

Othello

1970

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# PERFORMING ARTS



1970

San Francisco Opera



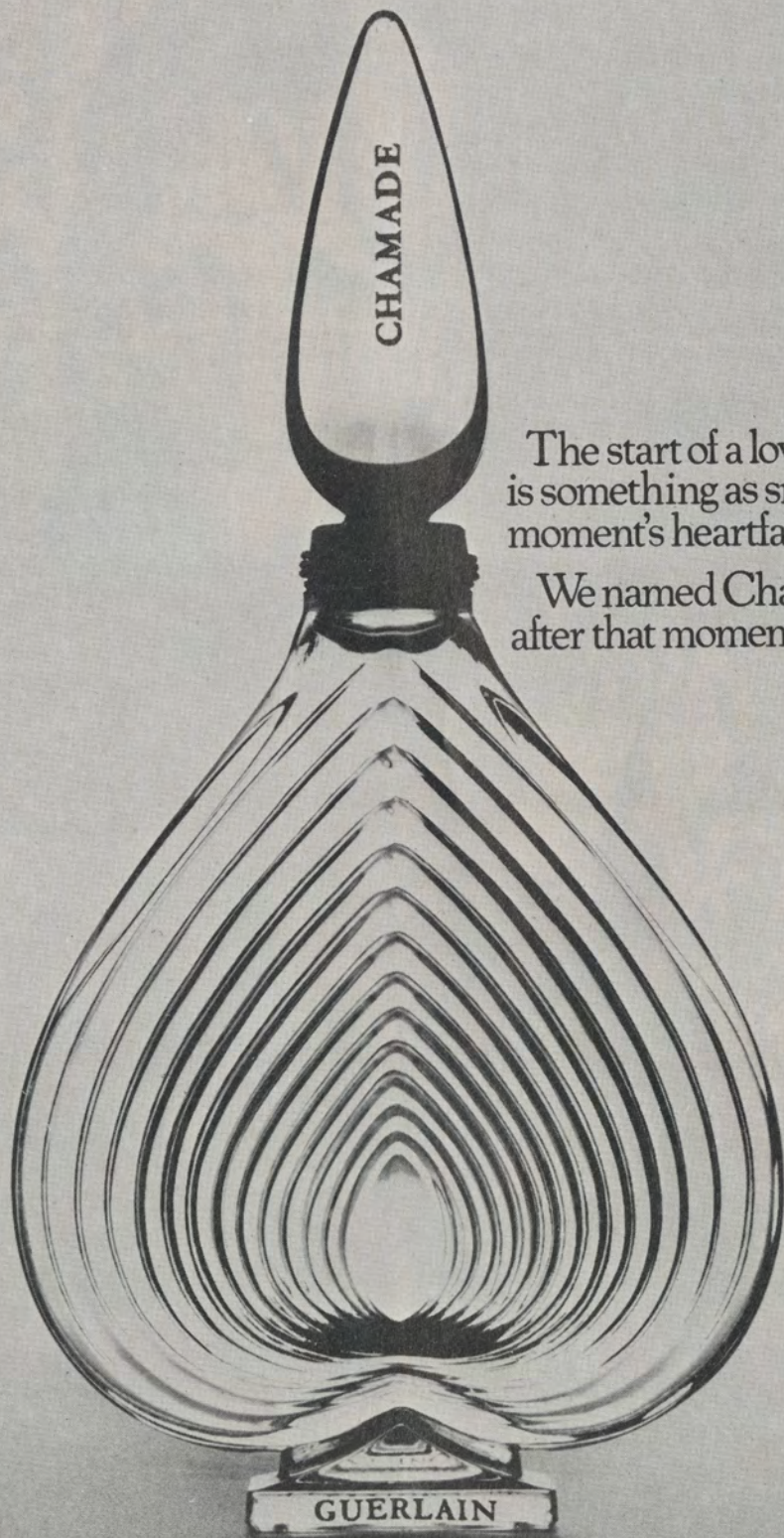
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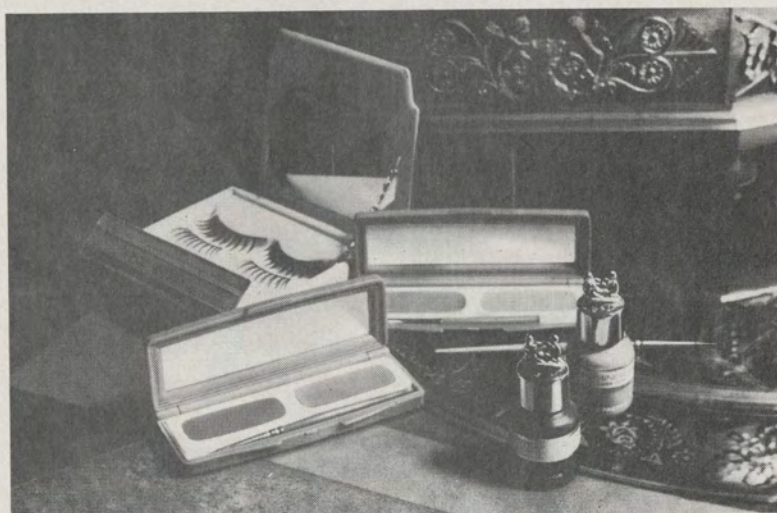
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George Jean Nathan



Leonardo da Vinci  
Self—portrait  
1513

# PERFORMING ARTS

SAN FRANCISCO'S MUSIC & THEATRE MONTHLY  
NOVEMBER 1970 / VOL. 4, NO. 11

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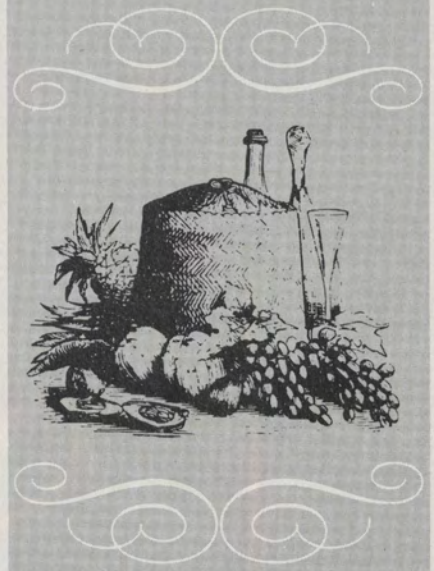
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"One of the most vital elements in making a recording is taste, and it is all too often most noticeable by its absence."

# Recording: The Illusions And The Realities

by JAMES GOODFRIEND

**Y**OU MIGHT ASSUME, when examining a typical LP record, that it is made out of some kind of malleable plastic molded to form physical equivalents of sound in its grooves, and colored with carbon black to give it an air of seriousness of purpose. It isn't. It is made out of money, large amounts of it, scraped together, cut up, and divided into dozens of little piles to pay dozens of people each to do their own specialized thing. You can frequently smell the money in a record. Sometimes it smells like a fresh young wine, vigorous and optimistic in its youth. Sometimes it smells like a classic claret of a favored vintage, proud in the attainment of its grand maturity. Sometimes it smells like vinegar — or like a lemon.

Most records, like most wines, are made in pretty much the same way. How they turn out — artistically and commercially — is only minimally dependent upon the process of manufacture. But the process is interesting nonetheless, because it defines the limits of what can be done. Since records are a totally different medium than live performance (and they demonstrate the crucial differences more with each succeeding year), it is well



Conductor Seiji Ozawa (facing camera) at a playback session for a recent Chicago Symphony recording. EMI/Angel photo.

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to know something about their possibilities and their limits so that one can make intelligent judgements on the music they provide.

All commercial records today are recorded first on tape, and since stereo is now the dominant mode of recorded reproduction, they are recorded in some form of stereo. I say "some form," because while the finished product, the stereo record, provides just two channels of sound, a left and a right, the initial tape recording may contain as many as sixteen separate and independent recorded tracks, all, of course, to be played back simultaneously.

Actually, we first have to redefine some terms. "Left," for example, in a recording studio, does not really mean left; it means whatever is being fed into the microphone or microphones that will ultimately play through your left-hand speaker. The instruments playing, for all you know, could be physically left, right, center, or in another room entirely. In other words, the engineer, not the conductor, controls what is going to be left or right

*(continued on p.12)*



Nicola Gedda (third from bottom), Maria Callas (behind Mr. Gedda) and cast of the EMI/ Angel "Carmen" face a phalanx of microphones in a Paris Studio. To simulate stage action, singers in operatic recordings sing from various locations, their positions being guided by the numbers on the floor.



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or center. "Center," by the way, means whatever is going to be fed in equal amounts to your left- and right-hand speakers, so that you will have the aural illusion that the sound is coming from neither one nor the other but from directly between them.

So, then, the sound is initially recorded on two or more tracks, up to sixteen — which I believe is the utmost any professional tape recorder can handle this month; next month may be different. The choice of number of tracks (and number of microphones) is not a meaningless one. For example, if you are recording an orchestra in a hall, two microphones and two tracks will provide the greatest sense of natural depth in the recording. This is so because the sounds of instruments vary according to their distance from the ear (or the microphone) and the human hearing and understanding mechanism is quite sensitive to these variations and assigns an aural perspective to the invisible orchestra on the basis of the information it receives. Now, if we use four microphones, placing two in front of the orchestra, and two halfway toward the rear of the orchestra, the instruments at the rear will sound more clearly — have more "presence" — while the depth illusion will be cut in half. If, to go to an ultimate point, we assign a microphone to every instrument in the orchestra, every instrument will be maximally clear, but there will be absolutely no sense of depth at all. If we believe, then, that depth is a necessary element in the reproduction of music, and we also believe that the ideal sound of any instrument is that when the instrument is clearest and most "close up" (not necessarily loudest, because loudness can always be adjusted), it can be seen that every recording is a compromise between opposite ideals. Virtually every record company, producer, or engineer draws the line of compromise at a different point, thus in one way accounting for the incredible number of different acoustical ambiances that issue from different records. Of course, one does not have to believe in the validity of either or both of the two ideals. But most record companies do.

The decision of what sort of microphone and multiple track setup to use is largely dependent on the sort of music to be recorded. In general, the simpler, more straightforward systems are used for classical music, the most



The original cast of "Hair" recording the "American tribal love rock musical" for RCA.

complex ones being reserved for popular music, particularly rock. While few classical producers employ the purist two-microphone, two-recording track system, some still do, and many use a three-microphone, three-track system. The particular advantage of the third track (which will later be evenly divided, left and right, and thus be a center) is most evident in recordings of concertos: the soloist is recorded on a track by himself, and this allows the ultimate balance of soloist and orchestra (always a very tricky matter in recording) to be readjusted and modified after the session is over. It makes such recordings easier and offers a built-in safety factor, but, as one can hear from many concerto recordings, the technique is often abused by electronically establishing a totally unreal and unmusical balance between soloist and orchestra. One of the most vital elements in making a recording is taste, and it is all too often most noticeable by its absence.

Recordings of more complicated classical works — operas, cantatas, oratorios — where the recording must deal with many independent sources of sound, are frequently made with multiple microphones. But the tendency in classical recording is still to feed the output of those multiple microphones into no more than three recording tracks, setting the essential balances at the recording session itself with minor adjustments to be made afterwards.

Most rock recordings (and many other popular music recordings) are done in precisely the opposite way. Every element is recorded separately and on a separate track and the balances of one part with the others are established long after the recording session itself has taken place. There is one minor and one major reason behind this. Producers and consumers of classical music are very much preoccupied with high fidelity sound quality, and the more microphones, the more tracks, and the more electronic processes the music has to go through, the more noise and distortion are added to the final record. Such distortion is usually considered a negligible factor in pop music recordings (unless specifically intended to be models of sonic excellence). That is the minor reason. The major reason is that those who produce classical music on records know in advance what the music is supposed to sound like and can therefore match what they hear to a mental image and make adjustments until the two coincide; the sound of much popular music, on the other hand, first comes into existence in the recording studio, and what it is supposed to sound like may not be decided until months later. At one time, popular performers tried to have their records sound like their live performances; now they face the exceedingly difficult task of trying to make their live performances sound like their records. (continued on p.55)

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# ROBERT WATT MILLER



1899 - 1970

As the curtain goes up on our 1970 season, we of the San Francisco Opera feel a great void. Robert Watt Miller is no longer with us.

We have missed him sorely during the pre-season stage and orchestra rehearsals of which he was such a familiar part for so many years. He used to come into the house and sit in the middle section of the empty main floor, often with a vocal score from his large library, which he would examine to see if there had been any changes in cuts or text. Frequently he walked towards the back of the auditorium to the stage director's desk to give highly valued criticism and comments.

On performance nights he arrived as much as one hour before curtain time, first making a trip to the box office to check on ticket sales, then going backstage to look at the setup and converse with technical personnel. If an organ was placed in the wings, he would almost always sit down and play several passages, the "Largo" by Handel being his favorite selection.

