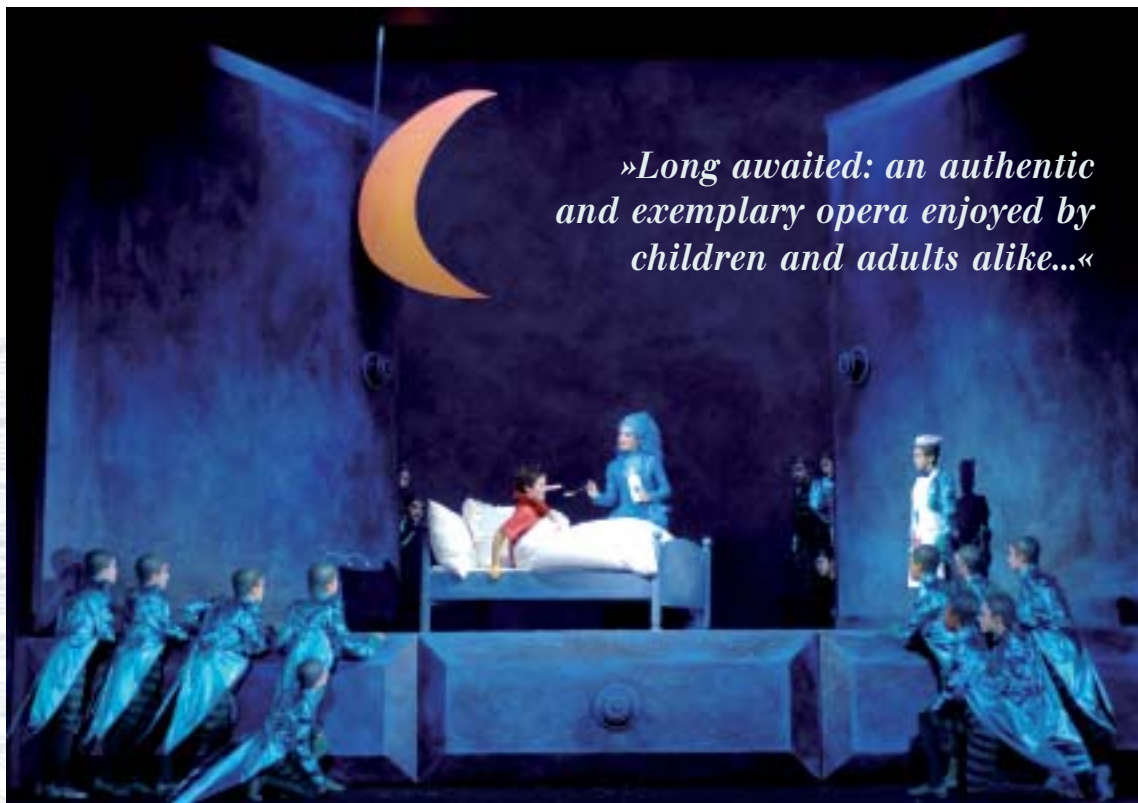


PINOCCHIO

Opera for children
by Pierangelo Valtinoni



»Long awaited: an authentic
and exemplary opera enjoyed by
children and adults alike...«

Pinocchio

Opera in two acts

Music by Pierangelo Valtinoni (2001/2006)

Libretto by Paolo Madron, based on 'Le avventure di Pinocchio' by C. Collodi (I,G)

Duration: 80 minutes

(World Premiere of one-act version: May 5, 2001 Vicenza, Teatro Olimpico)

World Premiere of two-act version: Nov 5, 2006 Komische Oper Berlin

Directed by Jetske Mijnsen

Conductor: Anna-Sophie Brüning

Stage Design: Benita Roth / Costumes: Christine Mayer

Company: Komische Oper Berlin

Press quotes from the Berlin performance

"The production was an immediate success with the audience (10 minutes of cheers, applause and stamping of feet at the end)... In his gentle music Valtinoni follows a little the great masters of musical fairy tales: there is much of Maurice Ravel in the sparkling piano introduction played against the pizzicato strings and in the brass solos, both sad and beautiful. This music, however, is simpler and more direct, slightly leaning towards Puccini and Bernstein..."

