



LA SONNAMBULA

AN OPERA IN TWO ACTS

Words by FELICE ROMANI

Music by
VINCENZO BELLINI

First Performance at the Teatro Carcano, Milan, on March 6th, 1831
Characters of the Opera

WITH THE ORIGINAL CAST AS PRESENTED AT THE FIRST PERFORMANCE

IL CONTE RODOLFO, Lord of the village	Bass	LUCIANO MARIANI
TERESA, milleress	Mezzo-Soprano	BAILLOU-HILARET
AMINA, orphan adopted by Teresa, betrothed to Elvino	Soprano	GIUDITTA PASTA
ELVINO, wealthy peasant	Tenor	GIOV. BATT. RUBINI
LISA, inn-keeper, in love with Elvino	Soprano	ELISA TACCANI
ALESSIO, peasant, in love with Lisa	Bass	LORENZO BIONDI
A NOTARY	Tenor	ANTONIO CRIPPA

Peasants and Peasant-women

THE SCENE IS LAID IN A SWISS VILLAGE

First Performance in New York, in English, at the Park Theatre, November 13th, 1835, with the following cast:

COUNT RODOLPHO,	MR. BROUGH
ELVINO,	MR. WOOD
ALEXIS,	MR. RICHINGS
LISA,	MRS. CONDUIT
TERESA,	MRS. VERNON
AMINA,	MRS. WOOD

First Performance in Italian in New York, Palmo's Opera Company, May 11th, 1844

AMINA,	BORGHESE
LISA,	BOULARD
TERESA,	ADAIR
IL CONTE RODOLFO,	VALTELLINA
ELVINO,	PEROZZI
ALESSIO,	BENETTI

Principals



Marlena Devoe



Pene Pati



James Ioelu



Lilia Carpinelle

Chorus



Phillip Akau



Amitai Pati



Hugh Taylor



William Pati



Rachael Dew



Elizabeth Mandeno



Evangeline Pati



Togi Lemanu

Studio Director



Welcome to our workshop/soiree presentation of La Sonnambula by Gaetano Bellini.

The idea to present this most beautiful opera arrived to me through an accident of timing as it were. We had 4 singers, 3 of whom were available to us only in July, who were suitable for this great work. [a month when most of our supporters are away enjoying the Northern Summer]

The main protagonist is Pene Pati - he is heading offshore to study in Cardiff with the Famous Dennis O'Neill. Very few Tenors can encompass the enormous range and vocal flexibility of the part of Elvino, but Pene is the vocal type who will sing this music when he is a professional. For us it was an opportunity not to be missed, so we decided to go ahead and challenge ourselves, despite a short rehearsal period and limited funds and a humble stage.

Marlena Devoe was also of the correct voice type and colour, not to mention all over beauty required for the role of Amina.

And our very fast developing James Ioelu was back in Auckland during his Northern Summer Vacation from Manhattan School of Music.

We are also delighted that our resident Lilia Carpinelli made herself available for the smaller part of Lisa.

Luckily a few members of the Graduate Chior were interested in trying Opera for the first time; for the first time acting, moving, memorizing and "opera-izing" their voices; so it has been a big learning and development thrill for them.

And last but not least; Patrice Wilson, who directed our AOS productions, Idomeneo and The Seven Deadly Sins, made herself available to pour her insight and imaginative teaching ability into a production which has only chairs for scenery, a carpet for a stage and no real lighting, and no real costumes or props; A true "recession production" in these difficult times of funding for the arts.

The Board of the Auckland Opera Studio, and I, feel this production totally covers all of the content in our Mission Statement towards young singers; an acceleration of the training process for the voices, an enormous lesson in the dramatic development of their performing and acting skills, a fee for each and every one of them, the training of a young pianist Somi Jo, already a prizewinning soloist, and the opportunity for Aucklanders to hear in the flesh a very seldom performed Opera, mainly because of the difficulty of the Tenor role. Please enjoy this Opera.

Frances Wilson

Directors Statement



This workshop production embraces La Sonnambula as a nineteenth century Melodrama as a dramatic form concerns itself with the plight of good and evil and an interest in the supernatural. Melodrama is defined by heightened emotion, theatricality and gesture.

