



AMERICAN OPERA CLASSICS



2 CDs

Stephen
HARTKE

The Greater Good
or The Passion of Boule de Suif

Worra • De Haan • Abraham • Wentzel • Worth
Thames • Byrne • Gardner • Alvarez • Burchett
Glimmerglass Opera Orchestra • Robertson



THE GREATER GOOD
or
THE PASSION OF BOULE DE SUIF

Opera in Two Acts

Music by Stephen Hartke

Libretto by the composer from Philip Littell's dramatic adaptation of
Guy de Maupassant's short story, *Boule de Suif*

CAST (in order of vocal appearance)

M. Carré-Lamadon Christopher Burchett, Baritone
Count Bréville Andrew Wentzel, Bass-baritone
M. Loiseau John David De Haan, Tenor
Mme. Carré-Lamadon Christine Abraham, Mezzo-soprano
Countess Bréville Elaine Alvarez, Soprano*
Cornudet Seth Keeton, Bass-baritone*
Mme. Loiseau Jill Gardner, Soprano*
Coachman Matthew Worth, Baritone*
The Old Nun Jeanine Thames, Soprano
The Young Nun Katherine Calcamuggio, Mezzo-soprano*
Elisabeth Rousset, also known as *Boule de Suif* Caroline Worra, Soprano
A Prussian Officer Christian Reinert, Tenor*
Mme. Follenvie Dorothy Byrne, Mezzo-soprano
M. Follenvie Liam Moran, Bass*

Glimmerglass Opera Orchestra

Michael Levin, concertmaster

Conducted by

Stewart Robertson

*Member of Glimmerglass Opera's 2006 Young American Artists Program

Act One

1	Scene 1: Rouen, a Tuesday in late February, 1871, 4 AM	3:20
2	“Count?” (<i>Carré-Lamadon, Count, Loiseau</i>)	1:53
3	“I know, I know, you never want to, girl” (<i>Coachman</i>)	1:13
4	“Cigar?” (<i>Loiseau, Carré-Lamadon, Count, Coachman</i>)	1:23
5	“A lonely street or an alley” (<i>Loiseau, Carré-Lamadon, Count</i>)	1:29
6	“Say, know why they call her Ice Cream?” (<i>Coachman</i>)	1:11
7	“You can get in if you want” (<i>Coachman</i>)	0:53
8	Scene 2: Aboard the coach, starting out	1:07
9	“There was a boat” (<i>Coachman</i>)	1:55
10	“These really are wonderful” (<i>The three wives</i>)	2:01
11	Scene 3: Dawn “Darling, look!” (<i>The wives and their husbands</i>)	1:10
12	“Do you know Mme. de Vidoudet?” (<i>The wives, later the nuns</i>)	2:00
13	“Very bad for business, war” (<i>The husbands, later Cornudet</i>)	2:32
14	Scene 4: 10 AM “What time d’you have?” (<i>The husbands, Cornudet</i>)	2:19
15	“If I were a big bad wolf” (<i>Loiseau</i>)	1:23
16	Inter-scene: Noon “See anything?” (<i>M. & Mme. Carré-Lamadon</i>)	0:56
17	Scene 5: 3 PM “Oh my God!” (<i>The husbands and wives, Cornudet</i>)	3:07
18	“I gotta hand it to you, girlie!” (<i>Loiseau, Boule, Cornudet, the nuns</i>)	2:00
19	“Gentlemen, pardon me” (<i>Boule, later Loiseau and the Count</i>)	2:04
20	“These are the tastes of ...” (<i>The wives, husbands, Cornudet</i>)	1:28
21	“Tiny gherkins, pickled onions!” (<i>The wives, husbands, Cornudet</i>)	1:02
22	“Men don’t understand” (<i>The wives, Boule</i>)	1:39
23	“You know how it was” (<i>Boule</i>)	2:30
24	“At first I thought I’d stay” (<i>Boule</i>)	2:41
25	“Someone helped me out” (<i>Boule, later the wives and husbands</i>)	1:02
26	“It’s like that Badinguet” (<i>Cornudet, Boule</i>)	1:18
27	“God it’s cold!” (<i>The wives</i>)	0:49
28	“Nothing but snow” (<i>Coachman, later Boule and the others</i>)	3:18
29	“I think I see lights!” (<i>Boule, the wives and husbands</i>)	1:26
30	Scene 6: Arrival at Tôtes, 6 PM “Raus! Raus! Raus!” (<i>Prussian Officer</i>)	1:57

31	“Come in, come in” (<i>The Follenvies</i>)	2:00
32	“Monsieur Follenvie!” (<i>The Follenvies</i>)	0:56
33	“Things are looking up!” (<i>The husbands, Follenvie, Cornudet</i>)	0:33
34	“Mademoiselle Elisabeth Rousset?” (<i>Officer, Boule, later the Count</i>)	3:28
35	“Well, you see how things are” (<i>Mme. Follenvie</i>)	1:40
36	“It’s a funny thing waking up under occupation” (<i>Mme. Follenvie</i>)	2:57
37	“They’re pigs!” (<i>Boule, Mme. Follenvie, the wives</i>)	1:06
38	“An unprovoked attack is barbaric!” (<i>Cornudet, Mme. Follenvie</i>)	1:53
39	Scene 7: In the Inn, 10 PM “What a collection!” (<i>The Loiseaux</i>)	1:26
40	“Our little Miss has to siss” (<i>Loiseau</i>)	0:56
41	“Come to my room” (<i>Cornudet, Boule</i>)	2:32
42	“Oh boy!” (<i>Loiseau, later Mme. Loiseau</i>)	1:34

