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## The Cunning Little Vixen. Review.

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*The Cunning Little Vixen*. color. 97 min. Nicholas Hytner, Théâtre du Châtelet, dist. by Kultur, 2010. DVD

Though written in 1924, Leoš Janáček's opera has a modern, almost postpunk look and sound, especially as directed by Hytner (artistic director, London's National Theatre; Broadway's *Miss Saigon* ). This live recording of the opera as produced and performed at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris relays the straightforward story, based on a Czech cartoon, weaving the infinite themes of the cycles of both humankind and nature. There is as much dance as song and dialog, and the choreography by Jean-Claude Gallotta keeps the forest folk magically alive. The libretto is sung in the original Czech, but it matters little to the storytelling; the gorgeous music and melodic singing are key. The costumes of Bob Crowley are edgy yet simple; his two-dimensional sets fare less well. Even the uninitiated will appreciate the crisp conducting of Sir Charles Mackerras. Recommended for all ages and all collections.

By Gerald A. Notaro, Univ. of South Florida Lib., St. Petersburg