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Rodula Gaitanou

Selected Reviews

Death in Venice, Teatro Grande Brescia (September 2026)

In Rodula Gaitanou's direction, we find the restraint and elegance we appreciated in her debut at the Teatro Grande three years ago with *Madama Butterfly* . The Greek director approaches Britten's masterpiece by avoiding both the more predictable references to Visconti's celebrated film and a purely illustrative reading of Mann's tale. Hers is above all an exploration of Aschenbach's tormented soul, the progressive dissolution of his certainties, the conflict between reason and desire. Reality, the protagonist's perception, and his reflection on what is happening coexist in a suspended scenic dimension, in which the boundaries between the external and internal worlds become increasingly uncertain.
Connessi all'Opera

The production signed by Rodula Gaitanou is extraordinary. Working with a modest budget, she manages to demonstrate that budget is irrelevant when every available resource is used effectively and, above all, when art, interpretation, and the performers' talent are given priority. The visual concept is as simple as it is brilliant: a dark and gloomy stage, exactly like Mann's Venice. A handful of elements: a chair, clocks, a barber's chair, an office desk, or a few gondola oars; reinforce the visual impact and place the action precisely where it needs to be. Every element is visually striking and meaningful, not least the costumes, inspired by the way people dressed at the beginning of the last century.
Opera Wire

Romeo et Juliette, State Opera South Australia (October 2025)

"This moment adverts both to gang violence and to war and its consequences for future generations, and director Rodula Gaitanou brilliantly thrusts Shakespeare's story into the contemporary world...Gaitanou's inspired direction renews Gounod's conception of Shakespeare's play...This outstanding co-production by State Opera South Australia, West Australian Opera and Irish National Opera is a compelling and thought-provoking piece of theatre – a must-see."- **Chris Reid*, Limelight***

"Director Rodula Gaitanou has taken Gounod's distillation of Shakespeare's play and imagined it as a love story that transcends time and space...this production imagines a lavish retelling. Everything about the performance is superb. From the costumes, the wigs, the lighting, the stage set, the chorus, the orchestra, the voices, everything comes together to create a sumptuous feast for the senses." - **John Goodridge*, The AU Review***

"From her training with École Jacques Lecoq, director Rodula Gaitanou is interested in the notion of "suspended space" and how a theatrical space is charged by human rhythm to become a living space [...] Gaitanou uses with great effect the raising of the individual guns of the Montagues and Capulets." - **Russell Fewster, *The Conversation:***

"The tension is already high, like Bernstein in *West Side Story*, and one wonders if this production by the Greek-born, French-trained director Rodula Gaitanou will quickly descend into a bloodbath even before the Overture is finished...this production really sets the cat among the pigeons, though, is how it subverts realism through freewheeling fantasy...Gaitanou has concocted what may be one of the zaniest costume parties ever staged. Putting their pistols aside, the Capulets are now adorned in frilly skirts, boas and feathers – men and women." - **Graham Strahle, *IN DAILY:***

"Under the direction of Rodula Gaitanou, these themes are more than explored, they are fleshed out. Gaitanou has abandoned the traditional 'stand and sing' of opera and replaced it with genuine emotion that tugs at our heart strings...Her characters are real, the love is real as is the hatred. We feel for the characters and their doomed plight. Will the feuding families find common ground after the tragic deaths of Romeo and Juliet? We may never know, but this version gives us hope for the future...There is one word that perfectly sums up *Romeo et Juliette* by State Opera South Australia, and that word is sublime! If you haven't bought a ticket yet, I urge you to do so quickly, it is a stunning production!" - **Barry Hill, *Stage Whispers:***

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La Boheme, Malmö Opera (March 2025)

"A performance that deserved to fill the hall all day long. Skånskans opera critic Lars-Erik Larsson gives the highest marks to Malmö Opera and director Rodula Gaitanou's production of "La bohème"... Malmö Opera's production of "La bohème", which premiered on Saturday, must be said to be the optimal opera performance. A well-known and beloved work, a consistent and high-class singing team, elaborate set design and costumes. Plus lots of "extra goodies". It was packed at the premiere and it deserves to be seen by packed houses the entire time it is being performed... We can only continue with the praise: The direction was perfect. Each individual got their own special character and the crowd was truly a crowd. It was a performance in the best spoken theater style where the plot gripped the audience, something you don't see in most opera performances."

