

Alan Savada's review of Il Matrimonio Segreto for Opera-L follows:

Over the weekend the University of Maryland School of Music/Opera Studio presented what has to be the most spectacularly staged student production I have ever seen in my life. Domenico Cimarosa's adorable IL MATRIMONIO SEGRETO received a truly marvelous staging thanks to the genius of director NICK OLCOTT (a local theater director who has thankfully entered the opera world many times to great success!). Under the baton of RYAN BROWN, the all-student orchestra excelled and gave a wondrous rendition of the music.

The excellent and intimate Kay Theatre at the gorgeous Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center on the UMD's Campus in College Park was the perfect place for this ensemble work, and kudos also go to set designer DANIEL CONWAY for what has to be one of the finest sets I have seen in years! A two-storey Italian villa with a wraparound balcony on the second level sports shuttered doors opening from the various rooms onto the balcony. An ornate gilded double door is centered on the lower level. There are ivies, plants and potted topiary trees throughout. The floor is made up of panels of marble and the "patio" has teak chaise lounges and outdoor furniture with striped cushions. At the rear right is a white baby grand piano and bar with a small swimming pool leading offstage. The rear has a terra cotta wall with a double iron gate leading to a rear balconied area (it gave the feeling of being on a cliff over the ocean, actually; think Amalfi coast). One can't leave out the superb 1960s costume designs by TIMM BURROW, lighting by ANDREW J GUBAN and wigs by Jeanne DiBattista Crocke. This entire production team just MADE MY DAY!

Add this to the superb and talented young cast that performed at the matinee I saw yesterday (there are four more shows on April 25,27, 29 & 30mat) and you have a show that is NOT TO BE MISSED:

Darren Perry as Geronimo
Brooke Evers as Carolina
Kari Marie Sorenson as Elisetta
Alvaro Rodriguez as Paolino
Alexandra Christoforakis as Fidalma
Kyle Hastings as Count Robinson

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