CD 2

68:26

Act Two

1	Scene 1: The Inn at Tôtes, Wednesday, 8 AM	1:03
2	“What the devil?” (<i>The husbands, Cornudet</i>)	0:38
3	“Yes?” (<i>Coachman, the husbands</i>)	1:17
4	“M. Follenvie! We demand an explanation!” (<i>The husbands, Follenvie</i>)	1:46
5	Scene 2: later Wednesday afternoon “I miss my cat” (<i>Countess</i>)	1:54
6	“This snow. This blasted snow” (<i>Mme. Loiseau</i>)	1:17
7	“Oh how I wish that I was in my house” (<i>Mme. Carré-Lamadon</i>)	2:38
8	“Who is it?” (<i>The wives, Carré-Lamadon, later the Count</i>)	1:28
9	“Nein! Dunt vant! Dunt care!” (<i>Loiseau, Mme. Loiseau</i>)	1:07
10	Scene 3: Wednesday, suppertime “Oh, look, how lovely” (<i>All</i>)	1:23
11	“You tell that bastard” (<i>Boule, later the others</i>)	1:05
12	“What’s all this about?” (<i>All</i>)	1:26
13	“Please, eat” (<i>Mme. Follenvie</i>)	1:32
14	Scene 4: Out in the village, Thursday morning “It’s so cold” (<i>The wives</i>)	0:46
15	“I have an enormous shipment” (<i>Loiseau, the Count, Carré-Lamadon</i>)	1:05
16	“Oh look! Isn’t that him?” (<i>The wives, later Mme. Carré-Lamadon alone</i>)	2:55

17	“Oh, Boule de Suif!” (<i>Coachman, Boule</i>)	1:56
18	“I hate this place” (<i>Coachman</i>)	1:13
19	Scene 5: The Inn, Friday morning “Going out?” (<i>Mme. Carré-Lamadon, Boule</i>)	1:52
20	“I have a child” (<i>Boule</i>)	2:07
21	“Let’s face it” (<i>Mme. Loiseau</i>)	2:10
22	“Let’s just tie her up” (<i>Loiseau, the Count</i>)	1:40
23	Scene 6: Friday, suppertime “Ah! Mme. Follenvie, we thank you” (<i>The Count</i>)	1:49
24	“Now see if you remember” (<i>The Count</i>)	2:12
25	“I know, I know!” (<i>The Countess, Count</i>)	1:26
26	“I’ve got one, and it’s a real corker!” (<i>Loiseau</i>)	5:02
27	“Well spoken, Loiseau” (<i>The Count, later Mme. Loiseau</i>)	0:53
28	“Listen to me!” (<i>Old Nun</i>)	3:12
29	“Oh but they were angels to my boys” (<i>Old Nun</i>)	1:38
30	“Yes, good sister” (<i>Count, Follenvie</i>)	0:27
31	“Child, you don’t know what to do, do you?” (<i>The Count, Boule</i>)	2:38
32	Scene 7: Saturday, suppertime “Have you seen her?” (<i>The wives and husbands, the Follenvies</i>)	1:17
33	“Is it a go?” (<i>The husbands, Follenvie, the wives</i>)	0:32
34	“I think everything’s gonna be just fine” (<i>Loiseau, the wives</i>)	1:24
35	“Good God! Forty minutes!” (<i>The nuns, Count, later Loiseau</i>)	1:15
36	“This is infamous!” (<i>Cornudet</i>)	0:51
37	“Good Lord! An hour twenty!” (<i>The husbands</i>)	1:06
38	Scene 8: Courtyard of the Inn, Saturday morning	0:45
39	“Good morning!” (<i>Husbands and wives</i>)	0:44
40	“Let’s go!” (<i>Coachman, Mme. Follenvie</i>)	1:09
41	“Good morning, madame” (<i>Boule, later Mme. Loiseau</i>)	0:49
42	[Setting off for Dieppe]	0:56
43	“Prime ... bonds” (<i>The Count, Carré-Lamadon, the nuns</i>)	0:47
44	“Ubi caritas” (<i>The nuns, M. & Mme. Loiseau</i>)	0:41
45	“Good heavens! One o’clock!” (<i>The Count, Loiseau, the wives</i>)	1:07
46	“Darling look!” (<i>The Carré-Lamadons, Mme. Loiseau, Cornudet</i>)	1:29

Stephen Hartke (b. 1952)

The Greater Good or The Passion of Boule de Suif

A commissioned opera: Glimmerglass Opera's first since the *Central Park* trilogy in 1999. The first opera by a highly acclaimed American composer. A world premiere based on an iconic short story by Maupassant—a work in itself of engrossing drama and character, and therefore surely full of operatic potential. “Commission,” “world premiere”—words to engender anxiety and anticipation, quickly followed by terror and exhilaration. Uncharted seas, perilous journeys, storms, sharks, treasure—clichés all, but perhaps still expressive. Endless questions, problems, delays, stumbling blocks, decisions, decisions reversed, decisions postponed...

Title: *Boule de Suif* (too hard to pronounce)? *Ball of Lard*? *Ball of Fat*? *Ball of Suet*? *Butterball*? (Well...no.) For a long time the opera was called *The Refugees* (too general? too bland?). Lists were created: *Escape from Rouen* (too specific)? *Through Enemy Lines*? Finally, it became *The Greater Good or The Passion of Boule de Suif*.

Casting: Lots of great character parts, some written for specific voices and specific types, since casting was being finalized while Stephen Hartke was at work on the piece. This diversity gave costume designer David Zinn a wonderful opportunity for a striking series of outfits—by turns elegant or, in the case of Boule, charmingly slutty—expressing a dramatic, modern take on nineteenth-century silhouette and detail. But how to deal (tactfully) with the physical demands of the title role? In the end, a brilliantly designed and constructed “fat suit” transformed glamorous Caroline Worra into the lusciously plump figure in Maupassant's story.

