ERA LA NOTTE

At night, we need to love surprises, whispers...
Era la notte
Lyric show by Juliette Deschamps
Staging Juliette Deschamps  
Lights Dominique Bruguière  
Set Cécile Degos  
Costumes Christian Lacroix  
Anna Caterina Antonacci, soprano  
The Soloists of Les Siècles
Duration : 1 hour 15 without interval

At night, we need to love surprises, whispers, that the night encloses and doesn’t offer every time. To understand history in darkness, to guess the way, to be wrong about half-light, to find oneself playing metamorphosis and ambiguity. Finally, to celebrate decency and to love what is hidden. The night is the theater of all intense pleasure, of all permission and all crimes. In particular, you hear music differently at night. So I chose Era la notte as a title.

I was born in theaters, I grew up there - familiar architecture, boat vocabulary. I know the bodies of actors, I’ve always heard their singing. I’ve often imagined that for poets, painters, stage directors, there was a rare, vital, inspiring, final encounter. And on August 2003, in a studio in Ivry, Anna Caterina Antonacci got into a rehearsal room, about to become Cassandre. They were preparing The Trojans by Berlioz.

I still can see her crying on stage in a white dress. Troja was burning down. Women were killing themselves. I still can see us backstage silently crying real tears as children, fixed in our fictions, in our fantasy, crying the predicted collapse of Troja, which we knew in advance and which we could verify every night on the blood red stage. Anna Caterina Antonacci has the solemnity of Madonnas and the burning presence of destiny’s women. I saw her seize the role, carrying up the audience, catching them and drawing them apart to tell them a story. As in romantic stories of opera evenings, I saw them breathless, eyes open wide. Enchanted, smitten too.

She appeared and I identified her. As the actress I had always dreamed to direct, the voice I had always been waiting for, recognizable among all.

Anna Caterina Antonacci has chosen the corpus of this show. Four little masterpieces, carefully kept in her repertoire, year after year, as a constantly renewed love, a dazzler that is verified each time: four very different pieces, that have become the four moments of our show Era la notte. This title, borrowed from the 12th canto of La Gerusalemme Liberata by Tasso, from which was taken the brilliant text of Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda, I have chosen to introduce a dark story.

I’m imagining the scenes of a woman’s life, whom we guess is lost for ever. Because of love, without any doubt. She is telling us episodes of her existence, with elegant crudeness in a precious, husky speech, made up of love dreams and love pains. Alone on stage, terrific, threatening, a brilliant visionary of her own broken existence. Try so to listen to these four pieces as the singing of the same one chacarcter who is metamorphosing successively into a woman, a man and a prophetess. There is this woman, crazy of love (La Pazza), abandoned (Lamento d’Ariana), appealing death as the only possible relief (Lagrime mie), a multifaceted visionary who is heralding dramas and fatal misunderstanding of love (Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda).
Formerly, the dictionary used to define the Baroque as a nuance of strange. Rare is this music, rare these librettos which leaves the character so much freedom - word, tone, movement freedom - so many mirrors, all the superlatives of the musical language and all the possible body torsions, and finally the crucial expression of vital feeling, all the ruptures, all the seesaws from sweetness to rage, from embrace to murder.

Disturbed language, disorder of the body, lost reason, the subject doesn't recognize himself; language is overwhelming, often offensive, always sinful, blasphemous when words of La Pazza have no link anymore between each other, when death is appelled to in Lagrime or when Ariadne makes murderous assaults; subversive language also in shameless provocations of Clarinda. From the straight way of piety, one often moves away. This song of love and anger can bring things to a head, set fire to everything, set also ablaze.

So, we need to love these texts without vanity. Imagine Ariande looking at the horizon. Imagine what could mean waiting, silence, absence of sign. Hear her singing loose itself into the sky as cries that will never be heard. Glimpse this other relation to question and unknown. There is a peculiar relation to silence and absence, to memory too, that makes the song possible.

And in the final Combattimento, an attempt to merge out of the night. The singing is here a symptom. You sing when you are about to die or to implore death. So, as hot blood gushes out of the wounds of Clarinda, the song wafts from the body as a final demonstration of existence, and as the most sophisticated forme of grief.

