



Thames Valley Network

Study Day

FOUR OPERA MASTERPIECES

What can they tell us about opera and its development?

Tuesday 15 November 2011

Rewley House, 1 Wellington Street, Oxford



“Opera” said Doctor Johnson *“is an exotic and irrational entertainment”*; maybe the good doctor is right. But the combination of music, drama, lights and costumes, when it works, has the power to move the human heart in a way no other art form can. But why is opera worthwhile?

This Study Day will explore opera, its artistic rationale and background and development through the ages up to the present time looking at four key works – Gluck’s ‘Orfeo et Euridyce’, Mozart’s ‘Marriage of Figaro’, Verdi’s ‘Othello’ and Puccini’s ‘La Boheme’. Talks will be illustrated with recorded excerpts of the operas to

illustrate the different styles and musical constructions. It will be of interest to anyone who enjoys listening to opera and would like to find out more. Speakers are drawn from Oxford University.

The Study Day programme is:

- 10:00 Arrive. Registration. Coffee
- 10:20 Introduction “Why Opera? And for that matter what is Opera?”
- 10.40 Aileen Thomson : Gluck’s ‘Orfeo et Euridyce’
- 11:40 Jeremy Siepmann : Mozart’s ‘Marriage of Figaro’
- 12:40 LUNCH
- 14:00 Matthew Lynch : Verdi’s ‘Othello’
- 15:00 Jonathon Hicks : Puccini’s ‘La Boheme’
- 16:00 “So what can opera tell us?”
- 16:20 Summing up / close
- 16.30 Finish

The venue for the study day, Rewley House, is the main location for University of Oxford, Department for Continuing Education. It is conveniently placed in the centre of Oxford with good public transport and Park-and-Ride.

The Study Day Fee is £12.50. This includes participation in the full programme plus coffee/tea on arrival and mid afternoon. A baguette lunch is available for £6.00. Members of U3As not affiliated to the Thames Valley Network are welcome at an additional fee.

Further information can be obtained from :

Anthony Burdall, 2 Fernham Road, Faringdon Oxfordshire SN7 7JY

Tel : 01367 240713 Email : anthony.burdall@burdall.net