



告诉我，谁去看歌剧？

Who goes to the opera, anyway?

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多年前，我刚开始造访巴塞罗那，跟一对夫妇共进午餐，妻子艾琳来自纽约，丈夫费尔南多是地道的加泰罗尼亚人。他们都是建筑师，一起创办了一家公司。当我问起他们成功的秘诀时，费尔南多望着我，毫不犹豫地回答：“艾琳会陪我妈妈去看歌剧。”

“那”就是他们跨国婚姻和谐的秘诀？其实，早前艾琳也跟我说过类似的话，但这说法却让我一头雾水。我本以为作为建筑师，费尔南多会与德国大文豪歌德英雄所见略同，深信建筑就是凝固的音乐。可是整个午餐期间，他却在滔滔不绝地讨论着歌剧艺术——尤其是瓦格纳——他说得头头是道

颇有见地，绝对不是一个门外汉。我留意到他的言行中的矛盾之处——“哦，我超爱歌剧里的音乐，”他言之凿凿，“可我受不了的就是‘歌剧’本身！”

几天前，我在聆听一位年轻女高音演唱伦纳德·伯恩斯坦（Leonard Bernstein）的一首早期作品时，突然想起了这一切。“我讨厌音乐！”她高声唱道，“可我喜欢唱歌。”伯恩斯坦笔下塑造的这个女孩，当时大概8到10岁，紧接着她还继续抱怨道：





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上：“村落之旅”艺术节中，金怡宁演唱“我讨厌音乐” 左页：利索大剧院外景

但那不是音乐。至少我不认为那是音乐，绝对不是！
音乐啊，是一群穿着西装与礼服的贵族……
是很多人挤在一个阴暗的大厅里，
每个人心里都巴不得赶紧离开；
里面摆满椅子，人人都装腔作势，
还有满场的皮草和钻石晃来晃去。

作为一首创作于 20 世纪 40 年代的歌曲，其中表达的情怀即便放到现在也依然贴切。费尔南多肯定会对此深表认同。依据我的观察，他的家族中上几代人大概都常在那些“阴暗的大厅”（指歌剧院）里出没。他的母亲如今或许还仍会身着皮草、佩戴钻石，盛装出现在那里。很多人对歌剧都抱有这种观点——而且这种刻板印象并非毫无根据。尽管威尔第这样的作曲家出身贫穷，声誉建立于他朴素的平民背景和贴近普罗大众的吸引力之上，但歌剧所

承载的大众属性，会随着岁月的蹉跎以及文化迁移，而渐渐褪色。

就算是在那个歌剧“大众化”的年代，最昂贵的贵宾席上也从不缺佩戴钻石的身影。20 世纪初，巴黎的文学杂志《吉尔·布拉斯》（*Gil Blas*）做出一个很大的决定，请来作曲家德彪西（Claude Debussy）与广受读者喜爱的系列小说《克洛蒂娜》（*Claudine*）的女作家科莱特（Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette）两人共同担任杂志的乐评人。他们常常报道同一场音乐活动，视角却截然不同。如果读者想了解演出细节与乐曲自身的艺术价值，他们就会选择德彪西的评论；若想了解哪些名人在观众席跟谁寒暄，与谁同行，或是穿着哪件新款时装，他们就会去阅读科莱特的评论。正如科莱特在为读者首次介绍自己的评论专栏时所写的：“在克劳德（指德

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“村落之旅”艺术节现场

彪西)和克洛蒂娜(科莱特小说主角,此处代指作者本人)之间,你可以自由选择。”

普契尼逝世一个世纪后,这些媒体报道的模式仍然存在。大都会歌剧院演出季开幕大秀《卡瓦利与克雷的神奇冒险》(*The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay*)首演一天后,乐评文章出现在《纽约时报》(*New York Times*)的文艺版;而名人出席歌剧演出、香槟招待会及庆典晚宴的照片,则晚些时候出现在《纽约时报》的时尚版。难怪曾经有一位正准备首次造访大都会歌剧院的朋友问我,是否需要租借一套礼服赴会?(我告诉他不用,但如果能穿件西装就很是得体了。)

如今,“谁会去看歌剧?”这个问题越来越复杂。首先是因为歌剧本身并无统一定义,其次是它也不

存在单一的观众群体。大都会歌剧院首演夜——无论是演出季开幕还是个别制作的首演——当然座无虚席。可是同一剧目的后续场次,上座率就没那么高了。很多歌剧制作变得越来越接近舞台剧;推广的营销策略也与时俱进:推出百老汇式的票务优惠,提供不同种类的折扣或加上其他优惠手段来吸引新观众。问题是,这种做法有时候会弄巧成拙,老观众群或许会感觉被忽略遗弃。我在纽约的邻居购买大都会歌剧院套票有40多年了,但最后还是决定放弃这一消费习惯,因为一是他们无法提前那么久规划一整年的日程;二是套票价格暴涨,贵到离谱。某天早上,他们心血来潮,走到剧院买下两张价值20美元的“冲冲票”(“rush” seats)。当晚发现,他们的座位与从前那些400美元套票的位置只间