Juliette Deschamps
Fond of opera as a teenager, Juliette Deschamps was hired as staging trainee by Opéra de Paris at 17 by Werner Herzog. The youngest director invited by the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, in 2006 her first show, Era la notte, followed in 2008 by Attre Stelle, two lyrical shows representing a new genre conceived for Anna Caterina Antonacci. Produced all over Europe, these productions lead her very soon to many prestigious opera houses: Theater An der Wien, Het Muziketheater Amsterdam, Grand Théâtre de Luxembourg, Teatro Ponchielli Cremona, Opéra Royal du Château de Versailles, among others...

Her literature and philosophy studies lead her to build up her theater writing through two simultaneous productions: The Symposium by Plato performed at the Louvre in 2007 – with such a prestigious casting as Michel Fau, André Wilms, Jérôme Deschamps and the participation of Michel Piccoli – and Rouge Carmen by Mérimée in 2008, first performed at Les Nuits de Fournières (Lyon) and then at the Opéra Comique (Paris), with scenery by the painter Miquel Barceló. After this great critical success, Juliette Deschamps was invited by the Venice University to lead together with Fabio Biondi a workshop about Haendel's Agrippina, on the occasion of the production of Teatro alla Fenice in 2009. She regularly gives master classes and teaches acting at the Fondazione Paolo Grassi (Italy).

Juliette Deschamps receives many opera commissions: Kurt Weill’s Mahagonny Songspiel and The Seven Deadly Sins (Théâtre de Champs-Elysées, Paris in 2009, Vienna in 2010), world première of her first contemporary opera staging at the National Theater of Taipei. The Painter, Yu-Lin about the tragic destiny of this Chinese artist victim of the destin tragique de cette artiste chinoise victime of the censorship. Italy also Juliette Deschamps the doors of its theaters: she has staged last year no less than three opera productions: The Servant Mätress and Sulastia at the Fondazione Pergolesi-Spontini, and Cavall’s Gaisone & Stradella at prestigious festival of Martina Franca. Juliette Deschamps founded his company: The Scene of the Crime.

An eclectic artist, she composed her first film music with the group Moriarty (CD released by Naïve), staged a show about the Beatles titled All You Need Is … featuring the string quartet Travelling Quartet, directed Matthieu Chedid’s clip “The King of Shadows” and signed together with him the staging of the last show of the artist - M -, winning in 2011 the Victoire de la Musique for Best show of the year.

Anna Caterina Antonacci, soprano

From soprano to mezzo roles, Anna Caterina Antonacci is confortable with 17th century as well as with 18th century repertoire – from Monteverdi (L’Incoronazione di Poppea, Il Combattimento di Tancred e di Clorinda) to Haendel (Rodelinda, Agrippina) singing Gluck (Armide at la Scala with Riccardo Muti), Haendel and Mozart (Così fan tutte, Don Giovanni, La Clemenza di Tito), Rossini (La Cenerentola, Il Barbier di Siviglia, Alice in Falstaff, Ermione, Semiramide, Mosè in Egitto…), she is also a virtuose interpreter of Bellini, Donizetti, Bizet, Massenet and pays special attention to French repertoire.

Anna Caterina has made her debut in a new production of Carmen at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden with Pappano in 2006. She has also performed Carmen at the Capitole in Toulouse and then, at the Opéra Comique with John Eliot Gardiner. Thanks to him, she plays for the first time Cassandra from Théâtre des Champs, Théâtre du Châtelet and at Opéra de Paris. Her latest and coming engagements feature the Stabat Mater of Pergolesi (English Concert), Cleopatra’s Death (London Philharmonic Orchestra / Y. Nézét-Seguin ; Orchestre National de France / J. E. Gardiner), Summer nights (Tonhalle Orchestra, Zürich / Y. Nézét-Seguin), a selection from Auvergnes’ Songs by Cantaloube (BBC Proms / BBC National Orchestra of Wales / F.X. Roth), and of course the reruns of Attre Stelle and Era la notte. Anna Caterina will also continue on a solo recital tour accompanied by Donald Sulzen, at venues including the Grand Théâtre de Genève, Wigmore Hall, Concertgebouw, Opera Comique, La Monnäie, Lincoln Center New York, Kennedy Center in Washington DC and in Montreal. She is also performing in recital, in the songs and Lieder by Hahn, Tosti, Toscanini, Bachellet, Trinidielli and Respighi, with the pianist Donald Sulzen, Anna Caterina Antonacci has been awarded the National Order of the Legion of Honour. From now on, she is recording for the label Naïve and her first album devoted to the arias form Era la Notte, has been a great success.
Les Siècles, chamber orchestra