- Lars-Erik Larsson, Skanska Dagbladet

"a nostalgic and emotionally charged La bohème" **- Kristina Lindquist, Dagens Nyheter**

"At Malmö Opera, the London-based director Rodula Gaitanou has chosen to move the action from 1830s Paris to 1960s Manhattan, where Andy Warhol is exhibiting at the cool Momus gallery. Yes, why not?... The musically close direction creates close contact between the notes and the acting. That the production so clearly, and so early, allows music to break a deadlock also becomes a hint of what it is that we in the audience are going to experience... Puccini's harmony and large-scale rhythm, Cordelia Chisholm's acoustically grateful scenography and Rodula Gaitanou's placement of the singers in these rooms create the conditions for the catharsis that the singers will now achieve. This catharsis is the very point of "La bohème", and when it comes, it no longer matters where or when the opera takes place. What happens, happens here and now. A room opens up where everything is both enigmatic and different. You want to laugh and cry and say that yes, yes, that's exactly how it is!"

- Tobias Lund, *Sydsvenskan*

"Bohemians have been frozen throughout time. But the magnificent production of La Bohème at Malmö Opera warms. YA's reviewer is impressed... the enormous width of the main stage has been used quite ingeniously in the scene's intersection of studios and galleries with a lot of space to fill, as if floating above a brick wall. A place for meetings, longing, pain, the territory of the opera. And of youth!" **- Mattias Gejrot, Ystads Allehanda**

La Forza del Destino, Greek National Opera (January 2025)

"In Rodula Gaitanou's new production, one of the most compelling I've seen of this challenging work, that overture was accompanied by black-and-white video (Dick Straker) showing clerics wrenching children away from a figure who turned out to be their maid, Curra. Set on a bleak seashore, the videos continued to slowly evolve in Bill Viola fashion between the scenes all evening, with the children growing up as Leonora and Carlo and eventually ageing. As the curtain went up on Act 1 it was revealed that the chief protagonist among those clerics had been Calatrava himself, the children's father (despite being identified in Gaitanou's synopsis as Cardinal Calatrava). Where most of the scenes had a outdoor, if nocturnal, feel, Calatrava's home was a claustrophobic bunker and he was armed with a pistol— picked up and accidentally discharged by Leonora's little brother, Carlo... The busy stage was brilliantly directed by Gaitanou, with details that really seemed to matter even when they might have surprised Verdi..." **– John Allison, Opera Magazine**

Nabucco, Savolinna Opera Festival (July 2024)

"With its Greek authors, director Rodula Gaitanou and stage director takis, the Babylonian opera has found a whole new point of view. The performance as an interpretation, visual and stage events as a whole is 'poor' theater at its finest. The staging, made from recycled bottles, is stunningly well done. Nabucco in full scale is a treat for all the senses. Without compromising ideas."

- Anne Välinoro, Rondo

"I dare to predict: this summer's new production of the Savonlinna Opera Festival, Nabucco, will be the new Aida - the 80s version that everyone around Finland was almost ecstatic to see again and again. The Greek pair Rodula Gaitanou and takis have been working together for a long time [...] because they think along the same lines. They both also want to say something weighty, not

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just illustrate old works. Director Rodula Gaitanou uses the choir with skill. The 80 or so singers transform themselves into a group of eco-warriors,

sometimes cheering each other on, sometimes forming a familiar chain, sometimes smiling with determination, sometimes into senior, sputtering technocrats. The audience fell in love with the new production right away. The applause continued for a long time. The whole is harmonious and extraordinarily beautiful, and not only that. The theme of this interpretation, saving nature, is also true on stage. Now we don't just talk beautifully in theory, we do what we talk about." **- Eastern Savo**

"Director Rodula Gaitanou and choreographer Lauren Poulton bring an entertainingly caricatured grandfatherly energy to the technocrats portrayed by the chorus, using proverbial aids as interpretive tools - the various walking sticks and canes that rich old people use to hobble away." - **Samuil Tiikkaya, Helsinkin Sanomat**

La Bohème, Minnesota Opera (May 2024)

