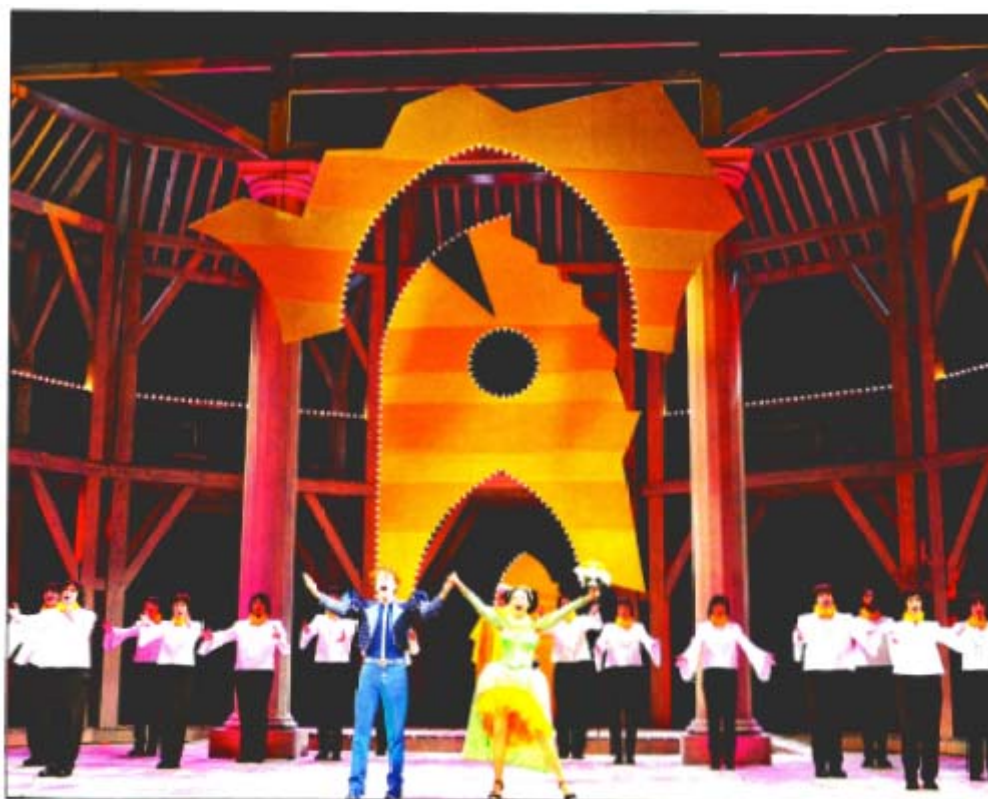


August 2008



David Larsen and Courtney Romano star as Bill Calhoun/Lucentio and Lois Lane/Bianca (center) in Glimmerglass Opera's 2008 production of Cole Porter's *Kiss Me, Kate*. The production runs through August 23 in Cooperstown, New York. Photo: Michael Manning/Glimmerglass Opera.

'Kate' on the Opera Stage

No one will ever confuse Cole Porter with either Verdi, Puccini or Mozart, but somehow he seems right at home on the stage of the **Alice Busch Opera Theater** in Cooperstown, NY. **Glimmerglass Opera** has given "Kiss Me, Kate," perhaps the best musical ever written, a first-class production, with nice cartoon-like sets and costumes on a

flexible Elizabethan stage that is being used as a unit set for the summer's three other operas, by Bellini, Handel and Wagner, all inspired by Shakespeare's plays. Diane Paulus' "Kate" production gives us the kind of big pit orchestra led by David Charles Abell that we no longer get on Broadway. It also spares us the miked singing actors that have invaded our Great White Way and the touring hinterlands as well. Acclaiming these virtues, it must be noted that Lisa Vroman, the Lilli Vanessi/Kate is somewhat thin in the lower register; she and Brad Little, Fred Graham/Petruchio push their vocal instruments. Courtney Romano, the Lois Lane/Bianca is cute as hell, but her tiny voice also vanishes frequently beneath the orchestral textures; fortunately supertitles preserve the texts. David Larsen, the Bill Calhoun/Lucentio is a fine young singing actor with an extremely bright future, and Michael Mott and Bradley Nacht, the two gangsters, are terrific, especially brushing up on their Shakespeare. Porter generally would be delighted.

Kiss Me Kate

Alice Busch Theater
Glimmerglass Opera,
through Aug. 23

Cooperstown, NY

607/547-2255

www.glimmerglass.org