

Footlight Players, Inc.
presents



by
Giacomo Puccini

Performances

Friday, Jan. 11	Saturday, Jan. 12
Friday, Jan. 18	Saturday, Jan. 19
Friday, Jan. 25	Saturday, Jan. 26

The Church of the Ascension, Rockville Centre

This Production is dedicated to
Father Kevin Morris
Ninth Rector, Church of the Ascension

Footlight Players, Inc.

Presents

Tosca

Music by Giacomo Puccini
Libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Sardou
Based upon "La Tosca" by Victorien Sardou

Musical Preparation by Tamara Cashour
Directed by Nathaniel Green

Footlight Players, Inc.
118 West Blvd, East Rockaway, NY 11518
Nathaniel Green, Artistic Director

Tosca Synopsis

Act I - Rome, 1800.

Angelotti, the deposed Consul of the late Roman Republic, escapes from imprisonment in the Castel Sant'Angelo and seeks refuge in a chapel of the Church of Sant'Andrea della Valle, where his sister (the Marchesa Attavanti) has left a key and clothing for him. Unaware of Angelotti's presence, the painter Mario Cavaradossi works on his canvas. The Sacristan recognizes that the artist's Mary Magdalene is modeled after a beautiful young woman who regularly visits the chapel, the Marchesa Attavanti (Angelotti's sister), whom Mario has seen but does not know. Taking out a miniature of the singer Floria Tosca, Mario compares her dark-haired beauty with that of the blonde Magdalene ("Recondita armonia"). The Sacristan grumbles disapproval and leaves. Angelotti emerges from the side chapel and is relieved to find Cavaradossi whom he has known as a political sympathizer. When Tosca, the artist's lover, suddenly calls from outside the locked door of the church, Angelotti must hide once more. Cavaradossi gives him his own lunch basket because he sees that Angelotti is weak from hunger. Tosca enters and, having heard whispering, jealously assumes that Cavaradossi has been seeing another woman. Her suspicions seem to be confirmed when she recognizes his Mary Magdalene as the Marchesa Attavanti, but the painter reassures her of his fidelity and sends her on her way. A cannon shot signals the discovery of Angelotti's escape, and the two men run off to hide him in Cavaradossi's villa. The Sacristan returns and tells the excited choristers that news has arrived that Napoleon's invasion of Italy has been defeated, but the joyous celebration is put to an abrupt end by the appearance of the sinister police chief, Baron Scarpia. His henchmen search the Attavanti chapel and find the Marchesa's fan as well as Cavaradossi's empty lunch basket. Tosca returns, and Scarpia easily turns her against her lover, using the fan as evidence of Cavaradossi's faithlessness. When she leaves, Scarpia orders his men to follow her; he knows that the trail will lead to Angelotti. Scarpia vows that he will have Tosca.

**There will be a scene change after Act I. It will take no more than 5 minutes.
Please do not leave your seats.**

Synopsis Continued ...

Act II

That evening, as Scarpia dines in his residence in the Palazzo Farnese, he sends for Tosca who is singing in the palace for the Queen of Naples. Scarpia's spy, Spoletta, reports that Tosca did indeed go straight to Cavaradossi's villa, but Angelotti was nowhere to be found. Cavaradossi was arrested instead. When he is dragged in for questioning, he denies any knowledge of Angelotti. Tosca is brought in just as Cavaradossi is dragged off to the torture chamber. Unable to bear his cries, she reveals Angelotti's hiding place to Scarpia. Scarpia offers her a bargain—her sexual surrender for Cavaradossi's life. Fighting off his embraces, she protests her fate to God, having dedicated her life to art and love ("Vissi d'arte"). Tosa realizes she has no choice and with great agony finally assents. Scarpia orders a mock execution for Cavaradossi and writes out a safe conduct pass for the pair to leave Rome. As he writes, Tosca sees a knife on the table and fatally stabs him. Placing candles by Scarpia's corpse, she slips away to join Mario.

Here there will be a 15 minute intermission.

Act III

At dawn, Cavaradossi awaits death at the Castel Sant'Angelo. He bribes the jailer to give a farewell letter to Tosca. As he begins to write, he is overwhelmed by memories of love, which soon becomes anguish ("E lucevan le stelle"). Tosca, full of news, suddenly arrives on the scene. She coaches Cavaradossi before his mock execution on the roof of the Castel Sant'Angelo. When the firing squad has left, Tosca is horrified to learn that Scarpia has double-crossed her and that the mock execution has, in fact, been real. As Spoletta and other agents rush forward to arrest her, Tosca vows to avenge herself before God and leaps to her death from the parapet.