"The incarnation that opened Saturday night at St. Paul's Ordway Music Theatre is the most entertaining and energetic "La Bohème" among the half-dozen I've experienced, and quite possibly the most well sung, as well. Boasting a very creative design scheme and performers throwing themselves into their roles enough to inspire tears both onstage and in the house, it's a production ideal for audience of all experience levels.
... Director Rodula Gaitnaou has clearly convinced her cast to tap into their sense of fun, for these "bohemians" are a lighthearted lot, laughing at life and giving the impression that they'd be in a celebratory mood even if our story didn't begin on Christmas Eve. ... The audience is treated to the most vibrant Parisian street scene I've found in a "La Bohème". There's a little subplot going on in every direction you look, even as our eyes and ears are drawn to the cauldron of desire and jealousy brewing between Rodolfo's painter pal Marcello and the proudly promiscuous Musetta." **– Rob Hubbard, Star Tribune**

"21st-century retelling of 'La Bohème' succeeds on universal themes... Stage director Rodula Gaitanou adds a few key details that help bring this "La Bohème" into the 21st century. For one thing, Gaitanou transforms a military parade that takes place in Act II into a "yellow vest" protest like the movement popularized in France beginning in 2018. That artistic choice contextualizes the income inequality at the route of the struggles of the main characters. Additionally, while the production sticks with the heterosexual coupling of the original opera, Gaitanou adds LGBTQ characters into the chorus scenes and gives a featured moment (though a silent one) to a trans character in the third act." **– Sheila Regan, Pioneer Press**

"Giacomo Puccini's triumphant opera, La bohème has finally returned to the MN Opera in a beautifully staged production... "
– Broadway World

"An overall incredible production" **– Lavender Magazine**

Rusalka, Opéra Royal de Wallonie-Liège (January 2024)

"The first key to this success is the particularly successful production of Rodula Gaitanou. An ingenious device allows a clear visualization of the different spaces: a large ring marks the dividing line between the worlds, while silver curtains separate humans from aquatic creatures. In the garden, an elegant ornate iron spiral staircase also allows the characters to evolve vertically. The staging, already very beautiful, is completed by superb costumes and, in Act I, by videos evoking the undulating surface of the water, through which an immense moon shines through. Under its light, the undines twirl in their flowing outfits, the three singers mingling with the dancers to illustrate the bubbling of the waves." **– Julia Le Brun, Diapason**

"A real staging challenge, the versatility of the underwater movements requires a certain amount of magic. Director, Rodula Gaitanou confronts this scenic tour de force with a symbolist and poetic décor. ... Generous, powerful and evocative, this *Rusalka* received a deserved ovation from the Liège public, always so receptive." **– Soline Heurtebise, Olyrix**

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"Antonín Dvořák's most important operatic work finally enters the repertoire at the Opéra Royal de Wallonie-Liège, where strangely *Rusalka* had never been performed, and it does so with a much-applauded new production by the Greek director Rodula Gaitanou." **– Alma Torretta, Il Giornale della Musica**

"Rodula Gaitanou has created a very wise production at the Royal Opera of Wallonia-Liège which makes the undine Rusalka the heroine of an austere and symbolist fable." **– David Verdier, Altamusica**

"*Rusalka* by Antonín Dvořák created in Prague in 1901 had never before been performed at the Opéra de Wallonie-Liège. It is now done, and done well. ... It must be said that Rodula Gaitanou's staging enriches the tale with its scenic images. Beautiful image, relevant and coherent. ... The *Rusalka* enchanted and rejoiced with her tragedy. It is a success." **– Stéphane Gilbart, Crescendo**

Andrea Chénier, St Gallen (June, 2023)

"The performance of Greek director Rodula Gaitanou is captivating. She manages to clearly structure the opera ... with its labyrinthine storylines. ... The four acts flow smoothly into each other, sometimes with a single solo performance, sometimes with all the singers and extras. The tempo changes and the color changes of the costumes are part of it as dramaturgical impulses. The piece does not sway back and forth, but develops grippingly towards the finale ... The Hatchet falls. Silence in the monastery courtyard. Then warm applause and a standing ovation." **– Alex Bänninger, Journal21.ch**

