Topical “Tosca”

Tosca, Boston Lyric Opera, Emerson Cutler Majestic Theatre, Boston, through October 25. Info at 617-912-7050 or bostonlyricopera.org

By Jules Beggar

Imagine a tyrannical regime with a corrupt police chief as sexually predatory as Harvey Weinstein. Add a revolutionary artist and his opera to a love struggle for real freedom in a city where religious officials become...

Health center makes Crucial Catch

Award funds fight against cancer

BY MICHELE D. MAINESALCO

The South End Community Health Center (SECHC) recently received a $75,000 Crucial Catch award from the New England Patriots and the American Cancer Society; and to celebrate, the health center hosted a ceremony and...

Casa Myrna Wins $3 Million Grant Slate

Submitted by Casa Myrna

Boston (October 23, 2017) – Throughout Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October, The Mary Kay Foundation is awarding $20,000 grants to 150 domestic violence shelters across the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Guam for a total of $5 million. Local shelter, Casa Myrna was chosen to receive one of the annual grants to further the organization’s efforts to combat domestic violence and provide rehabilitation services throughout Boston. This year’s highly sought-after grant slate brings the total investment in The Foundation’s annual shelter grant program to nearly $42 million. Casa Myrna will use the grant funding to support emergency shelter services. Other recipients use the unrestricted funds for basic operating expenses, hiring much-needed personnel, completing repairs and renovations or adding programs and...

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collaborators by confusing identity.

This is the kind of dystopia co-librettists Louis Iliois and Giuseppe Chacona vividly depicted in 1980 post-republic Rome for their Coppola opera "Tosca," first performed in the year 1900. Now Boston Lyric Opera is bringing fresh and timely resonance to this pertinent classic in its powerful, 4.1st year season opener at the Emerson Majestic Theatre.

Set designer Julia Noulz Merit has constructed a formidable high pillar two-level facade where most evident of police Sprezia—amassed by abusive henchmen—awaits a winding staircase to torture freethinking agnostic painter Cavaderoni and bans church-attending, convent singer Tosca.

Clergymen and nuns display religious devotion with no visible compassion and caring for the disenfranchised. Stage director Chantal Martigny admirably blocks the escalating conflicts of what may be Sprezia's most emotionally insightful opera.

The result is a staging where hypocrisy and deceit regularly face off against genuine faith and true love in the opera's nighttime scenario, one that George Orwell would admire for its horror.

Opera Falcon (Paris-based) founding artistic director David Stein, now in his BLO debut, nicely evokes both the irony and the dramatic highs of that face off as he conducts the production's 64 musicians—the season's largest orchestra—behind the stage.

There are particularly notable effects from the sea and percussion sections. Stein's nuanced conducting pays careful attention to the contrasting furious/stretches and softer moments of the opening. Stein's sharp direction also delineates the disarmingly pleasant passage that contrast with Sprezia's lethal manipulation of Tosca.

Bringing together the riveting poetic elements of the libretto and Puccini's poignant music are the high-voiced and expressive cast members. Elena Stikhina captures Tosca's tenderness and vulnerability, skillfully performing his love for Tosca and enduring great suffering as a resolution.

Adding to the strengths of this BLO winner is Stikhina and Boston's real chemistry together—whether rising quickly in front of a Macdonia statue at the church or sharing much bickled moments of remorse. Daniel Sebah finds all of Sprezia's brutality and saintly forgiveness of his real if twisted being for Tosca.

BLO veteran James Maddalena, always a convincing actor as well as singer, catches the steely demeanor of the church assistant: possiblyBattle in early exchanges with Cavaderoni, whose painting of Mary Magdalene he finds less than appropriate. Jon Jaugier has menacing coldness as Sprezia's henchman Spoleto. David Curbing has the right fragility as escaped political prisoner Angelotti. There are strong ensemble effects throughout—especially at moments of prayer.

Sprezia betrays Tosca. By contrast, the BLO's timely revival not only proves faithful to the diva's haunting emotional music but also demonstrates how much this wise opera has to say about society's freedom, love and life itself.