During performances his seat was at the back of Box F, subscribed for by him at all times. He had a very keen eye; whenever he rushed backstage, everyone knew he had noticed something wrong with the scenery or lighting before anyone else had.

After a premiere he would come on stage during curtain calls to personally thank and congratulate the artists. If he

was particularly pleased, he would visit the dressing rooms of singers or directors. He asked all artists appearing with the Company for a signed photograph; the picture gallery in his home was a remarkable documentation of more than 30 years of our opera. Before leaving the theatre, he would often walk around with me on the empty stage to give his frank opinion of the performance. While he was always kind, his praise was not given lightly, so it meant a great deal when it was forthcoming.

We had long and fascinating conversations during his visits to my office, sometimes during repeat performances or on Saturday afternoons. Shortly after last Christmas, he came the day before I left for Europe and stayed for several hours. I could not anticipate that this was to be his final visit.

In his memory Mr. Miller's friends and admirers, from all walks of life and from many parts of the world, have sent contributions to the San Francisco Opera. It is especially fitting that the Board of Directors has authorized the use of these funds to create a new production of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* for presentation during our 1971 season in honor of Robert Watt Miller. It was one of his favorite operas and it is my hope that our new production will be the tangible expression of our deepest gratitude for his many years of service and devotion to the San Francisco Opera.

*Frank Merbert Alden*





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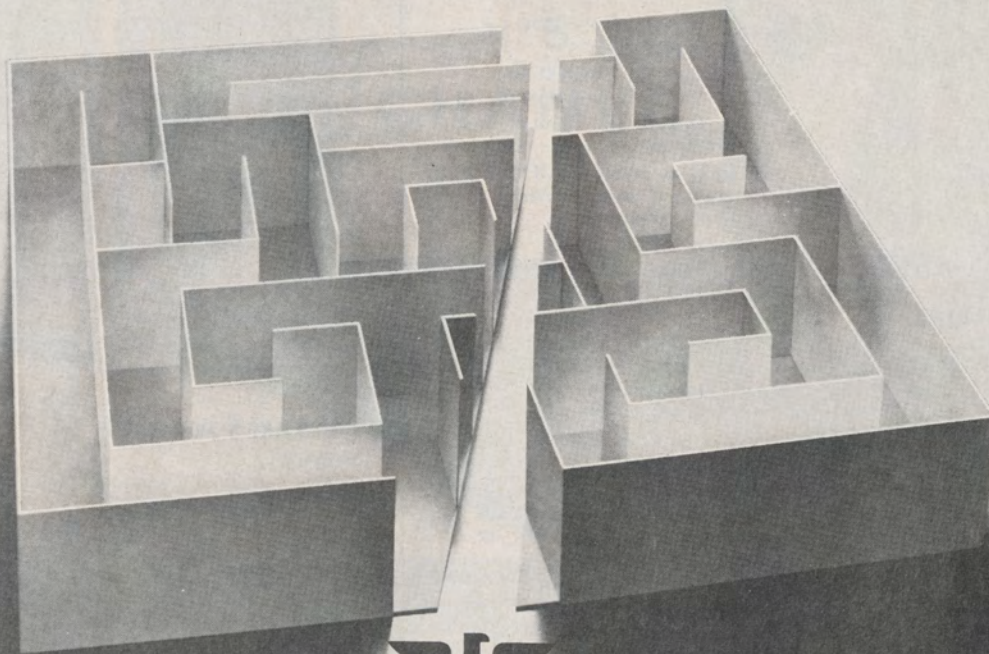
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
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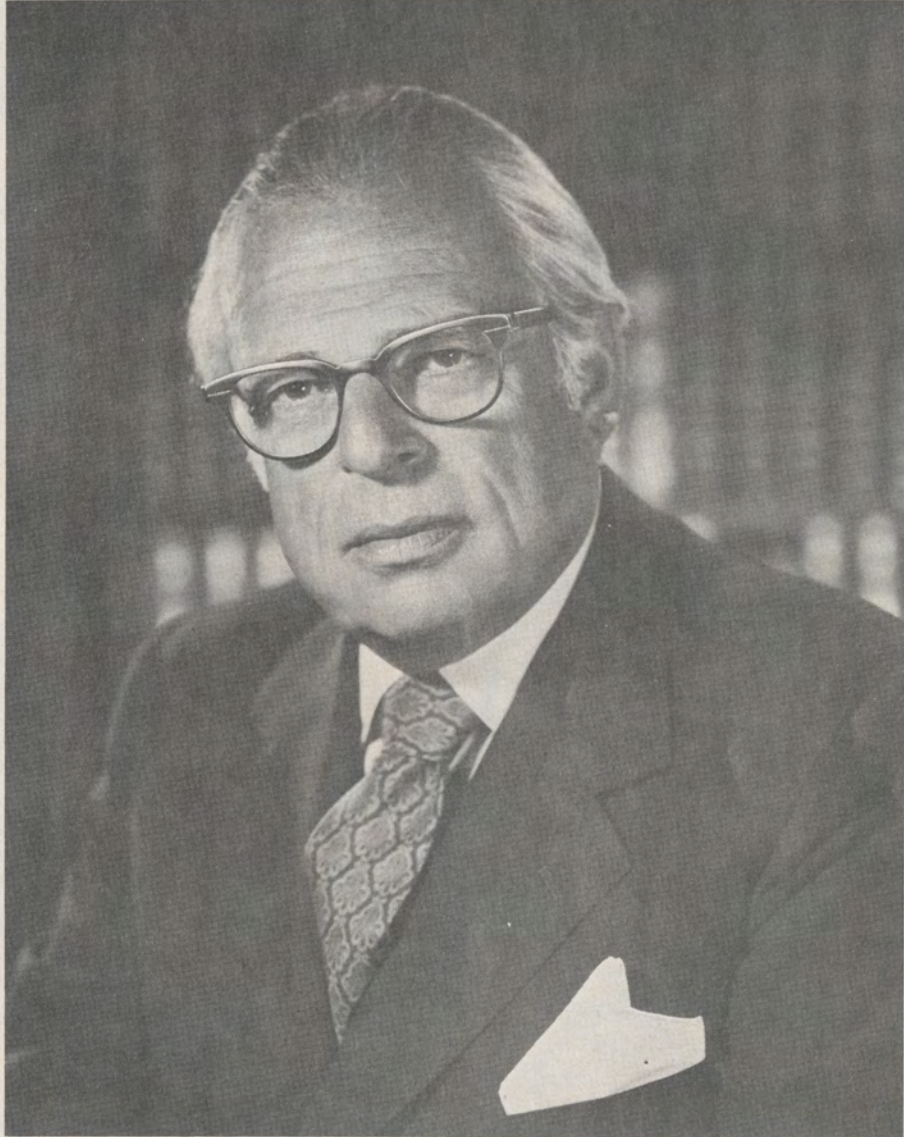
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*Principal*  
Lloyd Gowen  
Gary Gray

## Piccolo

Lloyd Gowen

## Oboe

James Matheson  
*Principal*  
Raymond Duste  
Allyson Christensen

## English Horn

Raymond Duste

## Clarinet

Philip Fath  
*Principal*  
Frealon N. Bibbins  
Donald Carroll

## Bass Clarinet

Frealon N. Bibbins  
Donald Carroll

## Bassoon

Walter Green  
*Principal*  
Jerry Dagg  
Robin Elliott

## Orchestra

### Contrabassoon

Robin Elliott

### French Horn

Herman Dorfman  
William Sabatini  
*Principals*  
James Callahan  
Ralph Hotz  
Jeremy Merrill

### Trumpet

Donald Reinberg  
*Principal*  
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### Trombone

John E. Meredith  
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Willard Spencer  
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### Tuba

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Dorothy Bogart  
Walda Bradley  
Norma Bruzzone  
Cynthia Cook  
Louise Corsale  
Carol Denyer-Bradley  
Sandra Drake  
Janice Felty  
Beverly Finn  
Ann Graber  
Lisa Louise Hill  
Veronika Lebedeff  
Tamaki McCracken  
Irene Moreci  
Ramona Mori  
Sheila Newcombe  
Luana Noble  
Rose Parker  
Jeanne Pfandl  
Cecilia Sanders  
Claudine Spindt  
Giovanna Szymkun

Vasso Theoharous  
Alma Wells  
Elizabeth Wilson  
Sally Winnington  
Arlene Woodburn  
Garifalia Zeissig

Winther Andersen  
Theodore Bakkila  
Jan Budzinski  
Joseph Ciampi  
Harry Clarke  
Peter Van Derick  
Harry M. De Lange  
Mischa Dolnikoff  
James Eitze  
Robert Eggert  
Dennis Emberling  
Spurgeon Felty  
Stan Gentry

John L. Glenister  
Colin Harvey  
L. B. Hayes  
Alva Henderson  
John Hudnall  
Conrad Knipfel  
Eugene Lawrence  
August Lourenzo  
Edward Lovasich  
Kenneth MacLaren  
Ronald Martin  
Robert McCracken  
Carlo Micheletti  
John Miller  
Thomas Miller  
Victor Montano  
Eugene Naham  
Mario Paredes  
Frank Parker  
Charles Pascoe  
James Page  
Robert Romanovsky  
Victor Shedko  
Francis Szymkun  
James Tarantino  
William Tredway

## Boys Chorus

Bradford Brennan  
Craig Brennan  
Robert Calvert  
Frederick Cohen  
David Englund  
David Green  
Randolph Haag  
Andrew Harris

Leonard Kalm  
Richard Kehres  
Tad Laird  
Gary Levy  
Stuart Misfeldt  
Christopher Nowak  
Tyrone Po  
Geoffrey Reed  
Jeremy Renton

Peter Rubardt  
Ted Schoenfeld  
David Sigal  
Scott Spiller  
Cyrian Tabuena  
Eugene Wang  
David Wolins  
Henry Wong

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Peggy Davis  
Mela Fleming  
Karen Hornschuch  
Carolyn Houser  
Judanna Lynn  
Leila Parello

Carla Sealander  
Allyson Segeler

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# REPERTOIRE 1970 SEASON

*Opening Night*  
Friday, September 18, 8:00

**TOSCA** (PUCCINI)  
Crespin/Spiess, MacNeil, Van Dam,  
Capecchi, Fried, Nolen, Lombardi  
Conductor: Cillario  
Stage director: Mansouri

*Saturday, September 19, 8:00*

**FALSTAFF** (VERDI)  
Costa, Price, Chookasian, Anderson/Evans,  
Burrows, Richardson, Ulfung, Berberian,  
Manton  
Conductor: Bartoletti  
Stage director: Evans, G. Hager

*Tuesday, September 22, 7:00*

**SIEGFRIED** (WAGNER)  
Lindholm, Nadler, Lewis/Thomas, Stewart,  
Ulfung, Richardson, Berberian  
Conductor: Suitner  
Production: P. Hager  
Designer: Skalicki, West

*Wednesday, September 23, 8:00*

**TOSCA** (PUCCINI)  
Same cast as September 18

*Friday, September 25, 8:00*

**FALSTAFF** (VERDI)  
Same cast as September 19

*Saturday, September 26, 8:00*

**TOSCA** (PUCCINI)  
Same cast as September 18

*Sunday, September 27, 1:00*

**SIEGFRIED** (WAGNER)  
Same cast as September 22

*Tuesday, September 29, 8:30*

**FALSTAFF** (VERDI)  
Same cast as September 19

*Wednesday, September 30, 8:00*

**CARMEN** (BIZET)  
Fassbaender, Marsh, Matsumoto, Nadler/  
Chauvet, Van Dam, Grant, Nolen, Manton,  
Fried  
Conductor: Perisson  
Stage director: Mansouri  
Designer: Bay  
Choreographer: Carvajal

*Friday, October 2, 7:00*

**SIEGFRIED** (WAGNER)  
Last performance this season  
Same cast as September 22

*Saturday, October 3, 8:00*

**CARMEN** (BIZET)  
Same cast as September 30

*Sunday, October 4, 2:00*

**TOSCA** (PUCCINI)  
Same cast as September 18

*Tuesday, October 6, 8:00*

**CARMEN** (BIZET)  
Same cast as September 30

*Wednesday, October 7, 8:00*

**FALSTAFF** (VERDI)  
Last performance this season  
Same cast as September 19

*Friday, October 9, 8:00*

**TOSCA** (PUCCINI)  
Same cast as September 18

Saturday, October 10, 8:00

**NABUCCO** (VERDI)  
Lippert, Anderson, Bybee/MacNeil, Tozzi,  
Bjoerling, Grant, Fried  
Conductor: Cillario  
Production: P. Hager  
Designer: Nomikos, West  
Choreographer: Collins

Sunday, October 11, 2:00

**CARMEN** (BIZET)  
Same cast as September 30

Tuesday, October 13, 8:00

**NABUCCO** (VERDI)  
Same cast as October 10

Friday, October 16, 8:00

**CARMEN** (BIZET)  
Same cast as September 30

Saturday, October 17, 8:00

**COSI FAN TUTTE** (MOZART)  
Production sponsored by  
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Price, Berganza, Sciutti/Davies, Rinaldi,  
Capechi  
Conductor: Pritchard  
Production: Ponnelle  
Designer: Ponnelle, West

