



Ressort: Kunst, Kultur und Musik

Triumphant Flight: La Rondine Soars with Elegance

Volksoper of Vienna, 15.02.2025 [ENA]

Giacomo Puccini's "La Rondine" has often been overshadowed by his more frequently performed masterpieces. However, the recent production at the Vienna Volksoper, under the visionary direction of Lotte de Beer and the masterful baton of conductor Alexander Joel, has illuminated this gem with unparalleled brilliance, reaffirming its rightful place in the operatic canon. Lotte de Beer's directorial prowess shines luminously in this production. She embraces the operetta elements inherent in "La Rondine," infusing the narrative with both speed and humor, thereby crafting a storytelling experience that is both engaging and profound. Her commitment to the genre is evident, and it's a choice that pays dividends. De Beer's innovative approach not only honors Puccini's original intentions but also breathes new life into the narrative, making it resonate with contemporary audiences.

Conductor Alexander Joel's interpretation of Puccini's score is nothing short of revelatory. He brings the waltz melodies to life with a delicate balance, ensuring they remain light-footed while underscoring the implicit Viennese character of the work. Furthermore, Joel's decision to incorporate additional sequences at the opera's conclusion offers a meta-commentary on the portrayal of women in Puccini's operas. This coda, assembled from fragments of Puccini's music, allows the audience to embark on a tour de force through the image of women in his works, culminating in an emancipated woman striding towards her future. This meta-level, imbued with both message and humor, enhances the work significantly.

The cast delivers performances that are both vocally and dramatically compelling. Matilda Sterby, in the role of Magda de Civry, dominates the musical action with her radiant soprano, capturing the character's vacillation between love and a life of luxury. Rebecca Nelsen, a favorite at the Volksoper, finds a perfect role as the rebellious maid Lisette. Her performance is both spirited and nuanced, adding depth to the character. The chemistry between the cast members is palpable, enhancing the emotional impact of the narrative and drawing the audience into the intricacies of their relationships.

The production's visual elements are a feast for the eyes. The set design by Christof Hetzer and costume design by Jorine van Beek create a vibrant and immersive atmosphere that transports the audience to the elegance of Parisian salons and the vivacity of the Bullier dance hall. The lighting design by Alex Brok further accentuates the mood, highlighting the emotional nuances of each scene.

The production has garnered widespread acclaim from both critics and audiences alike. Such accolades underscore the production's ability to connect with contemporary audiences while honoring the timeless

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beauty of Puccini's composition.

The Vienna Volksoper's production of "La Rondine" stands as a testament to the transformative power of visionary direction, masterful musical interpretation, and stellar performances. It breathes new life into Puccini's oft-overlooked masterpiece, offering audiences an experience that is both emotionally resonant and intellectually stimulating. This production not only reaffirms "La Rondine's" place in the operatic repertoire but also sets a new standard for future interpretations of this exquisite work. In sum, this rendition of "La Rondine" is a triumph—a harmonious blend of artistic vision and musical excellence that leaves an indelible mark on all who have the privilege to witness it.

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