

ALEXANDRA RAFALO

By Josephine Andò

Every morning, soprano Alexandra Rafalo wakes up under the Berlin sun, ready to audition for agents and opera houses all over Germany and ready to make the best out of her European experience.

However, in a couple of months, she will wake up under another sun– the one in Tampa, which began shining for her last year when she became part of the V.O.I.C.Experience training.

“Last year, I came to Tampa as a winner of the Sherrill Milnes Opera Idol competition, and it was a wonderful experience that was sort of a surprise to me,” she said. “I didn't know what to expect. It was a time of taking in a lot of information, and going into the artist's cocoon. The experience showed me where exactly I was in my progress and what I needed to do to get to the next level. It was sort of a diagnostic experience that outlined all my goals for the year.”

After VE, she was chosen to be an OTAP, which gave her the opportunity to have “all these great moments of learning, performing, and being with like-minded artists.” She remembers her experience as an OTAP as being full of moments of fun and music.

“Being around so many wonderful opera singer-stars in a casual setting was the beginning of a dream come true,” she said.

Alexandra learned many things during her time with Opera Tampa. She learned confidence in her technique. She learned how to put her full energy into every performance. And above all, she learned patience.

Though she hadn't expected it, Alexandra was asked to return. She usually tries to save herself from disappointment “by not having any expectations,” she said, but she felt very honored when she learned the good news. She was happy because Opera Tampa feels like home for her.

This year, she wants to bring “my love of music and performing, as well as support of my colleagues and friends” to the program, and she wants to show her audience her professional growth: “I feel I have grown a lot in the past year, but I'm a perfectionist, so I know that there is still a long way to go. Let's talk again in 10 years!”