

THE FAT LADY SINGS

Closing the Curtain
on Traditional Opera

13

STORY BY NICHOLAS COX

GUERRILLA OPERA MAY SOUND LIKE A PARADOX.

What about the subversive spirit of guerilla tactics could be compatible with the snobbish art of opera? What about the antiquated world of classical vocal performance could be new and experimental?

Let Rudolf Rojahn and Mike Williams—the duo behind Boston-based Guerilla Opera—prove that this semantic pairing is anything but incongruous. The non-profit music collective touts its own unique style of performance art that endeavors to revolutionize the operatic world.

The two have created a show that is both riotously intense and wonderfully intimate. Performers belt their melodies at a discomfitingly close distance; the music is angular and unsettling, enthralling in spite of, or rather because of, its tones, which are at times caustic; the alto saxophone that makes up one quarter of the ensemble, already an unorthodox operatic instrument, blows wildly creating spastic overtones. The piece clocks in at less than an hour, but it leaves you stunned nonetheless, your emotions exposed like nerve endings to the outside world.

