

Marble City Opera

Presents...

“The Copper Queen”

By:

Clint Borzoni & John De Los Santos



*****Stage Premiere*****

June 2-4, 2022

7:30 pm

Flying Anvil Theater

*****BE ADVISED*****

This production contains graphic depictions of sexual assault and violence.

We acknowledge that this content may be triggering. We encourage you to take the necessary steps to safeguard your emotional and mental health. Thank you.

Cast

Sara Crigger	as “ <i>Addison Moore</i> ”
Kathryn Frady	as “ <i>Julia Lowell</i> ”
Graham Anduri	as “ <i>Mr. Floyd/Daddy Lowell</i> ”
David Silvano	as “ <i>Teddy</i> ”
Jacob Lay	as “ <i>Richie/Sugar Dog</i> ”
Daniel Spiotta	as “ <i>Peter Ackerman</i> ”

Orchestra

Haley Reasoner	Violin 1
Mei White	Violin 1
Millie Runion	Violin 2
I-Pei Lin	Violin 2
Robyn James	Viola
Ian McClure	Cello
Daniel Shifflett	Bass
Alan Cook	Flute
Lydia Schoen	Oboe
Deirdre Ford	Clarinet
Maurice Hendricks	Bassoon
Joe Jordan	Trumpet
Kelsey Bentley	Horn 1
Sean Donovan	Horn 2
Bryce McCracken	Bass Trombone
Paul Hayes	Percussion
Dustin Lin	Piano

Artistic Team

John De Los Santos	Stage Director & Librettist
Marya Barry	Assistant Stage Director
Christy Lee	Music Director/Conductor
Clint Borzoni	Composer

Production Team

Joshua Mullady	Lighting Designer
Kayla Beard	Stage Manager
Sabreena Cherrington	Assistant Stage Manager
Paula Morris	Production Intern
Whitney Wells	Spotlight 1

Staff

Kathryn Frady	Executive Artistic Director
Brandon J. Gibson	Managing Director
Kayla Beard	Administrative Director

Synopsis

Described as a cross between *La Traviata* and *The Shining*, Borzoni and de los Santos' "The Copper Queen" is based on the dramatic true story of Julia Lowell, a resident of The Copper Queen Hotel in Bisbee, Arizona, in 1910, who was forced to live in captivity in service to the town's men. A century later, Addison Moore—a stranger to Bisbee—visits Room 315, the site of Julia's tragic suicide, where her ghost now famously roams. The riveting tale—told across the generations—is one of human bondage, furtive romance, secret connections, and ultimately—redemption.

Timeline

Location

The opera takes place in room No. 315 of The Copper Queen Hotel in Bisbee, Arizona. The action alternates between 1910 and 2010.

PART I: 2010

The hotel's concierge, Mr. Floyd, shows Addison Moore into No. 315, which she is visiting on a healing trip following her grandmother's death. He relates the history of Julia Lowell, a prostitute kept in the hotel by her father a century ago. Julia allegedly committed suicide in the room. Her restless ghost is now believed to haunt it, although Addison is skeptical. Once left alone, Addison makes a half-hearted effort to communicate with the spirit but is unsurprised when there is no response.

PART II: 1910

A miner called "Sugar Dog" waits for Julia's attention while a trio of men outside howl for their turn with her. Julia appears and haggles with Sugar Dog over the rates for her special extras. When he agrees, she ties him to the bed, but he climaxes disappointingly soon, just as the excitement begins. Julia escorts him out and declares she won't see anyone else for the night. One of the men from outside enters and asks for her company anyway. He tells her his name is Theodore.

PART III: 2010

It is now evening. When Addison attempts to use her hairdryer, it dies. She calls the front desk and is informed that electric devices don't reliably work in No. 315. She is stupefied and requests more towels be brought up. She tries to speak with Julia again, explaining why there's no reason for jealousy. Just as Addison is about to resign that the whole thing is a hoax, Julia's words suddenly invade her mouth. She also begins to smell lilac perfume.