Tosca Cast (in Order of Appearance)

Cesare Angelotti	Stuart Whalen
An escaped political prisoner, Former Consul of the late Roman Republic	
Eusebe, the Sacristan	Michael Plant
Sacristan of the Church of Sant' Andrea Della Vale	
Mario Cavaradossi	Johnny Lee Green
Painter and Bonapartist	
Floria Tosca	Alexandra Woodruff
A famous singer	
Spoletta	Michael Plant
A police agent	
Sciaronne	Bernie Genzer
Scarpia's orderly	
Baron Vitellio Scarpia	Nathaniel Green
Chief of the Roman Police	
Cardinal	William Cooper
Jailer	Stuart Whalen
Castel Sant' Angelo	
Shepherdess	Linda C. Byrne
Chorus	(Ladies, Nuns, Citizens, Soldiers, Police, and Clergy)
William Cooper, Linda Garrity, Susan Panzarella, Lydia Paulsen	
Children's Chorus	
Sera Allen, Erika Brancato, Daniel Carley	
Lighting, Sets, Prop Master	Joe Carley
Program	Stuart Whalen
Help with Set	Joey Bryant, Joe Carley
Artwork	Lydia Paulsen
Help with Publicity, Finance, Liaison to Vestry of the Church of the Ascension	William Cooper

Meet the Cast and Staff

Sera Allen

Children's Chorus

is an awesome sixth grader at South Side Middle School in Rockville Centre and attends the Church of the Ascension. Sera is a dancer and all around performer having played in many variety shows. Sera is delighted to be making her opera debut.

Erika Broncato

Children's Chorus

is an awesome seventh grader at Baldwin Middle School and attends the Church of the Ascension. This is Erika's first opera, but not her first show. She appeared once in a school production of Charlotte's Web. Erika is having a lot of fun in this show.

Linda C. Byrne

Shepherdess

is happy to be back with the Footlight Players after singing the role of Marullo in the Spring production of Rigoletto. She began her training by accident four years ago and has since sung with the St. Stephen's Choir in Port Washington, the Christ Church Festival Chorus in Oyster Bay, and in solo recitals. Last year Linda performed in Tosca and Don Pasquale with the North Shore Opera Festival. She gives great thanks to her voice coach Deborah Berruete-Fuhrman, who brings out the best in her vocally and otherwise, and big love to Eddie and Laura, who know just why!

Daniel Carley

Children's Chorus

is an awesome seventh grader at St. Agnes Middle School and attends church at the Church of the Ascension. Last year he had a principle role (Mr. Worthington) and solo in a school production of Christmas on Angel Street. Daniel studies percussion in the St. Agnes School band. He, too, is delighted to take part in his first opera.

Joe Carley

Lights/Sets

is back for yet another Footlight Players production, delighted to be lighting again. A craftsman and master of all things electrical, Joe is proud to be backstage in a show in which his son is on stage.

Tamara Cashour

Musical Director

returns this season as Musical Director of the Footlight Players, after serving in the same capacity in the 2011 production of La Traviata, and the Spring 2012 production of Rigoletto. Ms. Cashour has been a musical director/coach-accompanist for US regional opera, including Lake George Opera, Indianapolis Opera, Natche Opera, and the Hawaii Performing Arts Festival. She has also considerable experience as a conductor of musical theatre at: George St. Playhouse, Weinberg Center for the Arts, West Orange Theatre Under the Stars, and most recently at SOPAC (South Orange Performing Arts Center), where her conducting of Guettel's *The Light in the Piazza* received critical acclaim: "(Ms. Cashour conducted) a highly creditable musical performance ... Kudos are due Ms. Cashour who did yeoman duty in bringing the musical portion of this production to life" (South Orange Patch). Ms. Cashour is currently Adjunct Professor of Instrumental Accompanying at William Patterson University, in the Brass, Woodwind and Strings Departments. She is currently a vocal coach / recital accompanist at the Mannes College of Music, and formerly worked in that capacity at the Manhattan School of Music.

