

The Music

The music to *The Burning Lands* is in the classical tradition from Wagner and Puccini. It is, however, *not* pastiches or ironical quotations but *new* music, written in a modern melodic tonal language. The music is arranged for large string orchestra with a small brass section, alternatively played via MIDI on a computer. The orchestra includes an acoustic guitar, which plays an important part, presenting the "hero" Mike with the possibility of singing a number of soft ballads in between the intense musical and emotional eruptions from the orchestra and the singers.

The Parts

The Burning Lands has a number of interesting parts, primarily the lovers; the desperate Mike (tenor) and the charismatic Kathy (alto). But also well meaning Ingrid (soprano) who sings two of the best songs of the opera and her ex-husband Jack (bass). Jack is a comical dream part for any bass singer. There are no less than three child parts; the two cheeky teenage girls Sarah and Sally who light up the sinister moments of the story, and the "Child", singing the most important song of the opera. Pat (soprano) and David (baritone) are the "betrayed" wife and husband, eventually becoming the winners of the battle, the heroes of everyday life.

Scenography

The summerhouse, of course, plays a major part in the scenography; all scenes are played inside or in front of the house. The light over the sea and the woods, the stars and the clouds create the poetic atmosphere. And the visions of the opera are projected electronically over the stage, controlled from a PC with video and light setting programs. Light and effects can be run by 1 or 2 technicians.

Other Useful Information

Playing Time: 2.5 hours minus pause. *Size of the Stage:* Width approx. 10m, depth approx. 8m and height approx. 6m.

WHAT HAND DARE SEIZE THE FIRE...



Romantic Opera by H.W. Gade
- a Musical Tale of Love and Loss in the 1990'ies -

Nordisc
Established 1983

NORDISC Music & Text
DK-2700 Brønshøj Denmark

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NORDISC Music & Text presents

An Opera from the Land of the Living

Autumn is closing in on 3 couples in their late 30'ies. A portrait of the intellectual middle class in the safe darkness of the red wine and the beers. A compassionate portrait after nature, painted by an eyewitness.

A Passionate Drama of Love and Loss

Mike and Pat care for each other. Kathy and David are still in love. Ingrid and Jack are divorced. Jean owns the summerhouse, in which they enjoy a weekend. And they all long for love. And share the sorrow.

Modern Neo-Romantic Classical Music

This is not Mozart this is Chopin. Waltzes with a desperate belief in hope and light. Wagner and Debussy, anti-classical chaos. This is not Beethoven it's Puccini. This is Neo-Romanticism.

The Sight, The Taste, The Hearing, the Brains, The Heart

A slice of roast lamb. The delicious smell of garlic sausage. The golden whisky and the morning after. The stars, the talking. An enchanted English Autumn evening in the country. And the Dead are there.

But still the Laughter Prevails...

The kids and the entertaining jester, Jack, are not exactly speechless. The smile and the pain are always present, side by side. And the ardent political arguments are cut to size by Jack's impertinent sarcasm.

Danish Musical Theatre

A Modern Musical Tale

The generation, that was late for the happy 60'ies and too early for the roaring 80'ies. The anti-EEC movement, holism, Einstein, the cod quota in the North Sea. September 1992 for all it's worth. *The Burning Lands*.

The Creation of The Burning Lands

The opera was written in Spain and Denmark 1992-1993. The plot was moved to English surroundings during translation in 1994. H.W. Gade was born 1953 in Denmark, and has published 7 musicals.

FACTS

The Text and the Plot

Act 1 is an introduction to the characters of *The Burning Lands*. The last scene "*Monopoly*" contains the story of Mike and Pat's fertility project, and of the child they once lost.

In **Act 2**, the story splits into 2 individual stories. In the "*Lunch*" scene, comes the final startling conclusion of Mike and Pat's childlessness. But at the same time, dawns a love affair between Mike and Kathy to evolve throughout the remaining part of the opera. Our friends play badminton and have a nice dinner, dreaming of travelling to Greece and being young again. And then they must skinny-dip, like way back in the 70'ies. While the drunken people skinny-dip, hiding among the trees on top of the cliff away from the others, a peculiar seduction scene takes place. As they all return to the house for a dance and a night cap, Kathy and Mike meet for the last time, in the terrifying consequence of their play with "unconstrained" spiritual love. The play ends with the sleeping house and the title song "*The Burning Lands*". We are back in the "Ev'ryday empty safety".