

# Il giardino di Armida

An attempt to opera reviews

CATEGORY ARCHIVES: FLANDERS OPERA

## Rusalka @ Flemish Opera Gent

Posted on [January 31, 2020](#)



The critics were divided on this Rusalka, but I must say I really enjoyed it. The responsible for staging and set Alan Lucien Øyen and Åsmund Færavaag created two wooden but airy abstract shapes, which rotated on circular platforms and so created different spaces. The particularity of this production was that almost each singer was accompanied by the dancer. It was the dancer who expressed the innermost feelings of the character. The singer could be calm and composed while in reality the character would be enraged or furious, and to see this duality was very interesting. At

times this was too much: at the beginning, when the three water spirits are singing, they are accompanied by their respective dancers. But then also three additional male dancers appear. Between wondering why, trying to see what happens on stage and trying to follow the plot, I missed parts of it. But overall the idea works very well and there were many nice moments. For example when the foreign princess tried to Seduce the king, Rusalka is behind the wooden structures. She is only partially visible but this only increases the sense of desperation.

The conductor Giedrė Šlekytė created a melancholic atmosphere that permeated throughout the whole opera leading the orchestra of the Flemish opera to top levels, The legato was impeccable the deep strings moving, and the finales gripping. Maria Riccarda Wesseling showed some signs of strain in the top notes but overall sang well interpreting a cold and distant Jezibaba. Excellent Goderdzi Janelidze, who sang with a deep and round voice equal through the range, his water goblin was rendered with great emotional impact. Rusalka and the prince both had adequate voices, the prince was light and youthful with a good top. Karen Vermeiren on the other hand as the foreign princess had a lustrous voice and a magnetic stage presence. A very pleasant evening visually and musically.



Conductor –Giedrė Šlekytė, Staging and choreography –Alan Lucien Øyen, Set –Åsmund Færavaag, Costumes – Stine Sjøgren, Lighting –Martin Flack, Rusalka –Pumeza Matshikiza, The Prince –Kyungho Kim, Vodník, the water goblin –Goderdzi Janelidze, Jezibaba, a witch –Maria Riccarda Wesseling, The foreign princess –Karen Vermeiren, Gamekeeper –Daniel Arnaldos, Turnspit –Raphaële Green, Hunter –Justin Hopkins, wood sprite –Annelies Van Gramberen Zofia Hanna Raphaële Green, 14 January 2020, photo by Filip van Roe

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