"Since the eponymous hero and numerous other opera characters actually lived, it is only right that director Rodula Gaitanou brings to the stage in her all-round successful production exactly what Uberto Giordano and his librettist Luigi Illica specify in score and libretto." **– Marco Aranowicz, Operagazet**

Vanessa, Spoleto Festival USA (April 2023)

"Gaitanou's elegant production updates the setting to the 1950s and places it in upstate New York, a decision which helps to underline the timelessness of the opera's themes." **– James L. Paulk, ArtsATL**

"Vanessa feels like a wholehearted embrace: bolder and more contemporary with Rodula Gaitanou's daring stage direction ... the loneliness and isolation of its main character resonated more keenly, the effect enhanced because her icy vigil is self-imposed." **– Perry Tannenbaum, Classical Voice America**

Ariadne auf Naxos, Opera North (February 2023)

"Rodula Gaitanou's production of Richard Strauss's Ariadne auf Naxos is a hugely entertaining treatment of an opera that brings its fair share of problems to any company... the whole show took wings..." - **Robert Beale, *The Arts Desk*** *****

"Rodula Gaitanou's relocation of Strauss's opera to Rome's Cinecittà studios brings many gains..."

"Some directors fail to link the work's two parts adequately, but Gaitanou proves remarkably consistent here. We watch the cameras roll as the interaction between drama and harlequinade plays itself out with great subtlety, and routines rehearsed in the Prologue are subsequently seen in full." - **Tim Ashley, *The Guardian*** ****

"Rodula Gaitanou's relocation of Strauss' opera to an Italian film studio produces great entertainment... Simply gleams..."

- **George Hall, *The Stage*** ****

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"Opera North's Ariadne auf Naxos, first seen in Gothenburg, is a smart, satirical staging with two vocal set-pieces to die for… effervescent… Rodula Gaitanou's ingenious staging for Opera North, first seen in Gothenburg, makes the most of the 1916 version, which places a first act about the chaotic creation of the opera as a prologue to the opera itself."

- **Nicholas Kenyon, *The Telegraph*** *****

"Rodula Gaitanou's ingenious scenario for this co-production… Gaitanou must have micro-directed this multi-talented cast, so compelling was the detail. With Zerbinetta leading the way, Hofmannsthal's transformation could hardly have been more persuasive…" - **Martin Dreyer, *Opera Magazine***

Le Roi Arthus, Tiroler Festspiele Erl (July 2022)

"Rodula Gaitanou was extremely successful at engaging the soloists in exciting relationships with each other as well as leading the choir in a masterful way." ***– Der Opernfreund***

"Rodula Gaitanou's directorial work strongly encourages intense interaction of all the characters on stage. The focus is clearly not only on the main characters, but extends onto the individual choir members. Static standing around can therefore only be encountered when explicitly used as a special effect."**- Wolfgang Wagner, *Concerti***

Carmen, Opera Theatre of St Louis (May 2022)

"Rodula Gaitanou's inspired guidance, keeps this version of 'Carmen' moving at a pleasing pace, allowing the accomplished players to fully exercise their talents." - **Mark Bretz, *Landue News***

"Gaitanou's interpretation breaks away from the trendy projections that have run rampant in theater and opera in recent years in favor of a minimalist set, and more subdued colors. As a result, Bizet's story of seduction, lust, and betrayal is allowed to breathe fresh air… Gaitanou has underscored Bizet's themes of race, class, and gender without capsizing the production's uptempo pacing." – **Rob Levy, *ReviewSTL.com***

La Traviata, Opera Holland Park (June 2021)

"Rodula Gaitanou's revival of her successful 2018 La Traviata surpasses the original… In 2018, Opera Holland Park enjoyed a major success with Rodula Gaitanou's minutely observed period staging of Verdi's classic La Traviata… Gaitanou delineates the society in which thoughtful, sentient courtesan Violetta lives and dies with pinpoint precision… As with Holland Park's 2019 double bill of Il segreto di Susanna and Iolanta, this is world-class opera." **- George Hall, *The Stage*** *****

"Rodula Gaitanou's production roars back with splendid singing and emotional conviction… Gaitanou lays a light but skilful hand on a work that, even in non-pandemic times, needs no fancy manipulation from concept merchants impatient of its power and fame… Gaitanou makes the most of the almost panoramic vistas and racetrack lengths the long, shallow set permits her."