Jan Brachmann, Berliner Zeitung

"The Italian composer retells the famous classical story by Carlo Collodi in an entirely fresh fashion, with 57 child actors and five adult roles. Framed by a velvety blue stage, the wooden puppet ... experiences, in the truest sense of the word, utterly beautiful adventures... The individual, short scenes enable even smaller children to get involved in the story... The staging never aims for a cheap laugh and avoids sentimentality... Cheerful, totally free of false pathos..."

Elke Vogel, Mitteldeutsche Zeitung

The Origins of the Opera

Since the acclaimed premiere of his children's opera, *Il ragazzo col violino* (The boy with the violin) in 1997, at the very latest, everybody in Vicenza has heard of him. As a result of the popularity of the work, Pierangelo Valtinoni launched a new initiative in this marvellous town in northern Italy, situated between Verona and Padua. The idea behind it was to stage a children's opera from the repertoire every year, in turn with new works written for Vicenza, in the town's famous Teatro Olimpico. The project was supported over many years by the town of Vicenza, its primary schools and the orchestra of the Teatro Olimpico. The motto of the initiative, "Costruiamo un'opera", was taken from Benjamin Britten's children's opera *Let's make an opera*, which was one of the first works performed in Vicenza. The "Cantiere Internazionale d'Arte" that Hans Werner Henze founded in Montepulciano in 1976 almost certainly had an impact on the Vicenza initiative. The principle is simple enough: children put on music theatre for children (although adults are allowed on stage and in the orchestra), schools and music schools contribute to the productions while stage settings and costumes are created with the help of children and parents; more or less the whole town is involved in what eventually becomes a huge festival. Works specially designed for individual projects add an extra thrill – as was the case with *Pinocchio*. The opera was written in 2001 in co-operation with the composer's friend, the writer and journalist Paolo Madron. Pierangelo Valtinoni composed the work for children whose voices he knew well, for children's choirs he had already worked with, for musicians he had played with many times before, and for a theatre which is

so old and beautiful that UNESCO declared it a World Heritage Site – the Teatro Olimpico, built by Andrea Palladio. It is the oldest theatre of its time in its original form, in which performances take place in the completely preserved original settings. What could be expected in those surroundings other than something extraordinary!

When the Komische Oper decided to produce *Pinocchio*, it soon became clear that the possibilities offered by a big stage, with a professional children's choir, a permanent ensemble and well-equipped technical workshops called for quite a different *Pinocchio*. The work could be extended, more roles could be assigned to adults and the orchestra could handle more demanding things. All of which led to another stroke of luck when the two Italian authors worked together with the director, Jetske Mijnsen, the Komische Oper team and the publisher to design a new, tailor-made *Pinocchio* on the basis of the old one. The new *Pinocchio* is almost twice as long as the old one, further roles taken from Carlo Collodi's famous story have been added and some parts which had previously been sung by children are now sung by adults, such as the fairy's part. The wooden puppet was to be faced with even more adventures and trials on its way to becoming human – trials which, as can be discovered, have a certain similarity to those in the *Magic Flute*. On the journey in search of his father Geppetto, Pinocchio – like Mozart's hero, Tamino – passes a number of trials which are connected to the four elements: fire, water, air and earth.



Scenes from the colourful world premiere production of the revised version of *Pinocchio* at Komische Oper Berlin, 2006, with Karen Rettinghaus in the title role (photos: Monika Rittershaus).

The Composer

Pierangelo Valtinoni is what in Roman countries is called a musician with eclectic training, meaning of a very broad background, an all-rounder who has studied composition, the conducting of orchestras and choirs as well as the organ and the piano. His passion, along with composing operas for children, is choir and organ music, but also contemporary music and music for film and television. Avantgarde and functional music are of equal importance in his output, both based on solid crafts and skills.



Pierangelo Valtinoni studied the organ under eminent organ masters such as Michael Radulescu, Jean Langlais, Marie-Claire Alain and Harald Vogel; he was founder and leader of the Paralleli Ensemble in Vicenza and conducted the Icarus Ensemble in Reggio

Emilia whose tours included Milan, Munich, Amsterdam and Mexico. He also conducted several symphonic orchestras, recording his own film music with the Orchestra di Roma. In 1996 he represented his country in the European Choral Competition; other contestants included Manfred Trojahn for Germany, Arvo Pärt for Estonia and Tristan Murail for France. The contributions were performed on stage at a festival concert in Santiago de Compostela and released on CD. Pierangelo Valtinoni holds the position as teacher and vice director at the Vicenza conservatory, and he has also held numerous courses abroad, including Mexico City and recently Beijing.

