

A Little Wager?

Joey Skee (January 24, 2013)



Wanna bet Philistine Italian-American “Leaders” become “Outraged,” Again?

The Metropolitan Opera in New York City is set to premier [a new adaptatio](#) [2]n of Verdi’s Rigoletto set not in sixteenth-century Mantua but 1960s Las Vegas. In director Michael Mayer’s new version the Duke is a mobbed-up, show-biz celeb, his palace a neon-lit casino.

If visual artist [Tatzu Nishi's 2012 encasing](#) [3] of the city's Columbus statue in a mock apartment could set off a fire storm of "outrage" among our self-appointed spokespeople, how much you want to bet one of them will be "offended" and blow a gasket with this rendition of an opera warhorse?



I remember the brouhaha in 1984 when Italian Americans picketed the Met's performances of [Jonathan Miller's Mafia version](#) [4] of Rigoletto set in Manhattan's Little Italy of the 1950s. It was my first real introduction to opera (not counting those classics I enjoyed as a kid, "[What's Opera, Doc?](#)" [5] and "[Rabbit of Seville](#)" [6].")

Bookies, odds makers, and cognoscenti of the "Serie B" squad of Italo-American prominenti are already taking bets on the actual language of the predicted pronouncements:

"Michael Mayer's viciously anti-Italian production of an Italian masterpiece is an unforgivable insult to every Italian ever born and everywhere and only the latest salvo in the liberal cultural elite's campaign to slander Italians, who created Western culture."

—Giorgio Pescespada

"Once again, it's outrageous to see how we're the only group that has to put up with this kind of defamation--something that would never be done to a Jewish or Mexican opera."

—Bobbie "Zippularu" DiSano

Let's raise the stakes to see who'll be the first out the gate for the mad dash to the media finish line.

A little side wager? Which media outlet will be the first to pick up on this breaking news item and given credence to these one-note and strident gripers?

The Star-Ledger?

Don Imus?

Double or nothing on The New York Times?

The wheel is spinning. Place your bets. Mesdames et messieurs, les jeux sont faits.

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[2] <http://www.metoperafamily.org/metopera/news/features/rigoletto-light-motif>

[3] <http://www.i-italy.org/bloggers/34161/new-negative-image-italian-americans>

[4] <http://www.nytimes.com/1984/06/21/arts/opera-gangster-rigoletto-at-met.html>

[5] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nI9Nbt7oJG0>

[6] <http://vimeo.com/2909820>

[7] http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/27/arts/music/rigoletto-in-rat-pack-style-at-the-met.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

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