In 2003, conductor François-Xavier Roth decided to create an orchestra presenting a new genre, Les Siècles. A unique formation in the world, bringing together musicians of the new generation, capable of playing as antique instruments as modern, Les Siècles are dealing with the process of synthesis, pointing up several centuries of musical creation.

Les Siècles have performed in Paris (Salle Pleyel and Cité de la Musique, Opéra-Comique, Théâtre du Châtelet, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées), Lisbon, Tokyo, Wiesbaden, Essen, London, Luxembourg, Aix-en-Provence, Amsterdam, Lille... During the last season, Les Siècles have also been performing at the Festival Berlioz of La Côte Saint-André and Aix-en-Provence (Grand Théâtre de Provence). Their last recording Bizet-Chabrier has been awarded with Diapason d’Or by the magazine of the same name, also with Disc of the Week on BBC 3 and Classic FM and have received 5 stars by the German magazine Fono Forum.

The desire to pass out their passion for classical music on more people regularly leads the musicians to offer educational programmes in schools, hospitals or prisons. Les Siècles are also the first actor of TV broadcast Presto which is gathering more than one million of listeners every week on France 2.

During the last seasons, they have performed at Arsenal (Metz), Opéra of Besançon, Grand Théâtre de Provence, Cité de la Musique, Salle Pleyel, Opéra Comique (Paris), at the Festival Musica (Strasbourg), the Festival of Epau, in Liège, Amsterdam, Venise and Rome, and in Germany. The orchestra is regularly playing in the department of Aisne thanks to the support from Ministry of Culture - DRAC Picardie. The orchestra is also in residence at the festival Berlioz of La Côte Saint-André.

Les Siècles are being supported by ADAMI, I SPEDIDAM, Foundation Echanges et Bibliothèques and Katy and Matthieu Debost. In addition, Mécénat Musical Société Générale is the leading sponsor of TV broadcast Presto.

Christian Lacroix, costumes

A childhood in Arles, teenage passion for Oscar Wilde, the Beatles, Barcelone and Venise were certainly the roots of Christian Lacroix’s inspiration. After the art history studies in Montpellier and Paris, short experience by Hermès in 1978 and then by Guy Paulin in 1980, he joined the Jean Patou company in 1981. Taking up the challenge of the Haute Couture, he has recreated colours, extravagance and luxuriance of the eighties every season. With the help of Bernard Arnault, he has established in 1987 his own company and immediately has set the fashion : eccentricity and luxuriance, with the red as the leading colour. Decorations and awards are crowning his talent (Dé d’or in 1986 and 1987, Légion d’honneur in 2002). From 2002 to 2005, he managed the Emilio Pucci company in Florence. Diversity of his creations is being commensurate with his imagination : from the Air France uniforms for illustrations on Petit Larousse (2004), the design of Petit Moulin in a hôtel in Paris to a new design for TGV carriage, converting a cinema Gaumont Parnasse in Paris (2005), he is also the president of the board of directors of the National Center of the costume (Moulins) since its foundation in 2006. Exhibitions are paying tribute to him: Christian Lacroix : Fashion Histories (Musée des Arts Décoratifs, 2007), an another at the museum Jacques Réattu of Arles in 2008, or the retrospective Christian Lacroix, costumier (National Museum of Singapore, 2009) which has shown costumes and silhouettes drawn by the great couturier for the theater, the opera, the show and the dance. He has always been fascinated by the theater, in particular, he has been awarded with the Molière award of the Best Costumes Designer in 1996 for Phaedra by la Comédie Française.
Dominique Bruguière, lights

