



Robert G. Reid III Theatre
Arts and Administration Building
Saturday, 18 March 1995 at 8:00 p.m.

OPERA WORKSHOP

Reid Spencer
director and conductor

The Telephone
A Comic Opera in One Act

Gian Carlo Menotti
(b. 1911)

Lucy -- Russette Pack
Ben -- Denis Lawlor

Riders to the Sea
Opera in One Act

Ralph Vaughan Williams
(1872-1958)

Nora -- Colleen Walsh
Cathleen -- Shannon Snow
Maurya -- Susan Cummings
Bartley -- Cory Ralph

Chorus

Krysta Brocklehurst	Julia Halfyard-Martin
Krista Howe	Amanda Hull
Dawn LeDrew	Karen Morrissey
Zipporah Peddle	Michelle Pitcher

The Players

Flutes: Lynette Stoyles
Lynn Tucker
Clarinet: Jacqueline Dawson
Trumpet: Glen Oxford
Percussion: Guida Hogan
Gina Ryan

Oboe: Natalie Lippa
Eng. Horn: Valerie Holden
Bassoon: Lori Barrett
Horns: Kjellrun Hestekin
Terry Brown

Piano and Synth Strings and Rehearsal Accompanist:
Susan LeMessurier

Stage Manager:
Elizabeth Meaney



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Director's Notes

I would like to welcome you this evening to a pair of one act operas, chosen in the most part, for the contrast they represent. Ralph Vaughan Williams' short music drama *Riders to the Sea* is based almost word for word, on the one act play of the same name by Irish playwright J.M. Synge. The story of life at the turn of the century in a fishing community on the Isle of Arran, *Riders* speaks to the tragedy of any family that has lost a loved one to the sea. Specifically, it is the story of Maurya, a woman with six fine sons and two daughters, who, as the opera opens, has lost her husband and four of those boys, with the fifth son missing and presumed drowned. The youngest son, Bartley, is bound that day for Galway, to sell two horses at the fair. The movement to the final loss is inexorable, from Bartley's insistence on the trip, to Maurya's inability to give him her blessing as he leaves. But even as fate conspires to strip Maurya of her last son, she recognises that there is for her, at the end, peace, secure in the knowledge that she need no longer quake when she hears the church bell.

Vaughan Williams began composing *Riders* in 1925, finishing it in 1932, and it is judged by many to be his most successful work. It is largely ignored by most opera companies, due to the difficulty in finding a suitable comic work as a companion piece. In a relatively small school of music, the problem is, if anything, compounded by the necessity of the companion piece being written for a minimal size cast. Enter Gian Carlo Menotti, one of America's most prolific operatic composers, and the delightful little work called *The Telephone*. The scene takes place in Lucy's apartment, with poor Ben trying, time and again, to tell her something very important. The phone rings, and the ensuing half hour is a delight of affections thwarted by the omnipresent electronic interruptions. Ben's solution to the dilemma is a tribute to our ability to adapt to any situation, and the proposal -- for that of course is the object of the exercise -- finally comes to a successful conclusion. We hope you enjoy the evening as much as we delight in presenting to you.

Thanks to MUN English Department Drama Program, Arts and Culture Centre, Paul Rice, Richard Buehler and the students of the 3351 Stagecraft class.