

Bob Cole Conservatory of Music presents:

April 14, 7:30PM

April 15, 2PM & 7:30PM

April 16, 2PM

Cunning LITTLE

Diven

BY LEOŠ JANÁČEK

DIRECTOR SUZAN HANSON · CONDUCTOR ANDREAS MITISEK

Welcome!

Thank you for joining us for this exploration of Leoš Janáček's beautiful hymn to humanity.

The story of "The Cunning Little Vixen" is based on a 1920 serialized comic strip by Rudolf Teshnohlídek. Using this source material, Janáček transformed the original comic cartoon about a young fox into a philosophical reflection on the cycle of life. During my study of the opera in preparation for our production, I returned continually to the choice of the word 'cunning': defined as crafty, resourceful, insightful, wily. What cunning choices does the Vixen make?

As I studied, the largest military invasion in Europe seen since World War II was and is raging. I found myself thinking not only about the soldiers fighting, but also about the everyday folks in the war-torn areas left to scrounge for survival. What mind-boggling courage that takes! Certainly, their choices to stay alive can be described as cunning.

I became interested to explore Janáček's Vixen story from the perspective that all its characters are cunning in the face of unprecedented challenges. It seemed an interesting fit, then, to set our Vixen in a fictional war-torn country and explore the metaphor of the cycle of life and survival from this point of view.

Suzan

Suzan Hanson

Suzan Hanson, Stage Director
The Opera Program
Bob Cole Conservatory of Music

The Bob Cole Conservatory of Music at California State University, Long Beach
and the College of the Arts present

THE OPERA PROGRAM'S

production of:

LEOŠ JANEČEK'S

The Cunning Little Vixen

ENGLISH TRANSLATION: NORMAN TUCKER
REDUCED ORCHESTRATION: JONATHAN DOVE

CSULB UNIVERSITY THEATRE APRIL 14-16, 2023

CREATIVE TEAM

Conductor: Andreas Mitisek
Apostolia Nikouli (Sun 16, 2023)

Stage Director: Suzan Hanson

Set Designers: Suzan Hanson and Andreas Mitisek

Costume Designer: Erik Lawrence

Lighting Designer: Dan Weingarten

Video Designer: Andreas Mitisek

Assistant Conductor: Apostolia Nikouli

Rehearsal Pianists: Oliver Chan, Daniel Faltus, Esther Kim, You Zhao

CAST in order of appearance

FRIDAY, APRIL 14 @ 7:30PM
SATURDAY, APRIL 15 @ 7:30PM

Soldier/Forester: Eric Cornwell
Fox: Lauryn Jessup
Mosquito: Jonathan Joshua Juarroz
Cricket: King J.
Sepp: Stephanie Smith
Franzl: Lurdes Zapata
Vixen: Sabrina Dominguez
Owl: Viviana Ramirez
Frog: Alexandra Reyna
Dog: Rachel Steinke
Forester's Wife: Alyssa Mesa
Roosie: Stephanie Smith
Hen: Elizabeth Solis
Badger: Jon Hebel
Schoolmaster: Daniel Ramon
Parson: Noah Jackson
Pasek's Wife: Zuleyma Oropeza
Pasek: Alex Cobos
Harashta: Zachary Mascarinas

SATURDAY, APRIL 15 @ 2:00PM
SUNDAY, APRIL 16 @ 2:00PM

Soldier/Forester: Timothy Widner
Fox: Lora Bashmakian
Mosquito: Jonathan Joshua Juarroz
Cricket: King J.
Sepp: Stephanie Smith
Franzl: Lurdes Zapata
Vixen: Sabrina Ontiveros
Owl: Viviana Ramirez
Frog: Alexandra Reyna
Dog: Rachel Steinke
Forester's Wife: Alyssa Mesa
Roosie: Stephanie Smith
Hen: Elizabeth Solis
Badger: Jon Hebel
Schoolmaster: Antonio Serrano
Parson: Noah Jackson
Pasek's Wife: Zuleyma Oropeza
Pasek: Alex Cobos
Harashta: Zachary Mascarinas

ORCHESTRA PERSONNEL

Violin I

Cole Perez,
concertmaster
Namiyah Miller

Violin 2

Justin Pham, *principal*
Morgan Burtner

Viola

Kerry Walther, *principal*
David Albrecht

Cello

Raymond Newell, *principal*
George Rochelle

Bass

Brian Slack, *principal*
David Blackinton

Flute & Piccolo

Jacob Cruz
Lauren Cunio (piccolo)

Oboe & English Horn

Allison Fricke

Clarinet & Bass Clarinet

Stephanie Chavez

Bassoon & Contrabassoon

Kyra Harris

Trumpet

Lauren Spring

Trombone

Joseph Chilopoulos

Timpani & Percussion

Joseph Chang

Keyboard

Esther Kim

PRODUCTION TEAM

Production Manager: Andreas Mitisek

Stage Manager: Aliyah Smith

Assistant Stage Manager: Dawson McDonald

Light Board Operator: Hana Sakioka

Video Technician and Stagehand: Eduardo Martinez

Audio Engineer: David Goyette

Events Manager, Supertitles Operator: Madeleine Adragna

Events Manager: Aliyah Smith

House Volunteers: Miriam Adhanom, Emma Holm, Kate Johnson
Ellen Moody, Jose Ramirez Miller

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SYNOPSIS

Act One

Outside a small village, a wounded soldier staggers towards his home, where he previously was a forester. Exhausted, he sleeps and dreams...

In his dream, the Soldier is hale and happy, reminiscing about his amorous past. He meets a young woman in fox fur, our Vixen. With her as a sort of guide, he revisits his home, but finds he cannot interact with his wife, nor anyone he meets. Strangely it seems Vixen is the only person who can see his dream self.

Vixen shows the Soldier what has transpired in his village while he has been away fighting. As perhaps expected, his resilient neighbors have found a way to make the best of a worsening situation. His wife has opened a dance hall in their former home, where a rehearsal is taking place.

The rich man in town (Badger) is exposed for the turn coat he is.

Innkeeper Pasek has managed to keep his place open. The Soldier sees his old friends and, with the help of a special jacket provided by Vixen, can interact with them.

Vixen shares with the Soldier the birth of love in her life, as well as the formation of a resistance movement in the village.

Act Two

Still dreaming, the Soldier meets the town scavenger Harashta. Vixen arrives with her resistance recruits. She and her love Fox make future plans. Harashta puts an end to those plans.

Stunned, the Soldier returns to Pasek's for solace and answers, but the folks he finds there are as desolate as he. Exhausted and philosophical, he leaves the inn.

The wounded soldier wakes from his dream, a bit disoriented. He resumes his slow walk to his village but collapses enroute. The townsfolk come to his aide, taking home one of their own.

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