William Cooper

Cardinal

is a parishioner at Ascension and has performed in numerous Footlight Players productions. He sings in the tenor section of the Ascension Choir. When not performing, and sometimes when he is, he maintains a law practice in the village. He would have had a longer and more entertaining bio, mentioning his many ecclesiastical roles with the Footlight Players, but the program manager lost it.

Bernie Genzer

Sciaronne

is retired after 30 years teaching speech and drama in N.Y.C High Schools. He has a Bachelor's degree from Brooklyn College in Speech and a Master of Fine Arts in Theatre from Boston University. His other current activities are designing the lighting for Lantern Theatre productions and teaching fencing for the Great Neck Arts Center. He also is involved in singing barbershop harmony as a bass with The Long Island Harmonizers Chorus and his quartet All In A Chord. Bernie thanks Bob Heim for steering him to this group; he was last heard here as The Count of Ceprano in *Rigoletto*. He has directed musical productions such as The Pajama Game and Annie and acted in *Lovers & Other Strangers*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* and *Fools*. Love to Beverly for encouragement and support.

Johnny Lee Green

Originally from Augusta, Georgia, Mr. Green earned a degree in Vocal Performance from Loyola University (New Orleans) in 1997. He received further training in the Maryland Opera Studio at the University of Maryland and has subsequently performed throughout the country on the operatic and concert stages. In addition to singing with the Virginia Opera, the Augusta Opera, FBN Productions (Opera for Kids) and the 75th anniversary tour of Porgy and Bess, Mr. Green was most recently a two year Resident Artist with Dicapò Opera in Manhattan. There he sang "Don Ramiro" in Rossini's *La Cenerentola* and "The Beast" in *Gazzaniga's Beauty and the Beast*. Mr. Green is happy to be making his debut with Footlight Players in this production of *Tosca*.

Nathaniel Green

is the Footlight Player' founder (1984) and artistic director. This ensemble has brought a large variety of fully staged theatrical productions to the community including: *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Rigoletto*, *Tosca*, *She Loves Me*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *The Price*, *Henry IV*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello* just to name a few. He has also staged original works of his own such as *This Train of Life*, *The Enchanted Spring*, *Is the Glass Half Empty or Half Full?* *Grampa Says Goodbye*, *The Dancing Monk*, and most recently, the successful *Off-Off Broadway* productions of *Searching for Hamlet* and *Faust Meets Macbeth*. He has also performed in opera, musical theatre and cabaret. *Tosca* is the 8th production by Nate that the Church of the Ascension has hosted. Other performances have been: *Hamlet*, *Our Town*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Arsenic & Old Lace*, *Blithe Spirit*, and *The Tempest*. Nate counts among his favorite Shakespearean roles: *Iago*, *Falstaff*, *Hamlet*, and *Prospero*. He considers himself fortunate to sufficient interest (art, literature, foreign languages, and travel) to ward off the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune".

Linda Garrity

Linda is the Alto Soloist at the Church of the Ascension. This is her first appearance with The Footlight Players.

Susan Panzarella

has become a regular in the Footlight Players having played leading roles in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, and *Blythe Spirit*. Susan has a wide musical repertoire and has entertained local audiences at many a Cabaret night. She is a long-time member of the Church of the Ascension Choir, and is happy to be singing here on her home stage.

Lydia Paulsen

This is Lydia's third appearance in a Footlight Player's opera. She appeared in the ensemble of Verdi's *La Traviata* and *Rigoletto*. Lydia has also graced this stage in *Hamlet* and *The Tempest*. A fine artist, craftsman and teacher, Lydia is well known to the local community and especially to the Church of the Ascension, where she sings soprano in the choir, makes extraordinary quilts, and all manner of various and sundry crafts (such as the Stations of the Cross for the church school) whenever needed.

Michael Plant

makes his operatic stage debut in this production, having previously been confined to the orchestra pit as a trombonist and conductor. He studied at the Oberlin Conservatory, and has served several churches as a chorister and choir director, in addition to conducting appearances with the Richmond Philharmonic and the Victorian Lyric Opera Company of Washington DC. More recently, he has been heard locally with the Long Island Choral Society, the Stewart Consort, and Cerddorion Vocal Ensemble. He currently lives and works in Suffolk County, and serves as Bass Soloist at the Church of the Ascension.