I have chosen to embrace the simplicity of our setting story and budget and present Bellinis beautiful music in a minimalist storytelling format peppered with elements of melodrama, silent film, nineteenth century lighting with a hint of the contemporary - a simple but universal story about the preparation for a wedding and the ability of purity and true love to prevail.

In harmony with the Opera studios vision to provide world class training for young emerging artists plus my own belief that the real beauty is not achieved through fancy technology and costumes but through the medium of human energy, simple stripped away storytelling, beautiful connected voices and hearts. This is where the real magic lies.

Patrice Wilson

Synopsis

ACT I

It is early evening and preparations are under way for the wedding of Elvino and Amina, everyone is happy, except Lisa, the innkeeper, who was once engaged to Elvino.

Amina enters and expresses her happiness and gratitude to all and especially to all for coming, especially to Teresa, who had brought her up after she was orphaned["Come per me sereno"].

Elvino rushes in late for the wedding preparations and offers a bouquet of flowers to Amina in apology, then gives her a ring that belonged to his mother [Duet: "Prendi, l'anel ti dono"].

Suddenly, a stranger arrives—Count Rodolfo. After accepting Lisa's offer to spend the night at the inn he declares his love for this place, his childhood home that he has not seen in years ["Vi ravviso, o luoghi ameni"].

Rodolfo, noticing Amina, he is struck by her resemblance to a great love of his youth. As midnight approaches the villagers become apprehensive and Teresa explains to the stranger [Count Rodolfo] that a ghost haunts the town. Amused, the stranger says he'd like to see the ghost; he then departs, followed by the villagers.

Elvino and Amina, now alone, quarrel over the count's attentions to Amina, but Elvino soon apologizes for his jealousy [Duet: "Son geloso del zeffiro errante"].

At the inn, Lisa flirts with the count when suddenly there is a noise and Lisa hides dropping her handkerchief.

Amina enters, walking in her sleep. Rodolfo realizes that she must be the village "ghost." Lisa, however, assumes Amina is coming to meet Rodolfo as a lover, so she slips away...motivated now by her desire and unrequited love for Elvino.

Rodolfo leaves Amina innocently asleep wrapped in his dressing gown. Unfortunately, the ever-inquisitive villagers choose this moment to come sneaking in to get another look at the stranger. Lisa opportunely returns with Elvino and Teresa, everyone is surprised and shocked to find Amina in the count's dressing gown and assumes Amina has been unfaithful. Awakened by the commotion, the girl protests her innocence ["D'un pensiero e d'un accento"].

For a moment, the entire village seems heartbroken over Amina's betrayal, but soon rage sets in. In spite of Teresa's pleas and Amina's protestations,

Elvino calls off the wedding and, with the rest of the village, turns on Amina ["Non più nozze"] in the ensuing chaos, Teresa picks up Lisa's handkerchief.

ACT II

Amina overhears Elvino lamenting in the chapel. He continues to reject Amina and takes back his ring. Lisa seizes the opportunity to seduce Elvino and in a moment of passion he decides to marry Lisa instead. Count Rodolpho arrives to plead Amina's case but Elvino refuses to believe him.

Suddenly Amina appears, sleepwalking. Afraid for her safety the villagers watch and pray for her as she slowly reaches safety. Still asleep, Amina mourns the loss of Elvino, remembering the flowers he gave her that have since faded, and searching for her lost ring. ["Ah! non credea mirarti"]

Elvino is now convinced of Amina's innocence and is unable to watch her suffer any longer; Elvino and Amina reunite and affirm their true love.

PATRICE WILSON | Director

Patrice Wilson has spent the majority of her career in the United States. For twelve years she worked as an actress and director in regional theatres throughout the United States and Off Broadway, most recently as a company member of the Irondale Ensemble in New York. Patrice has been privileged to work and train with some of the worlds leading theatre professionals. She has an MFA in Classical theatre from the P.T.T.P at the University of Delaware (USA) and trained as an actress at the renowned Carnegie Mellon University School of Drama. Since returning to New Zealand Patrice's mission has been to provide world class, rigorous classical theatre training to the youth of this country. Her own performance company - "P.T.T.C." will debut in January 2012 with; *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Way of the World* and *the Women of Troy*. Patrice has worked on the drama faculty's of: Te Wananga O Aotearoa, UCOL, Northland Polytechnic, and currently at Excel School of Performing Arts. Patrice designed and directed, *Idomeneo* and *Seven deadly Sins* for the Opera Studio and has enormous regard for the master voice teaching of Frances Wilson.

