

Document Citation

Title	Broadcast excerpt: Allan Coombes show
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Source	<i>WABC</i>
Date	1984 Sep 24
Type	broadcast transcript
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Carmen, Rosi, Francesco, 1984

RADIO TV REPORTS, INC.

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FOR TRIUMPH FILMS

PROGRAM	ALLAN COOMBES SHOW	STATION	WABC
DATE	SEPTEMBER 24, 1984 8:52 AM	CITY	NEW YORK

BROADCAST EXCERPT

JOANNA LANGFIELD: I've seen so many new interpretations of Bizet's classic opera Carmen lately, I can sing the opera myself! Not like singing Happy Birthday, but I could give it a whirl. I couldn't sing it as well by any means as do the people performing in this new film version which is playing here in New York. But repeat visits do breed familiarity, and now that we've all seen the opera so many times lately we can make a more educated decision as to which version we like the best.

Well, probably nothing will leave me as awe struck as Peter Brooks more than brilliant Carmen which played at Lincoln Center last year. The new film, directed by Italian Francesco Rossi, is as lush as Brooks was sparse. Running some two hours and thirty minutes Rossi's film covers every nuance of the story, incorporates some breathtaking scenery and has a few of the world's most dazzling voices -- notably Placido Domingo's, to sing. He could have sung you Happy Birthday, that would have been better than us.

Where Carmen doesn't work though, Alan, is in the essential acting out of the plot. While Domingo's voice is grand it is more effective sometimes for us to just close our eyes and listen to him. In this film, unlike in his last and very fine appearance in La Traviata, Domingo often looks kind of confused and less forceful then Don Jose should be. With another beautiful voice, New Yorker, Julia Meginis-Johnson is plucky, very consciously aware though of her seductive powers in the title role of Carmen. Too aware I thought.

See, I've always assumed that Carmen was a woman who attracted men without even trying, and Miss Meginis-Johnson tries much too hard.

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