Stuart Whalen

Cesare Angelotti and Jaïler

has sung with the wonderful Choir of the Church of the Ascension for the past 30 years. He also sings with the Amore Opera in New York City (he will sing Valentine in Gounod's *Faust* in May 2013) and has performed in scores of productions in Long Island. Favorite roles include *Captain in HMS Pinafore Cervantes/Don Quixote in Man of La Mancha* and *Emil DeBeque in South Pacific*. Special thanks to Doctors Zoe Goldberg, Nancy Kemeny, Chris McCarthy, and to the staff of Sloan Kettering who made this extra time possible.

Alexandra Woodruff

Floria Tosca

concluded her second year as a Resident Artist with Dicapò Opera Theatre this past spring. While with Dicapò, Ms. Woodruff was offered various covers such as *Marie in The Most Happy Fella*, and the Stepsister in *Giannini's Beauty and the Beast*. This fall she is making her debut in the title role of Puccini's *Tosca* with The Footlight Players. Last season Ms. Woodruff performed with various opera companies throughout the tri-state area. Her more notable work includes the roles of *Giulietta* and *The Voice of the Mother in Les Contes d'Hoffmann* with Hudson Lyric Opera, and *Maddalena in Rigoletto* with The Footlight Players. In addition she has also performed in *Amici Opera's L'orfeo as La Musica*, *Il Re as Il Prete*, and *Rigoletto as Maddalena*. Ms. Woodruff is currently a student of internationally acclaimed tenor Arturo Spinetti

Chorus

Chorus

A Little More About Tosca

(Mostly from Wikipedia)

Tosca, the opera by Giacomo Puccini, is based on an Italian libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacomini. It premiered at the Teatro Costanzi in Rome on 14 January 1900. The work, based on Victorien Sardou's 1887 French-language dramatic play, *La Tosca*, is a melodramatic piece set in Rome in June 1800, with the Kingdom of Naples's control of Rome threatened by Napoleon's invasion of Italy. It is a little strange, for us 200 years later, to consider that Bonaparte was aligned with the 'good guys'.

Tosca contains depictions of torture, murder and suicide, yet also includes some of Puccini's best-known lyrical arias, and has inspired memorable performances from many of opera's leading singers.

Puccini saw Sardou's play when it was touring Italy in 1889 and, after some vacillation, obtained the rights to turn the work into an opera in 1895. Turning the wordy French play into a succinct Italian opera took four years, during which the composer repeatedly argued with his librettists and publisher. *Tosca* premiered at a time of unrest in Rome, and its first performance was delayed for a day for fear of disturbances. Despite indifferent reviews from the critics, the opera was an immediate success with the public.

Musically, *Tosca* is structured as a through-composed work, with arias, recitative, choruses and other elements musically woven into a seamless whole. Puccini used Wagnerian leitmotifs (short musical statements) to identify characters, objects and ideas. The dramatic force of *Tosca* and its characters continues to fascinate both performers and audiences, and the work remains one of the most frequently performed operas. Many recordings of the work have been issued, both of studio and live performances.

According to the libretto, the action of *Tosca* occurs in Rome in June 1800. Sardou, in his play, dates it more precisely: *La Tosca* takes place in the afternoon, evening, and early morning of 17 and 18 June 1800.

Italy had long been divided into a number of small states, with the Pope in Rome ruling the Papal States in the area of central Italy. Following the French Revolution, a French army under Napoleon invaded Italy in 1796, entering Rome almost unopposed on 11 February 1798 and establishing a republic there. This republic was ruled by seven consuls; in the opera this is the former office of Angelotti, whose character may be based on the real-life consul Libero Angelucci. In September 1799 the French, who had protected the republic, withdrew from Rome. As they left, troops of the Kingdom of Naples occupied the city.

In May 1800 Napoleon, by then the unquestioned leader of France, brought his troops across the Alps to Italy once again. On 14 June his army met the Austrian forces at the Battle of Marengo (near Alessandria). Austrian troops were initially successful; by mid-morning they were in control of the field of battle, and their commander, Michael von Melas sent this news south towards Rome.

However, fresh French troops arrived in late afternoon, and Napoleon attacked the tired Austrians. As Melas retreated in disarray with the remains of his army, he sent a second courier south with the revised message. If you listen carefully you will hear Sciaronne (Bernie Genzer) relate the news of the battle of Marengo to a very unhappy Scarpia. The Neapolitans abandoned Rome, and the city spent the next fourteen years under French domination.

Footlight Players, Inc.

Tosca

