



Angel of  
the Amazon

A NEW AMERICAN OPERA  
by Evan Mack

*Original New York City Production  
by Encompass New Opera Theatre;  
Directed by Nancy Rhodes, Artistic Director, 2011*

## About the Opera

IN 2005, DOROTHY STANG, A 73-YEAR-OLD SISTER OF NOTRE DAME DE NAMUR, FROM DAYTON, OHIO WAS BRUTALLY MURDERED IN THE TOWN OF BOA ESPERANZA, LOCATED IN THE BRAZILIAN RAINFOREST.

Sister Dorothy, born in Dayton, Ohio, but a naturalized Brazilian citizen, worked as an advocate for the rural poor, helping peasants make a living by farming small plots and extracting forest products without deforestation.

Dot, as she was called by her family, friends and most locals in Brazil, is often pictured wearing a t-shirt with the slogan, "*A Morte da floresta é o fim da nossa vida*" which is Portuguese for "***The death of the forest is the end of our life.***"

Stang was outspoken in her efforts on behalf of the poor and the environment, and had previously received death threats from loggers and land owners.

February 12, 2005, Dorothy woke up early to walk to a community meeting to speak about the rights for the Amazon. On her way there, she was blocked by the two men, Clodoaldo and Raifran. They asked if she had any weapons, and she claimed that the only weapon would be her bible. Raifran fired a round at Dorothy's abdomen. She fell face down on the ground. Raifran fired another round into Dorothy's back, then fired all four rounds into her head.<sup>1</sup>

Angel of the Amazon depicts her life's work, her devotion to her mission with Brazilian peasant farmers, and the events that sent her on a path of martyrdom.

“ I don't want to flee, nor do I want to abandon the battle of these farmers who live without any protection in the forest. They have the sacrosanct right to aspire to a better life on land where they can live and work with dignity while respecting the environment.

”

# AMAZING!

~ NY Daily News 5.16.11

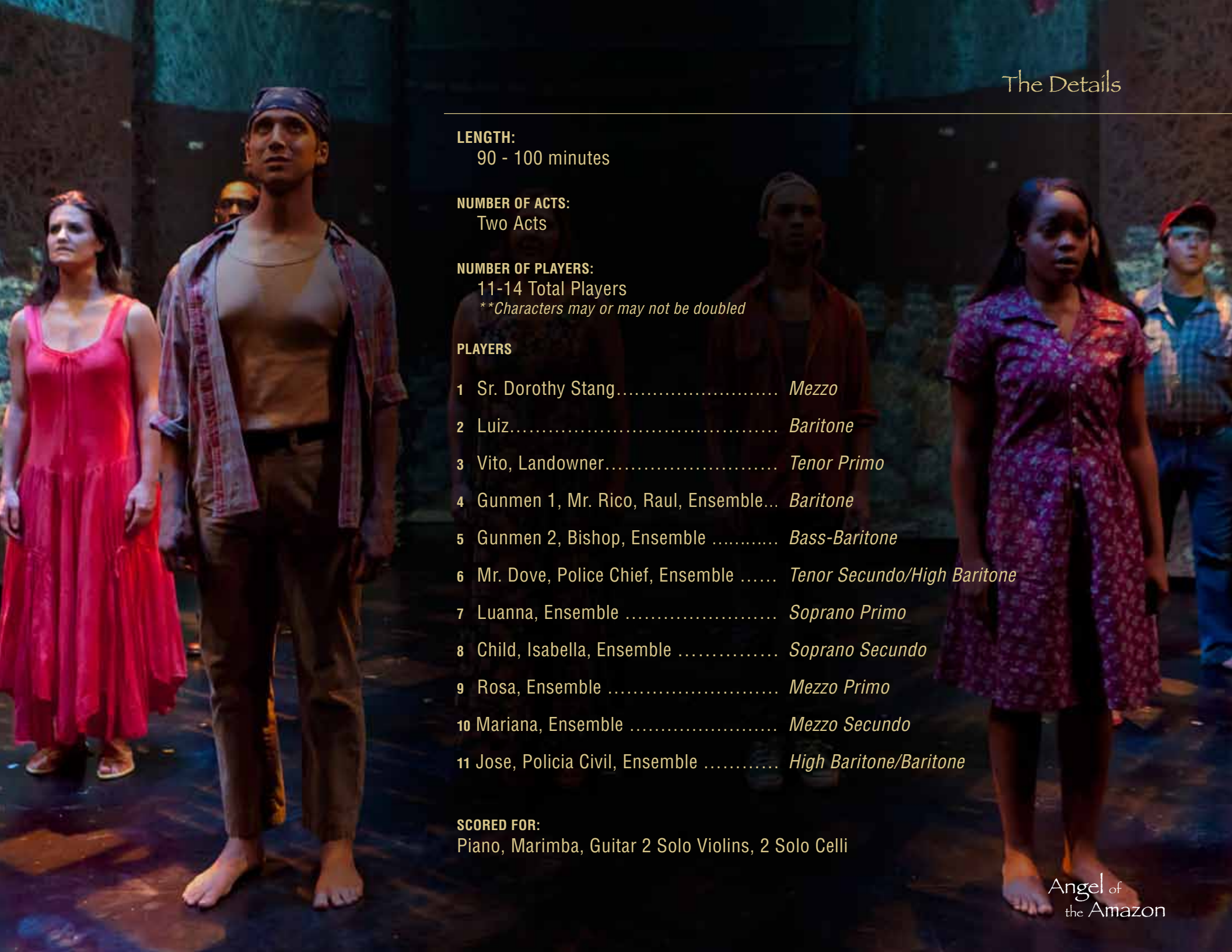
*“...an exceptional tour de force.”*

~ Command Opera 5/17

“...the music soars into the body  
and uplifts the listener’s spirit.”

