

Ethan Frome



Ethan Frome

an

Opera in Three Acts

by

William Kloster

with an

Original Libretto based

On the Novel by Edith Wharton

November 3, 4, 1973

8:15 p.m.

Ottawa Memorial Auditorium

Presented by Ottawa University

with The Ottawa Little Symphony

and The Kansas City Philharmonic Association

Statement by the Composer

I wrote the music. This is only an opera of shadows. To make these shadows come to life you must first add the directing genius of Steven Biddle who, little by little, gave the singers depth, dimension and insight into their roles. Of course, you must first have the singers; those rare people gifted by God (and hard work) to lift verbal communication to the ultimate height of song. Place all of this in a setting by Joe Hutchinson whose talents as a sculptor are so in evidence in the wonderful use of space in the sets and you finally have a flesh and blood opera. One cannot forget also the dozens of people who made and collected costumes (thank you, Lona) and props (thank you, Teri) and performed those endless and varied tasks necessary for production. (Thank all of you).

Most of us are destined to dream alone. I've been fortunate enough to be surrounded by those who were not only capable of dreaming with me but by those who were able to add new dimensions and insights to those dreams. We hope the result will be an evening of insight and pleasure for you in this not so perfect world.

William G. Foster

Synopsis

Act I, scene one: A New England Village. A dance is concluding. Ethan Frome outside waits to escort home Mattie Silver, his wife's niece. Mattie, who has been living with Ethan and Zenobia (Zeena) for some time now, tells Ethan that she feels unwanted in the Frome household. Ethan assures her that she will always be welcome to stay with them.

Scene two: Frome farmhouse. Mattie and Ethan arrive home. They are greeted by Zeena, who tells them of her declining health and her plans to visit a new doctor in Bettsbridge. As the act closes, the three principals renew their themes: Zeena worries about her health, Mattie about her discomfort with Zeena, and Ethan assures himself that Mattie's stay in the household is permanent.

--Intermission--

Act II, scene one: Frome farmhouse, early evening. Zeena has gone to Bettsbridge. During supper, the cat breaks a very special glass dish belonging to Zeena, and Ethan promises Mattie to have it repaired before his wife returns. Ethan's speculation that Mattie will soon be marrying prompts her to wonder whether Zeena has something against her and wishes her gone.

Scene two: Ethan returns to repair the dish, but Mattie tells him that Zeena is already back. Zeena enters and informs Ethan that, on the doctor's advice, she has already hired a girl to do the housework--which means that Mattie must leave. Ethan just has the chance to tell Mattie of this, when Zeena reenters with the broken dish. She accuses Mattie: "You've taken from me the one thing I cared for most of all."

Scene three: The next morning in the Frome kitchen. Ethan is writing a letter to Zeena to say good-bye, but destroys it. Mattie enters. She tells Ethan of her plan to find work in a store. As Ethan speaks against this plan, Jotham Powel enters. He has been sent for by Zeena to take Mattie's trunk to the station.

--Intermission--

Act III, scene one: In the village, the church choir is practicing. Children play on their way home from school. Couples prepare for sleigh rides. Mattie and Ethan enter. They cannot face being separated and decide to die together: They ride a sled down a steep hill into a large elm tree.

Scene two, Postlude. The Frome farmhouse one year later. The suicide has failed: Ethan is lame and Mattie must be cared for by Zeena.

Cast

In Order of Appearance

Ethan Frome	Tenor	John Lennon
1st Woman	Soprano	Joyce Stuermer
Mattie Silver	Soprano	Susan Franano
Dennis Eady	Baritone	Delvin Sutton
Zenobia Frome	Soprano	Betty Kloster
Jotham Powel	Bass	Edward Coulter
Choir Director	Tenor	Stanley DeFries
2nd Woman	Soprano	Alice Jo DeFries
1st Man	Tenor	Scott Paulger
1st Girl	Soprano	Paula DeFries
2nd Girl	Soprano	Janet Ratzloff
3rd Girl	Soprano	Jeanne Currier
The Cat		Lucia

Opera Staff

Musical Director.	William Kloster
Stage Director.	Steven Biddle
Choral Director and Minor Role Coach.	Joyce Stuermer
Children's Choir Director	Carole Sandstrom
Choreographer.	Becky Johnson
Set and Lighting Design.	Joseph Hutchinson
Ticket Managers.	Stanley and Alice Jo DeFries
	Greg Foust
Publicity Chairman.	Dottie Wellington
Costume Chairman.	Lona Harris
Properties.	Teri Buchanan
House Manager.	George Kramer
Key Grip.	George Jarowski
Orch. Manager and Librarian.	Phillip Scheldt
Program Design.	Neil Harris
Rehearsal Pianists.	Sherwin Snyder, Vicki Hogue, Carl Bobbish, Stanley DeFries

Chorale

Jeanne Currier
Paula DeFries
Wendy Pesch
Janet Ratzloff
Susan Hull
Susie Clough
Jill Haworth

Twinkie Sharkey
Karen Hummel
Sharon Wilcox
Janet Williams
B. J. Boucek
Greg Foust
David Rider
Steve Thomason

Larry Annable
Rob Ferree
Guy Johnson
Bob Nauman
Paul Shuman
Tom Pletcher
Scott Paulger

Children's Choir

Marty Netherland
Susan Kirkpatrick
Sheryl Gladman

Jennifer Hadley
Mary Lyn Roberts
Tim Diamond

Don Nease
Jerry Hall

Orchestra

FLUTE AND PICCOLO
Suellen Johnson

OBOE
Ralph Watilo

CLARINETS
John Parrette
Bobby Roberts

BASSOON
John Reitz

HORNS
Frank Franano
Michael Berger
James Shoush

TRUMPETS
Jerrold Eldred
Greg Smith

HARP
Ellen Dishinger

PERCUSSION
Thomas Plaster

VIOLIN I
Mortimer Alpert
Alice Joy Lewis
Helen Hollander
Joe Landes

VIOLIN II
Ginni Eldred
Brenda Chaney
Rosalyn Story
Carolyn Thayer

VIOLA
Martin Pearson
Eldon Roehl
James Hammond
Katherine Hammond

CELLI
Norman Hollander
Marilyn Hilberry
Barbara Potter

BASSI
Charles Cronkite
Phillip Scheldt

We wish to express our appreciation to the Franklin County Historical Society, Gable's Antiques and Ike & Mike's Antiques for the generous loan of stage properties and costumes.