

TAMI SWARTZ - Director's Biography

Tami Swartz has been performing on the stage in multiple, artistic genres ranging from theater, musical theater and jazz and opera. She began honing her directing skills from age 12 at various theater apprenticeship programs including Hampton Playhouse and at Northwestern University.

Her credits include, Artistic Director for Harrisburg Opera Association's educational outreach concert series - Opera in the Park. Additional Harrisburg Opera directing credits include: *Paris 1959* an original crossover program that she conceived combining *Il Tabarro* with jazz quartet, Co-Director/Co-Collaborator with Adam Klein for Harrisburg Opera's production of *An Historically Accurate Madama Butterfly* and Co-Director/Co-Collaborator with Adam Klein for *The Magic Flute*. Additional stage directing credits include Charleston Chamber Opera's inaugural production – *Pilot Season* for the Piccolo Spoleto Festival, Stage Director for The Co-OPERative Opera Company, NY, NY and Stage Director for The Harrisburg Symphony Orchestra Children's Concert Series. She holds Masters and Bachelors degrees from The Juilliard School and Northwestern University respectively and currently resides in New York City.

Selected Reviews:

"(Tami Swartz and Timothy Lafontaine's) concept itself borders genius. String together four (four!) chamber operas by dangling them from an ongoing theatrical performance, as if they were being filmed for the upcoming television season. In this case, its plot used the unavailability of Julia Child to mirror, then dissolve into Gian Carlo Menotti's The Telephone... Charleston Chamber Opera has set an incredibly lofty and ambitious goal for themselves with this sort of production. They definitely showed they have the drive and talent to make this marriage of theatre with opera open up new audiences for both forms. "A beginning is a very delicate time," wrote Frank Herbert, in reference to balances being correct. CCO's balance was a bit off at their debut, but here's to that being merely the birth pangs of something truly wonderful!"

-- The Charleston City Paper for Pilot Season at the Piccolo Spoleto Festival, 6.4.2008

"At the time Puccini wrote "Butterfly," no one gave much thought to ethnic accuracy in roles for theater or opera. Today, such oversights are sometimes controversial. In 1991, for example, a Broadway production of "Miss Saigon" received criticism for casting English actor Jonathan Pryce in an Asian role. Harrisburg Opera's production suffers a little from this proclivity, but a saving grace is that there is no condescension in the performances. The truth is that in theater, no one is ever playing him or herself, so such criticisms tend to lose their edge. Pryce received a Tony Award for his "Miss Saigon" performance. Onstage, it's less about who one is than how one acts. And as a representation of that concept, as well as how "Butterfly" might have appeared on stage when it was first presented in Milan in 1904, Harrisburg Opera's production is very much in keeping with both traditions."

-- The Patriot News for An Historically Accurate Version of *Madama Butterfly*, 10.6.2005