

TOSCA 2009 BACKSTAGE INFO

Staff/Running crew: (30) stagehands (carpenters, electricians, sound op, prop men, flymen)
(22) wardrobe (wardrobe master, dressers, stitchers, launderers)
(10) wig and make-up crew
(3) artistic team (conductor, director, lighting designer)
(11) music and production staff (incl. asst. designers, stage mgrs, etc.)

Cast: (9) principals
(54) chorus (20 men, 18 women, 16 children)
(27) supers (24 men, 3 women)

Orchestra: (65) including 6 banda (backstage players) plus 2 librarians

Total Budget: \$1,619,050 (for artists, crews, sets, costumes, everything else . . .)

Scenery/Props The scenery and props are owned by SDO, but the set was originally built by San Francisco Opera. It was designed by Jean-Pierre Ponelle in a monochromatic style; you will see mainly shades of grey and brown in these sets.

The opera is in 3 acts with 3 very distinct settings including a couple of interesting perspectives.

Act 1 occurs in the Church of Sant'Andrea della Valle. The audience sees this act from "behind" the altar, looking out into the church.

Act 2 occurs in Scarpia's quarters in the Palazzo Farnese.

Act 3 takes place in the upper courtyard of the Castel Sant'Angelo. The audience perspective is from inside the upper courtyard, looking at the statue (angel) from behind as it faces out to the street. There is a trap door down stage right that is used in Act 3 for the entrances of the soldiers and others. The stairs from the stage floor lead down to the basement. There is a crash pad behind the up stage left wall for Tosca's suicide jump. The Chula Vista YMCA has loaned us the jump pad.

Note the ceilings on sets that are painted in forced perspective.

Consumable props include food (chicken) and blanks for the rifles that are used for the execution of Cavaradossi. They are loaded with ¼ load blanks which have black powder making a nice smoky effect.

Lighting The lighting designer is Ron Vodicka. He has designed several shows for SDO including last years' *Pearl Fishers*. There are 350 lighting instruments for a total wattage of 347,000. That wattage would power 5833 60watt light bulbs or could toast 9253 pieces of bread. 40 of these instruments have gobos or metal patterns in front of the lamp or bulb. These patterns create varied textured patterns of light and shadow on the stage. In addition to the gobos, there is a color medium in front of most of the lamps (350 pieces). Three front of house follow spots are used in the show. In between acts, electricians move lights as the carpenters are moving the sets. In Act 3, you will notice a star drop which creates the night sky. There are 5 large 5000watt lights and one 4000watt large HMI (like a Movie Studio light).

Sound/Music There are up to 7 banda playing instruments including bells, chimes, harp, percussion, etc backstage. There are keyboards on stage left for the organ sounds. There is also a synthesizer through which the bells are played (actual bells recorded and played back through the synthesizer). The chorus also sings from backstage at different points in the opera. In the pit there is the celeste, timpani and the cimbasso (a trombone family instrument in the tuba range -owned by the company). Additionally, there are door lock sounds that the prop crew operates by using actual door locks and bolts.

Costumes The costumes are rented from Malabar, a rental house in Toronto and were designed by Zack Brown. The period is from 1805-10 and the design is a very traditional including the dark red velvet dress that Tosca wears. In Act 1, you will see various levels of officials in the church including bishops and up to the cardinal. When Cavaradossi is being tortured, he is making a just-offstage change into the "bloody" shirt showing his torture.

Wigs/Make-up Principal makeup and wigs are applied in the room at the end of the dressing room hallway or in individual dressing rooms by 4 M/U artists including the designer Steven Bryant. The supers and chorus have their wigs and makeup applied by six more artists in the rehearsal hall downstairs. 4 ounces of blood are used each performance. The blood packs (for the deaths) and the blood on the floor/wall is a liquid product called FX blood. Makeup is used on Cavaradossi to simulate the bloody injuries from the torture (hands and head).

CIVIC THEATRE BASIC TECH INFO:

Proscenium opening: width = 56'
Depth of stage = 56' (86' to back wall)
of line sets = 69

of seats = 2885
height = 29'6"
Height of grid = 80'
of traps = 6 (4'x6' to 4'x18')