

About Opera

I think there can be few human endeavours as complicated as an opera production. There are quite simply an eternal number of things that can go wrong!

In all of the many productions I have been a part of, some sort of crisis has arisen. They may be big or small, highly practical or deeply artistic, musical, theatrical, safety related, economic, medical, personal etc. etc. Crises will appear. And to solve them, endless discussions, negotiations, and compromises are required.

One of the great conductors has said that 'Opera is the art of forgiving'.
Opera is a teamwork.

But strikingly, my experience is that the highest artistic level is reached not in the processes that are smooth and where collaboration moves without friction. On the contrary, it is in those cooperations where the brute force of artistic temperaments are colliding and crashing together, that's where the unique is created, the moving, the irresistible.

I love opera because there is something achingly beautiful in that a huge number of people get together to do something which is so difficult that it borders on the impossible. For me, that's a symbol for humanity's struggle against everything that is superior.

A consequence of the enormous complexity of opera, is that absolute perfection is rare and unstable, like nuclear fusion. Because of this it is, and must be, an enterprise in constant motion and in perpetual state of flux.

This complexity makes the potential artistic drop abysmal, when opera is bad it can be epically bad. But also the inversion is true; the universe that opens above you as an artist is wide open and infinite. There is no border for the creative height and the potentially life altering force there lies in opera!

And those blessed moments, those rare instances where all parts for a second fuse together and converge, those moments have an intoxicating lightness and the crystalline clearness of Life itself.

The beauty is that we as opera artists continue trying and retrying in our aim to penetrate the core of Art, and reach further out in the wide open.

That makes me feel humble and deeply human.

That is what drives me.