Sunday, October 18, 2:00

**NABUCCO** (VERDI)  
Same cast as October 10

Tuesday, October 20, 8:30

**COSI FAN TUTTE** (MOZART)  
Same cast as October 17

Wednesday, October 21, 8:00

**NABUCCO** (VERDI)  
Last performance this season  
Same cast as October 10

Friday, October 23, 8:00

**COSI FAN TUTTE** (MOZART)  
Same cast as October 17

Saturday, October 24, 8:00

**SALOME** (STRAUSS)  
Silja, Cervena, Nadler, Matsumoto/Ulfung,  
Nienstedt, Peterson, Van Dam, Nolen,  
Monk, Grant, Fried, Janzen, Manton,  
Hall-Sundquist, Magary, Lombardi  
Conductor: Gregor  
Production: Wagner/Ebermann  
Designer: Wagner/Darling

Tuesday, October 27, 8:30

**SALOME** (STRAUSS)  
Same cast as October 24

Wednesday, October 28, 8:00

**COSI FAN TUTTE** (MOZART)  
Last performance this season  
Same cast as October 17

Friday, October 30, 8:00

**SALOME** (STRAUSS)  
Last performance this season  
Same cast as October 24

Saturday, October 31, 7:00

**TRISTAN UND ISOLDE** (WAGNER)  
Nilsson, Martin/Windgassen, Dooley, Tozzi,  
Monk, Davies, Grant, Hall-Sundquist  
Conductor: Suitner  
Production: P. Hager  
Designer: Bauer-Ecsy, West

Tuesday, November 3, 8:00

**FAUST** (GOUNOD)  
Beckman, Anderson, Cervena/Vanzo, Soyer,  
Cossa, Lombardi  
Conductor: Perisson  
Stage director: Fletcher  
Designer: Skalicki, West  
Choreographer: Johnson

Friday, November 6, 7:00

**TRISTAN UND ISOLDE** (WAGNER)  
Same cast as October 31

Saturday, November 7, 8:00

**OTELLO** (VERDI)  
Kabaivanska, Nadler/McCracken, Paskalis,  
Davies, Grant, Hall-Sundquist, Nolen,  
Lombardi  
Conductor: Gregor  
Production: Ponnelle  
Designer: Ponnelle, West

Sunday, November 8, 2:00

**FAUST** (GOUNOD)  
Same cast as November 3

Tuesday, November 10, 7:00

**TRISTAN UND ISOLDE** (WAGNER)  
Same cast as October 31

Wednesday, November 11, 8:00

**OTELLO** (VERDI)  
Same cast as November 7

Friday, November 13, 8:00

**FAUST** (GOUNOD)  
Same cast as November 3

Saturday, November 14, 8:00

**THE RAKE'S PROGRESS** (STRAVINSKY)  
Marsh, Anderson, Petersen/Dempsey,  
Dooley, Grant, Fried, Lombardi  
Conductor: Schuller  
Production: P. Hager  
Designer: Skalicki, Colangelo

Sunday, November 15, 1:00

**TRISTAN UND ISOLDE** (WAGNER)  
Same cast as October 31

Tuesday, November 17, 8:00

**THE RAKE'S PROGRESS** (STRAVINSKY)  
Same cast as November 14

Wednesday, November 18, 7:00

**TRISTAN UND ISOLDE** (WAGNER)  
Last performance this season  
Same cast as October 31

Friday, November 20, 8:00

**OTELLO** (VERDI)  
Same cast as November 7

Saturday, November 21, 8:00

**FAUST** (GOUNOD)  
Same cast as November 3

Sunday, November 22, 2:00

**TOSCA** (PUCCINI)  
Kirsten/Domingo, Quilico, Monk, Grant,  
Fried, Nolen, Lombardi  
Conductor: Levine  
Stage director: Farruggio

Tuesday, November 24, 8:00

**OTELLO** (VERDI)  
Same cast as November 7

Wednesday, November 25, 8:00

**FAUST** (GOUNOD)  
Last performance this season  
Same cast as November 3

Thursday, November 26, 8:00

Special Thanksgiving Day Performance  
Last performance this season  
**CARMEN** (BIZET)  
Davidson, Marsh, Matsumoto, Nadler/  
Domingo, Monk, Grant, Nolen, Manton,  
Fried  
Conductor: Perisson  
Stage director: Farruggio  
Designer: Bay  
Choreographer: Carvajal

Friday, November 27, 8:00

**THE RAKE'S PROGRESS** (STRAVINSKY)  
Last performance this season  
Same cast as November 14

Saturday, November 28, 8:00

In celebration of Dorothy Kirsten's 25th  
Anniversary with the San Francisco Opera  
**TOSCA** (PUCCINI)  
Last performance this season  
Same cast as November 22

Sunday, November 29, 2:00

**OTELLO** (VERDI)  
Last performance of the season  
Same cast as November 7

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It is extremely satisfying to Kurt Herbert Adler and his staff to be able to report that we entered the 1970 season with a fifteen per cent increase in subscribers, the largest number in our history. Not only have previous subscribers renewed at the highest rate ever, but we are also welcoming over 3500 new subscribers, more than in any past season. And single performance ticket advance sales have been extremely heavy, too. Proof indeed of the continued vitality of opera in the Bay Area.

We are deeply indebted to Crocker-Citizens National Bank for its grant of \$41,200 for the new production of *Così fan tutte*. Part of the Bank's celebration of its one-hundredth anniversary, this marks the first time we have received a new production from a local corporation. Especial thanks should be given to R. Gwin Follis for his efforts to obtain this important grant. We hope that this form of close involvement by business with the arts will become increasingly common in the years ahead.

Unlike so many products, opera performances cannot utilize the techniques of mass production and automation to counteract the rising expenses of labor and materials. So opera production costs continue to spiral upward. Every effort is made by the Association to establish the lowest possible operating budget, consistent with our ability to present opera of the highest standards. While our box-office income covers a higher percentage of costs than is the case for other opera companies, the gap between costs and income must be bridged by our annual Fund Drive. The 1969/70 Fund Drive raised \$580,000, the largest amount in our history, and we are particularly grateful to Robert A. Hornby, Assistant to the President, and Co-Chairmen R. Gwin Follis and Marco F. Hellman for their untiring efforts and to the many thousands of concerned individuals whose generosity has made it possible for us to continue.

However, we are somewhat in the position of the character in *Through the Looking Glass* who had to run faster and faster just to stay in the same place. The 1970/71 Fund Drive target has had to be set even higher than last year in order for us just to maintain our present levels. Our immediate problems are further complicated by the fact that the recent decline in the stock market hit especially hard the family foundations and trusts from which we have in the past received considerable support. This means that we must look to individual and corporate contributors to a greater degree than before for the funds we require. As for the future, it has become more and more evident that the only solution to the mounting financial crisis faced by the San Francisco Opera, in common with all other major performing arts institutions in America, is through substantial increases in the amount of assistance from traditional as well as new sources. Our hopes for increased government funding depend upon our ability to demonstrate widespread financial support from the community.

San Francisco is known the world over as an "opera city". If it is to remain so we must have the personal involvement of each person who loves opera. The maintenance and continued growth of the San Francisco Opera require such involvement. One cannot exist without the other. The Opera cannot exist without you.

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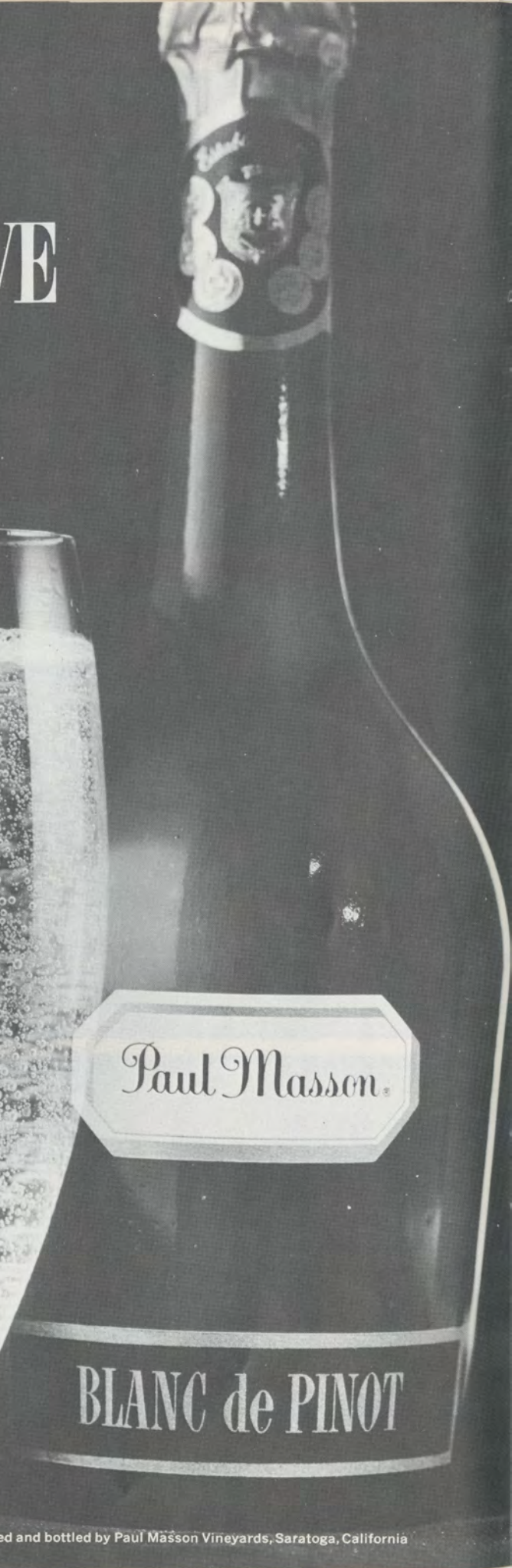
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## The Story of "Otello"

ACT I—During a storm, citizens and soldiers are gathered in the harbor of Cyprus, in front of Otello's castle. Otello comes ashore and announces the victory over the Turkish fleet ("Esultate!"), then enters his castle. The soldiers begin drinking in celebration of the victory, Iago among them. He is upset because of Cassio's promotion to a rank higher than his own. He seeks out Roderigo, who secretly loves Desdemona, and the two begin plying Cassio with wine. Iago sparks a fight, which is stopped by Otello who relieves Cassio of his command. Everybody leaves except Desdemona and Otello ("Già nella notte densa").

ACT II—Iago, proceeding with his scheming, urges Cassio to seek Desdemona's aid in regaining his commission. After Cassio leaves in search of Desdemona, Iago soliloquizes about his beliefs ("Credo in un Dio crudel"). Seeing Cassio in conversation with Desdemona, Iago calls Otello to witness it, thus planting the first seed of jealousy. The townspeople bring flowers to Desdemona in homage and Otello is once more enthralled by her beauty and innocence. But as she starts to plead Cassio's cause, his suspicions are fully awakened. When she tries to wipe his forehead with a handkerchief, he throws it to the floor. Emilia, Desdemona's companion and Iago's wife, picks it up. When Iago asks her for it, she protests, but gives it to him. Left alone with Iago, Otello bids farewell to his peace of mind ("Ora e per sempre addio"). Iago adds to his jealousy by telling him that he heard Cassio whisper Desdemona's name in his sleep ("Era la notte"), and that he saw the handkerchief in Cassio's hand. Iago and Otello swear vengeance ("Si, pel ciel").

ACT III—Ignoring the imminent arrival of the Venetian ambassador, Otello confronts Desdemona ("Dio ti giocondi"), thinking only about her supposed infidelity. He requests that she produce the handkerchief alternate with her pleas for mercy to Cassio. Confused, Desdemona leaves. Otello wonders about the cruelty of God's punishment for him ("Dio! mi potevi scagliar"), and hides when Iago and Cassio come in. Iago enters into a conversation about one of Cassio's amorous conquests, which Otello partly hears, believing Desdemona to be the lady in question ("Essa t'avvince"). Otello promises Iago that Desdemona will die that same night. The Venetian ambassador Lodovico and other dignitaries arrive. They inform Otello that he has been recalled to Venice, while Cassio is to be Governor of Cyprus. Otello misinterprets every response of Desdemona's, and finally strikes her. Overcome by rage and emotion, Otello collapses. Iago points to him with the words "Behold the lion!"

ACT IV—Desdemona prepares for bed and tells Emilia of an old, sad song which keeps coming to her mind (Willow song: "Piangea cantando"). After Emilia leaves, she sings a prayer ("Ave Maria") and retires. Otello enters, looks at his sleeping wife and kisses her. He asks the now awakened Desdemona to prepare for death, then charges her with having an affair with Cassio. Her denials are useless and he strangles her. Emilia, alarmed by her cries for help, knocks on the door until Otello opens it. Stunned by the tragedy, she calls for help. Otello admits to having killed his wife for her infidelity. Emilia explains how the handkerchief got into Iago's hands. Iago runs out of the room. Otello takes his sword and warns everybody to stand back ("Niun mi tema"). He addresses the dead Desdemona, then stabs himself and kisses his wife for the last time.