Bacchus

Bacchus asked Jackson if he really meant it when he said earlier that "Mary Walsh doesn't think black lives matter." Jackson did not answer yes or no, but said Walsh delays doing anything until a problem becomes a crisis. He pointed to the 2016 Boston Latin School protest, which ultimately brought in the federal Department of Justice.

He added it's not right that merely any city contracts go to people of color or women in a city where white families have far higher net worth—and life expectancy—than black families. He said And he said Walsh's recent dismissal of an NAACP report criticizing his tenure shows Walsh just doesn't believe in dialogue.

"He's making the wrong decisions," Jackson said.

Walsh said that's nonsense. He said he's held the first citywide meeting on race in Boston history. He acknowledged that while city contracts to people of color had been low, he moved last year to bring the number up. And the number of teachers, police and firefighters of color rose, he increased.

He said it was unfair of the NAACP to criticize him for "generational issues" that were happening decades before he became mayor and that "somebody's ever tackled." Increasing minority numbers in SPF Jackson said the mayor needs to work

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Halloween
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son Avenue
Join us for the final SoWa Open Market of the season, and Boston’s biggest Halloween Party!

We’ll be celebrating on October 26-27, 10 am – 6 pm, along with the region’s best makers, farmers, vintage vendors, and food trucks. Check out the event line up below.

• SoWa Costume Contest (People & Pets) – Details Below
• Free Pumpkin Painting
• Free Face Painting by Fun Face Express
• Spooky-Cupcake Decorating with Bella & Harvey
• DIY Succulent Pumpkin Planters with The Happy Cactus
• Live Music by Jordan Reynolds (Sat) and Night Tree (Sun)
• Magic Show by Darren Yong Live (Sun)

Enter the 2017 SoWa Costume Contest! All costumes are eligible for entry, the more creative, the better! Check out the categories and prizes.

- Humans: To enter, stop by the info booth located on Thayer Street (Sat) and the farmers market (Sun) from 11-3. We will collect your contact info and snap a photo. Winners will be posted on Facebook the following day.
- First & Second Place: $100 gift card to Cameraepsilon

Vendor: Secret judges will be going booth-to-booth

- First Place: $300 visa gift card
- Second Place: $300 visa gift card
- Third Place: $200 visa gift card

Pets: Pet parents, bring your pups by our info booth located on Thayer Street (Sat) and the farmers market (Sun) from 11-3. We will collect your contact info and snap a photo. Winners will be posted on Facebook the following day.
- First Place: $300 visa gift card
- Second Place: $300 visa gift card

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In the introduction of Valda Lupo, Waldnak said, “The city of Boston has done amazing work in making sure that every single person in the city of Boston has access to health care.”

The most poignant yet inspiring comments came from Dickson, a 40-year employee of SECHO who was diagnosed with the first of five bouts with cancer in her late teens, and Cerritos, who described the fear and emotions she felt during her breast cancer diagnosis and the growing decisions she had to make regarding her breast cancer treatment for the welfare and stability of her children.

Dickson’s warm and expansive manner came through as she chronicled losing her mother to cancer when she was 16 and helping her father to raise her four younger siblings, then discovering her first cancer at age 19.

Throughout her life, Dickson has battled breast, kidney, ovarian, cervical, and liver cancer as well as other serious illnesses. But she has come through it all with an optimistic determination. Speaking on behalf of the Parks about her desire to support cancer research, Cerritos quipped, “I want to grow up and be in oncology.”

After the comments and presentation, members of the public streamed in and learned from the cheerful, energetic, and well-known BUMS students how to avoid common cancer threats with sunscreen, condiments (for cervical cancer prevention), good dental hygiene and avoidance of tobacco products among other strategies. BUMS students are well-versed in the basics of breast cancer knowledge and are used to speaking about the disease to people who are far from the medical field.

After the event, SECHO director of external affairs Henry Goodrow declared the event a success. Goodrow said, “It turned out better than we could have possibly imagined, and the quality of the speaking program is really a great success.”

