

“Donna non vidi mai” (I never saw a woman) MANON LESCAUT, Act I, Giacomo Puccini; libretto by Illica and Giacosa, based on the novel by the Abbé Prévost, *l’Histoire de Manon Lescaut et du Chevalier Des Grieux* (1731).

SYNOPSIS: At an inn in Arras, the carriage from Amiens stops and Manon, a young woman on her way to the convent, gets off. The young Chevalier Des Grieux sees her and is immediately smitten by her beauty. He manages to speak to her and she promises to meet him later.

DESGRIEUX

Donna non vidi mai...

simile a questa!

A dirle: io t'amo,

a nuova vita l'alma mia si desta.

-“Manon Lescaut mi chiamo!”

Como queste parole profumate

mi vagam nello spirito

e ascose fibre

vanno a carezzare!...

*O sussuro gentil, deh! non cessare!

Deh! non cessare!

“Manon Lescaut mi chiamo!”

O sussuro gentil, deh! non cessar!

Deh! non cessare! Deh! non cessar!

(* = repeat)

I never saw a woman

equal to this one.

To tell her, “I love you,”

my soul would awaken to a better life.

“Manon Lescaut, they call me.”

How those simple perfumed words enchant me;

they wander through my mind

and hidden fibers

feel themselves caressed.

*Oh, sweet murmur, I pray, don’t be silent!

Pray, don’t you be silent!

“Manon Lescaut, they call me.”

Oh, sweet murmur, I pray, don’t be still!

Pray, don’t be silent! Pray, don’t be still!