PART IV: 1910

Julia has just finished a visit with Theodore, who she has now seen several times in a row. He pays her and leaves, just as Daddy Lowell enters, demanding the cash from Julia. He tells her his friend, Peter Ackerman, is waiting outside and demands she do whatever he wants. Peter is shown in, but when he forces himself on Julia, she fights back. Peter threatens to expose Julia's business unless her father compensates for his silence. Once Peter storms out, Daddy Lowell beats Julia, calling her ungrateful and useless. Aware that her situation is slowly killing her, Julia resolves to escape at whatever cost.

PART V: 2010

Mr. Floyd brings Addison her towels and discovers she is now convinced that the room is indeed haunted. She refuses to change rooms despite Mr. Floyd's offer to relocate her. Addison pleads with Julia to reveal more.

PART VI: 1910

Theodore and Julia have been seeing each other regularly. He confesses that he and his wife are moving to Boston in the hopes of better opportunities and starting a family. Julia becomes irate, and Theodore discovers that her father has been beating her. As he admits his marriage is unhappy, Julia convinces him she can be a wife and more to him. Theodore finally agrees that he will return for her to escape together in three weeks.

PART VII: 2010

The haunting vision of Julia's longing has unsettled Addison deeply and compounded her own loneliness. She demands the truth about what became of Julia but senses that the spirit has left her. When she desperately taunts the room aloud, it angrily responds to her voice.

PART VIII: 1910

Daddy Lowell sings to himself while he waits for Julia to return. When she does, he presents her with a new dress for her to wear for him on his birthday. He leaves while Julia checks on a secret stash of earnings she's hidden under the floorboards. Theodore arrives and reveals that his wife is pregnant and he cannot desert her. Julia pleads with him, but he remains resolute and sadly pushes her away. She insists that he take her necklace as a gift for the child before insisting he leaves. Once he does, she prepares to escape alone, but Daddy Lowell enters and reveals he has heard everything. Julia makes one last attempt at freedom, but her father pulls her back and murders her. The room swirls with terrible energy as time blends and strange voices from Julia's past shake its foundations. Addison appears alongside Julia to confront her spirit and reveal a secret that has bonded the women from the very beginning.

PART X: 2010

The following morning, Mr. Floyd enters No. 315 as Addison is late for her check out. When he asks her if she experienced anything unusual, she tells him nothing happened. Once he is gone, Addison assures Julia that she will never be forgotten.

Bios



Clint Joseph Borzoni is an award-winning composer whose “highly original yet lyrical music...[and] natural gift for melody and harmonic structure” (The Huffington Post) has resulted in international performances and premieres. He has collaborated with librettist John de los Santos on the opera “When Adonis Calls.” The lyrical opera (fashioned entirely from the poetry of Gavin Geoffrey Dillard), was selected for inclusion by Fort Worth Opera’s Frontiers and Opera America’s New Works Forum. The world premiere at the Asheville Lyric Opera sold out, and was followed by a collaborative new production in Chicago between Thompson Street Opera and Pride Films & Plays.

Clint and John are currently in development with The American Opera Project on a new holiday opera, “The Christmas Spider”. Other operatic works include “Margot Alone in the Light,” an adaptation of Ray Bradbury’s story “All Summer in a Day” (premiered by operamission and subsequently produced by Opera On Tap); and “Antinous and Hadrian” (commissioned by operamission). The orchestra suite based on “Antinous and Hadrian” won the Queer Urban Orchestra’s 2018 composition competition, and will be performed by the Brooklyn Symphony Orchestra next season. Mr. Borzoni has composed songs and song cycles for many leading vocalists. He won BARIHUNKS Best New Song (2015), Best New Solo Work for Baritone (2017), operamission’s cabaret song competition, and was a prize winner of Sparks & Wiry Cries Second and Fourth annual NYC songSLAM. Borzoni’s additional honors include the Morton Feldman Award, the Boston Metro Opera Festival Award, an artist residency with the American Lyric Theater’s Composer Librettist Development Program (2009), an artist residency with The American Opera Project’s Composers and the Voice Program (2010), and an associate producer credit for Patricia Racette’s CD “Diva on Detour”.

