

Personal Reflection – February 25, 2023

Change at the Met

Once a week I delight in an opera from the Met, via my subscription to [Met Opera On Demand](#). There I can find operas from their vast archive of HD video recordings, from the early seventies until the present.

Over the years, I've noticed a significant change. In the earlier operas, at the end of each act, the cast would step in front of the closed curtain to "take a bow" to receive the applause of the 4,000 people in the audience. That action has changed, although when and why I do not know.

For the past few years, that bowing and the audience applause comes *at the end of the opera*. I confess I am pleased by the change.

An opera is an integrated being: music, words, sets, dance, lighting. I am in an opera, drawn by the artful integration of all of these. I notice my behavior at the intermission: quiet, expectant, listening. When, in the past, the characters came on the stage at intermission for a bow and applause, they broke the story, dismantled the melody, shocked me: "*Who are those people?*" I am grateful for the thoughtful change, and celebrate those who made it.

The story of this change has relevance to life for me: *what do I want/need to change?* What systems are dissonant for me? What practices are uncomfortable? What words are inappropriate for *this* context?

Ahhhh! Freedom.

--Jane Vella