

Otello

1934

Wednesday, December 5, 1934 8:00 PM

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# SAN · FRANCISCO · OPERA ASSOCIATION

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GAETANO MEROLA · GENERAL DIRECTOR  
NOVEMBER · 14 · TO · DECEMBER · 8 · 1934

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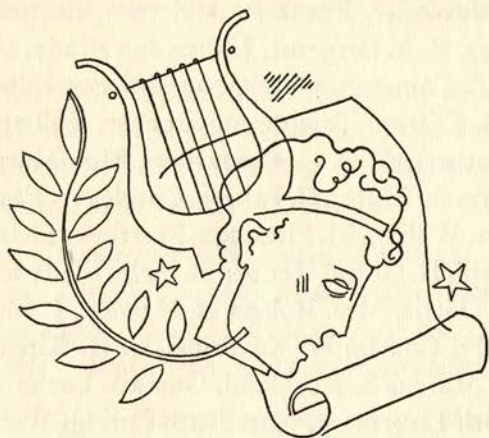
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# THE SAN FRANCISCO OPERA COMPANY

GAETANO MEROLA, *General Director*

ROUNDING out the years of its artistic life to an even dozen, the San Francisco Opera Company, maintained by the San Francisco Opera Association, begins its twelfth annual season, and the third in War Memorial Opera House, on Wednesday evening, November 14, and brings it to an end Saturday evening, December 8.

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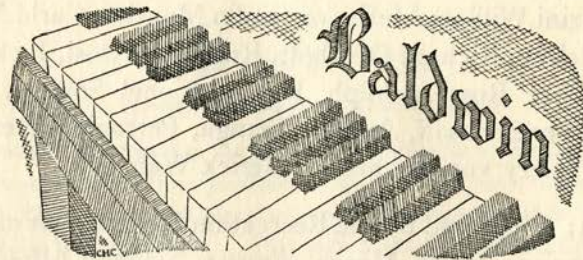
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## REPERTOIRE

- THE BARTERED BRIDE (SMETANA) *Wednesday Night, November 14, at 8:15*  
 With Rethberg, Chamlee, Windheim, Pinza, Smith, Gruninger, Clark, Gandolfi,  
 Howell, Taenzler, Ellis; Corps de Ballet. HERTZ, Conductor.
- LA TOSCA (PUCCINI) *Friday Night, November 16, at 8:15*  
 With Lehmann, Borgioli, Gandolfi, Gruninger, Howell, D'Angelo, Windheim,  
 Alibertini. MEROLA, Conductor.
- CARMEN (BIZET) *Saturday Night, November 17, at 8:00*  
 With Vallin, Chamlee, Pinza, Clark, Smith, Gruninger, D'Angelo, Gandolfi,  
 Windheim, Howell; Corps de Ballet. MEROLA, Conductor.
- MANON (MASSENET) *Monday Night, November 19, at 8:00*  
 With Bori, Crooks, Gandolfi, D'Angelo, Windheim, Howell, McLaughlin, Lanz,  
 Schiller, Strause, Ferrier, Simondet, Frediani. MEROLA, Conductor.
- MADAME BUTTERFLY (PUCCINI) *Wednesday Night, November 21, at 8:15*  
 With Lehmann, Borgioli, Marlo, Glando, Gandolfi, Windheim, D'Angelo,  
 Howell. CIMINI, Conductor.
- LAKMÉ (DELIBES) *Friday Night, November 23, at 8:00*  
 With Hardy, Chamlee, Gandolfi, Pinza, Simondet, Clark, Ferrier, Gruninger,  
 Strause; Corps de Ballet. CIMINI, Conductor.
- TANNHAUSER (WAGNER) *Monday Night, November 26, at 7:45*  
 With Rethberg, Melchior, Bonelli, Pinza, Eybel, Clark, Marlowe, Gandolfi,  
 Windheim, D'Angelo; Corps de Ballet. HERTZ, Conductor.
- LA TRAVIATA (VERDI) *Wednesday Night, November 28, at 8:15*  
 With Bori, Crooks, Bonelli, Badger, McLaughlin, Gandolfi, Windheim, D'Angelo,  
 Alibertini, Frediani, Howell; Corps de Ballet. MEROLA, Conductor.
- FAUST (GOUNOD) *Friday Night, November 30, at 8:00*  
 With Vallin, Borgioli, Pinza, Bonelli, Clark, Gruninger, Howell;  
 Corps de Ballet. MEROLA, Conductor.
- LA RONDINE (PUCCINI) *Monday Night, December 3, at 8:15*  
 With Bori, Borgioli, Clark, Windheim, D'Angelo, Folli, Smith, Strause, Nostrom,  
 Alibertini, Frediani, Howell; Corps de Ballet. MEROLA, Conductor.
- OTELLO (VERDI) *Wednesday Night, December 5, at 8:00*  
 With Melchior, Bonelli, Rethberg, Marlowe, Gruninger, D'Angelo, Frediani,  
 Alibertini, Howell. MEROLA, Conductor.
- MIGNON (THOMAS) *Saturday Night, December 7, at 8:00*  
 With Bori, Hardy, Borgioli, Pinza, Marlo, Windheim, D'Angelo;  
 Corps de Ballet. CIMINI, Conductor.

