

# HUFFPOST ARTS & CULTURE

## Fliegende Holländer at Glimmerglass



Women's chorus with Mary (Young Artist Deborah Nansteel)  
Photo by Karli Cadel for Glimmerglass

Your intrepid reporter has once again happily traipsed all the way across the state to see beautifully done opera and to tell you about it. This time the venue was the Glimmerglass Festival, site of several wonderful shows seen and reported two years ago. (I had to miss the entire season last year. Bitter tears were the result.)

The first show I saw was *Der Fliegende Holländer*, Mr. Wagner's great opus in honor of seamen. Ghostly ship's captain comes ashore once every seven years searching for true love, and one gathers that it never ends well. Glimmerglass always has innovative and creative new productions of both standard and unusual works, and Francesca Zambello, artistic director of Glimmerglass and stage director of this show, certainly did not let us down! This was a visually stunning show, with spellbinding effects in scenery, stage direction, choreography, and lighting. (My companion opined that the enormously effective lighting was like another character, but in a successful way, not in a Lepage-machine way.) Sets by James Noone and lighting by Mark McCullough deserve high praise, as do Ms. Zambello's lusty direction and choreography by Eric Sean Fogel. In fact, there was almost nothing to complain about in this show.



Melody Moore  
Photo by Karli Cadel  
for Glimmerglass

first Wagner role, and this production her first Senta. No matter--this lady is a highly skilled singing actress, and the role fits her voice like a glove. We believe her as a passionate young girl obsessed with the legend of the Dutchman, and we believe her senses are coming alive when she meets him in person. We want to hear her sing Senta's ballad

It's unusual for me to rave about the technical team before talking about singers, and I certainly don't want to suggest the musical elements of the show by comparison were less exciting than the visual. That would be a falsehood. Conductor John Keenan led a reduced orchestra through the opera in brilliant fashion, and the singing was above par almost across the board. Of course one must begin by discussing the Dutchman himself, sung by Baritone Ryan McKinny. Not only were his singing and characterization beautiful and nuanced, but his stage presence was electric. His duet with Senta was spellbinding, and one could feel the pain when he believes Senta has betrayed him. And what a bit of bad-boy eye candy he is in costume!



Ryan McKinny  
Photo by Karli Cadel  
for Glimmerglass

again and again. (I had thought the beautiful and amazing Melody More was a new name and face to me, but now I realize I saw her in New York City Opera's *Seance on a Wet Afternoon*)

Jay Hunter Morris sang Erik, Senta's local sweetheart. Mr. Morris gained well-deserved fame when he stepped in on short notice as Siegfried in the Met's Ring cycle last season. Although I didn't see those performances, I heard very good sounding clips from them. Which is why I was concerned that he sounded tired in this performance. He did not act tired, however, and threw himself into the role as the hot-headed young *Jägerman* Erik. A spy assures me he was in better voice for opening night, and I look forward to hearing Mr. Morris in the future sounding fresh and well rested.

Peter Volpe was a tenderly paternal Daland, Senta's father. The Steersman was performed with lusty if oversung ardor by Young Artist Adam Bielamowicz, and Mary was sung quite well by Young Artist Deborah Nansteel. The chorus of Young Artists was very, very good, and the dancers superb. Once again I must rave about choreographer Eric Sean Fogel. The sailors' dance at the beginning of Act III was quite a delight to see in its enthusiastic and uniform execution, and the movements of the women's chorus and dancers in Act II was similarly beautiful.

A musical, vocal, visual, dramatic success. What's not to love about this production?



Photo by Jamie Kraus for Glimmerglass