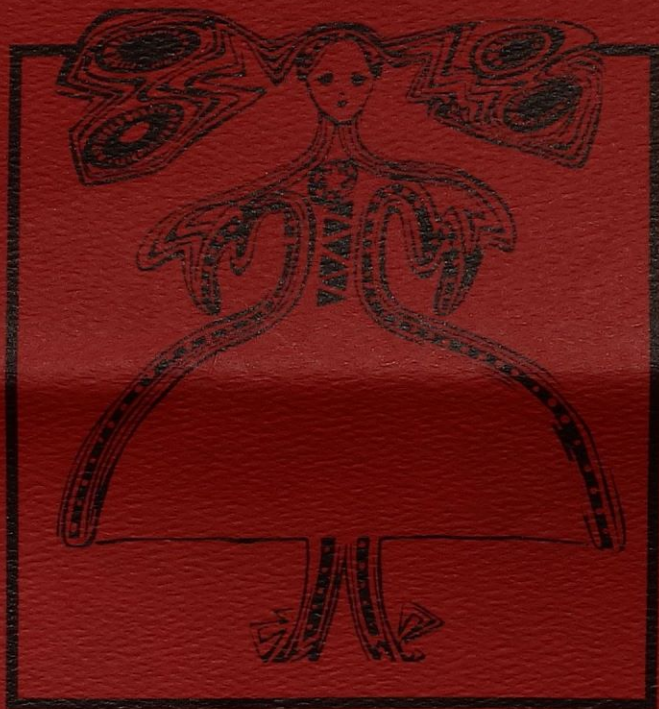


BEDRICH SMETANA'S
THE
BARTERED BRIDE



299
1984
5-20

UW MEANY THEATER

Thursday, May 17 at 8 p.m.

Friday, May 18 at 8 p.m.

Saturday, May 19 at 8 p.m.

Sunday, May 20 at 5 p.m.

University of Washington
Schools of Music and Drama
Opera Theatre

present
**THE
BARTERED BRIDE**

(in English)

Music by BEDRICH SMETANA

Libretto by Karel Sabina

Translated by Joan Cross and Eric Crozier

Conductor: Robert Feist

Stage Director: Vincent Liotta

Choreographer: Glenn Nielsen

Set Designer: Jeff Hunt

Costume Designer: Robert Dahlstrom

Lighting Designer: Geoff Sedgwick

(in order of appearance)

MARENKA.....Shiela Siobhan Burke 18#
Laurie Haney 17#19

JENIK.....Michael Dodaro 18#20
Jeff Francis 17#19

LUDMILLA.....Lesley Miller Chapin 18#2
Morgan McCurdy 17#19

KRUSINA.....Ronald D. Mahan 18#20
Erhard M. Rom 17#19

KECAL.....Kevin Helppie 17#19
Brian Kerns 18#20

VASEK.....Barton Nye Green 17#19
Garren Read 18#20

RINGMASTER.....John Obourn All

ESMERELDA.....Anne Bergsma 18#20
Laura Williams 17#19

MICHA.....Mark Hunter 18#20
Jeffrey Smith 17#19

HATA.....Karen Callan 17#19
Cynthia Oeck 18#20

RADOST Folk Ensemble
University Opera Chorus
University Symphony Orchestra

A Bohemian Village in the late 19th century.

ACT I: The Village square *Tape 10,685*

ACT II: The Local tavern *Tape 10,686*

ACT III: A Meadow outside of the village *Tape 10,687*

There will be two intermissions.

THE BARTERED BRIDE CHORUS

Soprano

Helen Dodd Hansens
Anne Patrice Dugaw
Peg Cleveland
Sabrina Bobrow
Leslie J. Rambaldi
Julie Gibson
Maria Woerne
Denise Rectenwald
Kimberly Douglass

Alto

Alice Bridgforth
Susan Lind
Sonja Lauber
Gretchen Watkins
Leanore Bittner
Lori McKillop

Tenor

Brian R. Russell
Stuart Lutzenhiser
James C. Whitson

Bass

David L. Schott
Paul Firth
Doug Wieboldt
Bud W. McRae
Aaron Brandon Caughey
Ken VanDyke

Radost Dancers

Greg Crandell
Janina Murray

Steve Dennis
Kathy Sandstrom

Children

Jessica Devin
Matthew Lind

Tristan Devin
Katherine Sedgwick

Circus

Bradley J. Anderson
Andy Demitri
David Pascoe

Matt Cantrell
Lori McKillop
Gretchen Watkins

Acknowledgements:

Thanks to Hans Wolf for additional chorus members.
Seattle Opera for the loan of their scrim.
Bud Turner, Seattle School District

UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY PERSONNEL

Violin I

Paul Culbertson
Concertmaster
Louanne Bean
Meredith Arksey
Gayle Strandberg
Ruth Whitlock
Danielle Franklin
Mark Kapeluck
Linda Melsted
John Higenbotham

Violin II

James Mihara
Louise McKnight
Robert Chisholm
Leif Pederson
Stephen Lee
Karen Law

Viola

Marianne LaCrosse
Chris Boyd
Linda Chang
Kendall Couch
Jubilee Cooke
Mathew Underwood

Cello

Sasha Van Dassow
Catny Chan
Joseph Bichsel
Tony Arnone
Noreen Silver
Lauren Root

Double Bass

Ring Warner
Harold Johanson
Walter Flint

Flute & Piccolo

Susan Hallstead
Twila Schemmer
Susan Telford
Doug Hjelm
Erin Kiyuna

Oboe

Ailene Munger
Susan DeBuse

Clarinet

David Wilcox
Elizabeth Sandusky

Bassoon

Paul Rafanelli
Eric Shankland

Horn

Margaret Berry
Maryruth Helppie
Carrie Weick
Jessica Papkoff

Trumpet

Ward Brannman
Kevin Hodgson

Trombone

Andrew Hillaker
Robert Zimmerman
David Bentley

Timpani

Adam Kuehn

Percussion

Michael Sarin
Allan Gerking

THE STORY

It is festival day in a small Bohemian Village. It is also the day on which Marenka is to be married to Vasek, the groom chosen for her by her parents, Krusina and Ludmilla. They have enlisted the help of Kecal, the marriage broker, who has chosen this lad, the younger son of Micha, a wealthy farmer. Marenka, is however, already in love with Jenik and refuses to sign the marriage contract that has been drawn up for her.

In despair, Kecal finds Jenik and tries to persuade him to look elsewhere. Jenik agrees for a reward of 300 crowns and a clause in the agreement which states that Marenka can only marry Micha's son. Meanwhile Marenka has met Vasek and convinces him that he does not want to marry her.

A circus then comes to town featuring Esmerelda, an exotic Spanish dancer. Vasek is fascinated by her and convinced to run off with the circus. Just as Marenka is about to give in and marry Vasek, Jenik reappears and proves that he is Micha's son. Vasek shows up dressed in a bear costume--much to the annoyance of his parents and amusement of the villagers. Jenik and Marenka are reunited and everyone lives happily ever after.

"THE BARTERED BRIDE" -- CORNERSTONE OF CZECH NATIONALISM

It was after Austria's defeat at the hands of Italy that the Czechs, around 1860, began to cultivate their own arts in a conscious bid for nationalism. Franz Josef's government became less restrictive; national theaters started to be built; and native art music was needed (the Czechs always having had a fine native folk music). Smetana and, later, Dvorak were the most prominent serious composers developed under this nationalistic movement, and it was certainly fortunate that, at this decisive moment when the future of Czech music was in the balance, after such a promising beginning, a genius came upon the scene. Before he was 30, Smetana had formed a great musical individuality with a rich imagery and a firm conviction about the mission and function of his music in the life of his country. Of course, Smetana had kept in close touch with what was going on in the world of music even when he was at home. He was a friend of many great musicians who came to Prague, such as Berlioz and Liszt. He went abroad to gain greater experience. There is no doubt that his stay in Weimar was decisive, since it gave a new direction to his symphonic music. Smetana's own talent was sturdy enough to use, in his own particular way, the influences and the themes which accumulated during his years at home and abroad.

Smetana lived for several years in Sweden (as a conductor in Goteborg), where he had gone originally to seek a living. Then, after a concert tour in Holland and visit to Germany, he returned to Prague in 1861 fully equipped and, most important, determined to help to build up the musical life of his country. He foresaw its great future and contributed to it with his own work. It was the time when the Czech nation was awakening from too many years of slumber to begin its fight for national freedom. That is why new tones could be heard in Smetana's music, tones which had hitherto been unknown or hidden in Czech music, so that the composer was compelled to fight for their place and sense.

It was Smetana who laid solid foundations for a vital growth of Czech national opera which even today follows in some way Smetana's example. Smetana began his work in the field of opera practically in two directions. First, he was, from 1868 to 1874, conductor of the Provisional Theatre which was opened in Prague in 1862, and second, he began to compose in order to supply the theatre with new Czech operas of high quality. Wagner's principles of musical drama were close enough to Smetana's intentions and efforts, and thus, as the first great Czech symphonic, as well as opera composer, he gave the orchestra a more important role. Most important, however, it was the Czech language and its intonation that served as his starting point for a national opera. Smetana, as the founder of Czech musical declamation, followed this path consistently. He was in constant dispute with everyone of a conservative turn of mind, and he had to fight hard for his advanced ideas. Smetana's artistic activities thus became part of the political life of the nation, all the more because he kept attracting more and more supporters.