Goodrow was impressed with the medical students and their interactions with the public. "They really added to the health fair. They have such enthusiasm. They were fantastic—so well organized. [One could] see how excited they were to be interacting with people and to get out of the institutional environment. I think that they brought out the best of everyone, not just the students but staff of health center. This was a bald move of what we're trying to do in the community."
Debate
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Patrick. "They gave plenty of tax credits away."

Walsh said the Amazon bid contains no specific economic incentives, although he noted it does call for certain transportation improvements, such as connecting the Red and Blue Lines, which the state said in 2011 would cost $370 million.

Lessons from the Olympics?

Walsh said the city learned a lot from the failed Olympics bid, which he said helped the city launch various planning programs for building a better Boston. He said he was the one who canceled the Olympics bid when he realized it could mean mortgaging the city's future.

"He is membrane watching," the is actually happened there," Jackson said. Jackson said he was the only councilor to denounce the Olympic documents as a "great, secret. We wasted a whole year on this issue," and Walsh kept denying his opponents' charges and he referred to them as "people on Twitter."

"He complemented the Olympic," he added. "He complimented the Olympic," and he only recently came up with a capital plan to improve Boston schools, he said.

Walsh said the profits in his pudding: Boston has 60,000 more jobs than four years ago, the most number of Level I and Level II schools in the city's history, and we cannot afford to walk away. And the bond market reacts to the city's success, he said. He then added that two city officials who face federal indictments remain on the payroll at $250,000 each year, even as BPS keeps getting cut.

Walsh denounced Jackson's charges as "all false," but acknowledged the two city officials remain on the payroll. "In the United States of America, you're innocent until proven guilty," he said.

Schools

Jackson said 49 schools are losing $31 million in funding this year. He said he would put more money into the school budget for nurses, art and music programs and computer science classes at all schools. And he said qualified teacher now assigned would get more teaching. He said he would bring back an elected school committee.

Walsh said he has increased school funding each year he's been in office and this year increased funding significantly for special education and for schools at risk of being downgraded to Level 4. He said that "the money follows the child," so schools that lose students lose the funding, that otherwise would have come with those students. He said votes have twice chosen an appointed school committee and that is to assure the State Legislature to let the city divert funds from the South Boston convention center for universal, pre-K transportation.

Walsh said the T needs to do more - such as connecting the Blue and Red Lines. He said the city is looking at ways to reduce congestion, even including cars, but said he remains especially committed to bikes, despite Mayored's opinion that some Boston roads are just too narrow for them.

Jackson also supported bikes. He said Boston needs to spend more on bike paths.

"No case should die riding a bike," and he said the city should use the $67 million in T as leverage to get it done. Also, the city should be devoting more effort to the impact of new development projects on transportation. "We develop, but we don't plan," he said.

Late-night T service

Both agreed the T blew it, giving it up. Space savers

Beauvi said people putting out items, which he said included refrigerators, to save space after snow storms. Both candidates agreed residents who shovel out space should get $18 hours to keep them.

Public restrooms in the Public Garden

Walsh said he plans to put $30 million into the Common and Franklin Park, that part of that will included permanent staff. He did not dismiss the idea of restrooms.

Jackson said, "well, that money comes from a shady deal" - the sale of the Winthrop Square garage - and said the city should have less concentration jobs. He said 14,000 BPS students are homeless. And he said the city needs to rebuild the Long Island bridge and restore the homeless and drug programs that were there. "We can pull together a plan for Amazon in a month and a half," and yet Long Island remains shut, he said.

Walsh pointed to city programs to house the homeless. And he said that while the Long Island bridge will be rebuilt someday, he no longer supports reopening Long Island as a home for shelters and treatment beds. He said the city has recreated its programs on the mainland and that it's wrong to hide the less fortunate and programs to serve them on a remote island in Boston Harbor.

Jackson said the $20 million spent to tear the bridge down could have gone a long way to improving services.

"The bridge was crumbling into the Atlantic Ocean," Walsh retorted.

