

BROOKLYN HEIGHTS PRESS & COBBLE HILL NEWS



**EXUBERANCE:** Judith Barnes as Ruggiero rejects the advances of scheming sorceress Alcina (Sungji Kim) in the Vertical Player Repertory production of the George Frideric Handel opera that closed Sunday. The editorial at lower left contrasts the skill and joy that went into these local performances with the heavy corporate control of so much of contemporary life, discussed in the upper editorial.

Photo by Remo Cosentino

## *Handel on High*

What a relief after the above thoughts it was to come back from Long Island early Sunday to catch the final performance of the Vertical Player Repertory's "Alcina" by George Frideric Handel. The small space at 219 Court Street in Cobble Hill (colleague Dennis Holt would insist it's Boerum Hill, being on the east side of Court) was packed, and one could only wish there had been room for more. Here was an abundance of zest and talent going into something that would not make anybody rich, except in joy and love. The sopranos Sungji Kim and Beth Hatton as the beguiling sorceresses Alcina and Morgana, producer and director Judith Barnes in the leading male role of Ruggiero, the Turkish-born bass Kerem Kurkcuoglu as the cynical Oronte —everybody! — to and including the lion played by our son's friend Val McDaniel, to whom we owed the invitation to come, was just splendid, as were the musicians under director/harp-sichordist Kenneth Cooper.

We tend still to look to Manhattan for culture. But it would be hard to think of any group anywhere creating greater delight out of an 18th century opera. There's a great deal of wonderful stuff going on in our own backyard — a sign of hope that maybe the world isn't going to material hell in a hand basket, quite yet.

—Henrik Krogius, Consulting Editor  
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