Libretti, with English translation, on sale in the foyer.

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## The Flames of Love Swiftly Pass

by Michael Barclay

At the center of Arrigo Boito's brilliant adaptation of Shakespeare's *Othello* is a core of intense pessimism expressed as a theological struggle between Iago's God-of-Hate and Desdemona's Christ. Standing infirm between these warring forces is Otello's faith, a faith so fragile that a theatrical demon can destroy its entire substance with a gossamer web of flowers and silk. Gone from the work are Desdemona's intellect and strength of wit, gone is Iago's resentful suspicion of Otello, gone is the violent sense of time—of brevity which leads naturally to confusion—gone are all the mitigating structures that make Shakespeare's Moor grotesque, fascinating and ultimately tragic—in their place a tale of weakness: weakness of love, weakness of faith, weakness of Christianity in the face of Satan. If Boito's tragic pessimism has an expressed message it is

*The fire of joy swiftly burns!  
Swiftly pass the flames of love!*

Verdi's own Christian compassion and deeply felt humanity palliate Boito's anti-theism, and the effect of the work as a totality is far less harsh, far more pathetic than a close consideration of the libretto at first suggests. If there is any sense of tragedy at the work's conclusion it is entirely the result of Verdi's music lending strength and grandeur to the character of Otello and bending the psychological contours of the work. Verdi's music ennobles the character of Otello and Desdemona's love and undercuts Iago's existential pessimism with theatrical irony. It is this spiritual tension between Verdi and Boito that is at the heart of their cooperative genius and leads directly to *Otello*, one of the greatest works of the Italian lyric stage.

*Otello* was Verdi's first music-drama, a term invented originally by Wagner to describe his own works. In music-drama all stale operatic conventions are discarded and the musical composition reveals the text, sets the text and comments on the text. The text becomes the focus; the musical ideas are of concern as they brilliantly illuminate the poetry in a manner that moves the form far beyond opera or spoken drama. This is the Super-Art, the art of Wagner, Verdi and Boito, Hoffmannsthal and Strauss

and Benjamin Britten. This is the most elusive of all talents, for it demands supreme genius as composer and poet. Only Richard Wagner combined these talents in a single man, but the triumvirate of Boito, Verdi and Shakespeare brought Italian opera far beyond its original confines.

Verdi's music, up to and including *Otello*, is so perfectly clear and lucid, so artfully molded to suit the range of color and emotion of the human voice that it speaks for itself and needs little explication. Boito's libretto, on the other hand, is subtler to discuss and this perhaps explains the pages of clichéd lip service it normally receives. It is far too brilliant and fascinating to gloss over with the usual "best Italian opera libretto"—for Boito penned no mere operatic libretto but a towering adaptation of Shakespeare's play in the form of a music-drama text—a text that at every moment anticipates Verdi's genius.

Boito draws his tale in vivid black and white, the black Barbarian and the blonde Venetian, the spotless Desdemona and blemished Iago, Otello's glory and desperate lack of faith. These violent extremes are vital to the shape of the work. If Desdemona is less faithful, Otello's suspicion is less monstrous. If Iago's God is too strong, Otello is not weak enough, and Otello's weakness is the subject of the work. So flimsy is the glorious Otello's faith that a whispered, "I like that not" shakes it to pieces in an instant.

During the storm that opens the first act the Cypriot citizens beg their Christian God to protect their leader's warship. The storm chorus is so demonically scored it rivals Verdi's own "Dies Irae" as a vision of the Last Judgement.

*God shakes the wild heaven, dark  
as a pall.*

*God, from the glare of the tempest!*

*God, from the lure of the sandbar!*

*Save . . . Venetian fortune!  
Thou, who rulest the stars and Fate!*

*Thou, who commandest the world and the heavens!*

Otello's entrance is supremely ironic, for in his christianized arrogance he bellows

*Exult! The Moslems' pride is  
buried in the sea; ours and  
Heaven's is the Glory!*

However loudly the Venetian General asserts his Christian identity, he never escapes his barbaric origins in African slavehood.

Boito quickly establishes Iago's beliefs and his faith in infidelity

*I swear, if a woman's fragile vow  
prove not too difficult a knot for  
my genius nor yet for Hell's,  
that woman will be yours.*

The great "fuoco di gioia" chorus which follows Iago's promise reiterates his pronouncement on love. All too often viewed as a display of Verdi's virtuosity, Boito's chorus lightly dismisses love as a "brief flame that glitters, grows dim, throbs, wavers, flickers and dies." The spastic, dying fire darkly foreshadows the course of Otello's love.

Boito's irony is less all-embracing than Shakespeare's, and lines like Iago's "Let cowards fly from the lively cup who hide deceit in their hearts" are all but lost in Verdi's brilliant ensemble. Yet here too a double genius is at work, for if we lose Boito's ironic line, Verdi's menacing coloratura writing for Iago establishes his deceitful character far better. Iago's violent, seductive, frightening command "Beva!—Drink!" descends clearly and meaningfully below the drunken ensemble, and forms its terrifying foundation.

Otello's deliberate use of irony as he shouts at the battling Cypriots

*Am I among Saracens! Or have  
you turned into raging Turks  
tearing each other to pieces?*

is subtly turned on the General himself for the Moor's rage soon destroys his civilized facade

*. . . by Heaven! Ah! Rage puts  
our guardian angel to flight!*

Indeed, the savage in him will soon tear his own soul to pieces and destroy his guardian angel—Desdemona.

The ensuing love duet is so cleverly structured and beautifully scored that ironic lines and grave foreshadowings are justly overpowered

*Let war thunder and the world  
be engulfed by it, if after im-  
mense rage comes immense love!*

He calls Desdemona a Paradise which brightens his "dark" world, a radiant star which illuminates his universe, and Verdi's orchestral horizon trembles in the star-lit, passion filled night. But for all the seeming security of their love, Otello's vague fear bursts out

*Let Death come! And take me in  
the ecstasy of this supreme mo-  
ment! Such is the joy of my soul  
that I am afraid, afraid that  
another such divine moment will  
never be conceded me in the  
unknown future of my fate.*



Rather than offering a vision of growing love as comfort, Desdemona demonstrates her passive faith by answering

*May Heaven dispel all worry and may love not change with the changing years.*

It is this quality of her faith joined to Otello's ecstatic love that will not prove capable of standing up to Iago's envy and hatred.

"The way to salvation lies open before you!", says Iago, as he directs the intimidated Cassio toward Desdemona. "Vanne!" he commands and then launches into the only intended set piece in the opera, his justly famous Credo.

*Go then; I already envision your end. You are driven by your demon. And mine drags me on, the demon in whom I believe, implacable God.*

*I believe in a cruel God who has created me in his own image and whom, now in hate, I name. From a vile germ or atom am I born. I am evil because I am a man and I feel the primordial filth in me. Yes! This is my creed!*

*I believe that an honest man is merely a poor actor, both in his visage and his heart—and every part of him is a lie, tears, kisses, looks, sacrifices and honor.*

*And I believe man is the joke of some unfair fate from the germ in the cradle to the worms in his grave.*

*And, after so much mockery comes Death. And then? And then? Death is Nothingness. Heaven is an old wives' tale.*

This is the enemy's creed, spewed forth to the ironic, bitterly laughing brass. This is the faith that destroys faith and makes a mockery of faith. Yet Verdi will not make him too strong and undercuts Iago's sense of self with music that tells us in its crudity that he is still the stage brother of Count di Luna. For it is not Iago's strength which is at issue, but Otello's weakness! Fully cognizant of his own limitations, Iago invokes the aid of a stronger force

*Help, help me, Satan, to achieve my goal!*

Iago intuitively understands his prey, senses Otello's dependence on Desdemona and makes this clear

*She inclines her smiling lovely face. One beam from that radiant smile would be enough to drag Otello to his ruin.*

Iago need offer only a quiet, careless, half-sung "Ciò m'accora.", "I like that not." . . . and Otello is caught. Within moments the Moor, the Barbarian, has risen to the surface and is projecting his own fears, still cloaked in the veil of his adopted faith

*By Heaven. . . In the cloister of your soul resides some fearful monster. . . Puke from your throat your worst thoughts in your worst words!*

So tentative Otello's control, so easily destroyed his security, that he himself encourages his eager ensign. To a terrifying musical vision exhaled by the serpentine bassoon Iago shows Otello an image of himself

*Beware, Sir, of jealousy! It is a dark hydra, livid, blind, which poisons itself with its own venom, its breast is torn by an open sore.*

With a caressing seductivity Iago whispers that Otello should merely be "vigilant", for his own eyes can "ricondur la fede"—restore the faith which he ingeniously tells the Moor he has already lost.

In the scene which follows, Boito extravagantly continues his theological metaphors—Desdemona is hailed by the chorus as an angel, as the Madonna, as a sacred image to be adored and adorned and the state of Otello's mind perfectly revealed with

*If she is deceitful, then Heaven mocks itself!*

The scene concludes with Iago's satanically hypocritical response to Otello's threats

*Divine Grace, defend me! Heaven protect you! . . . I want the whole world to witness that honesty is dangerous.*

It is appropriate that Iago's only tangible proof is the handkerchief he steals, for its insubstantiality is the point exactly, that is, as it has derisively been called, "The Tragedy of a Handkerchief." With this single piece of evidence, as yet unproduced, Otello drops all Christian pretense and addresses his pagan oath of vengeance to the "marbled sky, forked lightning and dark, destroying sea!" From this point on to the inexorable murder, every show of faith from his wife, every prayer, every protestation of innocence, serve only to further infuriate the savage Otello has become—they are only ironic reminders of what seems a foolish former faith in her God and in her love.

Otello's real relationship to Desdemona's God is subtly worked out in

the scenes leading up to his most moving and revealing monologue, "Dio! Mi potevi . . ." While Desdemona has all too readily been willing to accept guilt for Otello's hysteria and sorrow—"I am the innocent cause of so much grief"—he never admits his own culpability. His outburst to her God is no prayer, but an accusation

*God! You might have tested me with afflictions of poverty and shame—you might have made a heap of rubble and a falsehood of my brave triumphal glory . . . And I would have borne the cruel cross of suffering and disgrace . . . have been resigned to the will of Heaven. But torn from me is the mirage wherein I joyously lulled my soul. Mercy, . . . now you must hide your holy face with the hideous mask of Hell!*

Otello never understands that it is he himself who has torn off his love, destroyed his faith, broken all his images of glory—he never perceives that he has gone to war with himself and lost.

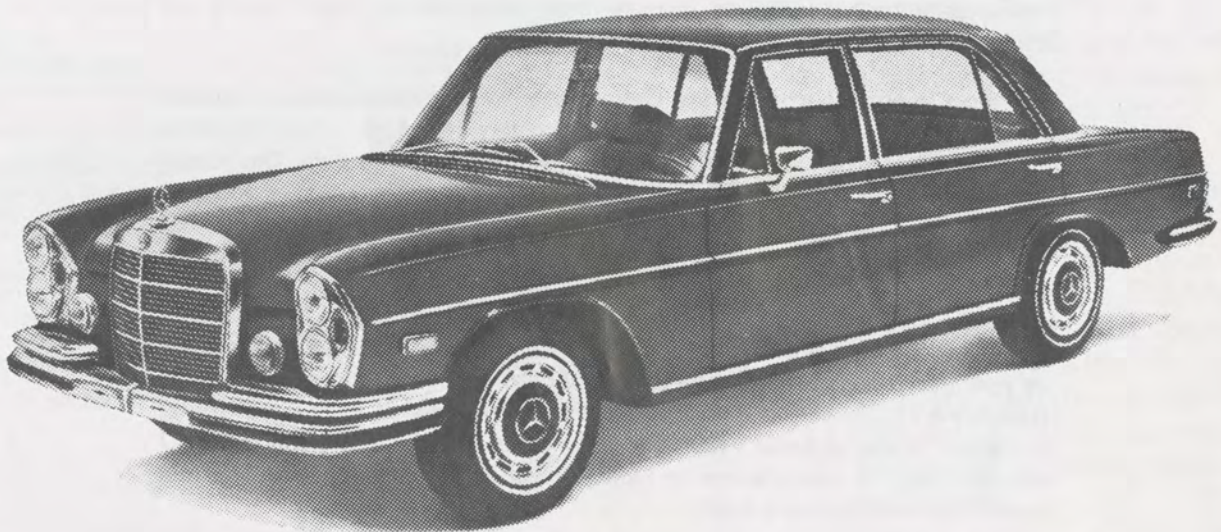
Boito appropriately has Desdemona recite her "Ave Maria" as her last futile gesture to prevent the doom she knows instinctively is imminent. Her prayer is so resigned, so passive, so peaceful, that as a prelude to violence it disables our emotional preparation. With desperate irony Otello turns her Christian faith upon her, crying that she damns herself on her deathbed—"Confess, I would not damn your soul." Even as she dies she maintains her faith and will not accuse Otello of murder but rather confess herself a suicide.