In addition to composing opera, art song, and concert music, his musical “My Life as a Bald Soprano” received an Off-Broadway run at the Midtown International Theater Festival. Borzoni has also scored three films for the production company JR VISION, which were featured at the Take Two Film Festival, the Miami Short Film Festival, SeriesFest, NewFilmmakers Los Angeles, and Anthology Film Archives. His music has been presented by the Merola Opera Program, the Glimmerglass Festival, the Bay View Music Festival, the Wintergreen Festival, the Summer Street Festival, St Martin-in-the-Fields, the U.S. embassy in Switzerland, La MaMA, Symphony Space, Opera Grows in Brooklyn, the New York Youth Symphony, the Walt Whitman Project, the Jacobs School of Music, the Guildhall School of Music, the Mannes School of Music, and many more venues and universities. He has recently been commissioned by Arizona Opera, the Delaware Art Museum, the Big Apple Corps Symphonic Band, and Barihunks. He studied with Pulitzer Prize-winning composer David Del Tredici at the City University of New York where he received an MA in Music Composition. He recently finished a new oratorio, “The Wife of Lot,” which was commissioned by the Gavin Dillard Poetry Library & Archive, and made possible by a generous donation from Steven J. Schimmel. “The Wife of Lot” is part of the collection of the Senator John Heinz History Center, in association with the Smithsonian Institution. He is currently working on a new chamber piece, “Requiem Fragments”, which is being commissioned by tenor Mitchell Sturges. He is also the Resident Composer for Musica Marin, a nonprofit organization that presents, supports and inspires classical music throughout the San Francisco Bay Area.



John De Los Santos has been called a “brilliant combination of literary insight and choreographic creativity.” He has staged a range of productions that include opera, musicals, plays, concerts, and ballet. His productions include the world premiere of *The Astronaut Love Show* at the Kraine Theater (NYC), *The Rose and the Knife*, *Otello*, and *Le Comte Ory* (called “a perfect fusion” by *The New York Times*) for LoftOpera (NYC), *La Cage Aux Folles* for Skylight Music Theatre, *La Fille du Regiment* for Arizona Opera, *South Pacific* for Ashlawn Opera, *María de Buenos Aires* for San Diego and Fort Worth Opera, and *Lexington Philharmonic*, and *Green Sneakers* for Opera Birmingham and the Southside Theatre at San Francisco’s historic Fort Mason Center. He choreographed the world premiere of Jake Heggie and Terrence McNally’s *Great Scott*, directed by Jack O’Brien, for the Dallas Opera. His choreography has also been seen at the Washington National, Florida Grand, Philadelphia, Des Moines Metro, Utah Festival, and Austin Lyric Opera Companies.

John’s first libretto with composer Clint Borzoni, *When Adonis Calls*, was selected for inclusion in Fort Worth Opera’s 2015 *Frontiers* showcase and Opera America’s 2017 *New Works Forum*. It had its world premiere at Asheville Lyric Opera in 2018, directed and choreographed by the librettist. John’s second collaboration with Borzoni, *The Copper Queen*, won the top prize Arizona Opera’s commission program, *Arizona SPARK*. John and Clint are currently in development with The American Opera Project on a new holiday opera, *The Christmas Spider*. John was commissioned by Washington National Opera’s American Opera Initiative to create an original work with composer Christopher Weiss. The resulting piece, *Service Provider*, premiered at The Kennedy Center in 2015, and has since been performed by Urban Arias, Opera Memphis, Hawaii Opera Theater, Virginia Opera, Opera Idaho, Westminster Opera Theatre, and was selected as the first opera performed by the Lake George Music Festival. In 2019, his one-act collaboration with Scott Bradley Joiner, *The Shower*, premiered at the Vienna Summer Music Festival. John serves as librettist-in-residence for Opera Lab at The Juilliard School.