Instrumental and vocal forces, props and special effects: Some negotiation on instrumentation, and an early agreement on no chorus (words to strike joy into any production manager's budget-driven heart). How to deal with the request for the (now famous) “tuned” soup bowls in Act I...finding props not only appropriate for the period, but with specific pitch and timbre (and

indeed, subsequently, bemused Wal-Mart employees observed the composer checking out the Corelle® dinnerware with a pitch pipe). And the goose liver pâté, smoked tongue, pickled onions in Boule's crucial picnic basket...performers eating while they sing? Much to discuss. Snow...notations in the libretto and score seemed to call for snow (really a blizzard) falling throughout most of the first act. Two years prior, fifteen minutes of snowfall during *Fanciulla* produced white chaos backstage—the artificial stuff was everywhere. How would we control this?

Carriage and horses: Almost the whole first act takes place in the confines of a carriage. Stephen had first suggested that the carriage be evoked just by some piles of luggage acting as benches. In the end, director David Schweizer, set designer Mark Wendland, and lighting designer Christopher Akerlind came up with a handsome, flexible, and arresting image of a coach that rode proudly through the snowy landscape, turning this way or that, opening and closing to reveal (and sometimes conceal) the action within. A coachman perched up high and a group of dedicated and precise “groomsman” provided the horsepower.

Opening night (July 22, 2006): But first...a reading with Stephen at the piano, singing (eloquently) all the parts, music sent to singers, orchestra parts finished and copied, the cast assembled, first week of rehearsals, coachings, design presentations, costume fittings, lighting rehearsals, the exhilarating “sitz” where most of us heard the singers with the full orchestra for the first time, dress rehearsals.... The journey that Stephen and we at Glimmerglass had set out on was joined and completed by the audience (and in a sense, truly completed by the CD recording). Finally, a sense of accomplishment, and delight in the result.

**John Conklin, Glimmerglass Opera
Associate Artistic Director**

Director's Note

My unforgettable journey with *The Greater Good* began as it was being written, when I was enlisted by Stephen Hartke and Philip Littell to direct the world premiere at Glimmerglass. I was thrilled, but also curious. The Maupassant novella, *Boule de Suif*, would be tricky to dramatize musically, to say the least. Reflective, episodic, clinically critical of its many devious and complex characters, this was writing of intense, well...subtlety. Fearlessly, Philip lined out a stunning, delicate, and stark initial libretto. Next Stephen dug in and attacked his formidable task — musically to “characterize” this ensemble, often presented in complex groupings but with very distinct individual attitudes — to sculpt musical worlds for events like the turbulent expedition of the first act, almost entirely sung from within a stagecoach hurtling through a long winter’s night.

Close proximity and collaboration with a talent like Stephen’s as he grapples with his first full-length opera is its own startlingly illuminating experience — a window into the moment-to-moment hesitations, reasonings, resolutions and triumphs of a major artist in high-risk work mode nonstop for two years. Stephen is off-handedly brilliant. He would benefit from speaking about what he was doing and why he felt so strongly about this phrase or that instrument used there and not there. I will never forget first hearing him play the haunted whisper of the opera’s opening when the passengers first arrive and wait to board the coach. Then the horses are brought out, and voices join into the cacophony of shivering — the inspired musical essence of frozen loneliness. Or the joyous outburst of pleasure when Boule proffers her food on board the coach, and Stephen’s glorious paean to cheeses and pâté and bottles of wine, at once deeply ironic and totally sincere, came pouring out of him as he warbled the music to me at his keyboard in Glendale, California.

Then, suddenly, I was actually staging the same sequence with a group of extraordinarily gifted and

resourceful singers. I had blinked and it had become the summer, and the piece had become opera theater. Somehow, with designers Mark Wendland, Christopher Akerlind, and David Zinn, a gorgeous dreamscape came to life that actually allowed almost an entire act to be sung from inside a stagecoach. Later, the prickly, spoiled characters in our story would struggle with both the actual and existential conditions of their captivity while inhabiting a virtually bare stage, without the confinement of walls, but with the luminously expressive sense of locale and moment that inspired designers can conjure.

Stephen took enormous pleasure in the daily rehearsal victories that a really gifted cast can have over even the terror of brand-new operatic material. And the momentum of our discoveries seemed always to contain the memory of those days and months when this composer first found his way. The same opera that welcomes chuckles at its greedy passengers on their coach ride, builds to a shattering climax as the squeaking bedsprings that signal Boule’s humiliation give way to another final coach ride in which she is shunned and sits quietly weeping. Our coach would open like a giant insect, and the entire cast would sit arrayed in judgment behind Caroline Worra, heart-stopping as Boule. Ms. Worra is a performer whose courage and talent are a gift to new work, but the cast lined up behind her were all superb, as you can hear on this recording, alive in every moment, acute, vivid, precarious in the complexity of their feelings.

I could confess that there were indeed daunting challenges in staging this piece, but they actually melted away in the face of this sublime level of musical storytelling. Choices became inevitable, and right, because they served a true vision, a unique and riveting story told — really TOLD—musically. How proud I am to have served here.

David Schweizer

Conductor's Note

My first contact with Stephen Hartke's music was the discovery some years ago of his fresh, bracing orchestral work, *Pacific Rim*. Since then I nurtured the notion that here was a composer who was equipped in both technique and imagination to make an original contribution to the operatic repertory. *The Greater Good* not only fulfilled those expectations, but far exceeded them in its sure-footed dramatic pacing, and its rich and varied character portrayals.

Hartke's use of the orchestra to paint pictures is extraordinary. High isolated violin lines and fragmentary "shivers" in divisi violas and cellos vividly depict the cold, desolate setting at the outset of the opera. His invention of an instrument that he calls the bowl tree (plastic mixing bowls loosely slung to a pole) which, when gently shaken, reproduces exactly the effect of horses' hooves, is an example of his aural imagination. Toward the end of the opera the strings are instructed to play regular rhythmic patterns on the "wrong side of the bridge" of their instruments. These rhythms gradually increase in speed and vigor, leaving us in no doubt as to the nature of the German officer's amatory adventures with Boule de Suif on an old bed in an adjoining room.