### EXTRA PERFORMANCES

- MANON Same cast as above *Saturday Night, December 1, at 8:00*  
 CARMEN " *Sunday Matinée, December 2, at 2:00*  
 TANNHAUSER " *Saturday Night, December 8, at 7:45*

Wednesday Night, December 5, at 8:00

# OTELLO

Lyric drama in four acts. Music by Giuseppe Verdi  
Libretto (in Italian) by Arrigo Boito

## THE CAST

Otello, <i>the Moor</i>	LAURITZ MELCHIOR
Desdemona, <i>his wife</i>	ELISABETH RETHBERG
Iago, <i>his ensign</i>	RICHARD BONELLI
Cassio, <i>his lieutenant</i>	RAYMOND MARLOWE
Emilia, <i>wife of Iago</i>	EVA GRUNINGER
Roderigo, <i>a Venetian gentleman</i>	AMERIGO FREDIANI
Lodovico, <i>an ambassador</i>	LOUIS D'ANGELO
Montanó, <i>predecessor of Otello in the government of Cyprus</i>	EVARISTO ALIBERTINI
Herald	JACK HOWELL

*Soldiers, Sailors, Venetians, Cypriots, Children, an Innkeeper*

Conductor: GAETANO MEROLA

Stage Director: ARMANDO AGNINI

Chorus Master: ANTONIO DELL'OREFICE

TIME AND PLACE: End of Fifteenth Century; a Seaport in Cyprus

- ACT I    Outside the Castle  
ACT II    A Hall on the Ground Floor of the Castle  
ACT III    The Great Hall of the Castle  
ACT IV    The Bedroom of Desdemona

*Bell rings three minutes before curtain rises  
Encores not permitted*

## THE STORY

ACT I: Citizens and soldiers are gathered to greet the ship of Otello returning victorious through a raging storm. Otello, brought ashore in a small boat, announces that the Turkish fleet has been destroyed and enters the castle to meet the awaiting Desdemona. Iago, determined to regain the power that is now Otello's, and Roderigo, who desires Desdemona, ply Cassio with wine. Brain-befuddled Cassio is adroitly led to quarrel with Montano, who is wounded, and the disturbance becomes a riot. Otello, emerging from the castle, quells the uproar and in punishment relieves Cassio of his command.

