



bachtrack



A 20th-century "dittico": *Der Zwerg* and *Il tabarro* in Naples

★★★★☆ [?](#)

Por *Lorenzo Fiorito*, 22 noviembre 2016

A diptych in concert version was the final show of the Summer Festival "The Golden Stage" at the Teatro di San Carlo. It was a double bill of two one-act plays: *Der Zwerg* (*The Dwarf*) by Alexander von Zemlinsky, which premiered at the Teatro di San Carlo, and *Il tabarro* by Giacomo Puccini.

Der Zwerg premiered in Cologne in 1922 under the baton of Otto Klemperer. The libretto by Georg Klaren was adapted from *The Birthday of the Infanta* by Oscar Wilde: there is plenty of references to psychoanalysis and to central European cultural themes of the early 20th century – loss of reassuring awareness, a destiny of bitter loneliness – within a dreamy-visionary music.



Der Zwerg

© Francesco Squeglia | Teatro di San Carlo

The story is set in 17th-century Spain. For the birthday of the Infanta, Donna Clara, a dwarf is sent as a gift by a Turkish sultan. Unaware of his physical deformity, the dwarf falls in love with the Infanta and sings a love song, pretending to be a brave knight. The Infanta, playing cruelly with him, gives him a white rose, but when he sees himself reflected for the first time in a mirror, he is seized by great anguish. He begs a kiss from Donna Clara, who rejects him, calling him a monster. With a broken heart, the dwarf dies, cradling the rose in his hands.

VER LA PROGRAMACIÓN

Crítica hecha desde Teatro di San Carlo, Naples el 18 noviembre 2016

PROGRAMA

Zemlinsky, *Der Zwerg* (The Dwarf)
(Concert performance)

Puccini, *Il tabarro* (Concert performance)

INTÉRPRETES

San Carlo Theatre

Maurizio Agostini, *Director*

Nicola Beller Carbone, *Donna Clara*

Majella Cullagh, *Ghita*

Scott MacAllister, *The Dwarf*

Thomas Gazheli, *Don Estoban*

Rodolfo Giugliani, *Michele*

Amarilli Nizza, *Giorgetta*

Antonello Palombi, *Luigi*

Antonello Ceron, *Tinca*

Carlo Andrea Masciadri, *Talpa*

Clarissa Leonardi, *La Frugola*

Mauro Secci, *The seller of songs*

Orchestra del Teatro di San Carlo

Coro del Teatro di San Carlo

The opera has a strong expressionist quality, marked by frequent, abrupt changes of mood and a lack of discernible melodies, even though some lyrical interludes and leitmotifs are recognizable. One is tempted to find influences from Puccini and Richard Strauss. Its orchestration includes mandolin, harps and raucous trumpets to balance the swooning strings.

The singing cast assembled by the Teatro San Carlo was first rate. Nicola Beller Carbone's glimmering soprano was convincing as the manipulative, cruel princess. Scott MacAllister's hard-voiced tenor as the dwarf, sacrificed vocal beauty to dramatic credibility. His tenor sometimes sounded feeble and strained in the upper range, but this didn't diminish his dramatically moving performance. The other singers, soprano Majella Cullagh and baritone Thomas Gazheli, were impressive, the latter especially showing fine diction and a virile baritone.

On the podium, Maurizio Agostini, replacing the previously announced Stefan Anton Reck, led a lively, detailed performance of Zemlinsky's richly orchestrated, tense score. The San Carlo Orchestra was really impressive as it created the right compelling atmosphere.

The following one-act opera was Puccini's *Il tabarro*, staged for the first time at the Metropolitan in New York in 1918 combined with two other one-act works, *Suor Angelica* and *Gianni Schicchi* (known collectively as *Il trittico*).



Il tabarro

© Francesco Squeglia | Teatro di San Carlo

Il tabarro (The cloak) is to a libretto by Giuseppe Adami from *The houpelande* by Didier Gold. The opera is considered a tribute to musical realism and is characterized by its extreme density and dramatic composition. The action is set in the slums of Paris, in a dismal atmosphere: in the opening, the orchestra's undulating waves remind us that we are on the banks of the Seine. The score is wrought around pentatonic chords, after Debussy's mode. The musical effect is one of desolate grief, which again (as in *Der Zwerg*) does not arise from melody but from the atmosphere the music creates.

The principals all sang well. Baritone Rodolfo Giugliani was Michele, a tough and tyrant husband whose heart grieves with jealousy. Amarilli Nizza sang Giorgetta, making us feel every harsh pain and twist of the drama. Her soprano was deep,

NEW
Your own
Artist Microsite
on Bachtrack
Be seen where it matters

**CLICK HERE
FOR MORE
INFORMATION**

GUÍA

BUSCAR ÓPERA AHORA

DICIEMBRE 2016

lun	mar	mié	jue	vie	sáb	dom
28	29	30	01	02	03	04
05	06	07	08	09	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	01
02	03	04	05	06	07	08

Función de tarde

Matiné

☆ MÁS CRÍTICAS DE ÓPERA

Rossini's *Otello* returns to its birthplace in Naples

Lorenzo Fiorito, 5th December

Suggesting that *Otello* was a migrant, like modern refugees, was not a great staging idea for a production which could count on an high-rate vocal cast.

★★★★☆ **SEGUIR LEYENDO**

Cilea's diva makes a successful return to Naples

Lorenzo Fiorito, 23rd October

A piece of Italian verismo well worth being in the repertoire, beautifully staged and sung.

★★★★☆ **SEGUIR LEYENDO**

Theatre first, then music

Lorenzo Fiorito, 2nd October

Teatro di San Carlo closed its Opera Festival summer season with *Le nozze di Figaro*, which director Chiara Muti staged as a timeless classic

★★★★☆ **SEGUIR LEYENDO**

Goyescas and *Suor Angelica*: an odd couple in Naples

believable and vocally vigorous. Tenor Antonello Palombi was fascinating, as he projected top notes wonderfully and with great musicality as Giorgetta's secret lover, Luigi. Here again, the conductor and orchestra were terrific in tackling the score with austere intensity.

 0 COMENTARIOS

Para añadir un comentario, por favor [Login or register](#)

Lorenzo Fiorito, 1st June

Juxtaposing Granados' sensuality with the miserable story of *Suor Angelica* functioned by contrast, as they do not have anything in common.



[SEGUIR LEYENDO](#)

MÁS CRÍTICAS...



Quieres colaborar con Bachtrack?

☆ MÁS ESCRITOS DE LORENZO FIORITO

Rossini's *Otello* returns to its birthplace in Naples

Cilea's diva makes a successful return to Naples

Theatre first, then music

A footloose staging of Paisiello's *Don Chisciotte*

Paisiello's *La Grotta di Trofonio*, fun and happy ending in Martina Franca

Mercadante's *Francesca da Rimini* in Martina Franca

Goyescas and *Suor Angelica*: an odd couple in Naples

Paisiello's *Zenobia in Palmira*: a labour of love in Naples

Todos artículos de Lorenzo Fiorito