

Celle dei Puccini

Echoes of Notes in a Quiet Place

Celle is a little village in the Pescaglia area. On 28 May 1971, the town of Pescaglia decided to change the name of Celle to Celle dei Puccini in honour of Giacomo Puccini, the world-famous opera composer.

It's a small village, but the Puccini Museum could be an attraction for those who are interested in Puccini's life. This is the actual house where the first of five generations of composers, Jacopo, was born and this is where Giacomo Puccini, the best known of the family, spent his childhood and holidays. It is a sixteenth century house with seven rooms on two floors. The upper floor is dedicated to the ancestors. Here people can admire their photographs, documents, and furnishings. On the ground floor there are two rooms, which in the past were used as cellars, and now are intended for musical events and art exhibitions on Pucciniani themes.

In 1864, after the death of Giacomo's father Michele, his mother had to sell the house because of economic problems. However, after more than a century, in 1973, the house was back in the hands of the Puccini family. Thanks to the daughters of Giacomo's sister Ramelde, who donated some heirlooms, and thanks to the Lucchesi nel Mondo Association that bought the property, the house became a museum, and it can be visited by appointment.

Each summer the Lucchesi nel Mondo Association organizes a concert series called *Celle sotto le stelle*. The June concert at Celle is presented by the Salotti Music School, that of July by the Accademia Malfatti. Other concerts organized by Lucchesi nel Mondo in other locations are listed in the What's On section of this magazine.

Lorenzo Malfatti, born in Pittsburgh in 1923, was the son of immigrants from Lucca. He began his musical career at the age of 19 and became a baritone opera singer. Thanks to his Lucchese origins, starting in 1960 he brought more than 1000 students to Lucca to study singing and the Italian language. He was the co-founder and director of the *Accademia Vocale di Lucca*, and later of the University of Cincinnati Opera and Music Festival in Lucca. Last year, in the fifth edition of the Malfatti Academy, the American singers performed a Pucciniano repertoire at Celle. Before the



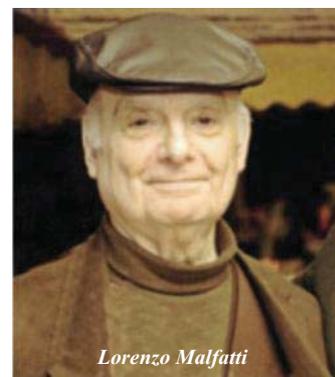
concerts, the Celle dei Puccini Museum is open for guided tours so that people can see the many objects representing the private and artistic life of the Maestro, Puccini.

– by Jamila Nasri, Liceo A. Vallisneri

Concert Dates

Friday 15 June
Saturday 21 July
(both at 9pm)

To visit the museum,
please contact Barbara
(who speaks English & Italian) at
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Lorenzo Malfatti

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