利索大剧院

隔了一排。很明显，这并非一种合理且可持续的运营方案。

但这说的还只是大都会歌剧院的个案。与其说是这家歌剧院每个晚上必须销售 3800 张票而面临巨大压力，倒不如说是观众对于那个观演场所或剧目类型无法提起兴趣。无论是纽约、伦敦、柏林还是旧金山乃至香港，这些城市的共性在于：你能在那里发现一些年轻歌剧艺术家以及小型歌剧团致力于发掘不一样的剧目，探索新颖的演出形式，甚至是崭新的营运模式。我最喜爱的两个小歌剧团——哥谭市室内歌剧团（Gotham Chamber Opera）与现场歌剧团（On Site Opera）——已经倒闭了，纽约市立歌剧院（New York City Opera）虽然幸存下来却也仅剩一个名号，但是它们开创的“制作小型歌

剧、寻找特别（通常都是沉浸式）演出场地”的模式，却在数十家其他歌剧团中延续了下来，迎合着那些渴望获得更高参与度和互动体验的观众。

坦白说，在心跳歌剧院（Heartbeat Opera）、摩天楼歌剧院（Teatro Grattacielo）或原型歌剧节（Prototype Festival）的现场，我从没见过有人佩戴钻石或身着皮草；而来这些剧院的观众大部分也根本不会想到要踏进大都会歌剧院的大门。我在这些地方看过数十部歌剧：有的仅由钢琴伴奏，有的由四把大提琴、弦乐四重奏或木管四重奏编配（或重新编配）配乐，几乎涵盖了所有能想到的室内乐组合形式。去年夏天，美国现代歌剧团（American Modern Opera Company）在林肯中心举办了完整的驻场演出，带来 12 部作品——大都会歌剧院的套



加泰罗尼亚音乐宫



票铁粉要是在场的话，肯定不会认同那些作品算得上是“歌剧”。

歌剧艺术所能呈现的可能性之广——尤其是演出质量层面的参差不齐——或许会令人懊恼，可也能令人感到兴奋。在我看来，衡量一种文化是否健康的标准，不在于看大都会歌剧院（或由此可以发散到，一家高贵的米其林餐厅优秀与否）是否天天满座。我们应该观察整个产业链有多少不同的选择与可能性，以及能否包容不同的价值观与票价。

再回到巴塞罗那的话题，我终于弄明白费尔南多的话背后的含义了。跟任何其他城市一样，巴塞罗那的歌剧长期以来都与上流社会息息相关。事实

上，如今的利索大剧院（Gran Teatre del Liceu），其资金很大程度上来源于剧院旁一家名为利索俱乐部（Círculo del Liceu）的私人会所，这家会所成立于1847年，由当地125位精英人士所创建。费尔南多很可能就来自这类精英家庭，或者至少，他与这些人有着密切联系，对这种文化氛围了如指掌。幸运的是，巴塞罗那也提供其他选择，比如说加泰罗尼亚音乐宫（Palau de la Música Català）。

如果说利索大剧院的运营主要依靠一小群富有赞助人的支持，那么加泰罗尼亚音乐宫的资金则源自加泰罗尼亚奥菲欧合唱团（Orfeó Català）的努力——这是一支由工薪阶级组成的业余合唱团，成



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“村落之旅”艺术节中，金怡宁演唱“我讨厌音乐”

员们会挨家挨户地募集捐款、推销音乐会季票。音乐宫的节目编排同样秉持“自下而上”而非“自上而下”的理念。而事实也证明他们的做法行之有效：这个建筑是全球唯一一座被列入联合国教科文组织（UNESCO）世界遗产名录的音乐厅。

这一切都让我回想起那个演唱伯恩斯坦作品的小女孩，以及“村落之旅”艺术节第二天的那场活动。该艺术节打出“文化与社群庆典”的旗号，为期10天，涵盖讲座、徒步导览、诗歌朗诵以及多种音乐风格的音乐会，所有活动都在重现并呼应20世纪五六十年代格林尼治村的文化鼎盛时期。（伯恩斯坦曾在20世纪50年代短暂居住于此，因此他也是今年艺术节的特别聚焦人物。）