Grimly pessimistic, there are no changes in character at the conclusion of the work. Iago will not admit his lies and in a gross mockery of heroism and justice flees the scene. Desdemona remains consistently devoted to her God and her husband, asking only that she be "recommended" to both, and Otello, too, reiterates his life, for with chilling and heartbreaking effect Verdi summons once again the very music of his brief love . . . "A kiss, another kiss, and yet one more"—"Un bacio . . . un bacio ancora . . . un'altro bacio."

*Michael Barclay is opera critic at KPFA-FM, and host of the popular opera program The Superart. He is a Ford Fellow and is writing his thesis on opera in James Joyce at the University of California, Berkeley where he will also lecture on Wagner.*

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October 15  
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Speaker: Robert Darling

November 6  
OTELLO  
Speaker: Dr. Jan Popper

November 13  
THE RAKE'S PROGRESS  
Speaker: Gunther Schuller

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Presented by Opera ACTION  
South Peninsula Chapter  
Oak Creek Club  
Palo Alto, 10:00 a.m.

September 17  
SIEGFRIED  
Speaker: Speight Jenkins

September 24  
FALSTAFF  
Speaker: Dr. Jan Popper

October 1  
NABUCCO  
Speaker: Dr. Stanley Easter

October 15  
OTELLO  
Speaker: John Rockwell

November 5  
THE RAKE'S PROGRESS  
Speaker: Miss Marie Gibson

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Presented by Opera ACTION  
Marin County Chapter  
Marin Art & Garden Center  
Ross, 8:30 p.m.

September 17  
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Speaker: Speight Jenkins

October 8  
COSI FAN TUTTE  
Speaker: Dr. Jan Popper

October 22  
FAUST  
Speaker: James H. Schwabacher, Jr.

November 5  
OTELLO  
Speaker: Miss Stephanie von Buchau

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Presented by the Jewish Community Center  
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September 21  
"A Half Century of the  
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Speaker: Arthur Bloomfield

October 12  
"Mozart and Stravinsky"  
Speaker: Robert Commanday

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Presented by the San Jose  
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September 18  
SIEGFRIED  
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September 25  
FALSTAFF  
Speaker: Dr. Jan Popper

October 2  
NABUCCO  
Speaker: Dr. Stanley Easter

October 9  
COSI FAN TUTTE  
Speaker: John Tyers

October 16  
OTELLO  
Speaker: John Rockwell

October 23  
TRISTAN UND ISOLDE  
Speaker: to be announced

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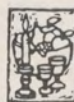
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# WHO'S WHO



**SYLVIA ANDERSON** returns to San Francisco for her fourth season. Her debut role in 1967 was that of Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier*, with which she scored a great success. That same year she also sang Siebel in *Faust*, a role she will re-create this season. Born in Denver, Colorado, Miss Anderson graduated from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, N.Y. She sang with the Central City and Santa Fe operas before going to Europe on a Fulbright scholarship. Currently a leading mezzo-soprano of the Frankfurt Opera, Miss Anderson makes frequent guest appearances in most of the major European opera houses. Last summer she sang at the Bayreuth Festival for the first time.



**JUDITH BECKMAN** is making her first professional appearance in America as Marguerite in *Faust*. She was heard on this stage once before: as a winner of the 1961 San Francisco Opera Auditions. Miss Beckman's musical studies included operatic training at the UCLA Opera Workshop with Dr. Jan Popper and at the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara with Mme. Lotte Lehmann. Her studies continued in Hamburg, where she went on a Fulbright scholarship. Her formal debut took place in 1962 in the Braunschweig production of *Così fan tutte*. She was soon engaged by the Düsseldorf and Hamburg opera companies, where she is still active. She has also appeared as guest artist in the opera houses of Amsterdam, Brussels, Vienna, Berlin and Munich. Steeped in music from early childhood (her father was a baritone and her mother a pianist), she is married to opera coach and conductor Irving Beckman, who is a member of the San Francisco Opera musical staff this season.



**SONA CERVENA**, returning here for her eighth consecutive season, is well known to San Francisco operagoers through her many character portrayals. The striking mezzo-soprano from Czechoslovakia started her career as an actress, but music soon took

first place and she was engaged by the Brno Opera House. A Prague recital led to a contract with the Berlin Deutsche Oper and a great number of appearances in most major European and American cities. One of her recent successes included the leading role in the world premiere of Kelemen's *Belagerungszustand* (State of Siege), given in Frankfurt.



**DOMINIC COSSA** started his career in psychology. After receiving his Masters degree, he took up formal vocal studies and was first heard as Sharpless in 1961 in the New York City Opera production of *Madama Butterfly*. By now a leading baritone of that company and a frequent guest at the Metropolitan Opera, he has added a large number of roles to his repertoire, including the elder Germont, Rigoletto and Valentin in *Faust*. It is in the latter role that he is making his San Francisco Opera debut. He was previously heard in San Francisco in the Spring Opera productions of *The Pearl Fishers*, *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *I Pagliacci*.



**JOY DAVIDSON** will be heard for the first time with the San Francisco Opera in a special performance of *Carmen* on November 26. She is, however, known to Bay Area audiences for her portrayal of the Secretary in Spring Opera's 1969 production of *The Consul*. *Carmen* is the role which has taken her around the world and made her a first prize winner of the 1967 International Young Opera Singers Contest in Sofia. Miss Davidson was a member of the Metropolitan Opera National Company with which she toured for two seasons and sang *Carmen* some 45 times. Last year, she attracted nationwide attention as Sister Jeanne in the American premiere of Penderecki's *The Devils of Loudoun* (Santa Fe) and as Konchakovna in *Prince Igor* (New York City Opera).



**RYLAND DAVIES** joins the impressive group of Welsh singers currently on the roster of the San Francisco Opera. This fall, during the season marking his American debut, he will be heard as Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*, Cassio in *Otello* and the Sailor's Voice in *Tristan und Isolde*. Born in Cwm Ebbw Vale, Davies was educated at the Royal Manchester College of Music. While still a student, he won several prizes, including the Ricordi Prize and the Im-

perial League of Opera Prize. His principal role at Glyndebourne in 1968 was that of Belmonte in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*. By 1969, he performed with every British opera company and with every major orchestra. His appearances this year included Cassio in the Salzburg Festival production of *Otello* under von Karajan.



**GREGORY DEMPSEY** started singing at the age of ten. At the age of sixteen, he took up formal vocal studies and trained as a baritone, but by the time he reached twenty he became a tenor. He was soon appearing in major roles at the National Opera in his native Melbourne. In 1962, he was offered a contract with London's Sadler's Wells and has been singing there ever since. In 1964, he sang the role of Gregor in the British premiere of *The Makropulos Case*. He repeated the role in the American premiere of the same opera in San Francisco (1966), which also marked his American debut. During the past year, he appeared as Erik in *The Flying Dutchman*, Don Jose in *Carmen*, David in *Die Meistersinger* as well as in title roles of Britten's *Albert Herring* and *Peter Grimes*.



**PLACIDO DOMINGO** is one of the most highly acclaimed tenors of the world. He is extremely active in America, as well as in Marseilles, Hamburg, Berlin, Vienna, and at Milan's La Scala. Born in Madrid, Domingo was brought up in Mexico and received most of his musical training there. His debut as Alfredo in *La Traviata* took place when he was twenty. He then moved to Tel-Aviv, where he sang for two and a half years, with guest appearances throughout Europe. Upon returning to America, he joined the New York City Opera for performances as Don Jose and Pinkerton and won international fame for his portrayal of the title role in Ginastera's *Don Rodrigo*. During the last few years, he has also sung a number of roles with the Metropolitan Opera. In 1971, he will make his first appearance at London's Covent Garden—as Cavaradossi in *Tosca*.



**WILLIAM DOOLEY** returns to his native California as one of the leading baritones on the international circuit. Born in Modesto, he studied music at the Eastman School of Music and as a Fulbright scholar in Munich. Following his Heidelberg debut

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(1957), he was engaged by the Berlin Deutsche Oper, where he is still appearing. For the past seven years, he has sung regularly with the Metropolitan Opera. Dooley has a large and varied repertoire and during the last year alone was heard in *Elektra*, Henze's *Die Bassariden* (composed for and dedicated to him), *The Flying Dutchman*, *Fidelio*, the *Ring* cycle and *Tristan und Isolde* (Berlin), *Il Trovatore* (San Antonio), *Salome* (Santa Fe) and *Don Giovanni* (Copenhagen).



**MATTHEW FARRUGGIO** is now in his fifteenth season with the company. In addition to his assignments with the San Francisco Opera and Spring Opera of San Francisco, he is also extremely active with the Merola Opera Program, which is devoted to the training of young professional singers. His experience in opera is unusually broad. As a singer, he appeared in most opera houses in the United States. He also took part in Broadway shows as well as on radio and television. His studies mostly took place in Europe and included costume design, painting and sculpture. In addition to San Francisco, he has staged operas in Vancouver, Honolulu and Houston.



**ALLEN FLETCHER** is known to San Francisco operagoers for his direction of the productions of *Romeo et Juliette* and *Martha* in the inaugural season of the Spring Opera of San Francisco. Dividing his time equally between opera and drama, Fletcher has directed many operas, including world premieres of Ward's *The Crucible*, Floyd's *The Passion of Jonathan Wade* and Ellstein's *Golem*, as well as numerous dramas for various repertory companies, notably for the Shakespeare Festival in Stratford, Conn. and for San Francisco's A.C.T. Of particular note was his recent staging of *Hadrian VII* for the latter company. He will be making his San Francisco Opera directing debut with *Faust* this year.



**HOWARD FRIED** has been with the San Francisco Opera for fourteen seasons and has some 150 active opera roles in his repertoire. A resident of San Diego, Fried has sung with most of the opera companies in the United States. He appeared in a number of leading tenor roles with the New York City Opera and is also very active as a concert and oratorio performer.



**CLIFFORD GRANT**, returning to San Francisco for his fifth consecutive season, was born in Melbourne, Australia, where he was known as a concert performer. He went to England and was soon singing principal opera roles. Presently on the roster of the Sadler's Wells Opera, Grant was this year heard as Hunding in *The Valkyrie*, Don Basilio in *The Barber of Seville* and Pogner in *The Mastersingers of Nuremberg*. He sings the role of the Commendatore in a new recording of *Don Giovanni*.



**BOHUMIL GREGOR** is currently first conductor at the Hamburg Staatsoper and since 1965 has been a permanent guest conductor of the Royal Swedish Opera in Stockholm. He was born in Prague, studied there and at the age of nineteen became a double-bass player in the orchestra of the Smetana Theatre. Maestro Gregor is acclaimed for his Janacek recordings, and has conducted all of the Czech composer's works in the theatre. One of his most recent assignments included the world premiere of Kelemen's opera *Belagerungszustand* (State of Siege) with the Hamburg Opera. His American debut took place last season in the San Francisco Opera production of Janacek's *Jenufa*.



**PAUL HAGER** has staged more than seventy productions here, including the American premieres of *Troilus and Cressida*, *Medea*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, *Carmina Burana*, *Katerina Ismailova*, *The Makropoulos Case* and *The Visitation*. Hager started his career in Munich and in 1951 became assistant to Wieland Wagner in the inaugural postwar Bayreuth Festival season. He has staged operas at the Vienna State Opera, in Naples, Cologne, Essen, Mannheim, Nürnberg, Buenos Aires and Salzburg. His recent productions here included the complete *Ring* cycle, *Jenufa* and *The Magic Flute*.



**DAVID HALL-SUNDQUIST** started singing in a boys chorus in his native Chicago.

His early opera experience included four seasons with the Chicago Lyric Opera Chorus. Following four years in the army, during which he was tenor soloist with the U.S. Army Chorus, he joined Western Opera Theater in 1969, and was heard in several leading roles.



**RAINA KABAIVANSKA** returns to San Francisco for the role in which she made her American debut here in 1962: Desdemona in *Otello*. She is well known for her portrayal of this role throughout the world and was most recently heard in the Bolshoi Opera production of *Otello*. After studies in Sofia and Italy, the Bulgarian soprano made her professional debut at La Scala in 1960. She sang extensively in Italy, as well as in Vienna, Buenos Aires, Santiago (Chile) and Moscow. In 1966, she was awarded the Bellini Prize for performances of *Beatrice di Tenda* in Catania. That same year, she returned to San Francisco as Mistress Ford in *Falstaff*. She has also sung leading roles at the Metropolitan Opera for a number of seasons. The 1969/70 season at La Scala opened with a new production of *Ernani*, starring Miss Kabaivanska.



