

legato e staccato

www.lademiddel.com

studio@lademiddel.com

In the hero's journey – our most common and dearly inherited narrative structure – the hero goes on an adventure, is victorious in a decisive crisis, and comes home changed or transformed. This is the structure of most of our fables, our myths, and nowadays our movies and novels. We are comfortable with the sequence and we even design our lives to follow this glorious path to success.

When you are a heroine, however, the narrative structure you receive is not quite the same. The women in our traditional stories suffer, struggle, betray, and hide terrible secrets. They cause wars and are most of all mothers, wives, and lovers dealing with a dilemma and paying the consequences of their bad choices. Never will you find a heroine that is not tragic, a heroine that is victorious even after building the most memorable characters of our universal storytelling.

When I started being exposed to the Opera at a very young age – thanks to my father's obsession – I did not realize that the titles of all these pieces corresponded to the names of the main characters. Tosca, Norma, Medea, and La Traviata, as words, made no sense to me. Maybe because the heroines' names are not repeated often enough to become a myth. Maybe because there is never a happy ending to their story – nothing inspirational in the failure of a woman.

The name of Maria Callas, however, did come out as a legend: some sort of tragic character with a mysterious life and unequalled talent. A legend that I missed alive by only a few years. That is why maybe for me when watching the old recordings of La Callas, I find it difficult to draw the line between the woman and the character she is performing. Both, the heroine and Maria Callas, are legendary. Both are also tragic, excessive, questionable, unreal, and condemned.

These images were created to pay tribute to the heroines, the ones in legends and the ones on stage and in real life. To reflect on the tragedy of their stories, I had the privilege of working in a unique place with such beauty that it makes the line between reality and myth also hard to define. The corners of Sirmione were the perfect setting to stage this tribute to opera and women, and the choice was one I shared with Maria Callas, who also spent in this town of surreal charms, some of the few happy years of her epic life.

CRISTINA
DE MIDDEL