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Ressort: Kunst, Kultur und Musik

Complicated choice

Theater an der Wien, 28.01.2023 [ENA]

La Périhole is an opéra bouffe currently being performed at the Theater an der Wien. Originally set in 18th-century Peru, this current interpretation of La Périhole takes place in the modern Vienna where major characters of the Viennese storytelling could be recognized. In the opera La Périhole, who is a singer, faces a complicated choice between love and freedom, at once side, and influence and money, at another.

La Périhole is an opéra bouffe (a type of French light opera) composed by Jacques Offenbach. The libretto, or words and lyrics, were written by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy. The opera is set in 18th-century Peru and tells the story of Périhole, a street singer, and her lover, Piquillo, a barber. The two are taken in by the Viceroy of Peru, who wants Périhole to be his mistress, but she remains faithful to Piquillo.

La Périhole premiered on January 31, 1868, at the Théâtre des Variétés in Paris, France. The opera was an immediate success and quickly became one of Offenbach's most popular works. It was performed in many different countries and was even translated into several languages.

Offenbach's music for La Périhole is characterized by its lively and catchy melodies, as well as its use of Spanish and Latin American rhythms and instruments. The libretto of La Périhole is full of wit and satire, poking fun at the excesses and pretensions of the upper classes. The opera also satirizes the political issues and influence of politicians. The characters of Périhole and Piquillo are meant to represent the downtrodden and oppressed, while the Viceroy and his courtiers represent the corrupt and exploitative ruling class.

La Périhole has been performed in many different productions and adaptations throughout the years. Some productions have updated the setting to more modern times, like this 2023 production.

La Périhole is performed in the style of opéra-bouffe, which is a genre of French operetta or musical comedy that emerged in the mid-19th century. It is characterized by its use of spoken dialogue, witty lyrics, and a mix of serious and comic elements. The genre is known for its light-hearted and satirical nature, often poking fun at contemporary society and politics. Some of the most famous examples of opéra-bouffe include Jacques Offenbach's "Orpheus in the Underworld" and "La Belle Hélène," and Léo Delibes' "Lakmé." The term "opéra-bouffe" is derived from the French words for "opera" and "buffoonery."

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The role of La Périchole is performed by Anna Lucia Richter who is a winner of various awards such as Borletti- Buitoni Trust Award and is known for her contributions at the Salzburger Festspielen and several other famous festivals and events as well as for her cooperation with Teodor Currentzis. Richter has a particular affinity for the works of Mozart and Strauss, and has received critical acclaim for her interpretations of their roles. She is considered one of the most talented and versatile singers of her generation.

The role of Pequillo is performed by David Fischer who was a part of the Deutschen Oper am Rhein and Oper Bonn ensembles. Davis is known for his powerful voice and expressive interpretations of a wide range of roles. He has performed at many major opera houses and festivals around the world, and has received critical acclaim for his performances. Some of the most notable roles he performed are from the german repertoire and he is considered a leading interpreter of the German Romantic repertoire.

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