**DOROTHY KIRSTEN** this year celebrates the 25th anniversary of her debut with the San Francisco Opera in a special performance of *Tosca*, scheduled for November 28th. Highlights of Miss Kirsten's career include the American premieres of Poulenc's *Dialogue of the Carmelites* and Walton's *Troilus and Cressida*. Best known for her portrayals of Puccini heroines, she has scored great successes in *La Fanciulla del West*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Manon Lescaut* and *La Boheme* as well as in *La Traviata* and *Louise*. In 1962, she made history as the first American soprano to sing *Traviata*, *Tosca*, *Madama Butterfly* and *Faust* in the Soviet Union. She has played parts in a number of movies and is frequently seen on television.



**JAMES LEVINE**, the young assistant conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra, makes his San Francisco Opera debut in two special performances of *Tosca*. Levine was previously heard in San Francisco last spring when he conducted two special concerts with the San Francisco Symphony. He started studying piano at the age of four, completing his musical studies later at Juilliard. In 1965, he was appointed to the Aspen Faculty and conducted at the Aspen Music

Festival. As finalist in the Ford Foundation American Conductors project, he attracted the attention of the late George Szell, which led to his Cleveland appointment.



**RICHARD LOMBARDI** will be heard in five roles during his debut season here. He took his masters degree at UCLA and has performed with the Santa Monica Civic Opera and with Dorothy Warenauskjold's Musical Theater. Last summer, he was an apprentice artist at the Santa Fe Opera where he appeared as a soloist in the world premiere of Luciano Berio's *Opera*.



**RAYMOND MANTON** was born in New York City but has been a San Francisco resident for many years. In addition to his 29 character portrayals with the San Francisco Opera since his debut in 1955, Manton is often heard in recitals and oratorio performances throughout the Western United States. He has been a frequent guest soloist with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra.



**JANE MARSH** returns to San Francisco Opera for her third season. Born in San Francisco and raised in Mill Valley, Miss Marsh achieved world-wide prominence as first prize winner of the 1966 Tchaikovsky competition in Moscow. In 1968, she signed a contract with the Düsseldorf Opera, where she has been singing since. Her San Francisco Opera debut took place in 1967 as Pamina in *The Magic Flute* and she returned the next season for Liu in *Turandot*. Miss Marsh frequently appears on the concert stage, most recently in Madrid performances of *Elijah* and in Mahler's Fourth Symphony with the New York Philharmonic. Her latest recordings include Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Boston Symphony and Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with the Philadelphia Orchestra.



**JANIS MARTIN** returns to San Francisco as Brangäne in *Tristan und Isolde*. This will

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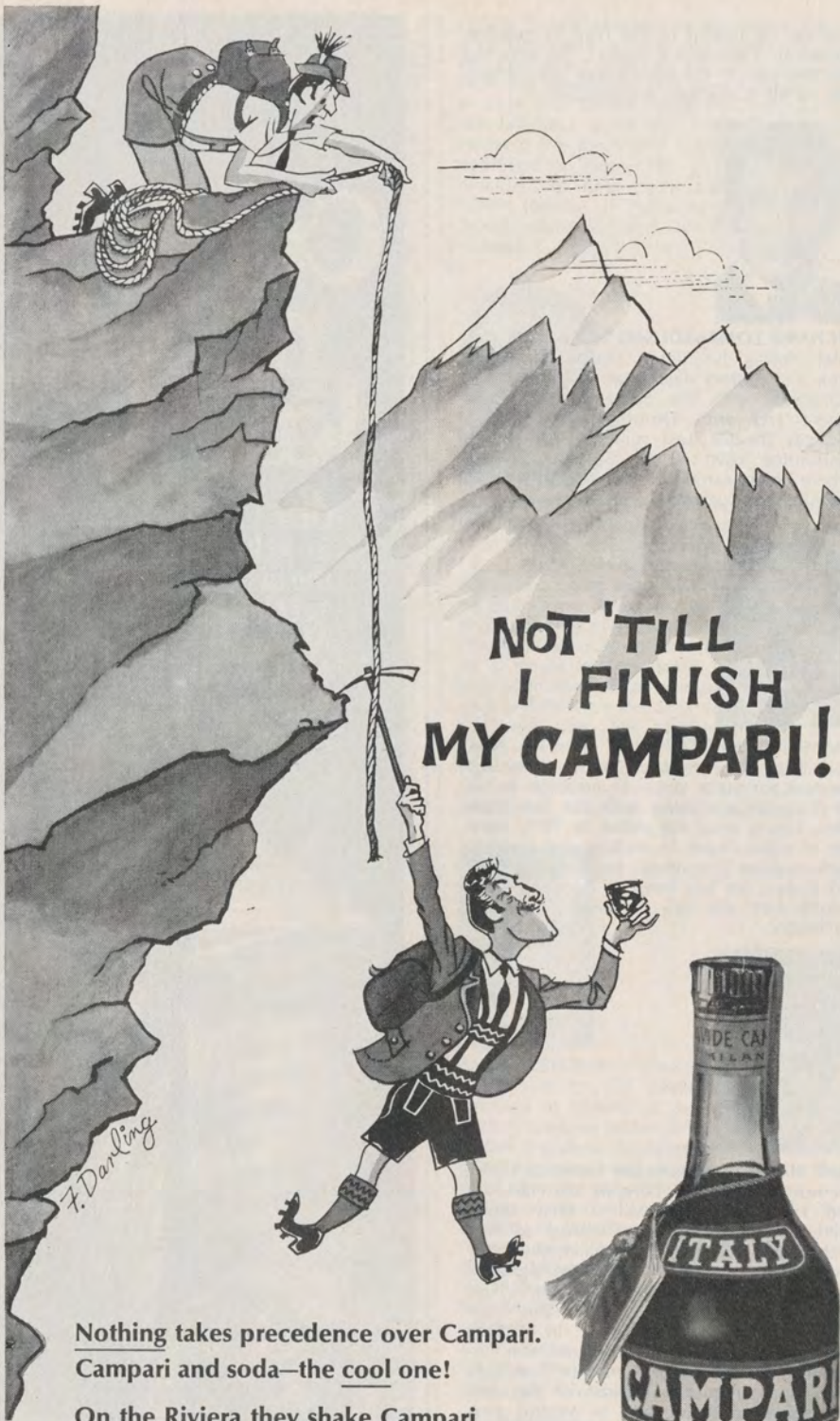
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be her eighth season with the company. California born, Miss Martin started her career with the Merola Opera Program, which led to her San Francisco Opera debut in 1960. She sang with the Metropolitan Opera for three seasons, after winning their National Auditions. Presently a regular member of the Cologne Opera, Miss Martin has also sung in Nürnberg, Munich, Nice, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Rouen, Stuttgart, at the New York City Opera and at Milan's La Scala. She was first heard at Bayreuth in 1968, and has returned there for every season since. At this year's festival, she sang Eva in *Die Meistersinger*, Fricka in *Das Rheingold* and Gutrune in *Götterdämmerung*.



**SHIGEMI MATSUMOTO** won the San Francisco Opera Auditions in 1968 and made her San Francisco Opera debut that fall. She has been a leading soprano of Western Opera Theater for the past two seasons, and appeared with Spring Opera of San Francisco. Miss Matsumoto has sung in the last two opening night concerts of the San Francisco Pops with Arthur Fiedler, and has performed throughout the Western United States as a Community Concert artist.



**JAMES McCracken** returns to San Francisco Opera in the role which made him famous all around the world: Otello. First heard in the role in Washington, D.C. in 1960, he was soon singing it in most major opera houses of the world. He has recently recorded the opera under the direction of the late Sir John Barbirolli. McCracken was born in Gary, Indiana, studied music at Columbia University and made his professional debut at Central City, Colorado as Rodolfo in *La Boheme*. After signing a contract with the Metropolitan and singing most of the walk-on roles in the repertoire, he and his wife, mezzo-soprano Sandra Warfield, left for Europe, where intensive vocal studies alternated with appearances in a great number of prominent opera houses. McCracken has returned to the Metropolitan in a number of leading roles which brought him great public and critical acclaim. His previous roles in San Francisco include two appearances as Otello, Manrico in *Il Trovatore*, Radames in *Aida*, Herman in *The Queen of Spades*, Samson in *Samson et Dalila* and Canio in *I Pagliacci*.



**ALLAN MONK**, on the roster of the San

Francisco Opera for four seasons, started his career with the Merola Opera Program. The young Canadian baritone was a member of the Western Opera Theater for three seasons, where he sang a number of leading roles. His appearances with Spring Opera of San Francisco include the title role in *The Marriage of Figaro* and Capulet in *Romeo et Juliette*. He recently sang the title role in the Honolulu Opera's performances of *The Marriage of Figaro*.



**SHEILA NADLER** is returning to San Francisco for her third consecutive season, and will be heard in *Siegfried*, *Carmen*, *Salome* and *Otello*. This past winter she made her debut at the New York City Opera as Jocasta in *Oedipus Rex*. Following her San Francisco schedule, she will be heard as Ulrica in *Un Ballo in Maschera* and as Feodor in *Boris Godounov*, both in Pittsburgh. Born in New York, Miss Nadler studied at the Mannes School of Music, Hunter College, Manhattan Opera Theater and the Metropolitan Opera Studio.



**BIRGIT NILSSON**, considered the world's leading Wagnerian soprano, made her American debut in San Francisco in 1956 as Brünnhilde in *Die Walküre*. This year, she returns to sing the leading role in *Tristan und Isolde*, which represents one of the most eagerly awaited events of the 1970 opera season. Born in West Karup, Sweden, Birgit Nilsson sang as a child in school concerts and soon decided on a musical career. When she reached Stockholm, she was one of the two candidates chosen from 48 applicants to study at the Royal Academy of Music. In 1946, she got an unexpected chance to sing Agathe in *Der Freischütz*. She learned the role in three days and obtained a contract with the Stockholm Opera. From then on, her career has taken her all around the world and made her a legend in her lifetime. Miss Nilsson has made an impressive list of recordings and is the first soprano in history to record the complete *Ring* cycle. A winner of many awards and honors, she is the Swedish Court Singer and Vienna State Opera Kammersängerin.



**TIMOTHY NOLEN**, a leading baritone of Western Opera Theater for the past two

years, returns to San Francisco Opera for his third season since his debut here in 1968. He has also appeared with Spring Opera of San Francisco and in a number of recitals and concerts. Last summer, he scored a great success in the opening concert of the San Francisco Pops with Arthur Fiedler and also sang Mahler's *Songs of a Wayfarer* at the Ojai Festival under the baton of Pierre Boulez.



**KOSTAS PASKALIS**, renowned Greek baritone, will be heard in San Francisco for the first time as Iago in *Otello*. At the beginning of his musical studies, Paskalis wanted to become a conductor, and joined the Athens Opera Chorus in order to supplement his income. His unexpected break came when both the star and the understudy became ill and the 20-year old Paskalis found himself singing the title role of *Rigoletto*, thus saving the performance and becoming an overnight celebrity. As a result of his appearance in *Un Ballo in Maschera* with Nilsson and Di Stefano at the Vienna State Opera in 1958, he obtained a contract with that company, which extends to this day. He also regularly appears with the Metropolitan Opera.



**JEAN PERISSON** studied at the Paris Conservatory and at the Salzburg Mozarteum. His first permanent appointment was as conductor of the French Broadcasting Corporation in Strasbourg. He then went to Nice where he served as head of both the Opera and the Nice Philharmonic. His conducting assignments there included French premieres of *Katerina Ismailova* and *Elegy for Young Lovers*. Guest engagements have taken Perisson throughout Europe and the USSR. His American debut took place here in 1966 when he conducted *Les Troyens* and *Carmen*.



**DONNA PETERSON** has appeared with the San Francisco Opera in over 40 roles during the past 10 years and is also a regular member of the Spring Opera of San Francisco. She is extremely active with a great number of symphony orchestras throughout California and is frequently heard at music festivals. Her activities also include appearances with the Western Opera Theater. A native of Oregon, Miss Peterson now makes her home in San Francisco.

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**JEAN-PIERRE PONNELLE** attended the Sorbonne and the Free University of Berlin. While at the Sorbonne, he studied painting with Fernand Leger and also met Hans Werner Henze, who asked him to design costumes and scenery for a ballet and his opera *The Stag King*. The success of this venture decided Ponnelle's career. By now, he is one of the most sought-after designer-directors of the opera world, and one of the few people to combine both tasks. His San Francisco Opera designing assignments included the American premiere of Orff's *The Wise Maiden* (1958), which also marked Ponnelle's American debut, *Carmina Burana* and *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. He is best remembered for his direction and design of last season's *La Cenerentola*. His recent successes included *Così fan tutte* at Salzburg with Seiji Ozawa, and the original version of *Boris Godounov* at Cologne. Ponnelle is married to the German film star Margit Saad.