- Boyd Tonkin, *The Arts Desk* *****

"Revived on its remodelled, wide-angled stage, this La traviata is even more powerfully affecting than three years ago, yet there are surprisingly few changes. Most noticeably, only the final scene is moved down onto the new stage apron, bringing Violetta's death closer to the audience – an effective touch at a time when people might listen to this work with increased empathy."

– John Allison, *Opera Magazine*

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La Clemenza di Tito, Bergen National Opera (March 2021)

"A brief word on Bergen National Opera's thrillingly stylised semi-staging of Mozart's last opera, La clemenza di Tito... Rodula Gaitanou's smart, vivid direction — relayed on Zoom from London while the cast rehearsed in Bergen — makes a virtue of austerity, projecting the drama grippingly in an abstract setting of squares marked around an oblong space, representing Tito's seat of power... An astonishing achievement for one of Europe's pluckiest small companies." - **Hugh Canning, *Sunday Times***

"Artistic Director Mary Miller who, together with conductor Edward Gardner, enthuses about Tito... The production, directed by Rodula Gaitanou, entirely bears out their enthusiasm.... The result works amazingly well: Gaitanou succeeds in turning [the Grieghallen's] imposed limitations to her advantage. The work's complex web of personal and power relationships is made perfectly clear... Gaitanou's finely integrated staging...." ***- Opera Magazine***

"...a defiant account of Mozart's final opera that's beautifully cast with six Norwegian nationals and intelligently rethought by London-based Rodula Gaitanou from her aborted original plans of a year ago. The result is a triumph of simplicity and clarity, light on pomp and glitter but forensically presented to reflect our times." **– Mark Valencia, *Backtrack*******

"Now BNO is back in the Grieg Hall with a version of Mozart's opera that is certainly different from the one originally planned, but which nevertheless works very well, both theatrically and musically. Greek Rodula Gaitanou, who has directed the show on zoom from London, is best known for beautiful, colourful and easily updated versions of 19th century opera classics. With the staging in the Grieg Hall, she has had to work with completely different means to establish a performance that satisfies the official requirements for distance and safety during the pandemic. Gaitanou and her staff have solved these problems by dividing the darkened stage floor into clear, luminous fields with solid spacing... The result has been an elegant, stylized stage image and a tightly choreographed movement pattern - which at the same time makes good sense in relation to the opera's narrative." ***- Bergens Tidende********

"A stripped back production, a director working remotely and a young Norwegian cast, but Mozart's final opera retains its extraordinary power... Gaitanou's production made a virtue of necessity and concentrated on the interpersonal relationships in a very abstract space. We saw the characters as individuals separated physically as well as mentally from each other. And after all, the engine of the plot is the fact that many of the characters entirely fail to say what they really feel, whilst Tito confuses by being direct and refreshingly honest.... Despite the warnings of it being stripped down, I enjoyed the production immensely. Rodula Gaitanou's interaction with the singers might have been done remotely, but there was a clear sense of thought and deliberation to what was presented. What we experienced was far more than a super-charged concert performance. When things have returned to a semblance of normality I do hope that Bergen National Opera invites Gaitanou and the cast back to revisit the production. They deserve it." ***– Planet Hugill***

Un ballo in Maschera, Staatstheater Oldenburg (December 2019)

"Rodula Gaitanou's production of Un ballo in maschera for the Staatstheater placed the action in Mafia territory, making Riccardo into a capo who was on the radar of the FBI. Set in the 1990s, with costumes by Goje Rostrup, the production was well crafted and essentially conventional, remaining respectful of the material, placing the Riccardo-Amelia-Renato triangle at the centre of the action and tracing Renato's tortuous emotional journey to especially convincing effect." - **Wolfgang Denker, *Opera Magazine***

Don Quichotte, Wexford Festival Opera (October 2019)

"The young Greek director has created a wonderful, simple staging, aided by takis' beautiful designs and Simon Corder's elegant lighting. The set features mobile wooden platforms which turn from town square into bandits' hideout and, most effectively, into the windmills which Don Quichotte mistakes for giants. Gaitanou tells the tale straight, with a little updating; the knight errant's horse,