From 2003 to 2010, he served as resident choreographer for the Fort Worth Opera, creating dances for *Rigoletto*, *Salome*, *La Traviata*, *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, and the world premieres of *Frau Margot* and *Before Night Falls*. John made his directing debut there with *Carmen*, followed by *The Mikado* and *The Pearl Fishers*. In 2010 he made his choreographic debut for the Dallas Opera with *Don Giovanni*. John has served on the directing faculty of the Seagle Music Colony in Schroon Lake, NY, where his productions have included *Anything Goes*, *Crazy for You*, *The Medium*, *The Fantasticks*, *The Mikado*, *La Boheme*, *Guys & Dolls*, *Brigadoon* and *L’Italiana in Algeri*. John has also coached young artists with the Washington National, Arizona, Fort Worth, and Des Moines Metro Opera Companies. Other productions include *Italienisches Liederbuch* for *Voces Intimae*, *The Golden Apple* and the world premiere of *Pure Country* for Lyric Stage, *Spring Awakening* and *Dogfight* for WaterTower Theatre, and *Carousel* for Ashlawn Opera. For the Dallas-based theatre company Uptown Players, John choreographed the American premiere of the Pet Shop Boys musical *Closer to Heaven*, the regional premiere of *Altar Boyz* (for which John was awarded the DFW Critics Forum Award for Best Choreography), and directed and choreographed the regional premiere of *Hello Again* and the American premiere of *Soho Cinders*.

John is originally from San Antonio, Texas, where he performed as a principal member of the Alamo City Dance Company. He received his BFA in Theatre/Film Performance & Direction from Texas Christian University.



Christy Lee continues to lead a diverse career as a collaborative pianist, chamber musician, vocal coach, conductor, and educator. In the world of opera, Dr. Lee has worked as pianist, coach, and assistant conductor at Opera Memphis, Chattanooga Opera, Pensacola Opera, Cleveland Opera, Knoxville Opera, Crested Butte Music Festival, Lake Placid International Voice Seminar, Pine Mountain Music Festival, Lyric Opera Cleveland, and Dorian Opera Theatre. As an active member of the American Choral Director's Association, she serves regularly as a collaborative pianist at national and district conferences as well as with honor choirs throughout North America and the Caribbean. In May of 2012 she had the pleasure of being a translator and vocal coach for the inaugural US/Cuba Choral Summit in Havana, Cuba and she was an Executive Leader for America Cantat 2016 in The Bahamas.

For six years Lee was on the faculty of the College of The Bahamas where she was a founding member of C Force, the premiere chamber group of the College of The Bahamas. She holds degrees from Florida State University, the Cleveland Institute of Music, and the University of Alabama. She is now on the faculty in the Music Department of Mississippi State University and resides in Starkville, Mississippi.



Originally from Debary, Florida, **Marya Barry** completed her undergraduate education at Stetson University where she performed as a member of the Stetson University Opera Theater for four years. In addition to her education, Marya has participated in young artist programs abroad including the Varna International Opera Academy in Bulgaria and Oberlin in Italy. As a graduate of The University of Tennessee with a Masters in Voice Performance, she also completed an independent study in opera directing with her professor and mentor James Marvel. She has worked as an assistant director with Marble City Opera in productions such as *The Human Voice*, *Follow Suit*, and *The Telephone*. Marya also directed two U.S premieres with Marble City Opera: *The Nero Monologues* in 2018 and *City of Ashes* in 2019.

In Summer 2021 Marya directed MCO's production of *Tosca* which went on to be named as one of the "Most Memorable Music Performances of the Year" by Arts Knoxville.

