

good to shed additional light on its composer, Francesco Cilea. Accordingly, it presented *Gloria*—seen first at La Scala in 1907 conducted by Toscanini and later in a revised version (performed here) in Naples in 1932—at the GERALD W. LYNCH THEATER at John Jay College on September 29. The short, three-act opera with a libretto by Arturo Colautti tells of the ill-fated love between Gloria and Lionetto, who played together as children but are caught in opposite warring factions in 13th-century Sienna. The opera has the kind of finely wrought lyricism, with modulatory inflections, familiar from *Adriana* and one or two slightly austere minor-key episodes that recall Federico’s Lament from *L’Arlesiana*. The performance was not one of Teatro Grattacielo’s better efforts, in large part, presumably, because the scheduled Lionetto cancelled. Wesley Morgan, the replacement, has a small voice, lacking Italianate attributes, but his consistent, reasonably accurate singing allowed the show to go on. Nor was Kerri Marcinko ideal as Gloria. Her voice sounded squally at first, but she got better and sang with arresting involvement in her two big duets in Act 2, first with Gloria’s brother Bardo, who talks Gloria into poisoning Lionetto, and then with Lionetto himself, at the end of which she admits she loves him even though he kidnapped her. John Robert Green did well as Bardo, and Mikhail Svetlov sang powerfully as Gloria’s father Acquilante. Israel Gursky, Teatro Grattacielo’s music director, was the reliable conductor.

GEORGE LOOMIS

## Philadelphia

OPERA PHILADELPHIA’S inaugural festival last year, named O17, was such a success that plans were immediately made for O18. As adventurous and ambitious as last year’s event, O18 may not have quite reached all the goals it set out to achieve, yet it delivered the same galvanizing citywide cultural force. Under the visionary guidance of Opera Philadelphia’s general director David Devan, this has instantly become a must-attend festival that feeds off and contributes to Philadelphia’s abundant creative life.

Its emphasis is mostly on groundbreaking new works, along with just a dash of the traditional. The latter was represented by a new production of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, directed by Laurent Pelly and presented at the venerable ACADEMY OF MUSIC. A co-production with the Vienna Staatsoper, this staging couldn’t really decide whether it was taking place in the real world or in Lucia’s troubled mind. Pelly’s idea was to have Lucia well on her way to bonkers from the moment of her first entrance—she came on twitching and writhing and didn’t stop for the rest of the evening. The concept left her nowhere to develop dramatically. On September 21 Brenda Rae

■ *Marietta Simpson as Martha and Frederica von Stade as Danny in ‘Sky on Swings’ at O18*