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Pet of the Week

Steven Cohen
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Aziul and Grimm, a pair of bonded Flemish giant buns (This means that at 6 months old and 5 ft by 4 ft they still have some growing to do!) They are extremely social and friendly bunnies that will hop right up to greet anyone who stops to say hi. Due to their large size, we think Aziul and Grimm would do best housed in an indoor (cage or pen) or in a sunny, protected yard, as free-ranging rabbits. Rabbit care is fairly easy to learn. They need access to clean hay and water at all times and a good-sized enclosure. Please contact the Adoption Center with questions about appropriate housing. If you think Aziul and Grimm might be a great match for you, please plan a visit to our shelter today or call 617-326-5002. The shelter is open Tuesday through Thursday, 1-7pm, Friday through Sunday 1-4pm, including some holidays.

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Casa
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resources based on the unique needs of their shelter and the clients they serve.

"At Casa Myrna, we are incredibly grateful for support from The Mary Kay Foundation and its continued commitment to break the cycle of domestic violence," said Casa Myrna Chief Executive Officer, Stephanie Brown. "This generous support from the Mary Kay Foundation will provide Casa Myrna with crucial resources to help uninsured victims of domestic violence achieve safety, healing, and economic stability, and will strengthen our efforts to engage our community in preventing domestic and dating violence."

"More than 700 domestic violence shelters nationwide applied for The Mary Kay Foundation shelter grants this year, which demonstrates the overwhelming need to maintain critical services and provide a safe haven for the survivors of an epidemic that impacts one in every four women," said Annie Clark, board member of The Mary Kay Foundation and Vice President of Public Affairs for Mary Kay Inc. "Working to prevent and end domestic violence is a cornerstone of The Mary Kay Foundation, and for countless members of our independent sales force. Since 2000, The Foundation has invested tens of millions of dollars in its shelter grant program and without a doubt, we know these funds make a difference in homes and communities across the country."

Mary Kay Inc.'s global cause-related program, Beauty that Counts, helps support The Foundation's annual shelter grant program. Applications for the 2016 shelter grant program will be available January 15 through April 30. Please visit marykayfoundation.org for additional information and for the full list of 2015 shelter grant recipients.

Today, Casa Myrna is Boston's largest provider of domestic violence awareness, shelter, and supportive services for domestic violence survivors. Our comprehensive range of services, available in both Spanish and English, provide survivors with tools to recover from the trauma of abuse and begin to build sustainable and fulfilling lives. Each year, we serve over 2,000 survivors in three residential programs (Mary L. Pooreman House Emergency Shelter, Transitional Living Program and Teen Parenting Program), housing assistance and advocacy, financial literacy education, and job readiness skill building, individual and group counseling, legal advocacy and representation, children's services, and community-based advocacy. Casa Myrna also operates SafeLink, Massachusetts' statewide 24/7 helpline for domestic violence hotline that answers nearly 10,000 calls annually. We also provide domestic and dating violence awareness and prevention to extend our reach to adults across the state through workshops, seminars, trainings, social media, engagement with the media, and annual ad campaigns on mass transit systems.

Halloween
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Sunday, October 29

Tedpoly's Annual Halloween Block Party
Tedpoly's, 58 Chelmsford Street, Sunday, 6:00-9:00 p.m.
Music by Vinyl Tapes & the Jumping Monkeys; food by Appleton Cafe, Blackbird Donuts, and Byte Bakery & Whole Foods; glitter tattoo, a bounce house, and this year, for the first time, a petting zoo! It's great fun, so we hope to see you. Please share with your friends.

Pumpkin Carving by the Concord Square Fountain
From 1:00 to 3:30 p.m. (date: Saturday, Oct 28)
Bring a pumpkin to carve with your neighborhood! All pumpkins will then be proudly displayed around the fountain and lit up for Halloween — when you can expect hundreds of little trick-or-treater to visit Concord Square. Stop sitting at its best hope to see everyone's inner artist to create pumpkin masterpieces...

Don't care to carve a pumpkin? Then just come out and meet your neighbor Concord Square.

Halloween, Tuesday, October 31

Tudor Sparrow Park Pre-Trick-Or-Treat Halloween Party
5 p.m. to 6 p.m.
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