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Rosinante, is replaced by a bicycle, while his sidekick, Sancho Panza, rides a moped. The opening festival is represented by a circus, with Dulcinée the star attraction… Kudos to Gaitanou for allowing both entr'actes to be performed with the curtain down – not every overture or intermezzo needs to be cluttered with stage action. Her production is a delight and I could have happily watched it all over again as soon as the curtain fell." **- Mark Pullinger, *Bachtrack***

"Rising star director Rodula Gaitanou joins with designer Takis and conductor Timothy Myers to give Wexford a successful season launch with this entertaining staging of Massenet's Don Quichotte…The result is a production of one of the French composer's finest pieces that balances perfectly the mixed package of humour and sentiment …." - **George Hall, *The Stage***

"Director Rodula Gaitanou's handsome production is visually spectacular and effectively balances both the comedy and pathos. The duo sally forth not on steeds but on decrepit motorcycles. Beautifully lit skyscapes frame the middle acts."
- Cathy Desmond, *The Irish Examiner*

"Though Rodula Gaitanou's staging is rich, with an elaborate happy-making circus-style Act 1, the emotional through-line retains its simplicity." **- Katie Hayes, *The Independent***

"Rodula Gaitanou's direction managed to successfully convey the drama in an engaging and meaningful manner, bring the characters and their relationships alive, while visually delighting the audience, but it also managed to deal with each individual act as a story in its own right, carefully building the tension to its climax, so that there was always a sense of completion as the curtain fell. Moreover, it was achieved without letting go of the underlying dynamics, which peak with Don Quichotte's death in the final act."
- Alan Neilson, *Operawire*

"…the new staging of Don Quichotte. The last, even so, proved to be the festival hit, thanks to Rodula Gaitanou's moving direction of a fine young cast… Gaitanou's sure-footed staging, in skeletal sets by Takis…proved entirely faithful to a work that should be better known." **- Hugh Canning, *The Times***

"An attractive and colourful production by Rodula Gaitanou updated the setting agreeably – Quixote's nag Rosinante became a rusty motor scooter and the windmills were turbines. The performance radiated a pleasant glow…"
- Rupert Christiansen, *The Telegraph*

Un ballo in maschera, Opera Holland Park (June 2019)

"Holland Park's mini-Glyndebourne is now open for business, and in Rodula Gaitanou's production of Verdi's Un ballo in maschera it has a winner. The big directorial decisions have been spot-on…" **- Michael Church, *The Independent***

"Rodula Gaitanou's thoughtful new production for Opera Holland Park treads a delicate line between heart and horror, keeping its feet even as the story and its protagonists start their dizzy whirl into the climactic final dance-to-the-death… Gaitanou's direction is sensitive and sympathetic, capturing the opera's widescreen spectacle and its intimate awfulness."
- Alexandra Coghlan, *The Arts Desk*

"The Greek director Rodula Gaitanou has made OHP's intractably wide stage seem like a walk in the park. Her staging of Un ballo in maschera is one of the company's finest, so much so that last year's memorable La traviata now seems like a dress rehearsal for the main event. This is a director who understands how to use three dimensions, how to energise characters, how to create convincing stage logic from improbable situations and how to guide the eye of her audience through a busy expanse of space. None of these things happen by chance…They require an eye that's steeped in operatic stagecraft and the kind of aesthetic sensibility that enables her, for example, to think of masks as recurring symbols of human secretiveness, from fencing helmets to travelling disguises to the faces at a masked ball." **- Mark Valencia, *Bachtrack***

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"Set in what appears to be the 1940s (as opposed to 1792 Sweden), Rodula Gaitanou's Un ballo in Maschera is a brilliant take on Verdi's opera. Perhaps the biggest surprise is the appearance of a hospital in the second act, instead of at the gallows outside of the town at midnight. In Gaitanou's reading, Amelia is being given a 'cure'. Gaitanou sets the opening scene as a fencing class...It all works well. Ballo is a difficult work to stage persuasively, and Gaitanou's thought-provoking insights will withstand many a viewing, revealing layer upon layer of depth." **- Colin Clarke, *Seen and Heard International***