~ The Dressing | 5.17.11

“This music is new and inspiringly  
brave in its breadth...” ~ Operagasm | 5.16.11



**LENGTH:**  
90 - 100 minutes

**NUMBER OF ACTS:**  
Two Acts

**NUMBER OF PLAYERS:**  
11-14 Total Players  
*\*\*Characters may or may not be doubled*

**PLAYERS**

- 1 Sr. Dorothy Stang..... *Mezzo*
- 2 Luiz..... *Baritone*
- 3 Vito, Landowner..... *Tenor Primo*
- 4 Gunmen 1, Mr. Rico, Raul, Ensemble... *Baritone*
- 5 Gunmen 2, Bishop, Ensemble ..... *Bass-Baritone*
- 6 Mr. Dove, Police Chief, Ensemble ..... *Tenor Secundo/High Baritone*
- 7 Luanna, Ensemble ..... *Soprano Primo*
- 8 Child, Isabella, Ensemble ..... *Soprano Secundo*
- 9 Rosa, Ensemble ..... *Mezzo Primo*
- 10 Mariana, Ensemble ..... *Mezzo Secundo*
- 11 Jose, Policia Civil, Ensemble ..... *High Baritone/Baritone*

**SCORED FOR:**  
Piano, Marimba, Guitar 2 Solo Violins, 2 Solo Celli

Highlight Video



**Evan Mack, Composer & Pianist**

Evan Mack is the composer and librettist of *Angel of the Amazon* which premiered in May 2011 by Encompass New Opera Theatre at the Baryshnikov Arts Center in New York City. As an acclaimed pianist, he has toured all over the United States, Barcelona, and South Africa. He is currently published with Hal Leonard.

As a composer, he has produced five full musicals (three of them for children's theater), as well as numerous popular songs, and numerous classical works.

His Choral Suite, Langston Hughes' Dream of Freedom is a Selection Winner of the National Association of Composers, San Francisco and the UCM New Music Festival as well as being published by Hal Leonard. Hailed as "the Springtime Nutcracker," Mack's Pinocchio, recently premiered in the Charleston Civic Center by the Charleston Ballet.

His work for Two Pianos, "American Groove" will be performed by the "Westhuizen Duo" all across the United States and South Africa throughout 2011. The work was a Selection Winner for the SCI Regional Conference in 2010 and premiered in Greensboro, NC.

Evan has performed in the Kentucky Symphony, the Cincinnati Symphony Chamber Players, the Dayton Philharmonic, and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra; including a performance in Carnegie Hall.

Evan holds a Doctorate of Musical Arts in Piano Performance from the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music and is on the faculty of the College of Saint Rose and Skidmore College.

In late 2005, Evan Mack attended a lecture at St. Anthony Church in Madisonville, Ohio. The speaker told a story of a nun in the Brazilian Amazon who had been murdered in February of that year. What struck a chord with Evan was that Sister Dorothy met her gunmen the day before, fed them, prayed with them, and showed them her work with the peasant farmers of the area.

As soon as Evan heard that story, he thought, “***This NEEDS to be an opera!***” There have been remarkable biographies on Sr. Dorothy, especially by Sr. Roseanne Murphy, Binka Le Breton, Michele Murdock, and the documentary film by Daniel Junge “***They Killed Sr. Dorothy.***”

Evan’s goal was to recreate her life and mission through music, with hopes that the opera would inspire audiences to help continue the spirit of her work.

This was a challenge to say the least. How does one take forty years of work and put it into a two act opera? With access to Sr. Dorothy’s letters from 1969 until one week before her murder, Evan noticed reoccurring cycles in her mission: ***As her mission grew, so did the forces to stop her.***

This cyclical nature became the main dramatic artifice for the opera. What was also made apparent was the noticable change in Sr. Dorothy’s tone from the early letters to the most recent. The early letters, fairly innocuous, gradually became harsher, more urgent in tone. “***Land owners***” became “***Land Sharks,***” and then “***Land Sharks***” became “***Invaders.***”

The Portuguese language increasingly crept into her letters as the years went on, which became important both musically and dramatically. Her musical language in the beginning of the opera is very “***Western,***” as the opera progresses, Brazilian rhythms and music enter her musical language and eventually becomes fully integrated as she assumes the role of leader and martyr.



# Angel of the Amazon

A New American Opera about  
*Sister Dorothy Stang*

written by Evan Mack

For serious inquiries please contact:

**Evan Mack**

(513) 479-2413

[evanmackmusic@gmail.com](mailto:evanmackmusic@gmail.com)

[www.evanmack.com](http://www.evanmack.com)