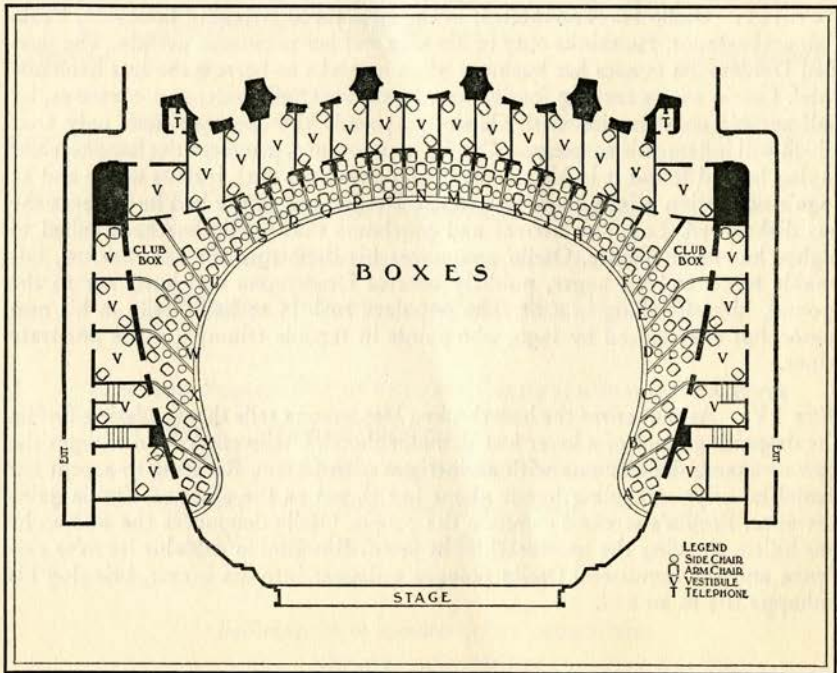
ACT II: Iago, in furtherance of his plan to overthrow Otello, urges Cassio to enlist the aid of Desdemona in the effort to gain back his post. Cassio goes in search of her. Iago bids Otello watch his wife, cunningly awakening his jealousy. The Moor seeks out Desdemona and questions her. She innocently pleads the cause of Cassio and Otello's jealous suspicions take definite form. Desdemona endeavors to wipe his perspiring brow with a handkerchief which was his first gift to her. In anger he tears it from her hand. Emilia picks up the handkerchief, but is forced to surrender it to Iago as Otello berates the bewildered and alarmed Desdemona. Following the scene with Desdemona, Iago adds to the flame of Otello's jealousy when he tells him that he has seen Desdemona's handkerchief in Cassio's possession and that he has heard Cassio speak her name in his dreams. The Moor's rage leaps out of bounds. Iago offers to help him to vengeance and they take tragic oath to punish the guilty.

ACT III: Otello takes no interest in the announced arrival of Lodovico, Venetian ambassador. He thinks only of his wife and her presumed perfidy. The puzzled Desdemona evades her husband when he seeks to borrow the lost handkerchief. Cassio enters seeking forgiveness. Iago bids Otello hide, and contrives, by half-audible conversation with Cassio, to permit the Moor to hear only that which will inflame his suspicions. Cassio, in innocence, produces the handkerchief saying he had found it in his rooms. Otello goes mad with jealous anger and at Iago's suggestion grimly plots to strangle Desdemona in the bed he believes she has dishonored. Lodovico arrives and proclaims that Otello has been called to higher honors in Venice. Otello announces his departure for the morrow, but unable to control his anger, publicly berates Desdemona and hurls her to the ground, himself falling in a fit. The populace rush in to hail Otello in his new honor, but are silenced by Iago, who points in terrible triumph to the prostrate Moor.

ACT IV: As she retires the heartbroken Desdemona tells the wondering Emilia the despairing story of a lover lost in maidenhood. Otello enters and charges the now awakened Desdemona with an intrigue with Cassio. Refusing to accept her denial he grips strangling hands about her throat as the alarmed Emilia gains entrance. Emilia's screams summon the people. Otello denounces the woman he has killed, showing the handkerchief in proof. But Emilia explains its false evidence and the remorseful Otello plunges a dagger into his breast, bringing his unhappy life to an end.

