

**Je suis narcissiste,
Summary of the reviews of the world premiere,
Madrid Teatro Español 6 March 2019**

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6 – 10 mar
SALA PRINCIPAL



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Je suis narcissiste

ÓPERA BUFA

Música
Raquel García-Tomás
Libreto
Helena Tornero

Director Musical
Vinicius Kattah
Directora de Escena
Marta Pazos

Con
Elena Copons
Toni Marsol
María Hinojosa
Joan Ribalta

Una producción de **Ópera de Butxaca i Nova Creació**
en coproducción con **Teatro Real, Teatro Español y Teatre Lliure**
Con la ayuda del **Departamento de Cultura de la Generalitat de Catalunya y Ayuntamiento de Barcelona**

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Con la colaboración de MONDIGROMAX, de la SGAE y el acompañamiento de la FUNDACIÓ CATALUNYA CULTURA

Je suis narcissiste. Nous sommes tous narcissistes

This world premiere could not have been fuller of fresher air.

Yesterday, Wednesday 6 March, we had the pleasure of the premiere of a new opera creation, a production of the *Òpera de Butxaca i Nova Creació* in co-production with the *Teatro Real*, *Teatro Español* and the *Teatre Lliure*. New productions come about in this manner, as collaborations, this one also counting on the input of *Mondigromax*, *SGAE* and the *Fundació Catalunya Cultura*, and with the support of the *Institut de Cultura de Barcelona* and the *Departament de Cultura de la Generalitat de Catalunya*.

This fresh air shows itself on various fronts. Principally it carries us away from known habitats and takes us to theatre spaces where opera is not normally performed, thus creating a miscellany from both worlds, theatre and opera. The space at the Teatro Real was smaller than what we are used to there, but it was up to the mark with **the attractive and suggestive staging**. The space permitted the actors-singers to shine to the right degree and dazzled our retinas with the subtle, direct lighting along with the work with colours, creating a play of extreme and dazzling tones.

It is clear that the team has worked shoulder to shoulder, which has been commented on by all those who have found themselves submerged both in the creation and the rehearsals ...

The music ... marks out with precision from the beginning an amusing tone, both irreverent and hilarious, but at the same time, intelligent. This is a story which parodies our own existence, which makes us smile and burst out laughing more than once: at bottom just as in life, this so transcendent and intranscendent thing.

Doce notas, Leticia Yustos - 07/03/2019

'Je suis narcissiste': modern-day opera, comic and good

It is not frequent or easy to come across modern comic operas: there is an **excess of transcendence** and the Rossinis are not abundant. ***Je suis narcissiste* is an excellent comic opera and the libretto of Helena Tornero deals with individualism and our obsessions in the present-day world in a humorous tone... it must be done well, and this is what is achieved with the imaginative staging of Marta Pazos with the help of a great team, with special mention for the spectacular costuming of Pier Paolo Álvaro.**

Along with this, we find the good music of Raquel García-Tomás, flawlessly professional, mixed and free, not confined by techniques or aesthetics.

All of this must be done perfectly and requires outstanding interpreters. Elena Copons and Toni Marsol have the roles of the most stable persons and are **extremely correct both vocally and as actors**. María Hinojosa and Joan Ribalta take on dozens of roles in a sensational and flexible manner, showing vocal qualities and histrionic abilities of the first order. The soloists of the *Sinfónica de Madrid*, with a pianist such as Duncan Gifford taking on a devilish responsibility, are simply splendid... the musical direction of Vinicius Kattah, also including aspects of actor, is irreproachable.

We have here a production of real quality. This shows that **we do not need to fear present-day opera**; what we must do is offer it with certain frequency, and, if possible, as well as it is done in this case. It is even possible to come closer to comic opera, which can amuse without being banal and can demonstrate talent. **Raquel García-Tomás has given us a creative smile which an intelligent director and some exceptional performers have presented to us so that we had a good time.**

El Mundo, Tomás Marco, 07 mar 2019

Opera of colours

An excellent premiere of «Je suis narcissiste», comic opera by the composer Raquel García-Tomás with the libretto by Helena Tornero. Amusing, defiant, kind to the opera enthusiast, crazy, ludicrous, critical and moving. One of the discoveries of recent months.

...this opera of the composer Raquel García-Tomás, with libretto by Helena Tornero, is one of the most amusing, crazy, pleasant and necessary (yes, necessary is everything that brings us nearer to what is happening in the world of our young artists – and which we find hard to value) productions that we have seen in recent months.

