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La Jura, a brand new production by the Teatro Lirico of Cagliari



La Jura, a brand new production by the Teatro Lirico of Cagliari

La Jura. This opera by Gavino Gabriel brings Sardinian cultural traditions on stage. From November 20th to November 29th 2015 (9 performances).

La Jura (libretto and music by Gavino Gabriel) will be staged at the Teatro Lirico of Cagliari. This opera, composed of five scenes (two acts), was first staged in Cagliari in 1928, and now is being proposed with a brand new stage design and a completely renewed musical edition in line with the last manuscript version of the score, which has never been performed before and is being staged for the first time ever during the Opera and Ballet Season 2015.



La Jura, a brand new production by the Fondazione Teatro Lirico of Cagliari

“The decision to bring light to an unpublished composition – as Susanna Pasticci, the project manager and the editor of the new edition of the score, puts it – stems from the recognition of the great historical and artistic value of an opera which represents one of the first global attempts to combine the opera tradition with the great popular music heritage. In his work as an ethnomusicologist, Gabriel devoted much of his life to collect the Sardinian popular cultural heritage: by composing La Jura, he decided to put it on the universal dimension of the myth on which the opera tradition is based”.

La Jura is staged by the Fondazione Teatro Lirico of Cagliari thanks to a special funding by the Regional Government of Sardinia as provided by the Framework Program Agreement Smart Business Factory, which finances live performances with EU funds in order to enhance the Sardinian cultural heritage. The project involves different local realities and many Sardinian artists; the cast is composed of international renowned musicians who will perform alongside with young talents chosen through calls for auditions, workshops and training courses.

The direction, scenes and costumes of this new staging of La Jura, have been assigned to Cristian Taraborrelli, while Fabio Massimo Jaquone has been entrusted with the videos, Guido Levi with the lights and Antonella Agati with the choreography. The Orchestra and the Choir of the Teatro Lirico of Cagliari and the a tàsgia chorus of the Accademia Popolare Gallurese Gavino Gabriel are directed by Sandro Sanna.

Gavino Gabriel (1881-1980) was an all-around artist that cultivated many interests throughout his life: music in the first place, but also popular traditions, literature, new technologies for the reproduction of sounds and music education. He was a fine intellectual, appreciated by Giuseppe Prezzolini and Gabriele D’Annunzio (who hosted him many times at his mansion at Lake Garda to prepare a collection of popular songs and draft the project for a new “regional Opera House). He

cooperated in the foundation of the Discoteca di Stato, of which he became the first director in 1932. Particularly noteworthy are his work as an ethnomusicologist and his commitment on the enhancement and the spreading of traditional Sardinian music which he made known through lectures and concerts all over Europe. His performance at the Teatro Quirino in Rome together with the a tàsgia chorus from Aggius in 1921, is renowned and was appreciated with great enthusiasm by Eleonora Duse and Grazia Deledda.



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THE LIBRETTO :

La Jura is a love and passionate story, full of betrayals and oaths. The title of the opera refers to an ancient type of ordeal oath, i.e. the “jura”, which provides for the death without revenge for those who break it. The love plot includes the shepherd and poet Ciccio Jacòni and the rich shepherd Burédda who compete for the heart of the lovely Anna and the beautiful Matalena; but a third woman, Pasca Ucchjta, seduced by Burédda and who lost her mind because of the death of her

daughter Salvatora, is lurking in the background. After many twists and turns, the story ends with a happy ending which celebrates the triumph of real love.

Beyond the plot, what Gabriel really wants to stage is a huge choral fresco, a universe of values, a cross-section of community life. The real protagonist of *La Jura* is therefore the whole community of Aggius, the keeper of the most ancient popular traditions of Gallura; in fact in the 1927 edition of the libretto the subheading of the opera is *Five paintings of Sardinian life in Gallura*.

Not only do characters act in the wake of personal drives, but they also follow ancient codes of conduct: the *pricunta* (the marriage negotiation ritual), the *abbracciu* (the official engagement), the *ora mala* (the evil influence), the rituals related to crops and grape harvest, the fairs and the religious festivals. Also the different settings have a ritual value: the *stazzi* (the rural houses of the shepherds), the woods, the *conche* (huge granite rocks) and the fountains are all places full of ancient meanings which are not only the setting for the action, but are part of it too, as they may even affect the choices and behavior of the characters.

La Jura is an opera that involves cultural and topical questions: the identity issue as a result of a negotiation process among different traditions and life styles; the possibility to conceive a meeting point between the oral dimension – peculiar to popular traditions – and the written dimension of the opera tradition; and finally the need to start a deep reflection on the value of local identities in an increasingly globalized world.

THE MUSIC :

The rediscovery of this opera is fundamental for the enhancement of the Italian Verismo opera heritage: in fact Gabriel was a friend of Ruggero Leoncavallo and cooperated with Umberto Giordano, who supported the composition of *La Jura* and favored its staging.

From a musical point of view, this big rural life fresco is made by remaking traditional Sardinian songs and melodies, skillfully inserted into a rich and expressive score, in line with the best Italian Verismo opera tradition. The singers, the orchestra and the choir of the Teatro Lirico are accompanied by an *tàsgia* chorus, an ancient technique of improvised singing performed by five voices, very popular in Gallura. The influence of popular music can be noticed all over the orchestral score, where the wooden musical instruments remind of the rough sound of the *launeddas*, while the tune is rich in dissonances as it is full of typical features of the oral tradition. It is an audacious contamination experiment which is much more than a simple patchwork of different elements: popular music is perfectly combined with classical music, providing listeners with a refined, original and surprising sound.

