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The Silver Fox

A Chamber Opera for Young People

John Olive (1978)

Libby Larsen
1978, revised 2009

The stage is bare. The house lights are on. TANTE MARIE enters. She is an older woman. She wears a strange, complex costume, possibly with a headdress designed to evoke the forest.

1

Tante Marie *(using a strong, magical gesture)*
SH! SH!
[Celeste ad lib.]

As soon as she speaks, the house lights fade quickly, and the atmosphere becomes moody and evocative. TANTE MARIE'S heavily made up face seems to glow in the strange light.

T. M. Something magical is going to happen. You feel it? We're deep in the forest, a deep, dark, wonderful place where no one sees us, where powerful spirits live, spirits like me.

Prologue

2 ♩ = 84, *a bright, crisp feeling*

[spoken]

T. M. Here the animals dance all day...

Offstage Chorus *p*

S La la la la la la la la

T **p* La la la la la la la la la La la la la la la la la

B *p* La la la la la la La la la la la la La la la la la la

*"J'ai vu les loups" is a Cajun folksong collected in Arnauville, La.

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4

T. M.

the wolf... the weazle... and the fox... Don't be afraid...

S
La la la la la la La la la la la la

T
J'ai vu les loups et les re-nards et les bil-let-tes, J'ai vu le loups et les re-nards dan - caeint

B
La la la la la la La la la la la la

6

T. M.

nothing bad can happen here..... only magic... Do you know what is going to happen?

S
J'ai vu les loups et les re-nards et les bil-let-tes, J'ai vu le loups et les re-nards dan - caeint

T
J'ai vu les loups et les re-nards et les bil-let-tes, J'ai vu le loups et les re-nards dan - caeint

B
La la la la la la La la la la la la

8

T. M.

Hm? A girl, a special, important girl is going to change to a

S
mf Je l'ais ai vu tous em-bras-ser Je l'ais

T
mf Je l'ais ai vu tous em-bras-ser Je l'ais

B
mf Je l'ais ai vu tous car-es-ser Je l'ais ai vu ça va, ça va

11

T. M. is going to change to a magical silver fox. Anything can happen in the forest...

S *p*
— ai vu ça va ça va la la la la — la la la la la la — la la la

T
— ai vu ça va ça va
p
— ai vu ça va ça va la

B *p*
la la la la la la la la la la la la

14 (She gestures) TITINE enters, lost and apprehensive...

T. M. Look! There she is!

S
la la la la — la la la la la la — la la la

T
J'ai vu les loups et les re-nards et les bil-let-tes J'ai vu les loups et les re-nards dan-caient
la la

B
la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la

TITINE looks about. As she hears the audience say her name, she looks around, wondering from where the voices are coming.

16

T. M. Her name is Titine... Titine... go ahead, say her name... she can't see you but

S J'ai vu les loups et les re-nards et les bil-let-tes, J'ai vu les loups et les re-nards dan-caient.

T J'ai vu les loups et les re-nards et les bil-let-tes, J'ai vu les loups et les re-nards dan-caient.

B la

Vln. *drone* *mf* *sim.*

18

T. M. she can hear you... Titine... You can make change into a silver fox... Listen!

S Je l'ais... ai vu ça va, ça va Ah *pp* (any high note)

T Je l'ais... ai vu ça va, ça va Ah *pp* (any high note)

B Je l'ais ai vu ça va, ça va Je l'ais ai vu ça va, ça va Ah *pp* (any high note)

Vln. to Water Gong

Free tempo

[hand-over-hand black-note gliss.] *15^{ma}*

Kbd. *ff* *l.v.*

8^{vb}

Ped.

TITINE is becoming more and more agitated

a tempo (♩ = 84)

22

T. M.

S

T

B

Fl.

Vln.

Kbd.

Hear that music? It's magic, it means she's going to change. Say her name... Titine... like magic

niente

niente

niente

niente

mp

Ti-

Sweet Potato

f

3

3

Water Gong (lower into water)

f

Vln. *drone*

f

a tempo (♩ = 84)

loco

mf

(15^{ma})

(l.v.)

(8^{va})

(2^{da})