尽管这场活动借鉴了伯恩斯坦“青年音乐会”的精神内核（即便未完全沿用其原有的教育模式）——且由伯恩斯坦的女儿妮娜（Nina）担任旁白，演绎圣-桑的《动物狂欢节》（*Carnival of the Animals*）——但没人会把这支年轻的节日管弦乐团（或者应该称其为

“坚持不懈演奏者”，这也是他们的昵称）与纽约爱乐乐团混为一谈。而我认为，这在很大程度上正是活动的初衷所在。人们前来，并非为了接受高难度的艺术挑战，也不是为了炫耀珠宝首饰，而是为了融入一种社群归属感——妮娜、指挥家维多利亚·邦德（Victoria Bond），很可能还有乐团的大部分成员与独奏家，演出结束后都能步行回家。

这场午后的演出或许在音乐技巧上有所欠缺，但在情怀追求上却毫不逊色——它传递出的真挚情感，远超那些票价翻倍（甚至是天价）的演出。而纽约这座包容性的城市，足以容纳所有这样的文化活动。

During one of my early trips to Barcelona, I found myself at lunch with a New York woman and her Catalan husband—both architects, partners in life and business alike—asking the secret to their success.

Fernando looked at me and said without missing a beat, “Eileen takes my mother to the opera.”

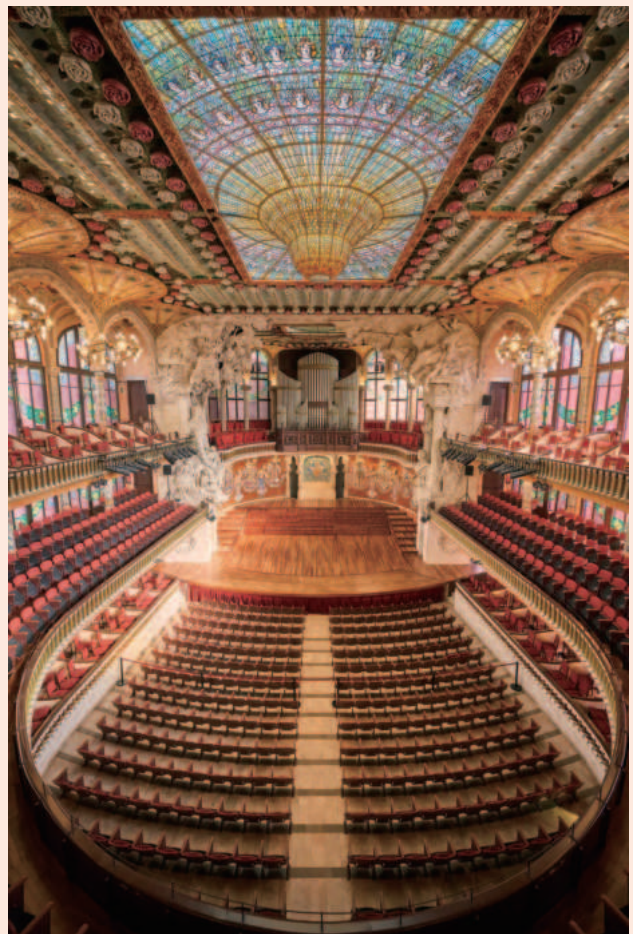
So *that* was his great cross-cultural advice? Eileen already told me more or less the same thing, but I wasn’t quite sure what to expect from him. Probably that, as an architect, he sided with Goethe and preferred his music frozen. But throughout lunch Fernando happily discussed opera—Wagner in particular—with a fair

degree of knowledge. I noted the incongruities. “Oh, I love the music,” he exclaimed. “What I can’t stand is the opera!”

This all suddenly came to mind a few days ago while listening to a young soprano perform an early song by Leonard Bernstein. “I hate music!” she cried. “But I like to sing.” The girl Bernstein had in mind was maybe 10, and goes on to complain:



加泰罗尼亚音乐宫内景



*But that's not music. Not what I call music, no sir!
Music is a lot of men with a lot of tails...
A lot of folks in a big dark hall
Where they really don't want to be at all
With a lot of chairs, and a lot of airs
And a lot of fur and diamonds.*

For a song from the 1940s, the sentiment holds up pretty well. Fernando would certainly concur. From what I gathered, his family had been haunting the big dark halls for generations, his mother still probably wearing fur and diamonds. It's still how many people think of opera—and not without reason. Despite the humble origins and “man-of-the-people” allure of composers like Verdi, opera's populism starts to fade the further you get from its epoch and culture.

Even in its populist heyday, though, you'd find plenty of diamonds in the good seats. In the early 1900s, the Parisian journal *Gil Blas* made an extraordinary decision to have Debussy, the composer, share its music critic position with Colette, author of the beloved Claudine novels. They often wrote about the same events, from entirely different perspectives. Readers who wanted details about the performance or the relative importance of the music would follow one, those wanting to know who attended which event with whom and what they were wearing followed the other. As Colette first introduced her column to readers, “You have a choice between Claude and Claudine.”