The irony, the sarcasm, the daring humour, turns into a brutal criticism of present-day society, a structure in which the word has lost all sense and in which only posturing and covering-up count. No one, nothing is spared. In the short prologue the intention of what we are to be shown is clear, and **the score is scattered with extraordinary and extravagant moments.**

The audience breathes this colour, this delight which the music contains, when one remembers that music is a manifestation which the human being created to express all that could be felt. The music was of colours and the staging used an intense, daring and defiant palette. **The staging of «Je suis narcissiste» was more than attractive and could not have been more inspired...**

The dramatic array of characters developed with humour, with energy and hit the mark. The four singers enjoyed themselves enormously...

In this way, **the libretto of Helena Tornero is very feminist. Absolute equality...** «Je suis narcissiste» should be programmed in Seville theatres. It would be a pity if opera enthusiasts, once more, are left without being able to enjoy a production as fantastic as this one is.

Correo de Sevilla Gabriel Ramírez, 07 mar 2019

García-Tomás has composed a score without complexes, mixing styles and forms. However, the most important thing is that she has done so with the audience in mind. Decades have gone by in which composers have been “creating” only to satisfy their own egos, their narcissism(?)

The music of *Je suis narcissiste* is not just easy to listen to, but very agreeable and complex. It mixes symphonic elements with electronic, and, in addition, is at the service of the libretto, and what it narrates. The four singers – fantastic actors moreover – are magnificent...

Pazos has gone for a staging which plays with light and colour. And does so excellently...

An amusing, ingenious production of the highest quality, which means that, at last, we have a great time at the premiere of a **contemporary opera**.

Nacho Fresno, Shangay, 7 de marzo 2019

Je suis narcissiste is, to begin with, a comic opera, quite a risk. In it, **Raquel García Tomás creates magnificent music which shows us a composer with many resources and much imagination...**

We must follow with great attention any new venture of this Barcelona creator now in full maturity ...

Jorge Fernández Guerra, El País, 7 de marzo 2019

The Sorrows of Clotilde

Welcome to new adventures like the one described in these lines, fruit of the collaboration between the *Òpera de Butxaca, I Nova Creació* and the *Teatro Real*, with the participation of the *Español* and the *Lliure* theatres.

The work, a success, is backed by a very colourful stage direction.

Arturo Reverter, La Razón, 11 de marzo 2019

Je suis narcissiste: An attractive collage

...García-Tomás shows great mastery of the means by which to ensure that the public does not feel overwhelmed by musical experiment and so check the minutes remaining to the end of the production. The other creator of the work, Helena Romero, stays clear of boring, resonating and pretentious pseudo-philosophical speeches, and gives us a text -sometimes a little slow – with clear criticism of so many of the tics of our present time ...

This, perfectly integrated with a score of contemporary tones, which demonstrates a notable ability to get a brilliant, modern-day sound from an orchestra of 15 including a piano (without ever producing sounds to damage the eardrum). *Je suis narcissite* is an

effective work worthy of being transferred to a musical comedy theatre without any problem.

The production is very much of today; few elements of scenery but very effective, by Fernando Ribero. The costumes, by Pier Paolo Álvaro, are colourful and exaggerated, but quite appropriate. The stage direction Marta Pazos is excellent, producing optimal results from the dedicated line-up of singers: a hilarious Elena Copons; a real master of transformation in María Hinojosa, and two more than accomplished males with Toni Marsol and Joan Ribalta. These were not inferior in their vocal achievements although the use of amplification always irritates me in an opera.

The performance of the members of the *Orquesta del Teatro Real*, was quite simply very good, and they as well as the singers had, in Vinicius Kattah, the ideal conductor to bring this ship safely to harbour.

Francisco Villalba, Ritmo, 10 de marzo 2019

A present-day comic opera: “Je Suis Narcissiste”, a brilliant parody of urban neuroses

A dynamic and colourful staging, with two male and two female singers doubling at the same time as actors of great bodily expressivity and with a notable sense of humour. Stage props, makeup and outstanding costuming are used with much humour, and the singers are accompanied by musicians of high level situated in the pit (something much to be appreciated and which has not been seen for many years in the *Teatro Español* – since those long-ago times when Mario Gas mounted or produced zarzuelas and musicals). Everything added up to an ongoing festivity followed with enthusiasm by an audience which has been filling the venue for the five sole performances of this innovative exercise in musical theatre, designed for us to laugh at ourselves in those situations on the limit where we move daily...

A charming performance which delights demanding audiences of the genre of opera, just as much as the less reverent, unprejudiced, lovers of good theatre.

Horacio Otheguy Riveira, culturamas, 9 de marzo 2019