The composer astutely employs different techniques and subtle references to a variety of musical styles to portray his characters in a variety of moods and situations. The travelers in the coach, who at the outset are cold and know each other only slightly, indulge in fragmentary snatches of conversation. The ladies' discomfort is amusingly represented by a stammering trio, and the general talk is mirrored in a sort of musical pointillism. Boule de Suif, when first we hear her, shows herself to be generous, seemingly straightforward and keen to share the food she has brought with her, all of which is represented with near-minimalist simplicity in which the composer perhaps betrays some of his Californian heritage. However, when Boule describes her previous encounters with the German army, her music takes an angularity and harmonic complexity

hitherto unguessed at. Similarly in Act II, when she describes her annual visit to her child, we see her ambivalent feelings echoed in the soft harp arpeggios and the strange unresolved harmonies in the strings.

Musical characterization extends even to the coach, with its dark, lurching, stuck-in-the-mud music. All the characters have their own musical personalities. From time to time they combine into smaller groups. The ladies' trio at the outset is amusingly reminiscent of popular ladies' trios of the 1940s and 1950s, while the three gentlemen sing together briefly in a more terse style that is all about business interests. Food, however, is the one unifying theme and the sight, sound, and smell of food provides the opportunity for several moments of lyrical ensemble singing of great beauty.

The innkeeper's wife, Madame Follenvie, while serving soup to her guests, sings an aria accompanied by a bizarre gamelan type of music provided by the clanging of tuned soup bowls. Her husband, who is chronically short of breath, has truncated lines punctuated by an orchestral "wheezing" of string harmonic arpeggios. The Old Nun, however, makes the most dramatic and unexpected contribution in the form of an aria that combines all the vocal pyrotechnics of a Zerbinetta and Queen of the Night rolled into one.

Stewart Robertson

Synopsis

CD 1

Act One

The story is set during the immediate aftermath of the Prussian victory in the Franco-Prussian War. [1] At 4 a.m. on a snowy Tuesday in late February 1871, a group of travelers assembles in the courtyard of the Hôtel de Normandie in Rouen, all eager to board a coach bound for Dieppe, where most hope to find passage to England in order to escape the German occupation with their fortunes intact. With the exception of two nuns and a

rather shabby political agitator named Cornudet, the party is quite well-off: the Count and Countess Bréville, M. Carré-Lamadon (a cotton manufacturer) and his wife, and M. Loiseau (a wine merchant) and his wife. **2** At first, conversation is sparse, owing in part to the surprise of encountering one another, as well as to the bitter cold. **3** The Coachman comes out, leading a horse, and with barely suppressed irritation sets about hitching up his team. **4** The three wealthy gents take the opportunity to break out cigars, lament the fall of France and **5** gossip about the occupying Germans. **6** The Coachman finishes his preparations and calls for the travelers to board the coach. **7** At this moment, one final traveler, a pretty, plump young woman, loaded down with a large hamper, rushes to get aboard after everyone else.

8 The great lumbering coach sets off, rumbling and skidding over ruts and icy puddles. The Coachman sings a little song to himself: **9** “There was a boat / That could not sail.” The passengers having settled in, **10** the ladies coo over their new portable hand-warmers, the nuns start in on their rosary, but shortly everyone is napping in the darkness. **11** As dawn comes, the face of the plump young woman is lit by the first light of the sun. In agitation, Mme. Carré-Lamadon wakes her husband, who recognizes the woman as “Boule de Suif,” a well-known prostitute, celebrated both for her beauty and her ample girth. The others wake and are scandalized to find themselves in her company. But Boule suddenly turns to stare them down, and they all back off to take up other topics of conversation. **12** The ladies natter on about their mutual acquaintances, then **13** the gents discuss the financial gain to be made in wartime, and lastly, Cornudet sings to himself of the revolution he hopes will come.

14 It is now 10 a.m.; the gents check their watches. Loiseau complains to his wife that they should have brought something to eat. He is starving! **15** Addressing the others, he jokes about being the Big Bad Wolf who would track down his Little Red Riding Hood – Boule

de Suif – “She looks so good! Awhooo!” But the joke falls flat. **16** The day goes on. Everyone grows hungrier. **17** At 3 p.m., Boule slides out the hamper she has stowed under her skirts. Completely aghast, the others watch and comment as she takes out one tasty item of food after another. Their wonder turns to anger and frustration, until Loiseau pushes himself forward **18** to break the ice. Very sweetly, Boule offers to share some of her food with him, then starts passing tidbits to the nuns and Cornudet, while the refined ladies glare at her. But Mme. Carré-Lamadon suddenly faints from hunger, **19** prompting Boule to ask that she be allowed to share with all the rest of them. **20** With a sigh of relief, the whole group sings in praise of the pâté and pears, the cheese and **21** the pickles. **22** In the glow of fellowship brought on by the food, the ladies beg Boule to tell what happened to her during the war. **23** Boule hesitates at first, but growing increasingly agitated **24** she tells how she nearly killed a Prussian officer who had been billeted on her home, and so **25** she was forced to flee Rouen. The others are very impressed both by her bravery and her patriotism. **26** But Cornudet challenges their royalist sentiments only to be shouted down by Boule: “Long live the Emperor Napoleon!” A silence falls. **27** It is growing colder and darker. **28** The Coachman sings to himself while his passengers lament that the food is all gone now. The coach rolls on.

