

Opera in the Afternoon

Sunday, July 14, at 1 pm

KURT WEILL

Street Scene



Kurt Weill's "American Opera" in 2 acts.

In English. Running time 142 minutes. Tea/coffee at intermission.

Considered the Broadway masterpiece of German/Jewish composer Kurt Weill who fled Hitler's Germany and found great theatrical success in America.

Story of 1930s working class people from diverse backgrounds, all seeking the American Dream. Music: Blues, jazz, Negro Spirituals, Jitterbug and Rogers & Hammerstein. Lyrics by Harlem poet Langston Hughes. 35 characters.

All Seats: \$10 Advance & At Door

Ticket Office, Mon-Thurs, 9:30—2:30. Or call 561-495-1300, ext. 5

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Kurt Weill's Street Scene

The opera is set in the 1930s, in front of a tenement on the Lower East Side of New York City. The neighborhood is populated by many different nationalities: an ebullient Italian, a fat, comfortable Hausfrau, a thick-headed Swedish couple, a left-wing Russian Jew, and hardened Americans who despise the foreigners.

Of the opera, Weill wrote:

“Street Scene is about life in a street of New York. We see, in the beginning, the women who live in the house, sitting on the steps, complaining about the heat, talking to the janitor who comes up from the cellar singing his blues song, gossiping about Mrs. Maurant's love life, and making fun of young Buchanan whose wife is having a baby.

“Then we hear Mrs. Maurant's aria expressing her troubled mind and her secret desires; the song of the young girls coming home from the graduation exercises; Sam Kaplan's song of adolescent melancholy; then Rose Maurant's scene with her 'boss,' Mr. Easter, who is trying to lure her into a different sort of life; Rose's decision to live her own kind of life; and the scene of young love between Rose and Sam, dreaming of lilac bushes and happiness.

“The second act opens with the morning music, the awakening of the house and the 'Children's Game,' and goes on to Mrs. Maurant's touching song to her little son, a passionate duet of the two lovers, Sam and Rose, who have decided to take life in their own hands, and the horror-stricken death scene of Mrs. Maurant.

“In the last scene we see two nursemaids trying to sing the babies to sleep, while at the same time gossiping about their parents; Rose meeting, for the last time, her father who has killed his wife and is being taken away by the police, and finally, Rose saying goodbye to the one she loves.”