OPERA AT WESTERN presents

Giacomo Puccini’s

SUOR ANGELICA & GIANNI SCHICCHI

Recorded on Saturday, March 13 & Sunday, March 14, 2021

Paul Davenport Theatre, Western University
SUOR ANGELICA & GIANNI SCHICCHI

Music Giacomo Puccini
Libretto Giovacchino Forzano

Music Director Simone Luti
Stage Director Michael Cavanagh

SUOR ANGELICA CAST

March 13
Angelica
Principessa
Abbess
Genovieffa
Osmina/Dolcina
Zelatrice
Nurse
Alms
Novice
Lay Sisters
Sisters

March 14
Hannah Nickel
Camila Montefusco
Natalie Nelson
Meaghan McKay

Hailey Witt
Erica Simone
Francesca Alexander
Taylor Burns
Grace Hakala
Chiara Siraco
Ashley Carpenter
Erica Simone

SUOR ANGELICA CAST

March 13
March 14
Trinity Kandiotis
Sophia Daunt
Candice Luo

Trinity Kandiotis

Candice Luo

Simmie Patoka
Grace Hakala

Simmie Patoka

Ashley Carpenter

Simmie Patoka

Theodore Baerg

Emma Battel

Leah Arvidsson

Leah Arvidsson

James Smith

James Smith

Angela Gjurichanin

Cameron Mazzei

Gabrielle de Grandmont

Renato Araujo

Renato Araujo

Francesca Alexander

Carlo Rescigno

Max Arvidsson

Cameron Mazzei

Max Arvidsson

Ocean Yin

Ocean Yin

Mitchell Kukura

Simon Ison

Simmie Patoka

Scott King

Grace Hakala

Grace Hakala

GIANNI SCHICCHI CAST

March 13
March 14
Schicchi
Lauretta
Zita
Rinuccio
Gherardo
Nella
La Ciesca
Betto
Simone
Marco
Spinelloccio
Amantio
Pinnelino
Guccio
Gherardino

Theodore Baerg
Julia LoRusso
Leah Arvidsson
James Smith
Simon Ison
Angela Gjurichanin
Francesca Alexander
Renato Araujo
Max Arvidsson
Ocean Yin
Carlo Rescigno
Mitchell Kukura
Cameron Mazzei
Scott King
Grace Hakala

Theodore Baerg
Emma Battel
Leah Arvidsson
James Smith
Cameron Mazzei
Ting Zhang
Gabrielle de Grandmont
Renato Araujo
Max Arvidsson
Ocean Yin
Carlo Rescigno
Mitchell Kukura
Simon Ison
Scott King
Grace Hakala
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Special thanks from the production team to Adrienne Pieczonka and Kaitlyn Smith of the Glenn Gould School, Toronto, for their contributions to props and scenic elements for Suor Angelica.

PRODUCER’S MESSAGE

The opera program at Western is very proud to present the double bill of Suor Angelica and Gianni Schicchi by G. Puccini during this year that is overshadowed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our amazing students have stepped up and prepared these two contrasting productions under what can only be described as complicated circumstances. Their learning curve has been exceptional on all levels. Performing like this has reinforced how reliable and flexible musicians are when the music is really a part of them.

They have been led in these productions by two wonderful and committed individuals; Conductor, Simone Luti and Stage Director, Michael Cavanagh. Their inspired leadership and creativity has made this possible and I as the program director could not be more proud of what has been accomplished.

Our Western students continue to develop as fine musicians - singers and instrumentalists – whose leadership will continue to make us all proud for many years. Bravi one and all!

Professor Theodore Baerg
**Suor Angelica**
On a late winter’s day in the near future, the cloistered Sisters of a religious order take their daily recreation. They exchange greetings, dole out and receive admonishments, celebrate the arrival of the spring sunshine, mourn their losses, and discuss (reluctantly or otherwise) their hearts’ desires. One of their number is Angelica, a member of a wealthy and powerful family, sent to the institution against her will as punishment for a transgression against their reputation. Her only desire is to see her 7-year-old son, who was taken from her as a newborn, at the same time Angelica was sent away, and for the same reason.

The Sisters hear thrilling news, that a mysterious visitor has arrived in a luxurious transport, a rare event in this highly restrictive world. Angelica, in particular, reacts with a mixture of excitement and foreboding. Sure enough, the visitor is revealed to be The Principessa, the woman responsible for Angelica’s internment, and steward of her child. She has come to demand two things of Angelica; that she sign away all rights to the family name and fortune, and that she demonstrate remorse and penitence for her actions. Angelica refuses both, and demands to see her son. The Principessa responds in cold anger, describing the boy’s recent illness and efforts to save his life. Angelica, sure that her son is dead, collapses in grief.

Later, in profound anguish, Angelica decides to make a frenzied attempt to be reunited with her child in the afterlife. In her delusion, she makes and drinks a poisonous mix of herbs and water from the order’s communal fountain. She suddenly realizes that she has committed, for them, a cardinal sin. Now convinced her soul is condemned, Angelica’s only hope is an act of forgiveness nothing short of miraculous. She begs desperately for salvation and her dying wish, to see her child again, is granted.

**Gianni Schicchi**
The year is 1974, in the early days of Zoom. The members of the Donati clan, a group of grasping, rapacious social climbers worthy of Dante’s Inferno, gather on a call to “mourn” the sudden passing of their wealthy relative, Buoso. What they’re really doing, of course, is hoping to cash in on the dispersal of his estate. A rumour swirls, though, that he has left his entire fortune to the neighbourhood church, which results in a frantic search for his will. Sure enough, once it’s discovered and read, they learn the rumours are true. Their whole family is destined for poverty, mockery, and ruin.

In their despair, and after some ardent persuasion by a nephew, Rinuccio, they turn to a local fixer, a clever fellow named Gianni Schicchi. He also happens to be the father of Rinuccio’s girlfriend, Lauretta, whom Rinuccio wants to marry against the wishes of the family matriarch. Schicchi and his daughter dial in, at Rinuccio’s bidding, to predictable results. After much bickering, lengthy pleading, and many threats, Schicchi decides to help the family. Of course, he has his own agenda, and after several near calamities and further recriminations, a new, fake will is successfully drawn up and everyone’s problems are happily resolved. Well, not everyone’s. Some people don’t deserve happiness.

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