**LOUIS QUILICO** studied in his native Montreal, at Rome's Santa Cecilia Conservatory, with Martial Singher at the Quebec Conservatory and at the Mannes College in New York. Between 1955 and 1958 he appeared with a number of American opera companies, including the San Francisco Opera. In 1959, he sang for the first time in Europe (Spoleto), and the next year at London's Covent Garden. The Russian conductor Melik-Pashayev was in the audience and he invited him for a tour through the USSR, which took place a year later with tremendous success. He frequently sings with the New York City Opera, most recently in the title role of the new production of *Rigoletto*. His most recent appearance with the San Francisco Opera was in 1968, when he substituted for an indisposed singer in the role of Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore*.



**GUNTHER SCHULLER**, one of the most important contemporary American composers, has in recent years devoted much of his time to conducting. Born in New York, he studied flute and horn at the Manhattan School of Music. He spent a number of years as first horn with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, but gave it up in 1959 in order to devote more time to composing.

Self-taught as a composer, he was soon receiving commissions from a number of major orchestras. He conducted the American premiere of his opera *The Visitation* in San Francisco in 1967, and his latest opera *The Fisherman and His Wife* was first heard in Boston this year. President of the century-old New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, Schuller was recently appointed co-director (with Seiji Ozawa) of the Tanglewood Music Festival and director of the Berkshire Music Center.



**ROGER SOYER** is making his American stage debut here as Mephistopheles. Previously he was heard in a concert performance of Berlioz' *Romeo et Juliette* in Miami. He has performed in recordings of Massenet's *Werther* and Berlioz' *L'Enfance du Christ* and *Les Troyens*. The young French bass entered the Paris Conservatory in 1958 and by 1963 had a contract with the Paris Opera. In subsequent years, he sang extensively in most major European opera houses and festivals (Aix-en-Provence, Salzburg, Wexford, Perugia). His repertoire includes the title role of *Don Giovanni*, Arkel in *Pelleas et Melisande*, Mandryka in *Arabella*, Mephisto in *La Damnation de Faust*, Don Basilio in *The Barber of Seville* and many others. He is also very active in concert and oratorio performances.



**OTMAR SUITNER** was the choice of the late Wieland Wagner to conduct the entire *Ring* cycle at Bayreuth in 1966. He led *Tannhäuser* there in 1964, *Der fliegende Holländer* in 1965, and the *Ring* again in 1967. Maestro Suitner was born in Innsbruck, studied at the Salzburg Mozarteum, and was a pupil of the late Clemens Krauss. He became music director of the Remscheid Opera in 1952, general music director of the Dresden Staatsoper in 1960, and general music director of the Berlin Staatsoper in 1964. Suitner has also conducted at La Scala, Venice, Buenos Aires and Stuttgart. He made his San Francisco Opera debut last year in performances of Wagner's *Götterdämmerung*.



**GIORGIO TOZZI** returns to San Francisco as Zaccaria in *Nabucco* and King Marke in *Tristan und Isolde*. Chicago-born Tozzi started studying voice at the age of 13, but his main attention was devoted to the study of biology. After he abandoned the latter,

(Continued on p. 50)



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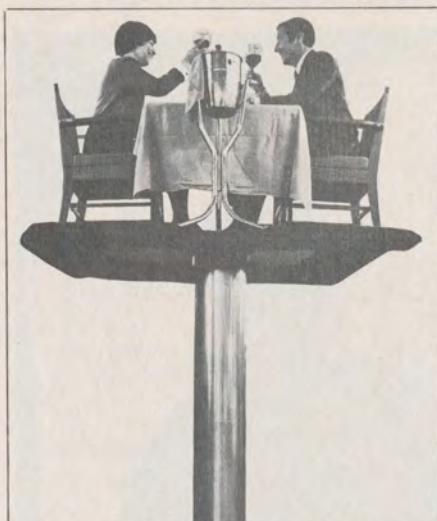


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## WHO'S WHO

(Continued from p. 43)

his singing career flourished and he was eventually to encompass most leading operatic basso roles. He has also appeared in a great number of operettas and musicals, oratorios and song recitals. His radio and television appearances are numerous and very popular, Tozzi being one of the most articulate spokesmen of the opera world. His credits include a huge list of recordings, featuring at least 10 complete operas. Most recently, he has won acclaim for the film version of *Die Meistersinger*, in which he sang the role of Hans Sachs.



**ALAIN VANZO** makes his American stage debut in the title role of *Faust*. Born in Monte Carlo, Vanzo was first noted at the 1954 Cannes Tenor Competition, where he obtained first prize among 800 competitors. The same year he signed a contract with the Paris Opera, on whose roster he has remained until this day. Equally renowned for tenor roles in the French and Italian repertoire, Vanzo has by now appeared in most major opera houses of the world, most recently in Mexico City, where he sang *Des Grieux* to Beverly Sills' Manon. Next year, he will re-open the Paris Opera in the title role of Berlioz' *Benvenuto Cellini*. He has made a great number of recordings, notably the complete *Lakme* with Joan Sutherland.



**WOLFGANG WINDGASSEN**, probably the most respected and esteemed heldentenor of our time, admired by audiences, critics, singers and musicians alike, makes his belated and unexpected San Francisco Opera debut as *Tristan*, his most famous role. This will be the first time he will sing the role in the United States. His career began mainly in the Italian repertoire, but after he sang his first *Siegfried* (1950), he devoted his time almost exclusively to Wagnerian roles. He was invited to sing *Parsifal* at the inaugural postwar Bayreuth Festival season in 1951 and has returned to Bayreuth for every single season since. He was heard at the Metropolitan Opera in 1957, singing *Siegfried* in *Die Walküre*, as well as the *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung* *Siegfrieds*. He sang the first *Tristan* of his career in 1951, his 100th in 1959 and his 175th in 1965, at which time he broke the world record for that role. He has also recorded the complete opera with Birgit Nilsson as *Isolde*. President of the Union of German Artists for a great number of years, he was appointed artistic director of the Stuttgart Opera effective at the end of the 1970/71 season.

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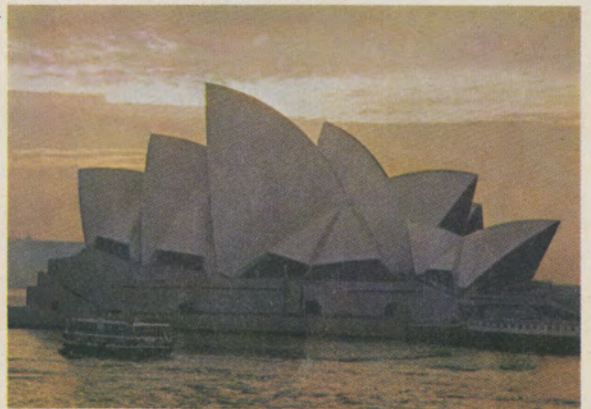
You probably won't get to see him running through the jungle, but you can see him running through places like the Lone Pine Sanctuary, just outside of Brisbane.

They've got a lot of weird animals there.

The kangaroo. (He really does run like he has springs in his feet.)

A bear that isn't a bear. The koala. (He's really a marsupial, like the kangaroo.)

And another bird, the emu, that doesn't



# Australia.



fly either but eats almost anything he can get his beak on. (Like your raincoat, if you're not careful.)

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The best place to see one is in the platypusary (that's right, platypusary) in Healesville, near Melbourne.

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The platypus is having the last laugh because now they think he's the missing link between mammal and reptile.

A missing link between modern man and prehistoric man was just discovered out in the outback. (That's the vast desert area out in the center of the country.)

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Recording session for the Busoni Piano Concerto which, in addition to utilizing the soloist and a large orchestra, requires the services of a chorus. A multiple microphone setup — seven mikes are visible in this photo — is used. EMI/Angel photo.

(continued from p.13)

After the recording itself has been accomplished there may or may not be a process called mixing. In popular music there almost invariably is; in classical music it is sometimes not necessary. Mixing is simply the process of finally establishing those balances and directionalities that have not been decided on at the recording session, and, at the same time, reducing those three, nine, or sixteen different tracks to two. With the proper mixing equipment, any given track may be slotted for full left, full right, or half and half (center), and, of course, one may vary the percentages, producing  $\frac{2}{3}$  left,  $\frac{3}{4}$ , etc. Theoretically, the process seems simple. But due to a certain acoustic and/or electronic factor called phase (which is too complicated to go into here) it sometimes doesn't work. And that is why one oftentimes hears from records pianos whose keyboards seem to be twelve feet across, clarinets that seem to wander all over the room, and bass fiddles whose sound resembles nothing so much as a ukulele played under a pillow. Mixing can be a very difficult and frustrating job — and, in case the money idea has passed from your mind by this time, mixers are hired by the hour and are paid very well.

The last really critical process a master tape goes through before being made into a record is editing. Editing is probably the most fascinating and certainly the most misunderstood aspect of modern recording technique. In the days of 78 rpm records there was no such thing as editing; if the artist made a mistake it either stood as a permanent document or he made the entire four- or five-minute disc over again. Today, by means of tape, a razor blade, a score, and a sharp ear, it is possible to remove a single offending note from the most whirlwindish piano passage and replace it with the correct note. That is, it is possible if the pianist was able to play the correct note at *some* time while the tape recorder was spinning. Editors have been accused of making virtuosos out of also-rans. The accusation, though resting on a core of truth, is largely unjust; all the editor can do is to produce the best performance of which the artist is capable, by using the best "take" of each long or short segment of the music. But even this can produce astonishing results at times.

There is the infamous example of a record made at one time by an ama-





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Left to right: EMI/Angel producer Peter Andry, violinist David Oistrakh and the late George Szell listening to the playback of the final take for their recording of the Brahms Double Concerto. Not pictured is the other soloist in the recording, cellist Mstislav Rostropovich.

teur choir of an exceedingly difficult piece of contemporary choral music. The choir sang the piece one syllable at a time and recorded each syllable four times. After the recording session was over, the record producer and the choir director selected the best take of each syllable, and the editor put the master tape together literally one note at a time. The result was a perfect performance of the difficult work — so perfect, in fact, that in the final recording one's attention was overwhelmingly drawn to the fact that the singers, throughout the course of a forty-minute work, never breathed once.

Even with such miscalculations, editing has a definite point. Perhaps the most singular characteristic of a record is that, unlike a concert performance, it is repeatable. Therefore, an obvious wrong note, which is heard one instant and gone the next in live performance, becomes a constantly anticipated annoyance on a record, like stubbing your toe against the same warped floorboard every time. One's attention gets drawn more and more to the mistake, and finally one loses all joy in the record, not being able to hear the fantasy for the fingerslip. The simple, if delicate operation of physi-

cally removing a piece of tape from the master recording and replacing it with one from another take eliminates the difficulty. But it is not always accomplished with the same ease; different instruments, or different combinations of instruments sometimes make such a task difficult or impossible. A successful editor has learned his skill through experience. He knows what he can do, what he can take a gamble on, and what he must leave alone; for the attempt to improve will only irreparably ruin what is there. Needless to say, he gets paid for his experience and expertise.

Once the final edited master tape has been made, the succeeding procedures in record processing are largely mechanical — which is not to say that there are not a million things that can go wrong. The next step is cutting the master disc from the tape. A few companies cut directly from the edited master tape (which involves some risk, but most make a tape copy of the master, grudgingly allowing the tiny extra bit of distortion that comes from adding one more step to the process, and have the master disc cut from that. A blank disc, of glass or metallic base with a special lacquer coating, is placed on a lathe-driven turntable,

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and the electronic impulses from the tape are amplified and fed to a recording head and cutting stylus which engraves their physical equivalent in a series of modulated grooves. The stylus is aided by a heating element which momentarily softens the lacquer. A certain standard equalization of the frequency response is effected in the amplifier, reducing the bass and accentuating the treble. There are several reasons for this. Bass wave forms, being large, are both difficult to engrave on the disc and difficult for the playing stylus of the home phonograph to follow. The louder they are, the more difficult; therefore, they are temporarily reduced in loudness. The high frequencies are accentuated because when a record is played back, friction produces surface noise and that noise is in the treble range. If, therefore, the high frequencies are accentuated on the record, and reduced back to normal by the playback equipment (all playback equipment has such equalization built in) surface noise is reduced too. The playback equipment similarly amplifies the bass in an amount corresponding to the amount it was reduced, thus restoring the original balance of the master tape. Cutting, though largely automated today, is still a tricky job, reserved for highly skilled technicians.

Once the master disc is obtained, it is plated. This is a process of permanently covering the disc with a thin metallic film which follows exactly the



The ultimate in recording balance results from employing separate microphones for the voice and guitar of Jose Feliciano. RCA photo.

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Lighthouse, the Canadian rock band, records amid a mass of electronic hardware. RCA photo.

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groove patterns of the lacquer but greatly strengthens them. Through a series of plating and stripping processes, stampers are obtained, stampers being exact mirror images of the master disc, used as molds to produce the final commercial pressings. The final process occurs when the stampers (for side one and side two) are placed in the press, labels for both sides are inserted, and vinylite (usually) in wafer, powder, or semi-liquid form is put into the mold, heated, and stamped with the impressions of the grooves. The vinyl is cooled, the press opened, and the final record removed to be checked, packed in its sleeves, and shipped to the distributor or store.

