

An upright piano; a girl dressed in white with a large blue ribbon around her waist plays, reading a score for, maybe, the very first time; next to her is another girl, in red, watching her and perhaps she'll start singing in a moment or two: an interior from the late 1800s, from the brush of Auguste Renoir, the French painter who painted the same scene half a dozen times.

Opera in those years was also consumed in this way. Publishers rushed to sell individual pieces, especially arias, romanzas and airs: leaflets with just a few pages for "voice and piano" that were placed on the piano's music rack, ready for reckless reading and playing at first-sight. All the melodies that are still familiar to us today, and masses of others that have since been forgotten, entered our homes of the day in this fashion.

Then along came the radio and the gramophone record, and music - and opera - followed a different path to become known to us. For a certain period, it seemed that the technology had definitely removed all traces of hands-on experience; the "stereo" eliminated the upright piano, the collections of the most famous arias were replaced by LPs and CDs. But it wasn't a final victory and already, in the '60s or thereabouts, we began to detect many, increasingly frequent signs of a new form of collaboration between technology and manual input in the field of popular music: the widespread diffusion of the record stimulated through imitation the birth of many small amateur "bands". The complete passiveness of listening and the creativity of making music began to grow closer to reach a mutually beneficial compromise.

Opera has, however, been excluded from this process until now; but if it's true that musical theatre shows are currently enjoying a resurgence in interest, also and especially with the younger generations, then we can be justified in thinking that we are on the brink of a small revolution. And here, once again, before our very eyes, is the interior of a house, where the piano hasn't been "evicted" by the stereo, but simply substituted by it. A stereo that, like the upright of earlier times, helps us make music, with the aid of the technology that it seems no-one can do without these days.

The "famous arias" can now return to our homes, once again in the traditional form of a score for "voice and piano", but with the additional support offered by CD technology. Indeed, the CD lets us listen to the arias on the sheet in a rendering that we could call a "standard", offering us an overall view of the piece; but the CD offers us even more, i.e., the orchestral base as we sing. Thus, if we're opera freaks, we can enjoy ourselves listening to a professional performance of the piece we're interested in and then try to sing it ourselves, accompanied by an invisible orchestra coming out from the stereo. If, on the other hand, we have a greater knowledge of music, or are even professionals, we can "read" the score, have ourselves accompanied on the piano by a capable friend and even check our professional training as singers by trying out our own voice above a real orchestra, an experience that's extremely hard to achieve otherwise.

To sum up, all those who have viewed the increasing power of technology as an implacable enemy of manual creativity are now kindly invited to think again.

Eduardo Rescigno

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Silvano Santagata



Diplomato in flauto al Conservatorio di Genova, ha studiato in seguito canto con Rosetta Noli. Ha preso parte a varie manifestazioni musicali quali il "Festival di Villa Imperiale" a Genova, "Settembre Musica" di Torino, le "Serate Musicali" di Milano. Si è esibito in Francia, Svizzera, Germania e Svezia, dove ha recentemente eseguito la Petite Messe Solennelle di Rossini. Ha presentato in prima esecuzione assoluta l'Ode Columbus di Angelo Canepa al Teatro dell'Opera di Genova ed è stato protagonista in importanti teatri delle operette Die lustige Witwe, Il Paese del sorriso, Frasquita e Sogno di un valzer. Ha recentemente registrato il Requiem di Mozart e l'opera Moro per amore di Stradella. Interprete di personaggi del repertorio operistico, ha recentemente debuttato come Turiddu nella Cavalleria rusticana di Mascagni.

Diplomaed in flute at the Conservatory of Genova, he then studied singing with Rosetta Noli. He has taken part in various musical displays, including the "Festival di Villa Imperiale" in Genova, "Settembre Musica" in Turin, and the "Serate Musicali" in Milan. He has performed in France, Switzerland, Germany and Sweden, where he recently performed Rossini's Petite Messe Solennelle. He presented the very first performance of Angelo Canepa's Ode Columbus at the Teatro dell'Opera in Genova, and was the protagonist in important theatres of the operettas The Merry Widow, Il Paese del Sorriso, Frasquita and Sogno di un valzer. He has recently recorded Mozart's Requiem and the opera Moro per Amore, by A. Stradella. As the interpreter of operatic repertoire characters, he recently made his debut as Turiddu in Mascagni's Cavalleria Rusticana.

Stefano Secco



Nato a Milano, ha studiato pianoforte con Soresina e canto con Giacinto Prandelli, Franco Corelli e Franca Mattiucci. All'interno del Concorso As.Li.Co. ha seguito corsi di perfezionamento con Leyla Gencer e Renata Scotto. Nel 1988 è stato finalista al Concorso "Labò" e nel 1995 ha vinto il Concorso Internazionale As.Li.Co. Ha inoltre vinto vari premi, fra cui il "Bjoerling" dall'Ambasciata di Svezia. Ha debuttato nel 1994 come Pinkerton nella Madama Butterfly cantando in seguito La Traviata, Don Procopio (Bizet), Don Pasquale, La Bohème, L'Elisir d'amore, Lucia di Lammermoor, La lettera anonima (Donizetti), Rigoletto. Intensa anche l'attività concertistica. Ha partecipato, nel ruolo di tenore, alla registrazione del disco Zaccoturtaic di Tullio De Piscopo.

Stefano Secco, tenor. Born in Milan, he studied piano with A. Soresina e singing with Giacinto Prandelli, Franco Corelli and Franca Mattiucci. Within the Concorso As.Li.Co., he attended courses of specialization with Leyla Gencer and Renata Scotto. In 1988 he was a finalist in the "F. Labo" competition, and in 1995 he won the Concorso Internazionale As.Li.Co. In addition, he has won various awards including the "J. Bjoerling" from the Swedish Embassy and. He made his debut in 1994 as Pinkerton in Madame Butterfly, he then sang La Traviata, Don Procopio (Bizet), Don Pasquale, La Boheme, L'elisir d'amore, Lucia di Lammermoor, La Lettera Anonima (Donizetti), and Rigoletto. His concert activity has also been intense. As a tenor, he took part in the recording of the record "Zaccoturtaic", by Tullio De Piscopo.

Nessun dorma

Silvano Santagata,

tenor

Antonello Gotta,

conductor

Compagnia d'Opera

Italiana