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*Production: ARMANDO AGNINI, Stage and Technical Director*

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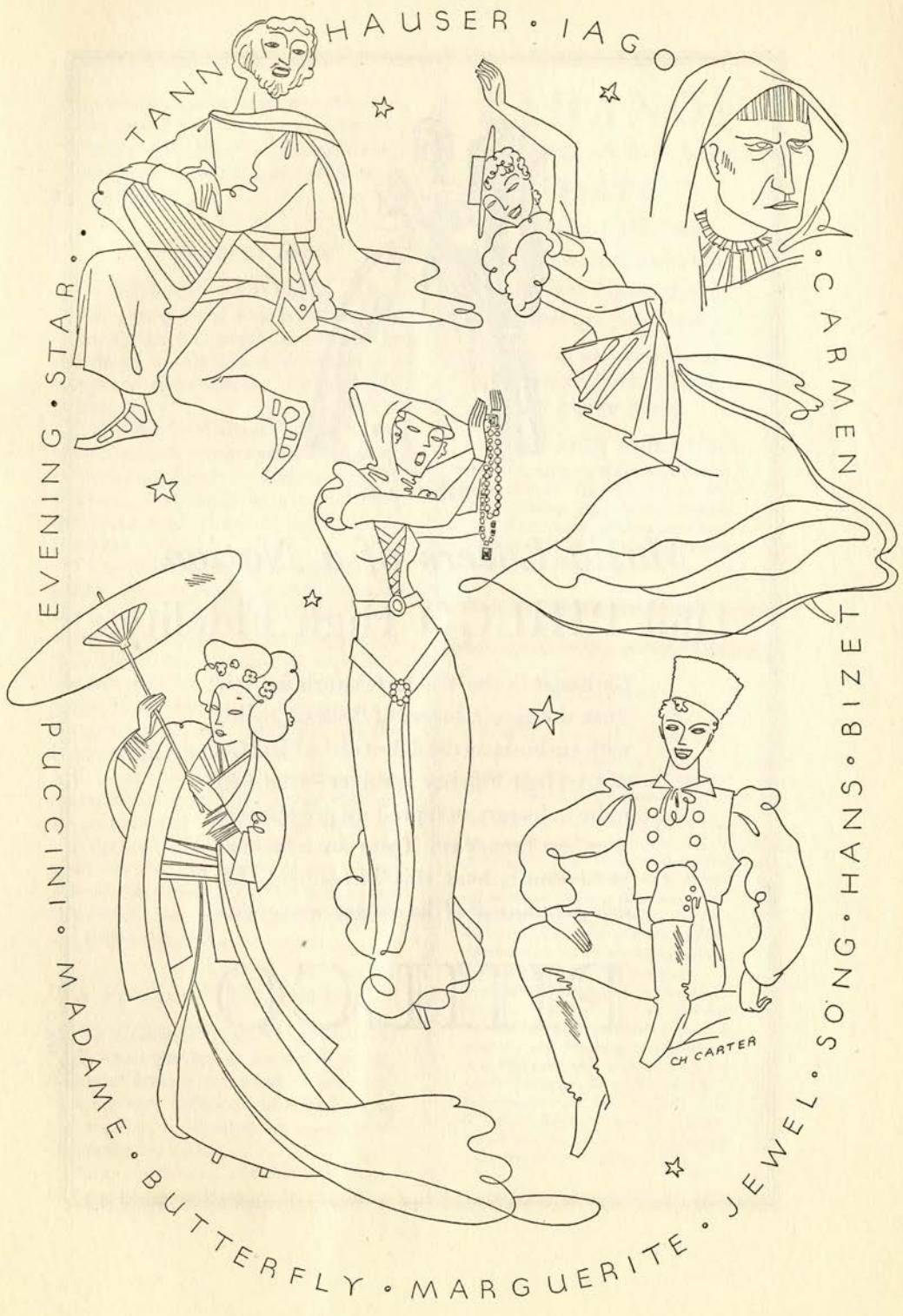
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## THE OPERAS

*The following operas on the present season of the San Francisco Opera Company, "The Bartered Bride", "La Rondine", "Lakmé" and "Otello", are additions to the repertoire.*

### *The Bartered Bride*

**FRIEDRICH SMETANA** (1824-84), recognized founder of the Bohemian school of music, is revered by the people of his native Bohemia as a composer with intense national impulses.

