

# **CARMINA BURANA**

## **THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS**

Music by Kurt Weill

Text by Bertolt Brecht

Premiere: Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris, 7 June 1933

### **Characters**

Anna I (singer)

Anna II (dancer)

Members of their family (portrayed by a male quartet):

Mom

Dad

Brother I

Brother II

Dancers

### **Prologue**

Anna introduces herself and her "sister" (Anna I, the "practical" one, is a singer; Anna II, the "idealistic" one, is a dancer). But as she explains, they are but two aspects of the same person. They set out for "the big cities where you go to get money," seeking cash to send back to their family in Louisiana, so that they may build a house.

### **SLOTH**

As the Annas begin their money-making endeavors, the family in Louisiana exhorts Anna to pull herself together, and not to succumb to the laziness she showed at home. They pray that the Lord will look down on their daughter and reward her efforts.

### **PRIDE**

Anna II is hired as a dancer at a sleazy Memphis cabaret. She starts talking about "art," but Anna I quickly disabuses her of her folly - after all, men pay to see her undress. The moral: "Pride is for those who can afford it!"

### **RAGE**

In Los Angeles, on a film set, Anna II's outrage at the mistreatment of a film extra almost gets the sisters fired. Anna I tells Anna II, "Practice self-control."

### **GLUTTONY**

In Philadelphia, Anna is doing well - she's signed to a star turn - but there's a weight clause in her contract. The family is worried about her unsatiable desire for food: "Gluttons never go to heaven."

### **LUST**

In Boston, Anna II is kept by a wealthy man, Edward, who showers her with money because he loves her. But Anna I, in turn, loves Fernando and gives him money. Anna I warns her sister to give up Fernando; girls like them can't afford such behavior. Finally, Anna I leaves Fernando and makes Anna II return to Edward. She does so, but sobs, "It's right like this, Anna, but so hard!"

**GREED**

In Baltimore, men seem to be shooting themselves after Anna has ruined them. The family back home is concerned with Anna's behavior: "We sincerely hope our smart little Anna has some common sense and will let her men keep a shirt or two. Shameless hoarders can earn themselves a bad name."

**ENVY**

In San Francisco, Anna II is tired and envies others who seem to live in contentment - those too proud to be bought; those who can act on their impulses happily. But Anna I points out that "you must learn to say no' to the joys of this world, for this world is a snare... Whoever gains victory over himself, also gains the reward."

**Epilogue** The Annas return to their new home in Louisiana.