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# Manon Lescaut

2011.3/15 - 30

OPERA PALACE | 6 performances | Opera in 4 Acts (Sung in Italy with Japanese Supertitles)

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Conductor : Riccardo Frizza

Production : Gilbert Deflo

Manon Lescaut : Svetla Vassileva

Des Grieux : Gustavo Porta

Lescaut : Dalibor Jenis

Geronte : Tsumaya Hidekazu

Edmondo : Mochizuki Tetsuya

L'oste : Osawa Ken

Il maestro di ballo : Hayama Kosei

Un musico : Ikeda Kaori

Sergente degli arcieri : Otsuka Hiroaki

Un lampionaio : Matsuura Ken

Un comandante di marina : Moriguchi Kenji

Chorus : New National Theatre Chorus

Orchestra : Tokyo Symphony Orchestra

Along with the works of the master of Italian opera, Verdi, the works of Puccini are an essential part of the repertory. In Japan, Tosca, Madama Butterfly and La Boheme are the Puccini operas most often performed. But it was Manon Lescaut, his third opera, that marked his breakthrough as an opera composer. Manon Lescaut contains luscious intermezzos and lovely, enchanting music throughout all acts. In it, one can sense the artistry that continued to manifest in the trilogy that came next (Il tabarro (The Cloak), Suor Angelica (Sister Angelica), and Gianni Schicchi). In opera, love comes in many forms; Manon's unrestrained notions regarding love differ from those of the characters of Arabella or Isolde, or of La Traviata's Violetta. We invite you to revel in the different faces of love that each opera reveals.

## SYNOPSIS

18th century. In a square opposite an inn in Amiens, near Paris, the student Edmondo and his young friends are drinking and singing lusty songs of youth. The Chevalier des Grieux pays them no heed, but is smitten at the sight of the beautiful Manon as she alights from her carriage. At his urging, she agrees to meet him again that night. But Manon, voluptuous and wanton in matters of love, wants to change her ways and so is on her way to join a convent, accompanied there by her brother Lescaut. Riding with them is the lascivious old treasurer-general Geronte, who wants Manon for himself and plans to abduct her. Des Grieux learns of the plot and tells Manon. He persuades her to elope, and with the help of Edmondo and his friends, the two head for Paris.

In Paris, Manon becomes fed up with her life of poverty with Des Grieux. She becomes Geronte's mistress, but faced with the emptiness of a life of luxury without love, she starts to miss Des Grieux. Des Grieux pays Manon a secret visit, and just as they are renewing their vows of love, Geronte appears. He is mad with jealousy and loss of face. He reports her to the police for adultery and theft, and has her arrested.

Manon is sentenced to deportation, and is held in a makeshift jail at the port in Le Havre. Des Grieux and Lescaut try in vain to free Manon, but in the end she is put aboard a ship bound for a distant land. Des Grieux cannot bear the thought of losing Manon forever, and he pleads with the ship's commanding officer to let him accompany her in exile.

Once in the French colony of New Orleans, Manon and Des Grieux again run into trouble, and escape from their pursuers into the wilderness. Weakened by hunger and thirst, Manon finally collapses. She realizes the end is near. Des Grieux can do nothing, as she pledges her eternal love and dies in his arms.