



THE CONSULATE GENERAL OF ITALY  
NEW YORK

New York, October 31, 2011

Prot. 19546

Robert Dodson  
Director, School of Music  
College of Fine Arts  
Boston University  
855 Commonwealth Avenue  
Boston, MA 02215

Dear Mr Dodson,

I am writing to acknowledge the enormous and valuable contributions made by Deborah Burton to the celebratory events of last December for the centenary of Puccini's opera *La fanciulla del West* at the Italian Consulate and the Italian Cultural Institute in New York. In November 2009 Dr. Burton, along with Walfredo Toscanini, first approached the Consul General of Italy in New York, Francesco Maria Talò (who is no longer serving in New York), with ideas for celebrating this event so vital to the interests of Italy and the United States; she worked directly with me on this project during the following years.

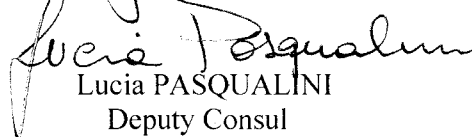
Dr. Burton collaborated with members of the Italian Cultural Institute, including its director Riccardo Viale, and myself to arrange a round table, exhibition and reception entitled *La Fanciulla del West: a Century of Puccini's Girl of the Golden West*. This event, which filled our hall to capacity, took place on December 3, 2010, and, moderated by Dr. Burton in both English and Italian, included stars of the Metropolitan Opera (tenor Marcello Giordani, and conductor Nicola Luisotti), Puccini scholars (Dr. Burton, Harvey Sachs and Prof. Allan Atlas of the CUNY Graduate Center, and descendants of the opera's creators, Simonetta Puccini and Walfredo Toscanini. In attendance were also Met baritone Lucio Gallo, the Met Assistant Manager, Sarah Billinghamurst and the Met stage director, Giancarlo Del Monaco. This event was also the official launch of Dr. Burton's website, [www.fanciulla100.org](http://www.fanciulla100.org), an invaluable resource for scholars and opera lovers alike.

*La Fanciulla del West: a Century of Puccini's Girl of the Golden West* received wonderful press coverage, some of which you can read at the following sites:

- <http://www.i-italy.org/16267/puccini-s-100-year-old-girl>
- <http://www.americasoggi.info/2010/12/05/21906-lirica-la-fanciulla-del-west-compie-cento-anni-tavola-rotonda-allistituto-di-cultur>

We are very grateful to Dr. Burton for her energetic, enthusiastic and successful work with us. We very much hope to have the opportunity to collaborate with her again in the future.

with my best regards,

  
Lucia PASQUALINI  
Deputy Consul