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**CHELSEA OPERA PRESENTS  
GIAN CARLO MENOTTI'S *THE MEDIUM*  
NOVEMBER 10-12, 2011  
CELEBRATING THE COMPOSER'S 100<sup>TH</sup> BIRTH YEAR**

Chelsea Opera begins its 8<sup>th</sup> season with Gian Carlo Menotti's riveting one-act opera, *The Medium*. Directed by Laura Alley, the opera concerns Mme. Flora, a fraudulent medium, Monica, her naïve, teenaged daughter, and Toby, a mute gypsy boy taken off the streets and raised in their home. During one of her "séances", Mme. Flora feels a pair of hands gripping her around her neck. She is so startled that she abruptly ends the séance, sending her customers away. But did she really feel anything? Her search to find the truth leads to murder and mayhem. It is a dark opera, one that Composer Virgil Thompson called "the most gripping operatic narrative he has witnessed in many a year...deeply touching and terrifying."

Performances with the Chelsea Opera Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Maestro Carmine Aufiero, are November 10-12 at 7:30 pm and November 12 at 4:00 pm at St. Peter's Church in Chelsea (346 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street, between 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenues). Tickets are \$35 preferred, \$30 general admission and \$20 students/seniors purchased in advance (or \$40, \$35 and \$25 at the door). Tickets may be purchased on-line (link through [www.ChelseaOpera.org](http://www.ChelseaOpera.org)) or by calling 1-866-811-4111. This production is supported in part by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, and the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency, and the Friends of Chelsea Opera. For more information, visit [www.ChelseaOpera.org](http://www.ChelseaOpera.org) or call 212-260-1796.

The cast features Judith Skinner and Mary Clare McAlee as Mme. Flora, Kate Oberjat and Rachel Sitomer as Monica, Aaron Berk and Spencer Cameron Young as Toby, and Susan Holsonbake, Meredith Buchholtz, Patrice Eaton, Caroline Tye, Brian Henry and Giuseppe Spoletini as the clients.

Gian Carlo Menotti was born in 100 years ago in Cadegliano, Italy. At the age of 7, guided by his mother, he began to compose songs, and four years later wrote the words and music for his first opera, *The Death of Pierrot*. His formal training was at the Verdi Conservatory in Milan. Following his father's death, his mother took him to the United States, where he enrolled at Philadelphia's Curtis Institute of Music, completing his musical studies.

His first mature work, the one-act opera buffa, *Amelia Goes to the Ball*, premiered 1937 and led to a commission from NBC to write an opera for radio, *The Old Maid and the Thief*, the first such commission ever given. Menotti returned to opera with *The Medium* (which ran on Broadway), and later *The Telephone*. *The Consul*, Menotti's first full-length work, won the Pulitzer Prize and the New York Drama Critics Circle Award in 1954. Menotti's best-known work is the Christmas classic *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, commissioned by NBC-TV in 1951. It continues to receive hundreds of performances annually.

Menotti's Festival of Two Worlds opened in Spoleto, Italy, in 1958, and was devoted to the cultural collaboration between Europe and America. The festival literally became "of two worlds" in 1977 with the founding of Spoleto USA in Charleston, South Carolina, which he led until 1993 when he became Director of the Rome Opera. Well into his 90s, he continued to direct opera at Spoleto and elsewhere. His 1996 Spoleto production of *Amahl* was filmed for commercial release. He died in 2007, still very active in the world music scene. His music has been published by G. Schirmer since 1946.

Chelsea Opera is a professional company presenting fully staged operas with chamber orchestra. The company provides a nationally recognized venue for professional singers to advance their artistry while making opera attractive, affordable and accessible to a broad spectrum of the community. The fine acoustics of the space provides excellent hearing, and the intimacy of the space allows the audience to feel involved in the opera's story. The company is also committed to providing opportunities for young people to learn about and become interested in opera either as a source of entertainment or future employment. As music writer, Anthony Tommasini of *The New York Times* noted in June 2009: "With American opera companies large and small struggling financially and a few going under, [Chelsea Opera is] a patch of encouraging news..."

Formed in 2004 by two singers, Lynne Hayden-Findlay and Leonarda Priore, the company was launched with an all-volunteer production of *Suor Angelica*. Initially, Ms. Priore and Ms. Hayden-

Findlay had only intended to produce this one opera. However, artist and audience response was so compelling that they agreed to move forward, incorporating Chelsea Opera and obtaining their IRS non-profit designation in a record eight days. They have since produced fourteen operas including *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (three times), *Pagliacci*, *Don Giovanni*, *Gianni Schicchi*, *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, *The Scarf*, *The Bear*, the company's 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary production of *Suor Angelica*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and *This is the rill speaking/Bermudas*. Their November 2010 production of Tom Cipullo's *Glory Denied* garnered rave reviews from both The New York Times and Opera News. Between main stage productions, fourteen thematic concerts have been produced for the *Chelsea Opera presents* series.

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For further information, visit [www.ChelseaOpera.org](http://www.ChelseaOpera.org) or write to [ChelseaOpera@aol.com](mailto:ChelseaOpera@aol.com).

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