



FLOWING DIALOGUE

"Lost Childhood" at the Opera Workshop

"I forgive no one, there is no forgiveness", sings-recites actor- singer Guy Mannheim in the part of the adult Yulek (survivor Yehuda Nir), and he does this with tremendous force throughout the opera.

The dialogue between Nir and Gottfried Wagner (great grandson of the composer, who disconnected himself from his family) continued for nearly nine years and ripened first into a book and now into an opera.

The opera brings together on the stage the adult Yulek, with the nine year old boy Yulek whose father is murdered while he, his mother and sister survive the horrors by assuming a false identity as Catholics.

At the Israel premiere the survivor Nir sat in the auditorium next to Wagner-- who was born after the war and discovered its horrors in his boyhood and has been welcome in Israel many times –and they watched together the opera which records their conversations and the many conflicts caused by the tragic reality, and all this despite the words "there is no forgiveness". This seems slightly unreal even after 60 years.

Janice Hamer's musical style contains many recitatives reminiscent of the style of the Italian composer Menotti, a realistic, neo-classical style. There is not one melodious aria that one can take home, but its dramatic force expresses the horror, while the talented director Ned Canty creates small but realistic scenes of fear, survival and even innocent love.

The role of the orchestra was played by the talented pianist Dan Saunders, who accentuates all the effects. The music in opera acts like music in films: interprets the events heightens the emotions and supports the drama.

The entire cast of singers was excellent both in their singing and acting. Moran Abouloff in the part of the boy Yulek (she jumped into the part two weeks ago) was very moving, even amazing throughout, and especially in the final scenes, when she sang the prayer for the coming of the Messiah, electrifying when she gazed at all the figures from the terrible past who appeared to her. Praise must go to Guy Mannheim who radiates warmth and creates a complete figure of a human and hesitant survivor. With a minimum of sets but with a deep identification with the material, the Opera Workshop presented a powerful work which deserves to be presented many more times in Israel and the world over. Yulek defeated Hitler.

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