Bios (cast)

Name/Voice: Sara Crigger, mezzo soprano
Hometown: Nashville, TN
**Opera Companies/
Symphonies:** Nashville Opera, Chrysalis Opera, Scenic City Opera, Tidewater Opera Initiative, Middle Tennessee Choral Society, Nashville Collegiate Orchestra, Belmont University Orchestra, Austin Peay University Orchestra

Name/Voice type: Kathryn Frady, soprano
Hometown: Plano, TX
**Opera Companies/
Symphonies:** New Orleans Opera, Opera Carolina, Knoxville Opera, Cleveland Opera Theater, Wichita Grand Opera, Marble City Opera, Opera West!, Opera in the City Festival in London, Diversita Opera Company in Dallas, The Pierre Cardin Theater in Paris, The Mediterranean Opera Festival, National Opera Center in New York City, Opernfest Prauge, Helena Symphony, Chattanooga Symphony, Knoxville Symphony

Name/Voice: Graham Anduri, bass-baritone
Hometown: Grand Junction, CO
**Opera Companies/
Symphonies:** Grand Junction Symphony Orchestra, Western Colorado Chorale, Grand Junction Messiah Choral Society, Western Colorado Concert Series, Blue Sage Concert Series, Art Song Colorado, Opera Fort Collins, Mobile Opera, Natchez Opera Festival, Festival South, Emerald City Opera, Operafestival di Roma

Name/Voice: David Silvano, tenor
Hometown: Grand Junction, Colorado
**Opera Companies/
Symphonies:** Opera Fort Collins, Boulder Opera Company, Grand Junction
Symphony Orchestra, Loveland Opera Theatre, Valley Symphony
Association (Montrose, CO)

Name/Voice: Jacob Lay, bass-baritone
Hometown: Atlanta, GA
**Opera Companies/
Symphonies:** Marble City Opera, Cedar Rapids Opera Theatre, Simpson
Productions, University of Tennessee Opera Theatre.

Name/Voice: Daniel Spiotta, baritone
Hometown: Knoxville, TN
**Opera Companies/
Symphonies:** Anchorage Opera, Knoxville Opera, Marble City Opera,
Mobile Opera, Opera Memphis, Memphis Lite Opera, NYC Lyric
Opera Theater, Druid City Opera, Memphis Repertory Orchestra,
Memphis Symphony

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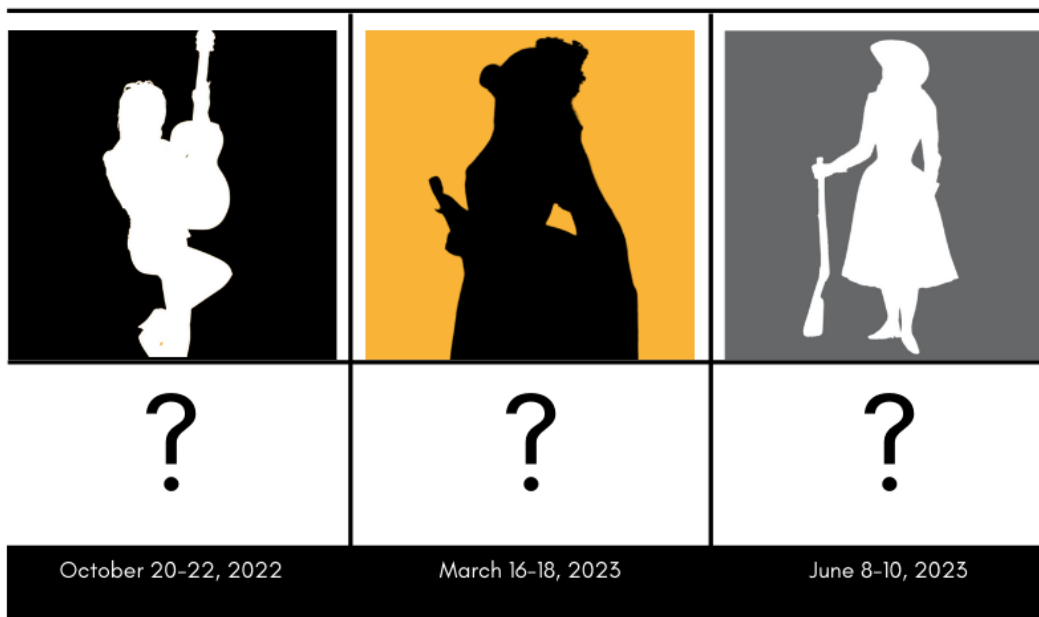
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Season Ten

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