students from surrounding high schools for their first live opera experience, and I truly believe it was life changing for

them! They have not stopped talking about it! Thank you again, and HURRY BACK!"

*RON ONESTI, President/CEO – The Onesti Entertainment Corporation
The Arcada Theatre, St. Charles, Illinois – January 2016*

Translation of TOSCA review from THE KOREAN DAILY NEWS/Chicago

It was simply a magnificent performance! **TOSCA** displayed a beautiful, traditional stage setting with full orchestra and chorus that brought a very high quality of the art form. Teatro Lirico D'Europa's 2nd season in Chicagoland left a memory of great pleasure and inspiration in the community. Former Metropolitan opera star Bill Powers performed the role of as Scarpia. Korean tenor Simon Kyung Lee was Cavaradossi and the title role of Tosca was sung by Rosa D'Imperio, who sang "Vissi d'arte" invested with deep emotion and a fine vocal technique to which the audience responded with great applause. Tenor Simon Kyung Lee sang the role of Cavadossi with conviction and clarity of voice quality throughout the performance, specially outstanding in his desperate aria "E lucevan le stelle" which brought tears of emotion. As the devilish character Scarpia, bass Bill Powers was simply perfect!

At the conclusion of of Act III the entire audience responded with a HUGE LONG STANDING OVATION for several minutes. After the show, many members of the audience expressed how much they enjoyed the evening and hoped there will be many more to come in the future."

Min Kim, Reporter – Korea Daily News

North Shore Performing Arts Center, Skokie, Illinois – January 2016