Dominique Bruguière is creating lights for theater, dance and opera. Two artistic encounters with Antoine Vitez et Claude Régy have founded her love to stage. Great international artists invited her to collaborate with them: Robert Carsen (Orlando, The marriage of Figaro, Lohengrin and Faust), Werner Schroeter (Engels in America), Deborah Warner (Doll’s house), Peter Zadek (Mahagonny), Jorge Lavelli (The Merry Widow, Ariodante, Medea The Child and the Spells), Youssef Chahine (Caligula) or Patrice Chéreau (Time and the room, Wozzeck, Don Giovanni, Phaedra). She has been collaborating for ten years with Luc Bondy for opera productions: Macbeth (Festival of Edimbourg, Vienna), The Turn of the Screw (Festival of Aix-en-Provence and Théâtre de La Monnaie, Brussels), Hercules (Festival of Aix-en-Provence, Opéra de Paris, London, Amsterdam and New York), Mademoiselle Julie, world creation of Philippe Boesmans (Théâtre de La Monnaie), Idomeneo (Scala di Milan and Opéra Garnier, Paris) and Yvonne princesse de Bourgagne of Philippe Boesmans (world creation at Opéra Garnier on January 2009, La Monnaie, season 2010-2011). She has been awarded two times with the price of Criticism and the Molière of the Best Creator of Light for Phaedra directed by Patrice Chéreau. Her last opera creations are Carmen with Emma Dante at La Scala, Seven Deadly Sins and The Little Mahagonny de Kurt Weil at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées with Juliette Deschamps, Mignon with Jean-Louis Benoît at the Opéra Comique and Calisto of Cavalli at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées with Macha Makeïeff. In 2010, she collaborated with Patrice Chéreau for Fall Dream by Jon Fosse.

Cécile Degos, set

Graduated in scenography from the National School of the Decorative Arts – ENSAD –, then an assistant of Richard Peduzzi, Cécile Degos worked with him on several set and museum creations – operas Mahagonny Songspiel (Festival of Salzbourg, directed by Peter Zadek) or Angels in America (Théâtre du Châtelet, directed by Philippe Calvario), exhibitions Surrealism : 2 privates eyes (Guggenheim Museum New York), Chardin (Grand Palais) Nijinsky and Arnold Böcklin (Musée d’Orsay), or Ideal City (Salines Royales d’Arc-et-Senans) fitting the hôtel Hilton in Beyrouth. Among her own stage creations are The Abduction from the Seraglio with Miquel Barcelo at the Festival d’Aix-en-Provence, Moscow, Cherry Town and the Merry Widow at Opéra de Lyon, and also many collaborations with Jérôme Deschamps and Macha Makeïeff: The Stunned Guys, An Affair on Lourcine Street and Mean Life (Théâtre de Nîmes) but also Mozart Short Cuts (Grand Théâtre de Luxembourg ; Cité de la Musique).

She has recently realized with Dante Ferretti the set of the opera The Fly directed by David Cronenberg and conducted by Placido Domingo (Théâtre du Châtelet ; Opéra de Los Angeles). She has collaborated with Richard Peduzzi on the production Fall Dream directed by Patrice Chéreau at the Théâtre de la Ville. Cécile Degos has also realized museographies, for instance, John Soone at Archives Nationales de Paris, Russian Art in the XIXth century and The Art of Calotypes at Musée d’Orsay, Mantegna and Neoclassicism at Musée du Louvre, Chirico, Deadline, DYNASTY and BASQUIAT at Musée d’Art Moderne.
PRESS

Le Point // André Tubeuf
Now showing - Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda, a sublime text of Tasse. Alone on stage, willfully androgynous, there is Tancred and Clorinda at the same time, voice, soul and body of passion! Juliette Deschamps is directing, among some scattered cuirasses, this one-woman-show. (…) Music, text and voice are enough for the theater: in the age of stage excess, this is a good piece of news.