The project of a new production of *La Jura* has been pondered over for a long time, but had never been carried out due to the lack of a reliable musical text; in fact the composer worked on the score again and again, composing different versions, each time adding, eliminating or changing something.

The first draft of the libretto dates back to 1907, and the first version of the score was composed between 1909 and 1928; a second version of the musical text was made for the performances in the late 1950s (Naples 1958, Cagliari 1959). After the last staging, the composer decided to prepare a new version of the score which has never been performed before, and will be heard for the first time at the Teatro Lirico in Cagliari on November 20th, 2015.

All the autograph and work materials of the composer are kept in the archives of the Accademia Musicale Gallurese Gavino Gabriel in Tempio Pausania and have been used in the making of the new edition of the score edited by musicologist Susanna Pasticci.

THE STAGING:

Another outstanding feature of this new production of the Teatro Lirico is the choice to combine the philological precision – in obedience to the text and the will of the author – with an extremely experimental staging. Cristian Taraborrelli is responsible for the direction, scenes and costumes. He is a young, multitalented artist, internationally renowned (Premio Franco Abbiati 2004 and 2006; Prix du Syndicat de la Critique 2009, nomination for the Premio Molière 2009).

Taraborrelli has prepared a dynamic direction and set which is able to enhance the choral aspect of the opera through the usage of images that amplify the details of the action on large screens. The choreography includes popular dances moves which highlight the dramatic tones, while the costumes take inspiration from the popular tradition, but their colors are reviewed in a pictorial way.

JURA RADIO AND JURA FILM:

Wednesday, November 25th at 8:30 pm, La Jura by Gavino Gabriel will be broadcast live on RAI RadioTRE.

After being performed on stage (20-29 November 2015), the new production of La Jura by Gavino Gabriel will become a film-opera, where the images of the performance at the Teatro Lirico will be intertwined with the images of the Sardinian natural scenarios in which the story is set.

Gabriel started to dream about making a “film” of La Jura since its first staging (Cagliari 1928), and he prepared a pioneer and detailed screenplay draft.

The film will be made by the same staff involved in the staging at the Teatro Lirico. It will be directed by Cristian Taraborrelli and Fabio Massimo Iaquone, two artists with a considerable experience in theatre and experimental cinema.

ARCIPELAGO JURA: research, communication and training collateral activities .

The new production of the Teatro Lirico of Cagliari is also promoted through a series of research, communication and training collateral activities aimed at facilitating the knowledge and the valorization of Gavino Gabriel, of his opera La Jura as well as Sardinian cultural heritage.

JURA ROOTS – a big festival of popular music organized in cooperation with Slow Food Cagliari: Parco della musica in Cagliari, Sunday, October 25th, 2015 (10 am – 5 pm).

JURA ROOTS is a big popular music festival, held at the Parco della musica of the Teatro Lirico of Cagliari to rediscover and enhance the musical roots which inspired La Jura by Gavino Gabriel. On the stage of JURA ROOTS, cantadores and sonadores will take turns with other artists who, following Gavino Gabriel’s example, remake the popular heritage using contemporary means of expression. A concert band and a polyphonic choir will accompany the audience along a continuous dynamic sound path.

JURA ROOTS is organized in cooperation with Orti, arti e giardini of Slow Food Cagliari, an initiative that promotes traditional values and the local memory: an important occasion to create a

moment to share the meanings of La Jura with the community, as it is an opera which extols the value of local identities, of the territory and its natural resources.

JURA JUNIOR – La Jura suitable for children: workshops and shows for primary schools, from October 20th to November 21th 2015

In the kitchens of the Teatro Lirico of Cagliari the puppeteers of the Sarzi family, in cooperation with master bakers and grandmothers and grandfathers, keepers of ancient knowledge, will help the small hands of the children to make puppets with bread for the JURA JUNIOR show in which La Jura is performed adapted for children, with the participation of young musicians of the music school of Cagliari.

JURA WEB – A website dedicated to Gavino Gabriel and his opera, which will be online before the opening of La Jura both in Italian and in English: <http://www.gavino-gabriel.com>.

This site allows you to explore the artistic and intellectual universe of Gavino Gabriel in all its complexity: it contains information on his life and the opera, curious facts, manuscripts and archival documents, photographs, videos and pieces of music. The site has a scientific and popular touch, specifically conceived for different users. You can browse through the main pages – easily accessible and full of multimedia materials – or access specific sections with detailed information on bibliographic repertories and archival sources.

JURA CONFERENCE – Conference Music, cultures and identity: the world of Gavino Gabriel, November 17-18, 2015 (Foyer of the Teatro Lirico and Great Hall of the University of Cagliari).

This conference stems from the need to cast light on the figure of Gavino Gabriel and on the different aspects of his artistic and intellectual activity, still rather unknown and surrounded by a halo of mystery. Apart from presenting the results of the studies preliminary to the new staging of La Jura, the conference aims to contextualize Gabriel's experience with regard to the relationship among music, cultures and identity: a topic which is the common thread of all his artistic research and summarizes the aesthetic meaning of La Jura.

The Conference is organized by the Fondazione Teatro Lirico of Cagliari in cooperation with the Istituto Centrale per i Beni Sonori ed Audiovisivi, the University of Cagliari and the University of Cassino, under the aegis of the Società Italiana di Musicologia.

JURA WORKSHOP – training courses for young talents:

JURA LAB: A workshop for young singers in preparation for the staging of La Jura (september 2015).

JURA STAGE: A training course for young assistant directors, scene assistants, costume assistants, projection assistants and assistant conductors (september-november 2015).

JURA YOUTHS: Thanks to an agreement for a training course signed by the Fondazione with the Conservatorio of Cagliari, the young musicians of the music school will perform in the shows for children of the project Jura Junior.