DIRECTOR OF THE AUDITION BY MARTIN KALMANOFF

by

HUSSIN JANMOHAMED

B.Mus., University of British Columbia, 1996

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF MUSIC
(OPERÁ)

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
(School of Music)

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

October 1998

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Department of **Music**

The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

Date **October 19/98**
A TALE OF TWO OPERAS

with the UBC OPERA ENSEMBLE

THE AUDITION

by William Walton

THE BEAR

by Martin Kalmanoff

Friday, January 30, 8:00pm
Sunday, February 1, 2:00pm
Admission Free
UBC Old Auditorium (across from the School of Music)
THE BEAR

Mise en Scene  John Juliani*
Piano/Musical Coach  Donna Falconer

CAST
(IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

FRIDAY

Popova  Tami Gazzola
Smirnov  Andrew Greenwood
Luka  Shae Apland
Cook  Suseh Nievares
Groom  Russell Robson

SUNDAY

Karyn Way*
Andrew Greenwood
Shae Apland
Suseh Nievares
Russell Robson

* Appearing by permission of Canadian Actor's Equity Association

SYNOPSIS

Popova, a pretty widow, is wallowing in her grief for her late and promiscuous husband. She is confronted by Smirnov, one of her husband’s boorish creditors. They quarrel to a point where he challenges her to a duel and she promptly responds by producing two of her husband’s pistols. They stare each other down but neither of them can pull the trigger as they find they are in the power of something greater than their initial dislike of each other.

BACKGROUND NOTE

The Bear described by its author, Anton Chekov, as a jest in one act, was written in 1888 and given its first performance in 1889 to remarkable popular and critical acclaim. In 1965 the fames
of Peter Pears brought the play to the attention of Sir William Walton. What emerged two years later was The Bear, An Extravaganza in One Act with music by William Walton and a libretto adapted from Chekov and lyrics by Paul Dehn. The opera premiered on June 3, 1967 at Aldeburgh under the aegis of the English Opera Group with James Lockhart conducting the English Chamber Orchestra and direction by Colin Graham.

**Program Note**

Although we have made some attempt to distance the setting of this production from the late 1990s, nothing has been done from a formal design perspective to reproduce the 1898 period in which Anton Chekov's play, The Bear was written and set. For whatever modest and eclectic elements of scenic design we have incorporated, we are grateful to the UBC Theatre Department and specifically to the Costume and Properties Division. Our special thanks for their gracious assistance to Jean Driscoll-Bell and Sarah Marchand in Costumes, and to Melanie Walden, Sheri Milne and Janet Bickford in the Props department for the loan of props and furniture.

I would like to acknowledge the quietly efficient contribution of Suseh Nievares, our stage manager, and the technical support of Derek Mack and Jeremy Baxter. Special thanks must go to Donna Falconer for the indefatigable, good-natured and patient way in which she handled the music direction.

In working on The Bear I have had the opportunity to observe firsthand the talent, dedication and tirelessness of the students in the Opera Program. That these young people manage, in sometimes difficult working conditions, to maintain their enthusiasm and produce excellent results suggests the presence of strong and caring leadership. And for that, Nancy Hermiston should take a bow.
THE AUDITION

Stage Director  Hussein Janmohamed
Musical Coach/Piano  Erika Switzer

CAST
(IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

Director
Dawn Aurora
Melisande Jardin
Veronica
Maria Callas Epstein
Renata Tebaldi O'Rourke
Hedy Iceberg
Birgitt Blumberg
Carmen Carmen

FRIDAY
Russell Robson
Cindy Keung
Rapunzel Tu
Maike de Bruyn
P. Mulholland
Sascha Karp
Neyir Hall
Irene Kurka
Suzanne Abbott

SUNDAY
Joel Jaffe
Robyn Driedger
Olga Tylman
Maike de Bruyn
P. Mulholland
June Iwagami
Eva Gersbach
Katy Hedalen
Jennifer Légaré

SYNOPSIS

The Audition is dedicated to Opera. It concerns eight extraordinary sopranos auditioning for a position with an opera workshop. Each attempts to outdo the other by avoiding familiar audition material and by bringing wonderful unknown arias from previously “undiscovered” operas by such composers as Handel, Debussy, Puccini, Wagner, and Strauss. May the best woman win and may “Opera attain its rightful place/As the Queen of all the arts!”
BACKGROUND NOTE

The Audition, as described by the composer is piece composed purely for entertainment. It is an aleatory opera which can be expanded or retracted based on the director's needs. The libretto and music are by Martin Kalmanoff, who currently resides in New York, New York with an assist on the words of three musical numbers by Dr. Sigmund Spaeth, Illica & Giacosa and Jay S. Harrison.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The Audition is ideal for opera workshops to accommodate young singers' first solo endeavours on stage. In working on The Audition we have all ventured into new territory and have learned a lot. For many of the singers it is their first time on stage and therefore this piece has been an excellent vehicle for them to get a good taste of life as a singing actor. We have worked together to come out of our comfort zones and have realized that it is okay to be outrageous sometimes. Everyone's hard work and dedication is fabulous and it is an amazing feeling to be part of such a fun and exciting production.

On a personal note, I would not be where I am now without the love, kindness and support of my family, friends and mentor, Nancy Hermiston. I have no words to express my gratitude for their faith and confidence in me. Also a very warm thank you to all the performers, to our pianist Erika Switzer, to our stage manager Suseh Nievares and to our technical staff.

Please sit back, relax and enjoy The Audition.

-Hussein Janmohamed
**Production**

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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Production Manager</td>
<td>Nancy Hermiston</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical Director</td>
<td>Derek Mack</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage Manager</td>
<td>Suseh Nievares</td>
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<td>Jeremy Baxter</td>
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**Acknowledgements**