"Rodula Gaitanou's direction generally focused proceedings to the middle of the viewpoint. Her placing of the work to about 1940 worked well, and blended tradition with some neat ideas – not least casting Oscar as a feisty and charming young woman rather than the usual annoying teenager. Gaitanou's handling of the cast was exemplary, and the characters totally believable as they became increasingly mired in their complex relationships."**- Francis Muzzu, *Opera Now***

"...the video direction... captures both telling detail and the 'wide-screen' sensation that Holland Park's stage can offer when suitably filled – as here in Rodula Gaitanou's lively, consciously cinematic production... it aptly combines brooding menace with Knockabout comedy..." ***– Opera Magazine (Live stream 2020)***

L'oracolo & Mala vita, Wexford Festival Opera (October 2018)

"Both operas, though, were punchily staged by Rodula Gaitanou and skilfully designed by Cordelia Chisholm. Keeping the setting as San Francisco — Chinatown in 1900 gave way to 1950s Little Italy — made thematic sense, suggesting two equally claustrophobic worlds, and Gaitanou's violent embellishments to both denouements rang true." **- Neil Fisher, *The Irish Times***

"Director, Rodula Gaitanou's approach to the opera's relentless sensationalism was to ramp it up and make the ending even more shocking and gory. In the libretto Uin-Scî, the learned doctor and father of murdered Uin-San-Lui, merely strangles the villain, props him on a bench and pretends to talk to him to avoid detection by the passing policeman. Not content with exacting revenge, Gaitanou's Uin-Scî starts performing a gruesome surgical removal of the villain's heart which he bears aloft in gloating triumph before the policeman catches him in the act at the end. It had the audience gasping audibly...Gaitanou's modernisation was tasteful and clever and even the changed ending..." **- Andrew Larkin, *Bachtrack***

"Director Rodula Gaitanou made the final revenge killing even more bloodthirsty than intended by the composer and librettist, though in broad terms her punchy production remained close to the spirit of the piece... a corner of Little Italy, the site of Gaitanou's equally accomplished production of Mala vita (Wretched Life, 1892), the second half of the evening's double bill."
- George Hall, *Opera Now*

"Rodula Gaitanou's staging of the two pieces was often guileful." **- Geoffrey Wheatcroft, *Opera Magazine***

Guillaume Tell, Victorian Opera (July 2018)

"Top marks, then, to Richard Mills...Together with director, Rodula Gaitanou, he has shorn the work of its ballet music to "achieve clear storytelling, strong drama and unfussy, lucid staging". To a large extent, they have succeeded in their aim. The resulting length of this production is a bit over three hours, but time passes quickly as the dramatic pacing rarely flags."
- Tony Way, *Limelight*

"Rodula Gaitanou directs in a way that is paradoxically restrained and bold, an attitude that filters into every aspect of the production. She encourages her villains to push into the grotesque but then reins in some of the opera's most melodramatic turning points. It's a tricky balancing act, executed with great skill...Gaitanou and Mills have tapped into the work's magnetic power, and unleashed something truly resonant. Lovers of the form are going to rush from all corners of the nation to join this fight." **- Tim Byrne, *Timeout***

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Rayfield Allied

Rodula Gaitanou

Selected Reviews

La traviata, Opera Holland Park (June 2018)

"The direction of the third act is flawless." **- Michael Church, *The Independent***

"This is the most distinguished new Traviata to reach London in years." **- Mark Valencia, *WhatsOnStage***

"...a remarkably complete depiction of the work's central themes." **- George Hall, *The Stage***

"A highly successful and engrossing production by Rodula Gaitanou." **- Dominic Lowe, *Bachtrack***

"Rodula Gaitanou's La traviata is an exceptionally intelligent affair." **- Sam Smith, *MusicOMH***

Ariadne auf Naxos, The Göteborg Opera (February 2018)

"Gothenburg Opera's dazzling production" **- Hugh Canning, *The Sunday Times***

"Pure Magic!... If I could only use one word to describe this new production the word would be "inspired". Director Rodula Gaitanou was an inspired choice for the Gothenburg Opera and together with a superb team she created one of the most memorable and beautiful opera productions I have ever seen." **- Niklas Smith, *Seen and Heard International***

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