"The Bartered Bride" is one of the most charming comic operas of all musical literature. Lively, brilliant and highly finished, it abounds in national song melodies and characteristic dance rhythms.

"The Bartered Bride" was given first performance at Prague in 1866, but was not heard outside Bohemia until 1892, when it was produced at the Vienna Music Festival. The first London production was in 1895, but it was not given in America until February 19, 1909, when it was performed at the Metropolitan in New York.

For its American production the opera was re-scored by Gustav Mahler, who conducted. Mahler lightened up the orchestration to better suit the melodies and the tempo of the story. The Mahler score is used in San Francisco with German libretto in place of the original Czech.

### *La Rondine ("The Swallow")*

**GIACOMO PUCCINI** (1858-1926) was regarded at his death as the foremost Italian composer of his time. Writing very definitely in the idiom of the theatre, he created an opera style distinctly his own.

Puccini's music, melodiously facile and easily comprehended, is unmistak-

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## Madame McCune Williamson

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To San Francisco, already famous for its fine musicians, and long list of artists, (its music centre being second only to New York City,) has been added Madame McCune Williamson, distinguished voice specialist, lecturer and composer, who has lectured extensively on the art of singing and the science by which it is produced.

Madame Williamson has to her credit many artists who pay her grateful tribute for their success in concert, operatic and teaching engagements. A cordial invitation is extended to the music-loving public by Madame Williamson to visit her studios at 26 O'Farrell Street, or special appointments may be made by telephoning EXbrook 5969 or ORdway 8974

able in its appeal. "La Rondine" was composed in 1917, following "Girl of the Golden West" by seven years. The music is characteristically Puccini, but displays new and brilliant facets in its fascinating and fragile score, which approaches operetta in its charming lightness.

The opera had its world premiere in Monte Carlo, March 17, 1917. In March, 1928, it was produced at the Metropolitan with Lucrezia Bori, Editha Fleischer, Beniamino Gigli and Armand Tokatyan. Mme. Bori, who is the only artist to have sung the role of Magda in America, re-creates the part in the first presentation of "La Rondine" in San Francisco.

### *Lakmé*

**L**ÉO DELIBES (1836-91) ranks as a pioneer in the modern French impressionistic school. He found best expression for his musical gift in ballet

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composition, his charming "Sylvia," "Naila" and "Coppelia" ballets holding prominent place in all music libraries. Of Delibes' operas, "Lakmé" alone has survived.

The brilliant passages of "Lakmé" have made the opera a favorite vehicle for revival performances to display the vocal wares of coloratura sopranos. Its first production was in Paris in 1883.

The Metropolitan produced "Lakmé" in 1890 with Patti, and again in 1892 for Marie Van Zandt. It was revived in 1906 for Sembrich; by the Chicago Opera Company in 1910 for Tetrizzini; again at the Metropolitan in 1916 with Barrientos and in 1917 at Chicago for Galli-Curci.

Emily Hardy, resident soprano who made her opera début last season, sings the title role in the San Francisco revival.

San Francisco has not heard "Lakmé" since 1911, when it was performed at the Valencia Theatre by the Paris Grand Opera Company, of which André Ferrier, now of the San Francisco Opera Company, was leading tenor.

### *Otello*

**T**HE prolific and virile music pen of Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901) had been without product for sixteen years when "Otello," was produced at La Scala, Milan, in February, 1887.

That Verdi had not spent the sixteen years in idle resting on his well-earned laurels, but had kept in step with the changing mood in music, was apparent in his newest work.

For in "Otello" he very definitely abandoned the forms that had previously determined the nature of Italian opera. The opera has no set arias. There are melodious song-like passages aria in motive, but none in accepted aria form. Instead, a free-flowing recitative, tremendously intense in expression and copiously accompanied, is used with short, crisp dramatic phrasing.



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