His first experience with opera, which naturally was rather rough, bears traces of the conflict between art and practice. It was THE BRANDENBURGERS IN BOHEMIA, staged on January 5, 1866 at the Provisional Theatre in Prague. Then Smetana went on to compose THE BARTERED BRIDE. It was the direct and worthy descendent of Mozart's LE NOZZE DI FIGARO. THE BARTERED BRIDE's perfection was the hard-won result of three revisions, and it remains the finest expression of Smetana's musical genius. It is also his most popular opera because it is filled with bubbling good spirits, with sparkle and love for humanity. The libretto of THE BARTERED BRIDE (PRODANA' NEVESTA in Czech) was worked out by Karel Sabina (1813-1877) and Smetana began to compose it in August, 1864 and finished the first version, in two acts with spoken dialogue, in March 1866. This was presented to the public at the Provisional Theatre on May 30, 1866. In 1869, Smetana added the male chorus, which now opens the second act of the opera, to the original first act. In addition, he added a second aria for Marenka and the dance scenes. In this version, the opera was given for the first time on January 29, 1869.

The interest of St. Petersburg and Paris to perform THE BARTERED BRIDE caused some further alterations. Smetana replaced the spoken dialogue by recitatives and divided the existing two acts into three with the polka ending the first act. The first performance of this definitive version took place on September 25, 1870 at the Provisional Theatre again under the composer's baton, while the date of the successful Russian and first foreign premiere was January 11, 1871. Paris followed soon after.

Smetana was to write 6 more operas before his death in 1884, but none was destined to equal the popularity of THE BARTERED BRIDE -- at least on foreign soil. It was precisely to discover why this should be, that I began an extensive Rockefeller research grant in the mid-sixties. That research took me from the Edinburgh Festival -- where the Prague National Opera was performing operas by Smetana, Dvorak and Janacek -- to other, longer, visits in that year to Prague, Brno, Ostrava and Pilsen. As an official guest of the Prague National Opera, I was able to immerse myself in the vast nationalistic repertoire of the country extending beyond these three composers to Martinu, Fibich, Cikker, Haba, Suchon, etc. and to hear, study and discuss them with the conductors, directors and singers of the major opera houses of Czechoslovakia: Krombholc, Tichy, Gregor, Kaslik, Stros, Svoboda, Kosler and others. It was an exciting and illuminating period, opening my eyes and ears to newly-discovered treasures of the operatic and symphonic repertoire. To condense these myriad impressions of many months is difficult, but, in essence, I think I was able to discern why so little Czech opera is heard outside the confines of that country: they are all basically too nationalistic, too intimately connected with the history, legends, fables, folk-lore and traditions of the country to exert the same appeal on international audiences. When in Prague, or Brno, for instance, it is possible to so steep yourself in Czechoslovakia's vast cultural heritage that you can begin to love and appreciate, as the Czechs do, certain other major operas, among them certainly Dvorak's RUSALKA and DIMITRIJ, all of the remarkable output of Leos Janacek, Fibich's BRIDE OF MESSINA, Martinu's JULIETTE, and most of the works of Smetana (I only missed seeing two of his

operas), but at the same time realize that the historic and/or folkloric implications of most of the libretti are such that interest is remarkably diminished once outside of the country . There are exceptions, and THE BARTERED BRIDE, in its vast universal appeal, is the leading one. Close on its heels, follows RUSALKA and, I feel, most of Janacek,-- certainly a giant of this century to rank with Bartok, Prokofiev and others. As for Smetana, the light-hearted spirits of THE KISS and THE SECRET are no match for THE BARTERED BRIDE, and the majestic heroics of DALIBOR and LIBUSE, thrilling as they can be in optimal performances, cannot achieve the same magic on our stages as in Prague. Hence, the recent and more numerous concert performances of these rare operas in New York and elsewhere are a worthy solution,-- permitting, at least, an aural acquaintance with them in addition to the recorded versions.

If I were, however, to choose the Smetana opera ranking almost as high as THE BARTERED BRIDE it would have to be the comic opera THE TWO WIDOWS, which so impressed me that I was able to convince the Italian Radio TV Corp., RAI, to produce it in concert form in national broadcast as an Italian premiere. I conducted it in Milan in 1974, marking the centenary of the opera's premiere, and that performance was later aired on National Public Radio in the USA. The opera itself has since entered the repertoire of several European and American companies, as well as having university productions. Unusual as it is,-- a sort of French opera-comique (based, in fact, on a French play by Mallefille) with echoes of Mozart, Donizetti and even Wagner,-- it still misses the impact and sheer bubbling mastery of THE BARTERED BRIDE.