29 Suddenly, Boule and the ladies spot the lights of the village of Tôtes. Soon they come to a halt in the courtyard of an inn. **30** A young Prussian officer appears and brusquely orders them out of the coach, taking away their travel documents. **31** Mme. Follenvie, the innkeeper, and her asthmatic husband call for them to come into the warmth of the inn’s kitchen. Once inside, **32** drinks are served, dinner preparations are under way, **33** and things seem to be looking up. **34** But the Prussian officer returns to summon Boule to meet with his Kommandant. Defiantly, Boule refuses, prompting the Count to step in and persuade her to go, for the good of all. **35** The others sit down to dinner, where, to the accompaniment of spoons hitting soup plates, Mme.

Follenvie regales them **36** with her observations on the war and living under occupation. **37** Boule storms back into the room, clearly upset. The ladies ask what the matter is, but she just sits down and starts eating her soup with a vengeance. Mme. Follenvie finishes her monologue, musing on the unfairness of war. **38** Cornudet offers a word about the moral necessity of self-defense, but Mme. Follenvie concludes: "If anybody's going to die, shouldn't it be all these kings who amuse themselves starting these things?" To cover the ensuing embarrassment, the Count feigns a yawn and soon the whole party decides to retire.

39 Now alone in their room, preparing for bed, the Loiseaus laugh about their companions. He tucks his wife in, and then, hearing a noise in the corridor, **40** he crouches down to peek through the keyhole. **41** He sees Cornudet accosting Boule, wanting her to come back to his room. Boule repulses him, insisting that it would not be right because of all the Prussians in the house. Sensing that there is more to this explanation than she is letting on, Cornudet gives up and goes away. **42** Loiseau finds this all very titillating. He gets in bed and wakes his wife with a kiss, asking, "Do you love me?"

CD 2

Act Two

1 The following morning is bright and sunny. With great excitement, the entire party of travelers gathers in the courtyard, ready to get underway. **2** They quickly see that the horses haven't been hitched. When the Coachman strolls sleepily in, they rush at him. **3** He explains that he had orders not to prepare the coach, adding, "Ask the Kommandant. He gives the orders around here, seems to me." **4** The gents then beset Follenvie, who leads them off to meet with him.

5 It is now later that afternoon. The three ladies are each in their respective rooms, waiting for their husbands to return, and yield in turn to their reveries: the Countess misses her cat, **6** Mme. Loiseau complains of

the snow, and **7** Mme. Carré-Lamadon dreams of being home again. **8** The men return in a state of dejection: the Kommandant won't let the travelers go and won't explain why. **9** Loiseau tells his wife of the meeting, mocking the Kommandant's German accent. **10** Their gloom is dispelled briefly by Follenvie calling them all to dinner, but once they gather at the table, Follenvie asks Boule if she "has changed her mind." **11** Her anger mounting, Boule hisses at him, "You tell that Prussian son-of-a-bitch that I never will!" The others are completely puzzled by this and beg Boule to explain. **12** Finally, she unburdens herself: "I'll tell you what he wants. He wants to sleep with me." The others respond with sympathy and indignation over Boule's predicament.

13 The next day, Thursday, the three ladies and their husbands go for a walk around the village. **14** It is bitterly cold, and the ladies are miserable. **15** The gents are anxious about the business affairs they are being forced to neglect. Just then the ladies spot the Kommandant a distance away. **16** They find themselves quite impressed by his good looks, leading Mme. Carré-Lamadon to muse to herself: "If I had to, I would do it." The couples go back inside as Boule enters the inn's courtyard. **17** The Coachman calls to her from his perch atop the coach. She goes to sit with him for a moment, sharing his flask. **18** "I hate this place," he laments.

19 Friday morning finds the three married couples gathered in the kitchen, gloomily playing cards. Outside, a church bell rings. Boule comes in, dressed to go out. She explains that she's going to the church to see a baptism, even though she doesn't know the family. Coaxed by Mme. Carré-Lamadon, **20** Boule tells her about the child she has had to give into foster care. Once she leaves the room, **21** Mme. Loiseau completely loses her temper: "Who the hell does she think she is? Isn't it her job to be a whore?" **22** Loiseau suggests that they "just tie her up and hand her over," but the Count intervenes: "No. She must be persuaded." A plot is hatched.

23 After dinner that evening, the Count proposes a round of games and stories. One by one, stories are offered, underscoring a single moral: women must sacrifice themselves for the greater good. First, 24 the Count gives a twisted version of the Biblical tale of Judith and Holofernes. Then the Countess tries to tell the story of 25 the rape of Lucrece, but is too flustered to get through it properly. Loiseau seizes the floor with a completely fabricated episode 26 in which Hannibal's army is slaughtered by the Romans after their wives have seduced all the Carthaginian's men. 27 The Count and the other plotters applaud, when suddenly the Old Nun leaps angrily to her feet. 28 "Listen to me!" She preaches a sermon on duty, calling on her experience as a nurse in wartime. 29 She sings the praises of the camp-followers, saying, "I did what I could, but those women did *real* good. They were angels to my boys!" 30 All are stunned into silence by this outburst. Follenvie approaches Boule again with the Kommandant's demand, but Boule bolts from the room and out into the cold night. 31 The Count follows on Boule's heels, chasing after her in the shadows. He makes one last appeal to her vanity: "Just think, when that German boy gets home he'll be able to say, 'I had the prettiest woman in France!'"

32 Saturday evening's meal finds everyone gathered together again, with the notable exception of Boule. Follenvie says that she is "indisposed." 33 In a flash, all realize that their deliverance may be at hand. Loiseau, calling for champagne, suddenly stops himself and

points to the ceiling from which the sound of creaking bedsprings can now be heard. 34 "I think everything is gonna be just fine," he says. The others try to carry on with their dinner in an attempt to cover their embarrassment. As the squeaking grows louder, the nuns start telling their rosary. 35 Forty minutes pass. Loiseau grabs his wife and waltzes her around the room in time to the bedsprings. He taunts Cornudet, who turns on the group, 36 angrily denouncing them all – "Appalling! Shameful! Infamous!" – before storming out. 37 The others laugh him off, while the gents offer admiring comments about the Kommandant's evident staying power. Another forty minutes has passed and the party breaks up.