Scoring & Roles

Scoring

2S,M,T,BBar,B,14 child soloists; children's chorus;
1.1.1.1—2.1.0.0—perc(2)*—pft—strings

* perc I=bongos/2cowbells/2SD/claves(susp)/congas/
glsp(C#3,D3)/whip/pedal dr/hi-hat/susp.cym/tamb/
military dr/3timp/4tom-t/tgl/wdbl;
perc II=cowbell/aeolian chimes/t.bells(F1-G1)/SD/
claves(susp)/congas/cyms/glsp/lg parade dr
(with cym)/guiro/maracas/4metallophones(SSAB)/
susp.cym/ratchet/tamb/tgl/wdbl

Roles

- PINOCCHIO Soprano
- GEPPETTO Bass / Baritone
- THE FAIRY Soprano
- THE CAT Mezzo-Soprano / child's voice
- THE FOX Tenor / child's voice
- MANGIAFUOCO Bass / child's voice
- LUCIGNOLO child's voice
- Two Policemen children's voices
- ARLECCHINO child's voice
- PULCINELLA child's voice
- INNKEEPER child's voice
- SNAIL child's voice
- Dr RAVEN child's voice
- Dr OWL child's voice
- Four Hares children's voices
- TUNA FISH child's voice
- The Speaking Cricket, Choir of Marionettes, Choir of Wayfarers to Cockaigne, Choir of Fish children's chorus

Bottom: Exerpt from the vocal score of *Pinocchio*: At the beginning of the opera, the Fairy announces the story to the audience.

The image shows a page of a musical score for the opera Pinocchio. It features several staves: Guiro, Glock., Perc., Il Gr. p., and Pf. The vocal line for 'LA FATA' is written in Italian and includes the lyrics: 'Que - sta è la sto - ria di un bu - rat - ti - no bu - gio - so che - non sa - va co - me un'. The score is marked 'RECITATIVO' and 'calmo'. Dynamics include 'mf' and 'pp'. The time signature is 3/4.



Synopsis

The Fairy tells the story: The old puppet maker Geppetto has created the perfect marionette, Pinocchio, who is able to move on his own. Geppetto sends Pinocchio to school, but the lively and wilful little boy goes to the puppet theatre instead. Mangiafuoco, the director, is tired of telling the old tales over and over again and gives Pinocchio money to travel around and bring him new stories. But Pinocchio is robbed by a pair of scoundrels and has to flee from the police because he is not able to pay for the meal he had at an inn.

A pigeon brings him to the fairy's house, but the snail needs so long to come and let him in that Pinocchio breaks down from hunger and cold in front of the door. After the animals have

already prepared Pinocchio's funeral, the Fairy re-awakens him with some bitter medicine. When Pinocchio denies all the fooleries he has committed, suddenly his noses grows longer and longer. The Fairy exhorts him not to lie anymore. On his way back to school Pinocchio meets his old friend Lucignolo. Both boys plan to travel to where every wish instantaneously comes true and where nobody has to work. But the idlers' land turns out to be but an illusion, created by an evil magician who now catches the boys and puts a spell on them – they are donkeys now. Desperately, Pinocchio drowns himself in the sea where a huge shark swallows him. Pinocchio hears weeping, and following the voice finds Geppetto who now lives in the shark's stomach. Pinocchio regrets what he has done, and carries the old man out on his shoulders.

For further information, please visit the opera homepage of Boosey & Hawkes at www.boosey.com/opera

For promotional scores, demo recordings and other material, please contact the promotion department of B&H at composers.germany@boosey.com

Playing again at Komische Oper Berlin:

Feb 14/17/18, Mar 09/10, Apr 13/14/22/23 2008

New production:

Hamburg State Opera, premiere: Feb 10, 2008

Directed by Alexa Zeggai

Conductor: Benjamin Gordon

Company: Hamburg schools / Kampnagel

Perfs Feb 15/16/17/22/23/24/29 & Mar 01/02

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