

FROM VERDI TO GERSHWIN: THE VOICE OF PINA MAGRI

FROM OPERA TO SOFT ROCK, JAZZ MUSICAL THEATRE
A VOICE ABLE TO SING A WIDE RANGE OF STYLES

It is certainly a rare gift when a voice spans from Verdi to Gershwin, from Debussy to Negro Spirituals, from Puccini to Ella Fitzgerald.

Pina Magri, an Italian American, has a great sense of interpretation and style. Perhaps due to the fact that she not only speaks three languages but is very aware of cultural nuances since two cultures are an integral part of her: Italy for operatic "bel canto", and the United States for jazz, musical theatre and pop songs. She is a soprano with an extensive vocal range, who's been listening since childhood to everything from Fitzgerald to Streisand.

Her vocal flexibility allows her repertoire to range from pop to opera. In fact, her diploma in opera from the Conservatorio di 'Santa Cecilia' in Rome along with her portfolio of private studies and master classes with maestros of the calibre of

Ettore Campogalliani enable her to perform Gershwin's 'Summertime' in the original operatic style, or 'Con te partiro' with impressive technique and breathtaking effect. Her broadway studies make her interpretation of 'Don't Cry For Me Argentina' both moving and authentic.

We can appreciate her voice in the soundtracks written by Maestro Ennio Morricone in "Il Principe del Deserto" and in Zeffirelli's "Hamlet" as well as in the music written by Simonetti for the movie "Phenomena" by Dario Argento. One of Magri's wishes is that someone would compose specifically for her voice bringing together both pop and opera. It is our wish that she find a good record producer who will invest in her talents which have already been recognised by those who have already included her in their projects.

How did you become interested in opera?
And thanks to whom did you take your first steps in that direction?

A person I studied with for several years and from whom I learned a great deal is

Ettore Campogalliani who is unfortunately no longer living. I am one of a long list of students which includes Renata Tebaldi, Mirella Freni, and Luciano Pavarotti. But I also owe a lot to my first teacher, Eloise Finardi.

What about your passion for musical theatre?

I studied quite a lot at Broadway with various coaches. I have performed in New York City but not yet in a Broadway show because it is important to live there and do auditions just like in "A Chorus Line".

Who is your inspiration? Is there a voice you feel has particularly influenced you?

I lived in the United States for 20 years, and the first singer who really impressed me was

Barbra Streisand. Whenever I drove the car and she would be singing on the radio, even if I'd reached my destination, I would stay in the car and listen until the song was finished! I believe that as far as melodic pop is concerned Streisand's voice is the best! Furthermore, she is an artist in the fullest sense, has carisma, and is highly professional. She's great!

What is your rapport with the record world?

Maybe I haven't yet found the right person or I haven't looked enough. I've mostly concentrated on studying, being a professional and performing live music.

Have you seen results from your studies? Do you feel that your voice has improved?

Yes, of course!

Are there other artists that mean something special to you?

I think Judy Garland is a great artist and a beautiful sensitive person; she is a legend.

What about Italian singers?

Mina, a wonderful singer ... and if I were to look for someone that resembles me somehow, I would say Bocelli - kind of a female version, since I've studied opera but also have a voice which is fit for pop. I am a lyric soprano with a range of three and a half octaves, and in some of my soundtracks I've touched G above high C!

Satisfactions or

disappointments? What is your rapport with the public?

Beautiful! Singing is the centre of my life and the mirror of who I am. I never separate the singer from my inner self, I am always me. Singing is simply a wonderful way to express myself and gives me an opportunity to love and be loved.

What are you currently working on at the moment?

I am creating and performing various concerts with pianist Antonello Vannucchi, and the keyboard player Stefano Ferretti.. On Sundays I sing in the choir

of the Cappella Musicale of the Basilica of St John in Lateran, where sometimes I am asked to do solo parts. On 26 May I will sing in Arezzo at the Roman Amphitheatre during an international sports award (Premio Fair Play). On June 19 I will be performing at Palazzo Barberini in Rome, with a special repertoire that covers the spiritual to the musical.

Emanuela Di Gironimo
June 1 2000
Il Quirino newspaper
Rome Italy

translation by P.M