38 Early the next morning, the coach is ready to go at last. 39 The couples come out, gaily greeting each other. 40 Impatiently, the Coachman tries to hustle everyone aboard. Mme. Follenvie comes out to distribute food packets for the trip. 41 By the time a bedraggled Boule appears, the packets are all gone. She says good morning to the others, only to have them all turn their backs on her. 42 All are aboard now. The coach departs. 43 The nuns chant a hymn; the men discuss money; 44 the Loiseaus play cards. 45 Soon it's time to eat and out come the packets, but no one offers anything to Boule. Tears roll down her cheeks as they ignore her. 46 "See that? She's crying 'cause she's ashamed of herself," says Mme. Loiseau. Cornudet taunts them with a few whistled bars of the *Marseillaise*. The light fades.

Stephen Hartke



Stephen Hartke has emerged as one of the leading American composers of his generation, whose work has been hailed for both its singularity of voice and the inclusive breadth of its inspiration. Born in Orange, New Jersey, in 1952, he grew up in Manhattan, where he began his musical career as a professional boy chorister, performing with such organizations as the New York Pro Musica, the New York Philharmonic, the American Symphony Orchestra, and even two seasons as an understudy at the Metropolitan Opera. Following studies at Yale, the University of Pennsylvania, and the University of California at Santa Barbara, interrupted by stints as advertising manager for several major music publishers, he settled in the Los Angeles area, where he is now Distinguished Professor of Composition at the Thornton School of Music at the University of Southern California.

Stephen Hartke's output is extremely varied, from the medieval-inspired piano quartet, *The King of the Sun*, and *Wulfstan at the Millenium*, an abstract liturgy for ten instruments, to the blues-inflected violin duo, *Oh Them Rats Is Mean in My Kitchen*, and the surreal trio, *The Horse with the Lavender Eye*. He has composed concerti for renowned clarinetist Richard Stoltzman, and violinist Michelle Makarski, and his collaboration with the internationally celebrated Hilliard Ensemble has produced three substantial works, including his *Symphony No. 3*, commissioned by the New York Philharmonic. Other major commissions have come from the National Symphony Orchestra, the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Koussevitzky Music Foundation, the Barlow Foundation, and many others. He is also the winner of the Rome Prize, the Berlin Prize, and the prestigious Charles Ives Living, awarded by the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Most of his music is available on CD on Naxos American Classics, CRI, ECM New Series, EMI Classics, and New World Records.

The composition of *The Greater Good or The Passion of Boule de Suif* was made possible through funding from the Hanson Institute for American Music of the Eastman School of Music, Meet the Composer, OPERA America, and Glimmerglass Opera. Funding for the recording of *The Greater Good or The Passion of Boule de Suif* was provided by the International Music and Art Foundation and the Aaron Copland Fund for Music.

Stewart Robertson



Stewart Robertson is the Music Director and Principal Conductor of Florida Grand Opera, Music Director of the Atlantic Classical Orchestra, Artistic Director of Opera Omaha, and Music Director Emeritus of Glimmerglass Opera. He has directed such orchestras as the Netherlands Symphony Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Buenos Aires Philharmonic, Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de México, the North German Philharmonic, the Utah Symphony, and the Louisville Orchestra. Opera companies include New York City Opera, Opera Company of Philadelphia, the opera companies of Detroit and Montreal, the Deutsche Oper am Rhein, Düsseldorf, the Norwegian National Opera, and the Puccini Festival in Torre del Lago. He has conducted many world premieres, notably *Orpheus Descending* by Bruce Saylor at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, *The Midnight Angel* by David Carlson at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, the *Central Park* trilogy by Deborah Drattell, Michael Torke, and Robert Beaser at Glimmerglass Opera, *Federico II* by Marco Tutino at the Jesi Opera Festival in Italy, *Wakonda's Dream* by Anthony Davis at Opera Omaha and, recently, David Carlson's *Anna Karenina* at Florida Grand Opera and Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. He has recorded Sir Richard Rodney Bennett's *The Mines of Sulphur* for Chandos, and the music of Alan Hovhaness with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra for Naxos. A graduate of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music, he studied the piano in London with Denis Matthews, and conducting with Otmar Suitner at the Salzburg Mozarteum and with Hans Swarowsky in Vienna.

Caroline Worra



Soprano Caroline Worra made her European debut at Teatro Massimo Bellini in Catania, Sicily, singing the role of Anne Trulove in *The Rake's Progress*. An alumna of Glimmerglass Opera's Young American Artists program, she has performed the roles of Eurydice in Philip Glass' *Orphée*, Mrs. Mueller, Katy Wendler and Madam Kakonyi in Robert Kurka's *The Good Soldier Schweik*, as well as Jenny in Sir Richard Rodney Bennett's *The Mines of Sulphur* at Glimmerglass Opera. With New York City Opera, she has performed a variety of roles, including Amy in *Little Women*, the Dew Fairy in *Hansel and Gretel*, and Handel's *Agrippina*. Additionally, she has appeared as Curley's Wife in Carlisle Floyd's *Of Mice and Men* with Lyric City Opera of Kansas City, Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* with Connecticut Grand Opera, Just Jeanette in the world premiere of Edwin Penhorwood's *Too Many Sopranos*, and in the title roles of *The Merry Widow* with Opera Memphis and *Semele* with Long beach Opera.

John David De Haan

In the past two decades John David De Haan has sung lyric and heroic tenor roles in leading opera companies throughout North America and Europe. He can be heard on the Decca, Sony, and Naxos record labels and continues to perform extensively in operas, concerts, and recitals. He recently sang the role of Caliban in Lee Hoiby's *The Tempest* and is to be heard on a recording with Dave Brubeck. Having expanded his activities to teaching in 1995, he is on the faculty of the University of Minnesota's School of Music in Minneapolis.



