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Good cast in Estonian La Boheme in Vilnius



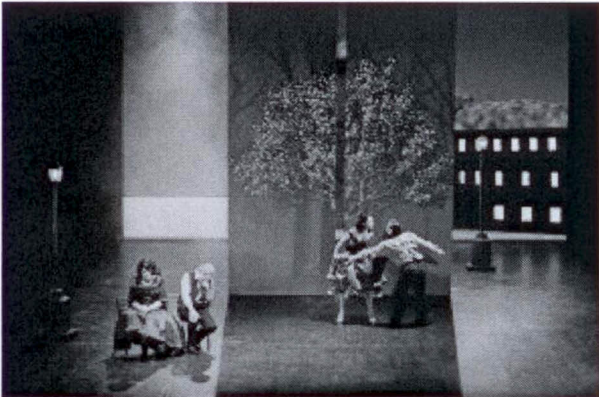
By Henning Høholt on 9/28/11 • Categorized as Opera



La Boheme, photo: Hanne Rospu

La Boheme by **Giacomo Puccini**, staged by **Ran Arthur Braun** (Israel) with the **Estonian National Opera**, guesting in Vilnius, Sunday night, had an outstanding cast. Headed by the wonderful young soprano **Aile Asszonyi**, of international class as Mimi, closely followed up by **Helen Lokuta** as Mussette. **Mart Madiste** was singing Rodolphe. **Rauno Elp** as Marcel, **Pritt Volmer** as Coline with the beautiful aria about his jacket in the fourth act and **René Soom** as Schaunard. In addition **Väino Puura** was singing both the roles as Benoit and Alcindora, but with completely different outlook, as it is correct to have. **Alvar Kaseste** was Parpignol. Last but not least The Prince from Love for Three Oranges the night before **Mart Madiste** was singing Rodolphe, and did it great. he was even better Sunday than in 3 Oranges, where he dont have so much nice to sing. He has the correct light, beautiful tenor voice, with a beautiful shining sound, the needed power, and not afraid

to use it. He could only need a little pedagogical help to get the sound more open in the very top on the most brilliant parts, and some time to add a little vibrato. The group of singers was good instructed and the team was working well, and it was amusing and funny and in the end sad to enjoy.



La Boheme, Act 3. photo: Hanne Rospu

It was modernised in daily costumes, by **Elo Soode**, it worked well. The costumes for the girls was perhaps a bit too elegant for the history, furthermore in third act, with minus 5 centigrades Mimi arrives on stage outdoor to try to find Rodolphe with half short arms without a coat or a warm schale. That was not logical and especially when Marcel comes out to meet her with a scarf on that is needed in the cold winter.

The scenography with sliding walls showing digitalized background functioned some of the times well, for example the opening background picture with winter, ice cold trees and snow falling down was very beautiful, for me some times the moving houses was a bit like Disney houses. And the contrasts could have been tuned down some. But with the sliding walls we got possibilities for new views into the stage, for example when the three friends of Rodolphe is singing to him and ask him to hurry up, the sliding walls did so we could see them standing outside his window, as we at the same time was inside in the house. The same happened when Mimi and Rodolphe is leaving for Momus, they ended the duet in the middle on the stage, but so it looked that they were on their way out through the sliding walls. Very well done.



From La Boheme with The Estonian National Opera, foto Hannu Rospu.

In the Momus scene - 2nd act. I was waiting for the tune "***Just singing in the Rain***", from the famous musical, as the choir was in yellow raincoats and with yellow umbrellas, but that tune doesn't belong to La Boheme, and I was missing rain (by light effect). Shall we have umbrellas, then it must be either rain or snow, - eventually sunshine. Furthermore. That actual act is supposed to be on Christmas Eve. This picture had not anything to do with Christmas, and the parade of the guard we heard, but didn't see. Scenographie by **Ran Arthur Braun and Riccardo Gallino**. Costumes **Elo Soode**.

The conductor **Jüri Alperden** gave the singers the time they needed, and it sounded well.

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