The UW Opera Dept is happy to observe the centenary of Smetana's death (1884) with this production, one of the rare occasions for Seattle opera-lovers to see it on stage -- and in a version that we feel is a uniquely felicitous compromise. It will be performed in the final three-act version, but we are reverting to the original concept of 1866 using spoken dialogue instead of sung recitative. My reasons for this decision are entirely musical and linguistic: the Czech language has thrown obstacles in the path of translators ever since the beginning, with "extra" syllables more or less appended to phrases that in Eng-

lish, Italian, French or German would already have concluded in a more natural "musical" fashion. To try to match these syllables or words with an equivalent feeling in another language is all but impossible,-- particularly in recitatives, as I can attest after countless German and Italian productions. They sound ungainly, unmusical and awkward -- both for the singer and audience -- and pose orchestral problems as well. Hence, apart from singing the opera in Czech (a totally unfeasible option, even in major American or foreign houses), a more logical choice is simply to omit the recitatives and perform the work as originally conceived as a sort of operetta or opera-comique, which we think will make it more accessible and understandable. Our choice of translation (by Cross and Crozier) also has been made after carefully consulting some 4 or 5 in existence, and appears to us the best on all counts.

We are grateful to the Radost Folk Ensemble for their participation in this centenary production, since the many dances - beside the overture - are the best known and loved excerpts of the score. I am indebted not only to Pavel Eckstein, the late eminent critic and author, for his personal insights, comments and his brief history of Czech opera, but also to all the eminent Czech artists and colleagues I was able to know personally while in Czechoslovakia. From them all, I learned what Czech nationalism in music really means. It extends far beyond THE BARTERED BRIDE, its cornerstone, and the musical scene is richer for it.

-- Robert Feist

STAFF FOR BARTERED BRIDE

Conductor.....	ROBERT FEIST
Director.....	VINCE LIOTTA
Choreographer.....	GLEN NIELSEN
Scenic Designer.....	JEFF HUNT
Costume Designer.....	ROBERT DAHLSTROM
Lighting Designer.....	GEOFFREY SEDGWICK
Stage Manager.....	BRAD A. LESTER
Assistant Director.....	JOHN HAGEN
Assistant Conductor.....	HAROLD JOHANSON
Assistant Conductor.....	PIL-SUNG KIM
Technical Director.....	KEN HARRIS
Properties.....	MARGARET CLAPP
Repetiteur.....	JUDY DIANA
Repetiteur.....	GLENDA WILLIAMS
Chorus Master.....	SCOTT PETERSON
Asst. Costume Designer.....	HEIDI HAUGLAND
Asst. Costume Designer.....	MARTHA MATTUS
Asst. Lighting Designer.....	COLLIER WOODS
Master Electrician.....	JEFF McDONALD
Crew.....	Drama 212 Class
Crew.....	Opera Workshop Classes 107 and 307

Král. zemské české divadlo v Praze.

Dnes ve středu dne 30. května 1866. (Hra mimo předplacení.)

P O P R V Ě : (Osobním vedením skladatele.)

Prodáváná

NOVÝ ČÍSLO

Komická zpěvohra ve 2 jednáních. Slova od K. Sabiny. Hudba od Bedřicha Smetany.

Nová dekorace jest od divadelního malíře pana Macourka zhotovena.

OSOBY:

Kralina, sedlák	pan Paleček.	Jeník, sedlý hoch	pan Polák.
Ladomila, jeho žena	pl. Procházková.	Kecal, dohazovač	pan Hrynek.
Mateňka, jeho dcera	ml. z Eggenberga.	Komediant prvního pádu	pan Mlýna.
Milča, sedláčkův.	pan Šebesta.	Zeměpán, jeho dcera	ml. Ledebrová.
Hala, jeho žena	ml. Fialovcová.	Indánc, komediant druhý	pan Křtin.
Vasek, její syn	pan Kysel.	Seláky lid. Kluoc.	Komediant. — Děj na venkově v čas pouli.

Začátek v 7 — konec o 9. hodině.

Letky lze dostati od 9 až do 2 hodin odpoledne a večer od 6 hodin u denní kasy Král. zemského českého divadla.

Za příčinou noremního dne zůstane zitra divadlo uzavřeno. V pátek dne 1. června 1866. (53. hra v předplacení.)

KRÁSNE GRUZINKY.

F. Th.

ANKA

(COPY OF ORIGINAL OPENING NIGHT PROGRAM)