Christine Abraham



Mezzo-soprano Christine Abraham's performances include the title role in David Carlson's *The Midnight Angel* with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Glimmerglass Opera, and Sacramento Opera, Dolly in the world premiere of David Carlson's *Anna Karenina* with Florida Grand Opera and Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Ida in *Die Fledermaus* at the Metropolitan Opera, Sesto in *Giulio Cesare* with Utah Opera, Maffio Orsini in *Lucrezia Borgia* with Opera Boston, Isabella in *L'Italiana in Algeri* with Arizona Opera, Stéphanie in *Roméo et Juliette* with the Spoleto Festival USA, the title role in *La Cenerentola* with Santa Barbara Grand Opera, and Minerva in *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* with Boston Baroque.

Andrew Wentzel



Bass-baritone Andrew Wentzel has appeared in numerous productions at the Metropolitan Opera, including *Roméo et Juliette*, *Billy Budd*, *Rigoletto*, *La fanciulla del West*, *Turandot*, *Manon*, and *Les contes d'Hoffmann*. Other credits include Figaro in *Le nozze di Figaro* with New York City Opera and San Diego Opera, Mr. Flint in *Billy Budd* with Houston Grand Opera, Collatinus in *The Rape of Lucretia* with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* with Glimmerglass Opera, Don Basilio in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* with Boston Lyric Opera, Alidoro in *La Cenerentola* with Knoxville Opera, and Olin Blitch in *Susannah* with Opera Columbus, Nashville Opera, and Indiana Opera.

Matthew Worth



Baritone Matthew Worth's performances include Tarquinius in *The Rape of Lucretia* under Lorin Maazel, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* at Tanglewood under James Levine, his debut at Chicago Opera Theater as Claudio in *Béatrice et Bénédict*, and Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte* with Lyric Opera of Kansas City. Other highlights include Shrike in the world premiere of Liebermann's *Miss Lonelyhearts*, Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, L'Horloge Comtoise in *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*, and Siméon in *L'Enfant prodigue* for Juilliard Opera Center, as well as his Carnegie Hall debut as soloist in Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem*, soloist in *Carmina Burana* at Alice Tully Hall, and Harlequin in *Ariadne auf Naxos*.

Jeanine Thames



Soprano Jeanine Thames recently appeared in New York City, singing the role of Miss Wordsworth in *Albert Herring* with the Gotham Chamber Opera. During the same season she sang the title role in *La traviata* with Ontario Opera and performed the role of the Old Nun in Glimmerglass Opera's world premiere of Stephen Hartke's *The Greater Good*. Her concert engagements include Vaughan Williams's *Sea Symphony* with the Norwalk Symphony, Haydn's *Creation* with the Xalapa Symphony in Mexico, a concert of Mozart arias with the Acadiana Symphony, and Orff's *Carmina Burana* with the Monterey Symphony. She has also toured to Tokyo and Osaka with the Prague State Opera, where she was heard as Queen of the Night in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*.

Dorothy Byrne



Mezzo-soprano Dorothy Byrne has appeared with Lyric Opera of Chicago as Mrs. MacLean in *Susannah*, Mrs. Olsen in *Street Scene*, and Gertrude in *Roméo et Juliette*. She has performed with Houston Grand Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, Minnesota Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, Hawaii Opera Theater, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, and Chicago Opera Theater in such roles as Larina in *Eugene Onegin*, Gertrude in *Hamlet*, Venus in *Arianna*, Cecilia March in *Little Women*, Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus*, Katisha in *The Mikado*, Ma Moss in *The Tender Land*, and Zita in *Gianni Schicchi*. Her Broadway credits include *Parade* and *The Phantom of the Opera*.

Jill Gardner



Soprano Jill Gardner's performances include Musetta in *La Boheme* with Florida Grand Opera, Eurydice in *Orpheus in the Underworld* with Glimmerglass Opera, Hanna Glawari in *The Merry Widow* with Syracuse Opera, Mimì in *La Boheme* with the Piedmont Opera Theatre, Cio-Cio San in *Madama Butterfly*, Violetta in *La traviata*, and the Countess in *Le nozze di Figaro*. Her concert performances include Handel's *Messiah* with the Syracuse Symphony Orchestra, Vaughan Williams's *Hodie* with the Susquehanna Valley Chorale, Verdi's *Requiem* with the Hamilton College and Community Chorale, and Mozart's *Mass in c minor*, as well as Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with the Binghamton Philharmonic Orchestra.

Elaine Alvarez



Cuban-American soprano Elaine Alvarez made her European opera debut singing the roles of Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* and Mimi in *La Boheme* for Oper Leipzig in the 2006-2007 season. She has also traveled with Oper Leipzig to Hong Kong for a series of performances of Mozart's *Mass in c minor* and will return to Leipzig for performances as Mimi in *La Boheme*, Corinna in *Il viaggio a Reims*, and Violetta in *La traviata*. During the 2006 summer season she was seen as Countess Bréville in the world premiere of Stephen Hartke's *The Greater Good* and as Barena in Jonathan Miller's production of *Jenůfa* at Glimmerglass Opera. She was a finalist in Plácido Domingo's Operalia 2006 competition held in Valencia, Spain.

Christopher Burchett



Baritone Christopher Burchett has performed with Glimmerglass Opera in *Jenůfa*, *Patience*, and *The Good Soldier Schweik*. Other notable credits include Belcore in *L'elisir d'amore* and Masetto in *Don Giovanni*. He has performed with Cedar Rapids Opera Theatre, the Estates National Theatre in Prague, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, the Opera Orchestra of New York, Opera Omaha, and New York City Opera. A Metropolitan Opera Regional Finalist, his concert experience includes engagements with the Boulder Bach Festival, the New Hampshire Music Festival, the Bethlehem Bach Festival, and the Carmel Bach Festival.