A century after Puccini's death, that media model still holds. Reviews of the Metropolitan Opera's open-

ing production of *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay* appeared on the music pages in a day or so. Photos of celebrities at the opera, champagne reception and gala dinner ran later in the *New York Times* Style section. No wonder a friend of mine planning his first trip to the Met once asked me if he needed to rent a tuxedo. (I said no, but a jacket might be nice.)

What makes the question “Who goes to the opera?” so complicated today is that, first of all, there's no one definition of opera, and second, no single audience for it. Most opening nights at the Met—not just of the season but for most productions—will likely be packed; the rest of the run, not so much. It's not just the productions that have gotten more theatrical; the marketing strategies have too, offering Broadway-style ticket deals along with other strategies to lure new audiences. But this also runs the risk of alienating long-time fans. My neighbors in New York finally decided to give up their Met subscription after 40 years because (a) they couldn't plan their schedule so far in advance, and (b) the tickets had become ridiculously expensive. One morning, on the spur of the moment, they bought \$20 “rush” seats and that night found themselves only one row away from their old \$400 seats. Clearly this is not a sensible, sustainable approach.

But that's just the Met. If the company has trouble filling 3,800 seats on a nightly basis, maybe that's because audiences are looking for different settings or repertoire. The thing about New York, or London, or Berlin or even San Francisco and Hong Kong, is that you find younger artists and smaller companies willing to



利索俱乐部内景



explore not only different repertoire but also new methods of presentation and even new business models. Two of my favorite opera companies (Gotham Chamber Opera and On Site Opera) may be gone, with New York City Opera still holding on in name only, but their model of smaller, site-specific (often immersive) productions lives on in dozens of other companies catering to audiences craving a different level of involvement.

Frankly, I've seen neither diamonds nor furs at Heartbeat Opera, or Teatro Grattacielo, or the Prototype Festival, nor would large segments of their audience ever think to go to the Met. I have seen dozens of operas accompanied only by piano, others scored (or rescored) for four cellos, string and wind quartets, and nearly any conceivable chamber-music configuration. Last summer, the American Modern Opera Company had a full residency at Lincoln Center with 12 productions, none of which would any diehard Met subscriber likely consider to be an opera.

The sheer breadth of operatic possibilities—not least being the quality of the performance—can be a source of frustration, but also a shot of excitement. By my gauge, the mark of a healthy culture is not whether or not the Met—or for that matter, a Michelin restaurant—

is fully booked, but rather how many possibilities are available for consideration with various value systems and price points.

Getting back to Barcelona, I see where Fernando is coming from. Like everywhere else, opera there has long been intimately connected with high society. The current Gran Teatro del Liceu was, in fact, largely funded by an adjoining private club, the Círculo del Liceu, founded in 1847 by 125 members of the city's elite. Fernando probably comes from one of those families, or at least feels he's spent enough time with them. And fortunately, he lives in a city with other options, such as the Palau de la Música Català.

Where the Liceu was supported mainly by a small group of wealthy patrons, the Palau was funded through the efforts of the Orfeó Català, an amateur chorus whose working-class members went door-to-door requesting donations and selling season concert subscriptions. Likewise, its programming seems designed from the bottom up rather than the top down. And they must be doing something right: the Palau is the only concert hall in the world listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Which all brings me back to our young girl singing



成立于1847年的利索俱乐部为利索大剧院提供了大部分的资金来源

Bernstein, an event on the second day of The Village Trip, billed as “a festival of culture and community” featuring 10 days of talks, walking tours, poetry readings, and concerts in a wide variety of musical styles, all recreating and echoing the cultural heyday of Greenwich Village in the 1950s and 1960s. (Bernstein, a Village resident briefly in the 1950s, was a special focus this year.)

Though shaped in the spirit (if not the actual educational mold) of Bernstein’s Young People’s Concerts—and featuring his daughter Nina narrating Saint-Saëns’ *Carnival of the Animals*—no one would confuse the young Festival Orchestra (or as they were dubbed, the “Going the Distance Players”) with the New York Philharmonic. And I think that was largely the point. People came not to show off their jewelry, or even to be artistically chal-

lenged, but rather to join in a sense of community (both Nina and conductor Victoria Bond, as well as most of the orchestra and soloists, could walk home after the concert).

What the afternoon lacked in musical ability it made up for in ambition, with more heart than performances where the tickets would cost twice as much (or more). The mark of a city like New York is having enough cultural space to embrace them all. 📖



伯恩斯坦及其女儿妮娜·伯恩斯坦（右）