



Queen Anne News & Magnolia News

Home News Classifieds Contact Our Publications Schools Communities Obituaries Our Blogs

Safari Power Saver **45°F**
 Click on the Weather Forecast Flash Plug-in



Our workers are ready to help!

Millionair Club
 206-728-JOBS or Click Here

Classical KING FM
 31 Days of MOZART

Seattle Pacific UNIVERSITY
 Join us for our Graduate Business Programs Open House on January 16, 2014
 spu.edu/business

HIGH MPG! LOW PRICES!
 University Mazda
 4522 Roosevelt Way NE - Just East of I-5
 UMAZDA.COM 206-634-1191

COLLECTIONS CAFE
 WEEKEND BRUNCH PACKAGE
 \$39 (plus tax & gratuity)
 Chubby Garden and Glass Addition - Collections Cafe, Rainier

Spirit of Magnolia
 20x more liquor than big box stores!
 Same location in Magnolia Village
OPEN NOW! 3310 W McGraw St. (206) 466-1432

home : on the town : out & about

Share

January 16, 2014

1/14/2014 5:17:00 PM

Seattle Opera's 'Rigoletto' shows passion for the music

By Maggie Larrick
Columnist

Director Linda Brovsky's 2004 transposition for Seattle Opera of Verdi's "Rigoletto" from Italy's 16th century to its Fascist 1930s has aged beautifully. Last Saturday's opening performance of "Rigoletto" s current Seattle Opera run earned a justifiably rousing standing ovation.

The shift in time period provides a more immediately recognizable framework than the opera's original Mantuan Court roots. Just as in Mantua, however, the corrupt power elite of Fascist Italy could do pretty much as it pleased, and the working class suffered the often-horrific consequences.

The tragedy of Verdi's opera is set in motion when a servant, the hunchback jester Rigoletto, offends a member of the power structure, Count Ceprano, who retaliates by kidnapping Rigoletto's beloved daughter, Gilda.

We are carried along by the implausible plotline of Verdi's tragedy of love and sacrifice only through Brovsky and her cast's detailed characters and passion-driven staging. Even the singers in the Seattle Opera Chorus behave like fully three-dimensional characters.

Of course, part of the production's success rests on Verdi's beloved music, so well-known that most neophytes have heard Rigoletto's inescapable aria "La donna è mobile," performed by everyone from cartoon character Bugs Bunny to famed opera singer Luciano Pavarotti.

Conductor Riccardo Frizza and the orchestra deftly supported the cast, effortlessly sailing through the score's rapid changes of mood. Under Frizza's direction, the chorus did likewise.

Powerful voices

Baritone Marco Vratogna's Rigoletto seemed far more resigned and less bitter than the usual Rigoletto over the way life has treated him. Yet, that and his gorgeous and touching duets with his daughter make him surprisingly sympathetic. While Vratogna's emotional intensity ramped up nicely during the opera, he also wasn't as distraught as I expected over his daughter's death, a scene that could have been devastating instead of just sad.

In her Seattle Opera debut, Nadine Sierra perfectly embodies Rigoletto's innocent daughter, Gilda. On opening night, Sierra displayed a soaring, crystalline soprano, effortlessly swirling up and down through Verdi's coloratura, most impressively while lying on her back during her aria "Cara Nome." My favorite moments were Sierra's duets with Vratogna, glowing with her love for her father. This is an up-and-coming performer to keep your eye on.

As the licentious Duke of Mantua, tenor Francesco Demuro's rounded and open voice flowed with powerful ease over the most stratospheric notes, including the high B natural in "La donna è mobile." Rightfully, Demuro drew his biggest applause for the moving Act 2 double aria, in which he declares he is falling in love with Gilda and she makes him want to be a better man. This Duke really does seem to fall for Gilda, so his subsequent betrayal of her with Maddalena is confusing.

In the role of the assassin Sparafucile, Andrea Silvestrelli's bass rumbles as ominously through your soul as his menacing presences. As Sparafucile's sister, Maddalena, Sarah Larsen was a curvaceous and confident siren, luring men irresistibly to destruction.

Updated for modern audiences

Built for Seattle Opera's 1988 "Rigoletto," Robert Dahlstrom's set was updated to the 20th century for the 2004 production, by adding period posters, electric lights and furniture such as a billiards table.

Thomas C. Hase's shadowy lighting magnifies the opera's treacherous political landscape.

Marie Anne Chiment's costumes — from glamorously figure-hugging evening gowns to Fascist uniforms — adroitly play up the opera's leitmotifs of sexuality and power.

The wonderful music, passion and awe-inspiring vocal pyrotechnics make this a most gratifying night of opera, despite the harrowing story



Marco Vratogna as Rigoletto in Seattle Opera's 2014 production, which opened at McCaw Hall on Jan. 11. Photo by Elise Bakketun

Advanced Search

search... search P

< January >						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

ATAC
 Individualized Tutoring for All Ages
 Currently accepting new students!
 Test Prep, Test Taking, Curriculum Support, Study Skills, & Organization
 206-547-1818
 8141 E Harrison St, Seattle



Anthony's
LOBSTER DINNER \$19.95
 Monday thru Thursday
 ANTHONY'S RESTAURANT on Shilshole Bay
 www.anthonys.com

LISTENER-SUPPORTED CLASSICAL MUSIC
 CLASSICAL
KING FM 98.1
 www.KING.org

Keep in touch with your community representative
 Larry Phillips
 King County Council



Continuing story:

Seattle Opera's "Rigoletto" plays at Marion Oliver McCaw Hall (321 Mercer St.), through Saturday, Jan. 25. For ticket information, visit www.seattleopera.org.

MAGGIE LARRICK is a former editor of the Queen Anne & Magnolia News. To comment on this review, write to QAMagNews@nwlinc.com.



Article Comment Submission Form

Please feel free to submit your comments.

Article comments are not posted immediately to the Web site. Each submission must be approved by the Web site editor, who may edit content for appropriateness. There may be a delay of 24-48 hours for any submission while the web site editor reviews and approves it.

Note: All information on this form is required. Your telephone number is for our use only, and will not be attached to your comment.

Dr. Lina Kim Dental
 Open In North Magnolia on Government Way
 Saturday and late afternoon appointments available.
 Patients of all ages welcomed. Most dental insurance plans accepted.
www.LinaKimDental.com
 (206) 402-3904



Submit an Article Comment	
First Name: <small>Required</small>	<input type="text"/>
Last Name: <small>Required</small>	<input type="text"/>
Telephone: <small>Required</small>	<input type="text"/>
Email: <small>Required</small>	<input type="text"/>
Comment: <small>Required</small>	<input type="text"/>
Password: <small>Required</small> <input type="password" value="x8AZZY"/> Click here to see a new mix of characters.	This is an anti-SPAM device. It is not case sensitive.
<input type="button" value="Submit"/> <input type="button" value="Reset"/>	



QUEEN ANNE ORTHODONTICS
 DR. ZEENY TEJA
zeenqueen.com
 206.285.7755
 Invisalign Preferred Provider
 Complimentary new patient exam
 Serving Queen Anne for 16+ years
Give the gift of a smile!



Straight Shooting
 with Richard T. Jameson
 An Online Movie Magazine





[Home](#)

[Contact](#)

[News](#)

[Our Publications](#)

[Submit news](#)

[Real Estate Links](#)

[Lifestyles](#)

[Lifestyles](#)

© 2012 Pacific Publishing Company. All rights reserved. Please see our [Legal Disclaimer](#).

Software © 1998-2014 1up! Software, All Rights Reserved