Le Midi Libre // Roland Massabuau
For the first performance of the French production by Juliette Deschamps, a singer, alone on stage, is singing and moving deeply, a woman is burning away. (…) Anna Caterina Antonacchi and seven instrumentalists (…) are offering a lyric and musical ceremony of heartbreaking beauty. The visual conception imagined for this show spectacle finishes to put trouble on the interpretation of this assemblage where the night, death, arms and love break hearts and invade the air. And the auditorium also.

Le Figaro // Jean-Louis Validire
A broken cuirass to evoke violence in front of a little orchestra. It is next to nothing but the show is finding intensity we don’t get away with. (…) Closer to the opera than to the recital, this show is a success.

Diapason // Gaëtan Naulleau
Recital and theater in the same time, the first show by Juliette Deschamps is presenting itself as a jewel case to the Antonacci performance. (…) A free area where the fire of the tragic actor is burning more intensely (…). Alone on stage during one hour and a quarter, Antonacci is embodying all the nuances of pain without ever risking verbosity. The actress doesn’t force the text; it is glowing through her, her energy is pulsing in every line of Tasso, almost palpable. (…) this declamation is going into all the body, the voice, the hand, the look, the posture, finest form of the poetry. A total art. (…)

La Lettre du musicien // PhT
The result is deeply moving, of course, as much as the beauty of the text and music are exposed here.

Wiener Zeitung // Gerhard Kramer
Il Combattimento by Monteverdi was a special case: the singer, with incredible involvement, has made us forget that the original was actually composed for a male narrator and two additional voices (Tancred and Clorinda). At that instant, the direction is reaching its total achievement: the singer was switching, with the most natural simplicity, from the narrator to the poor knightland’s role and then, to the dying Sarazine one. And she was sparking off without any doubt more effect than it wouldn’t have been the case in an traditional version.
Era la notte

Lyric show by Juliette Deschamps

Direction Juliette Deschamps
Lights Dominique Bruguère
Set Cécile Degos
Costumes, Christian Lacroix

Anna Caterina Antonacci, soprano
The Soloists of Les Siècles

Duration : 1h15

Musical programm :

Biagio Marini (1597-1665)
Passacaglia a terzo & a quattro op. 22

Pietro Antonio Giramo (before 1619 - after 1630)
Lamento della pazza, Chi non mi conosce (Pazia venuta da Napoli) for soloist

Biagio Marini (1597-1665)
Sinfonia sesto tuono op. 22

Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)
Lamento d’Arianna, Lasciatemi morire
For voice solo with instruments, Venice 1623

Biagio Marini (1597-1665)
Sinfonia primo tuono

Barbara Strozzi (1619-1677)
Lamento Lagrime mie, a che vi trattenete
(Diporti di Euterpe, Overo Cantate e Ariette a voce sola op. VII, Venice 1659)

Biagio Marini (1597-1665)
Sinfonia terzo tuono op. 22
Balletto secondo a terzo & a quattro op. 22

Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)
Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda
The 8th Book of the Madrigals, Venice 1638
Text of Torquato Tasso – Gerusalemme liberata, XII, 52-62; 64-68

Biagio Marini (1597-1665)
Zarabanda terza op. 22

Information :

Production Instant Pluriel

The set has been made by the design studios of Théâtre de Nîmes

Grand Théâtre de Luxemburg (Luxembourg) – 31/01/2006 and 01/02/2006 (world première)
Théâtre de Nîmes (France) – 6 and 8/02/2006
Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris (France) – 2, 4 and 5/05/2007
Théâtre de Coen (France) – 10/05/2007
La Halle aux Grains, Toulouse (France) – 16/05/2007
Muziekgebouw Amsterdam (The Netherlands) – 20 and 21/06/2007
Theater An der Wien (Austria) – 6, 7 and 9/02/2008
Teatro Arriaga, Bilbao (Spain) – 21/11/2008
Opéra Royal du Château de Versailles (France) – 16/06/2010
Festival Monteverdi, Teatro Ponchielli of Cremona (Italy) – 26/05/2012