Such is the manufacturing cycle of the record. The physical product you have in front of you costs, perhaps, thirty cents — a pittance. But the varied skills that went into it are priceless — which is not to say they are costless. After one pays the artist, the producer, the engineer, the mixer, the editor, the cutter, the plater, the presser, the artist who designed the jacket and the printer who printed it, it is a wonder that there is any money to be made in records at all. In classical music, there very likely isn't. It just gets all ground up in the grooves of the record, and you hope, that when all is said and done, it at least smells like wine and not like vinegar. □

Mr. Goodfriend, who has been involved in various facets of the record business for some years, was one of the founders of Connoisseur Society Records. Mr. Goodfriend is currently Music Editor of Stereo Review. He is an avid collector and critic of wines as well as of records.

# the hamlet syndrome

by LEONARD LYONS



At a dinner party in Hollywood one night, I heard Ernest Lubitsch talking to a young actress about the Theatre, its playwrights and Hamlet. The young lady asked: "What's a Hamlet?" Lubitsch winced, then told her it was the name of a play.

"Hamlet?" said the young actress. "What a funny name to pick for a play..."

Hamlet always has been the dream and most challenging role for all performers everywhere.

When George Grizzard resigned from his co-starring role in Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, Billy Rose asked why he was leaving the play which then was Broadway's No. 1 hit. Grizzard explained that he was leaving for Minneapolis to play *Hamlet* for Tyrone Guthrie.

"Now I understand," said Rose. "To an actor, Hamlet is Hedy Lamarr blowing hot in your ear."

One day, in an Actors Studio experiment with *Hamlet*, Robert Webber noticed a minor actor staring at him — and then suddenly beaming. Webber asked him to analyze this sudden change of expression, from a stare to an improvised beam.

The young actor, in true Studio fashion, spoke frankly about this: "I kept looking at you, Hamlet, wondering

why you seemed familiar, and then it suddenly came to me — we went to the University of Denmark together."

Tyrone Power once told the story of a young actor playing the role of Osric, a courier in *Hamlet*. He mentioned his work to another novice, who said he'd never heard of *Hamlet*. The first actor was incredulous, but the novice vowed: "I swear, I've never heard of Hamlet. What's the plot?"

"Well, you see," the first actor began, "there's this fellow Osric..."

Mae West confided that when she had the urge to play Shakespeare, she discussed it with a noted Broadway director. He assured her that no Shakespeare role was suitable. "Oh, yeah?" Miss West said. "How about *Hamlet*?"

Cyril Ritchard played Hamlet at school in Australia. Orson Welles played Hamlet at Dublin's famed Gate Theatre when he was seventeen. Eddie Foy, Jr., said that even his father, Eddie Foy, Sr., who led the Seven Little Foyes across the nation's vaudeville stages for years, once tried playing Hamlet, seriously. The senior Foy took his Hamlet to Boston for a tryout, and the audience laughed and laughed.

Maurice Evans' *Hamlet* was produced by Michael Todd. At the end of the first act, on opening-night, I saw Todd standing next to Toots Shor in the lobby. Shor bellowed to me: "I'm the only one here who doesn't know how this is gonna turn out. Todd knows how it ends, but only because he saw a rehearsal."

When Laurence Olivier produced, directed, wrote and played the title role in the movie version of *Hamlet*, he included a scene he knew would be cut by the censors. "I know they'll cut it," he said, "but it will be good for the censors to see."

Walter Huston always advised young actors who sought his counsel that they should start by learning *Hamlet* thoroughly. Frank Thomas, Jr., once said to Huston: "I did as you told me. In fact, I read *Hamlet* not once, but twice."

"Young man," Huston replied, "I can't start to discuss *Hamlet* with you until you've read it at least twenty-five times."

"I've read *Hamlet* over and over again, countless times," said Jean-Louis Barrault, the French star. "I've played *Hamlet* for over twenty-five years, but it's always exciting to start rehearsing it again — because each time I find something new to do, some new way to speak the lines."

Kelcey Allen told me this story when

we both attended the Broadway premières—in the same season—of rival *Hamlet* productions starring John Gielgud in one, and Leslie Howard in the other.

Gielgud's company included Murvyn Vye, then fresh from Yale's Drama School. Vye had a one-word role and, at the dress-rehearsal he spoke his one word resonantly. Then he received a message that Gielgud wanted to see him.

Vye rushed to the star's dressing room. "About that word," Gielgud said. "When you speak it — keep your shadow off my face."

Leslie Howard's *Hamlet* was denounced by the critics, who compared it unfavorably with several other Hamlets, particularly Barrymore's. Just before Howard ended the Broadway run and returned to England, we met at the bar of the 21 Club where he told me, somewhat wistfully, that John Barrymore had warned him: "Every critic is going to compare your Hamlet with mine, and they'll say mine was magnificent."

"Honestly," said Barrymore, "mine was the hammiest performance ever given."

The fabulously wealthy social leader, Laura Corrigan, saw both the Gielgud and Howard productions that season, and was asked which one she preferred. "I enjoyed them both," was her haughty and memorable reply. "I like Hamlet very much. You see, I happen to be a friend of the King of Denmark."

In London a few years ago, when Peter O'Toole did *Hamlet* for Britain's then-new National Theatre, he told me about assorted actors who had played the role. O'Toole mentioned an actor who did *Hamlet* readings for either \$30 or \$32 a performance.

When the Hamlet was asked the difference between these two performances, he said, "For \$32, I bring my own skull."

The late star of the Yiddish theatre, Maurice Schwartz, produced and starred in a Yiddish version of *Hamlet* for many years, all over the world. Lou Jacobi once mentioned to him that Maurice Evans was planning to do *Hamlet* on Broadway, and asked Schwartz how he thought it would be received.

Schwartz shrugged: "In English? Who knows?" □



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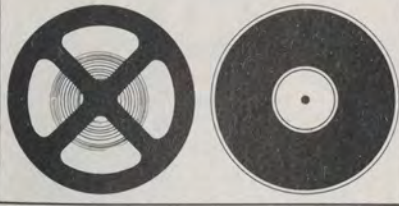
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# STEREO

by JOHN MILDER



**LUXURY AT (SLIGHTLY) LOWER PRICES:**  
Volume Two, Part Ten of the Performing Arts Guide to Stereo Components.

If you are a cost-no-object sort, it's easy enough to buy your way out of the problem of choosing stereo equipment. Except in the case of loudspeakers, where it can be argued that going beyond a certain price brings you *less* quality (in the form of outmoded but still super-expensive models), one can safely go the route of buying the component that's three times as expensive as all the others.

But if you have to pay attention to money for one reason or another, there is equipment of undeniable luxury that doesn't cost as much as some other equipment of undeniable luxury. In some cases, the luxury tag applies only to pure performance — with amenities missing that might well be important for some conditions of use. But in others, everything anyone could conceivably need may be found at substantially lower cost.

What follows is my own notion of lower-priced luxury in various component categories, with explanations. The list isn't all-inclusive, and isn't intended to be all-exclusive of other equipment. Hopefully, it may simply prove pertinent to some people's imminent decisions on sound vs. money.

In record-playing equipment, the outstanding bargain to my mind (and the most venerable one to be found) is Acoustic Research's AR Turntable. The AR unit is not an unalloyed delight: I don't know why, after almost ten years, the company can't contrive a simple mechanism to lift the tone arm at the end of the record, or why it doesn't offer (as an extra-cost option if necessary) a hinged dust cover that could keep things covered while the blasted record plays. But at roughly \$90 (including arm, base, and lift-off dust cover), it is a wonderful bargain for sheer performance, and is the unit I keep returning to after flirtations with far more expensive gear. The AR turntable supplies the quietest back-

ground for record-listening I've ever heard, and often produces a startling gain in audible clarity when substituted for another unit of seemingly impeccable quality. And since I keep saving money by going back to it, I'll happily pay millions to someone for an automatic arm-lift and a hinged cover.

I wish I could discover a pickup of bargain nature in the highest performance category, but so far the best all cost accordingly. The Grado Model B, often to be found for less than \$10, almost makes it, but hasn't quite the transparent sound quality of the super-expensive cartridges to my ears, and doesn't track at quite as low a stylus force.

Out of the thousand or so stereo receivers that seem to be on the shelves of most audio stores, the one that best suits my notion of everything needed at the center of a stereo system is Kenwood's TK-140X. This unit has presumably been superseded by a newer model (at \$60 more), but it's still to be found in most stores, and I wouldn't be surprised to find Kenwood forced to keep it going despite the newer model. What makes the TK-140X unique to my mind is that, at \$319.95, it supplies all the power and FM performance and control flexibility I can conceive of anyone really needing in a home. You have to spend roughly half-again its price to get significantly better performance in any area, and I'm not convinced that the increase would be a *useful* one.

With the tremendous variety now available in receivers, and the performance of units like the TK-140X, the traditional combination of separate electronic components — pre-amplifier, power amplifier, FM tuner — no longer represents the only route to "ultimate" performance. Its chief appeal now (aside from the ego gratification represented by row on row of knobs) is added flexibility and the ability to update things one at a time as the technology continues to change. The premium payable for that these days is formidable, and the popularity of receivers has driven out most of the less-than-outrageously-priced units. About the only exception these days, and a genuine bargain in most instances, is Dynaco's "kit" equipment. (The quotes are meant to indicate that many Dynaco buyers — maybe most of them — don't actually build the Dyna kits for themselves, but buy the "factory-wired" versions.) The com-

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combination of a Dynaco PAT-4 preamplifier and Stereo 120 power amplifier costs about \$250 in kit form and \$330 wired, and offers basic sound quality for those prices that is hard to imagine being improved significantly. The control facilities of this combination are not as elaborate as others (or even those of many high-priced receivers), but the combination of basic performance and performance-per-dollar is hard to beat.

In view of the subjective considerations involved in choosing a speaker, it is unlikely that any one unit would meet everyone's notions of ultimate excellence. But the bargain that is hardest to argue in the most-ambitious-system category is the Advent Loudspeaker. (No model number, just the name.) I can't claim objectivity here, since I've been associated with the designer (who previously was a founder both of AR and KLH). But I know what my ears tell me, which is that, at \$125 (or less for a "utility" version), it is as big a bargain as anything I've come across in audio, easily competing with far more expensive systems.

In tape equipment, the trend is toward increasingly expensive "top-of-the-line" open-reel recorders. But the two machines that impress me most are both in the middle, somewhere around \$300. They are Tandberg's 3000X and TEAC's A-1200U. In electronic quality, particularly at low tape speeds, I would give the Tandberg a slight edge, and would assign the same margin of superiority in mechanical performance to the TEAC. There are many far more expensive machines (including ones from the same companies) that are better suited to certain recording needs as certain cameras are to photographic applications, but for basic sound quality for home recording it seems unnecessary to pay more.

If you add up the prices for the components I've mentioned, you will find the total is walloping for a supposed bunch of bargains. But bargains they remain. For the record, I haven't attempted to outline a "dream" system or even my own (I have some of the units mentioned, but not all). What these units add up to in a stereo system is simply something worth a good deal more than the sum of their price tags. □

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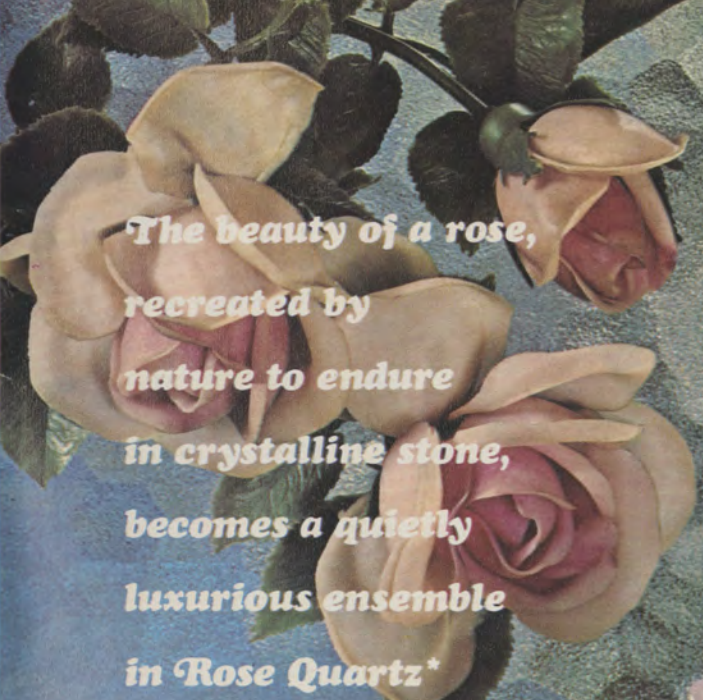
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