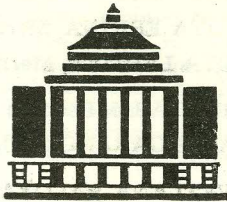




RAT-ESTONIA



JOANNA TENTATA



RAT · ESTONIA ·

JOANNA TENTATA

A 3-act ballet by EINO TAMBERG

Libretto by MAI MURDMAA

The premiere took place on January 23, 1971

Director and choreographer:
MAI MURDMAA, Merited Art Worker of the Estonian SSR

Conductor:
ERI KLAS, People's Artist of the Estonian SSR

Designer:
MARI-LIIS KÜLA, Merited Artist of the Estonian SSR

Ballet masters:
HELMU PUUR, People's Artist of the Estonian SSR
AIME LEIS, Merited Artist of the Estonian SSR
and
ANTON BOME

Concert master of the orchestra:
MATI UFFERT

Stage manager of the performance:
PEETER KARELL

Characters:

- Joanna — ELITA ERKINA, Merited Artist of the Estonian SSR
JUTA LEHISTE, Merited Artist of the Estonian SSR
- Suryn — TIIT HÄRM, People's Artist of the Estonian SSR
JANIS GARANCIS, Merited Artist of the Estonian SSR
- Gipsy girl — SVETLANA BALOYAN
TATYANA LAID, Merited Artist of the Estonian SSR
OLGA CHICHEROVA
- Watchman of the convent — JANIS GARANCIS, Merited Artist of the Estonian SSR
ALEXANDER KIKINOV
- Joanna and Suryn
("thoughts" in Act III) — ELITA ERKINA, Merited Artist of the Estonian SSR
TAMARA SOONE, Merited Artist of the Estonian SSR
SVETLANA BALOYAN
ALEXANDER BULDAKOV
SERGEI VOROBYOV
- Pastorale — ELITA ERKINA, Merited Artist of the Estonian SSR
INGE ARRO
ALEXANDER BASIKHIN
ALEXANDER BULDAKOV
MIKHAIL NECHAYEV
SERGEI VOROBYOV
- Round dance — SVETLANA BALOYAN
TATYANA BASSOVA
TAMARA BUROVA
LEMME JÄRVI
KATRIN KIVIMÄGI
SAIMA KRANIG
TATYANA KRIKUN
TATYANA VORONINA
VLADIMIR AISTOV
YEVGENI BASIKHIN
IGOR BELYAYEV
MIKHAIL BOGATYRYOV
MÄRT KALBUS
MATI KALDA

The action takes place in the 1630s

The main characters of the ballet "Joanna Tentata" have been taken from real life. Both Jeanne des Anges (the name adopted by her when she was a nun at the Ursuline convent in London) and the priest Jean-Joseph Surin lived in France in the 17th century. Both have left letters and memoirs elucidating the events reflected in the ballet. The Polish forms of their names originate from the story by Jaroslaw Iwaszkiewicz, laureate of the international Lenin Award, and the film "Mother Joanna of the Angels" by Jerzy Kawalerowicz, on the plot of which the ballet is based. In the music, use has been made of 16th-century tunes.

ACT I

The strange goings-on in the convent supervised by abbess Joanna have been the subject of interest and curiosity of the local people for some time already. The nuns are said to be possessed by devils who divert them from the path of virtue. The extatic prayers of the nuns alternate with depraved play-acting.

At the beginning of the performance we are given an idea of the metamorphosis that has taken place in the convent.

At an inn nearby, people comment in their own way on the happenings in the convent. There appears Suryn, a prest-exorcist who has been sent to dispel the devils from the convent, and a gipsy profesies him the failure of his mission.

At the convent, Joanna tries to keep herself in control when receiving Suryn, but at length she is unable to restrain herself, and begins play-acting. Suryn is appalled.

Joanna's vitality is even more strikingly expressed in the abbey, where the exorcizing ceremony is turned into a public spectacle. Unlike the other nuns, she does not submit to the will of the priests, and it is only by sheer force that the priests succeed in making her succumb to the ritual.

ACT II

Meditations on life and human nature take Suryn to the countryside where he regains his belief in the perfection and harmony of life. This feeling is further strengthened by the simple tune played by the shepherd on the reed-pipe. Suryn is determined to instil Joanna with the same noble feelings.

Suryn fails once again to transmit his feelings of devotion and love for human beings to Joanna. She becomes only aware that she is a woman yearning for terrestrial love.

A folk festival is held beyond the walls of the convent. The convent itself continues to live its complicated simile of life. For a moment it seems to Joanna that love has delivered her from her affliction. In Suryn, however, the doubts and the inner tension begin to get the upper hand, and in his dreams he sees Joanna as a seducer, as a depraved woman. In order to get rid of those visions, he castigates himself mercilessly.

ACT III

At their next meeting Joanna and Suryn become aware of their love, but they do not dare to admit it, and try to conceal it by praying.

But their feelings do not comply with prayers. The more passionate the prayer, the more active the imagination, and the more unbearable the tension. (The thoughts of both are expressed in the ballet by the doubles.) Finally, Joanna and Suryn rush towards each other, and Joanna kisses the priest. Suryn drops to the ground in a faint.

Simultaneously with unbounded merry-making and almost heathenly dancing taking place outside the convent, Suryn is tormented by pangs of conscience in his cell. He is unable to pray; in his imagination he only sees Joanna, at times loving, and at others desperate. Suryn's grasp of reality is in a chaos. The sublime devotion of a priest has been replaced by a new, powerful feeling. For him, it is such an unsurmountable and sudden clash of emotions that he goes out of his mind. In a fit of madness, he kills the watchman of the convent, seeing in him the embodiment of evil.

Joanna, having lost her beloved and any hope of love, has nevertheless experienced the greatness and power of human feelings.

The composer EINO TAMBERG, born in Tallinn in 1930, graduated from Prof. E. Kapp's composition class at the Tallinn Conservatoire in 1953. Worked as a sound director at the Estonian Radio, as a consultant at the Composers' Union of Soviet Estonia, and since 1968 has been teaching composition at the Tallinn Conservatoire. Since 1974 he has been simultaneously acting as secretary of the Composers' Union.

E. Tamberg's production contains compositions of various genres, e. g., "Concerto grosso" (1956, First Prize and gold medal at the contest of the Sixth World Festival of Students and Youth in Moscow), Symphonical Dances (1957), Trumpet Concerto (1973), Symphony (1978), instrumental chamber music, choral and solo songs, music for plays and films, etc. The weightiest part of E. Tamberg's compositions have been written for the theatre: "Ballet Symphony" (1959), ballets "Boy and Butterfly" (1963) and "Joanna Tentata" (1970), the "Moonshine Oratorio" (1962) for performance on the stage, operas "The Iron Home" (1965) and "Cyrano de Bergerac" (1976).

Price 30 kop.