

Giuseppe Giacomini on YouTube: "Try Going to the Theater and Experiencing the Artists in Person"

Luigi Boccia (November 04, 2007)



The tenor has released an interview on July 8th 2006 published on YouTube by Agatarco. The interview is in Italian. Reading the comments, though, we found people who wished that this interview could be translated in English, accessible to a larger audience of opera lovers

Journalist: How should the audience have to judge, analyze or respect a singer?

Giacomini: I think people must start from a very simple position: if the singer's artistic expression enters inside you, if it makes you experience beautiful moments in such a way that you look at the people closest to you (relatives, lovers, wives, husbands, children, etc.) and feel that you can look at them with more joy at that moment in the theater, listening to this singer... If, in other words, you



think that this expression, this acuto, this technique, this way of singing that truly moves you live inside, (and not because of the singer's name - for this is merely a surface trick: sure the name may sometime play a big role, but the true artistry must be something more important inside, something that lives inside of you and not just for the high notes!)... If it makes you experience a range of emotions inside yourself, then you are able to judge him or her based on these feelings you are having. It is in this mindset which you must go to the theater, with these intentions - not going there with prejudiced thinking ("Let's see if he or she is going to hit this high note tonight!" or "Let's time how long he is going to keep it!"). These are just exteriorities that do not make a fair assessment in Art. They are pointless.

The recent generations, especially have been spoiled by recordings. Recordings are witnesses, but what we seem to forget is that there is always a technical interference inherent here. The voice must be heard in the temple, in the theater, in the right theater, without microphones, to be truly felt and appreciated.

Try going to the theater and experiencing the artists in person, become "spiritual" friends with them, and see if they inspire in you beautiful moments of feeling and emotion. If so, this is a sure sign that you are in the right position, but also that the artist is too.

Journalist: Having been given this wonderful vocal talent, it seems that you want to remain humble in front of the score and the vocal art in general. Do you feel that you've succeeded in donating your life to study with respect and humility, as well as with respect to the gift you were given?

Giacomini: You've touched a very delicate point for me - I feel I've always been misunderstood. I have always said, (and for this was always reprimanded): the voice is the spirit, by all means, and this spirituality can be different for different people according to their political beliefs. Of course, we don't want to get down to the nitty gritty, because we are all entitled to have different opinions about this, but yes... I feel compelled to talk about this spirit regardless...

First, it is not really about religion. I'm a believer, thank God, and I recognize this never-ending gift (the voice), because there is no other way to explain it. Yes, later on my job became singing, but there are many times when you walk in the theater and think to yourself: how am I going to make this happen tonight? I'm not feeling well, the voice is not ready. Your conscience and your honesty also make you feel all the possible and psychological pains possible. On the contrary, though, it ends up being a wonderful evening (miraculously). In these moments most of all, singing is prayer, but not so much prayer as much as a pure expression of gratitude to heaven, to God to the Virgin Mary, to the Saints, whatever you want! A prayer for a dear person you know who has recovered from a disease, an international calamity or some grief in the world.

The thing that made me suffer the most is this: I started and am still immersed in this great spirituality, but in the theater I felt pressured and squeezed. The voice is not acknowledged as a spiritual gift, rather a specimen to be evaluated for its entertainment value. The consciousness that (through your voice and your art you can muster) to cancel all the bad things from the world cannot always oust this pressure. I'm not saying to treat your spirituality like a relic, but it is, however, something we must keep safe and protected - I feel that's why we are lacking an important starting point for the opera theater. The gift is one of the greatest. After all, what is the reason we are able to express anything? Sure the technique, the body, all of these trainable and obvious factors, but the great voices of our time had something more.

With the voice today you are able to produce a sound one day, and the day after you are unable to



repeat that same experience with the a similar sense of ease, because many times it is the spirit that drives you in different directions.

I happen to have at this moment of my life great emotions, which has seen a genuine response from my audiences (I hope not because of pity) in these last few things that I do on the stage. These small performances become huge - I see great emotions from people in the environment, from singers, colleagues and the general audience. They cry with their eyes because a person, with his or her voice, is an instrument that is capable of inspiring deep emotions. The voice is only an expression of gratitude, it is not your thing, its purpose is not something to conquer the world.

One should be able, yes, to accomplish a very noble task with the voice. For example, I am convinced that we are capable of finding a direction, beyond any politics. Can you imagine if it was possible to sing for the terrorists, in the most "bastard" moments of life and inspire in them beautiful feeling?, I believe that this is the purpose that a singer has when he/she sings: to unite the souls in the good. Sometimes, unfortunately, I get frustrated, but I don't curse against God. Sure I've been given the most beautiful gift, but God didn't give me the armor to protect myself against a world that doesn't understand me, that can't wait to squeeze me and put me in a box or somewhere else and say "finally he is ill." It is not, after all, about feeling good or ill, because when I am on stage I don't think about my role - absolutely not! I think about living those moments.

The artist doesn't have to sing for his own interest, but for the interest of the common souls of audience. The audience must be with you thanking heaven for this gift. When the high note comes out beautifully, when the phrase is properly sung, when you experience these great emotions, you must make the audience live them alongside you and, if you do make it in the end, you will feel that the audience has been able to share these deep rewards with you. This is a very important thing!

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