

Super Express

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“Verbum Nobile”



On the evening of January 22, at the Kosciuszko Foundation headquarters, amongst the paintings of noted Polish artists such as Olga Poznanska and Jacek Malczewski, the Polish Theatre Institute presented *Verbum Nobile* by Stanislaw Moniuszko, a 19th century Polish composer of numerous operas.



Within a minute the room was transformed into the Warsaw Opera House, La Scalla or the Metropolitan Opera, where the stage features a heavy chair carved with beautiful plant patterns and white-red carnations. Suddenly onto the stage, the artists appeared wearing costumes from the 18th century, *Verbum Nobile*.

All the voices with the exception of soprano, Malgorzata Fliszkiewicz as Zuzia, were not of Polish origin. In this rare American performance Ko Kaiden from Japan was featured as Marcin, Olivier Baby-Fourcade from France as Bartlomiej and two Americans, Lawrence Long from New York

as Serwacy as well as Adam Juran from Washington.

The director, Nina Polan, achieved something incredible. It was an amazing triumph of the ability to portray the spirit of the text as opposed to the foreign nature of the words themselves. All of the performers were transformed and sang in unison in Polish. There were standing ovations after the two arias, “*Jak tam mosci dobrodzieju*” sung by the amazing baritone Ko Kaiden and “*By ojciec mial spokojny zgon*” sung by Lawrence Long in beautiful deep baritone. Listening to their marvelous pronunciation of Polish we can only guess the hard work that all of the artists devoted in order to overcome the obstacles of the Polish language. Ko Kaiden commented, “*Verbum Nobile* is a comic opera. You need to know the libretto very well. You need to understand the meaning of what you are singing. Every grimace, smile or furtive glance in the wrong place can destroy the character you play. Comic Opera has to be lively. And it is. Ovarions. Flowers. Banquet.

Szop Prac (Summary)