

# ROYAL OPERA PREMIERES WEILL'S *DAS JASAGER*

VALLETTA—The Royal Opera House on the Strada Reale conducted a very special premiere of Kurt Weill's *Der Jasager*, which Mro Luigi Cantoni describes as being based on a libretto by the German writer Bertolt Brecht. "The theme of this beautiful opera is made by quite explicit by Brecht," Cantoni says. "When you agree to a course of action, you must fully understand it." In the opera, a young boy asks to join his teacher on a dangerous journey over the mountains to see a great physician who might be able to cure his ailing mother. The teacher reluctantly agrees, but when the boy becomes ill during their journey, the other members of the party remind the teacher of a strict old custom which demands that anyone who becomes ill during the journey must be

hurled into the valley. The teacher reminds them that the sick person can instead demand that the entire party should turn back. The boy, however, decides that he knew the risk he was undertaking and decides to throw himself into the abyss, asking in return only that they bear back a jar of medicine to his injured mother. "It's a cautionary tale," Cantoni continued. "Appropriate for a time when the world has a great need for caution."

No such caution was to be seen among the wealthy dignitaries who were assembled to enjoy the premiere. The Royal Opera House seized the opportunity of the high profile premiere of the highly popular German opera to reach out to the finest of Malta's upper and political classes, who

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*The evening's fundraising efforts raised record amounts from remarkable glitterati at a gala affair. Montgomery and Portia Donovan are premiere donors, on the red carpet at the Royal Opera House,*

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