Seth Keeton



In addition to singing the role of Cornudet in the world premiere of Stephen Hartke's *The Greater Good*, bass-baritone Seth Keeton has appeared with Glimmerglass Opera in *Jenůfa*, *Death in Venice*, and *Lucie de Lammermoor*. Other opera credits include Colline in *La Boheme*, Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, Pistola in *Falstaff*, and Crespel and Luther in *Les contes d'Hoffmann*. As a member of Minnesota Opera's Resident Artist Program, he was seen on the mainstage in *Tosca*, *Don Giovanni*, *Joseph Merrick: the Elephant Man*, *Rigoletto*, *Lucrezia Borgia*, *Passion*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Maria Padilla*, and *Carmen*.

Liam Moran



Bass Liam Moran has performed with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Glimmerglass Opera, San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Center, Florida Grand Opera, and Opera Omaha and will soon make his debuts at Wolf Trap and Pittsburgh Opera. He has performed several new works and premieres, including pieces by Bennett, Penderecki, Weisgall, Baksa, Hartke, and Carlson. A native of Brookline, Massachusetts, he studied at McGill University's Schulich School of Music and the Yale School of Music.

Christian Reinert



Tenor Christian Reinert began his career with Minnesota Opera's Resident Artist Program. After being named a winner in Palm Beach Opera's Vocal Competition, he joined Baltimore Opera's young artist program. His roles include Rodolfo in *La Boheme*, Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, Števa in *Jenůfa*, Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*, Lysander in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and the title roles in *Faust* and *Roméo et Juliette*. He has performed with Baltimore Opera and Palm Beach Opera, as well as in Europe.

Katherine Calcamuggio



Mezzo-soprano Katherine Calcamuggio has performed roles with Florida Grand Opera, Chicago Opera Theater, Glimmerglass Opera, OperaModa, Springfield Regional Opera, Aspen Music Festival, and the Brevard Music Festival. A prize winner with Palm Beach Opera and the Bel Canto competitions and a grand-prize winner of the Anna Sosenko Trust, she also performs a great deal of recital and oratorio work. An Ohio native, she received a Bachelor of Music from Bowling Green State University and a Master of Music from Northwestern University.

Glimmerglass Opera

Established in 1975, Glimmerglass Opera was founded through the efforts of residents of Cooperstown, New York, musicians, artists, and lovers of the art form, to bring opera to their community. Its first season brought four staged performances of Puccini's *La Boheme* to a local audience of 1,200 at Cooperstown High School. The company has since grown to international stature and now offers more than 40 performances of four operas in repertory during its eight-week season, attracting audiences of nearly 40,000 from around the world. The company's Alice Busch Opera Theater opened in 1987 and is located along the shores of Otsego Lake, the "Glimmerglass" of James Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales*. Glimmerglass Opera established its acclaimed Young American Artists Program in 1988, giving young American singers the opportunity to work with some of the finest conductors, directors and coaches in the country. The company has attracted directors and designers of the highest international reputation, and its productions have been seen at numerous other companies, including New York City Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Cincinnati Opera and Houston Grand Opera.



From left to right: Jill Gardner as Mme. Loiseau,
Christine Abraham as Mme. Carré-Lamadon
and Elaine Alvarez as Countess Bréville



Caroline Worra as Boule de Suif



Matthew Worth as the Coachman



From left to right: John David De Haan as Loiseau,
Caroline Worra as Boule de Suif, Jill Gardner as Mme. Loiseau,
Liam Moran as Follenvie and Seth Keeton as Cornudet



The cast of *The Greater Good* or *The Passion of Boule de Suif*

**All photographs:
George Mott/
Glimmerglass Opera**

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AMERICAN OPERA CLASSICS

Stephen Hartke's *The Greater Good* was commissioned by Glimmerglass Opera, and is a strikingly original contribution to the operatic repertory. Based on an iconic short story by Maupassant set during the immediate aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War, *The Greater Good* is notable for its sure-footed dramatic pacing and astute use of different techniques and subtle references to a variety of musical styles in order to portray the characters in a variety of moods and situations. This is the opera's world premiere recording.

The composition of *The Greater Good* or *The Passion of Boule de Suif* was made possible through funding from the Hanson Institute for American Music of the Eastman School of Music, Meet the Composer, OPERA America, and Glimmerglass Opera. Funding for the recording of *The Greater Good* or *The Passion of Boule de Suif* was provided by the International Music and Art Foundation and the Aaron Copland Fund for Music.

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Stephen
HARTKE

(b. 1952)

The Greater Good

Opera in Two Acts

Text by the composer from Philip Littell's dramatic adaptation of Guy de Maupassant's short story, *Boule de Suif*

- Elisabeth Rousset, also known as *Boule de Suif*** Caroline Worra
M. Loiseau John David De Haan
Mme. Carré-Lamadon Christine Abraham
Count Bréville Andrew Wentzel
Coachman Matthew Worth
The Old Nun Jeanine Thames
Mme. Follenvie Dorothy Byrne
Mme. Loiseau Jill Gardner
Countess Bréville Elaine Alvarez
M. Carré-Lamadon Christopher Burchett

Glimmerglass Opera Orchestra
Stewart Robertson

CD 1 74:05 **CD 2** 68:26
1-42 Act One **1-46 Act Two**

A full track and cast list can be found on pages 2 to 4 of the booklet.

The English libretto can be found at www.naxos.com/libretti/669014.htm.



Recorded at Alice Busch Opera Theater, Cooperstown, New York, USA, on 30th July and 3rd, 12th and 15th August, 2006
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 Recording Engineers: Mark Donahue and John Newton
 Mastering Engineer: Mark Donahue

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2:22:31

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