Chamber Opera
Music by Elizabeth Hoffman
Libretto and Direction by James Labe
Conducted by Kris Falk

Wednesday, June 7, 1995 8 pm
Meany Studio Theater
JOB'S WIFE
a chamber opera in three acts

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Music.....................................................Elizabeth Hoffman
Libretto..................................................James Labe
Conductor..............................................Kris Falk
Stage Director........................................James Labe
Set Design.............................................James Labe
Set Construction.................................Elizabeth Hoffman, James Labe
(rocks thanks to Vivian Umino)
Costume Design.................................Elizabeth Hoffman, James Labe
Lisa DeFrance (seamstress)

This performance is a premiere of the opera, completed this year under a Seattle Artists Grant from the Seattle Arts Commission.
In the Bible, Job was a good man who suffered many curses but never rejected God. His wife told him he should curse God and die. He refused, but begged God for an audience to plead his innocence. Finally God appeared in a storm and informed Job that mortals are too limited to understand the reasons for their suffering.

This sequel begins years later as aged Job and his young daughter Jemimah are on their way to her wedding. Jemimah runs ahead. Job meets with a sorceress who brings his wife back from the dead, so that Job can fulfill his vow that they would be together at Jemimah's wedding. Job and his wife sing of their personal passions and their bittersweet love, tempered by lives of suffering.

Act II begins with Jemimah, her fiancé, and his father preparing the wedding site. Job and his wife enter shortly. The adults exchange different points of view about marriage and sacrifice and what it was like to be young. Then they watch as the enraptured lovers sing of love in their wedding ceremony. Afterwards the newlyweds retire to a tent to consummate their marriage. Overcome by the ceremony, Job's wife runs away. Meanwhile, Job and the groom's father drink and celebrate. Suddenly there is a crash of thunder and the sky darkens. The storm is upon them.

Act III begins in the stormy darkness. Job's wife is alone. She realizes that she has fulfilled the promise to attend Jemimah's wedding and that the storm signals her return to death. But she has renewed her desire to live and resolves to fight God. An angel descends a golden ladder from the clouds and challenges Job's wife to fight for a blessing. They struggle and finally Job's wife wins. The angel blesses her, affirming her desire to remain among the living.
ORCHESTRA

Violin I
Coral Overman

Violin II
Laurel Wells

Viola
Ed Davis

‘Cello
Gretchen Yanover

Bass
Todd Gowers

Flute
Megan Lyden

Oboe
Stina Dragovich

Clarinet
Debbie Smith

Horn
Donald J. Ankney

Trombone
Chad Kirby

Percussion
Patrick Roulet

Harp
Bianca Ence

ALTERNATES:
Thane Lewis, Ellen Gray
Loren Dempster
Aron Taylor
Darlene Franz
Thuc Nguyen, Kate Labiak
Nate Irby-Oxford, Kevin Karnes

Special thanks to Pamela Vokolek