JAMES IOELU | Count Rodolpho (Bass)

James Ioelu (Bass-Baritone) is a New Zealand born Samoan who is currently studying at the Manhattan School of Music in New York. In 2010 he commenced his studies at MSM and will be returning to the school to pursue postgraduate studies in voice in September of this year. James has had a successful year with his voice with opportunities taking him to the Caribbean Island to perform. He is particularly grateful for the generous support of a number of New Zealand organisations including The Auckland Opera Studio, Kiri Te Kanuwa Foundation, Creative NZ, Dame Malvina Major Foundation, James Wallace Trust, The Jack McGill Trust, and Auckland Opera Factory.

RACHEL DEW | Teresa (Soprano)

Rachael Dew has been singing for the past nine years under the tutelage of Louise Malloy and has recently had the privilege of being tutored by Francis Wilson. She has passed the ABRSM Vocal Examinations up to Grade 8 and is currently working on the ABRSM Diploma. During the past several years she has been a part of the NSPACS, SAPACS, North Shore Harmony Club Competition, NZ Aria Competition, Margot Lloyd Competition, Opera Factory Productions and was cast in leading roles in her high school musicals. Rachael is in her last year of high school and is looking forward to studying vocal performance at an American University in 2012.

MARLENA DEVOE | Amina (Soprano)

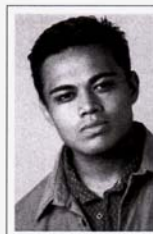
In 2009, Marlena graduated from the University of Auckland with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Italian and German. She is currently completing her Bachelor of Music Honours in Performance Voice under Dr Te Oti Rakena and Rosemary Barnes. Highlights to date were performing the role of Servilia in the Auckland Opera Studio's production of "La Clemenza di Tito" with the Auckland Chamber Orchestra; joining the NBR Chapman Tripp Opera Chorus for Macbeth and singing in the finals for the 2010 New Zealand Aria Competition in Rotorua. In September, Marlena will begin her Masters of Music at the Manhattan School of Music in New York, where she has been assigned to the studio of renowned singing teacher, Marlena Kleinman-Malas.

PENE PATI | Elvino (Tenor)

Darren Pene Pati is a 23yr old Samoan-born tenor. He is in his final year of his BMus(Hons)/BA at the University of Auckland, where his teachers are Patricia Wright and Rosemary Barnes. In 2009, Pene won the prestigious NZ Aria in Rotorua and also received the 'Most Promising Voice' award that year. In 2010 he won the Performing Arts Competition Society 'Young Performer of the Year' award which takes place every 2nd year in Invercargill. In July, Pene was one of four NZ'ers competing in the Prestigious Sydney Sun Aria competition and was one of the 8 finalists overall. Maestro and Highly respected Richard Bonygne singled out the Samoan-born tenor quoting 'he has a voice from the Gods'. Pene has also been the recipient of several major awards including the inaugural 'Iosefa Enari memorial' scholarship from Creative Arts NZ, the Seamus Casey Memorial Award, and many more from the University of Auckland such as the Pears Britten and Marie D'albini.

LILIA CARPINELLI | Lisa (Soprano)

The Italian soprano Lilia Carpinelli is now based in New Zealand. She holds an Italian diploma with distinction in voice completed at Salerno Conservatoire of Music, Italy, in 2001 at the age of 21 where she also studied the 'Estill Voice Training System' with Elisa Turlà. A highlight during this period was to be invited to participate in master-classes with the famous Italian singers Luciana Serra and Bruno De Simone. In 2000 Lilia won two First Prizes in the 'Giannina Arangi Lombardi' competition in Naples and in the 'Citta' di Mercato Severino' competition in Salerno. The following year she was awarded the First Prize in the 'Idelmo Poggioli' competition in Naples. Lilia is currently studying towards her Master of Music in Baroque performance at the University of Auckland.



Steven Setu
Narrator



Somi Kim
Pianist

With particular thanks to
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and other supporters who wish to remain anonymous