

L'Elisir d'Amore

1975

Saturday, October 4, 1975 8:00 PM

Tuesday, October 7, 1975 8:00 PM

Friday, October 10, 1975 8:00 PM (Broadcast)

Sunday, October 12, 1975 2:00 PM

Friday, October 17, 1975 8:00 PM

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# L'ELISIR D'AMORE

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA MAGAZINE 1975





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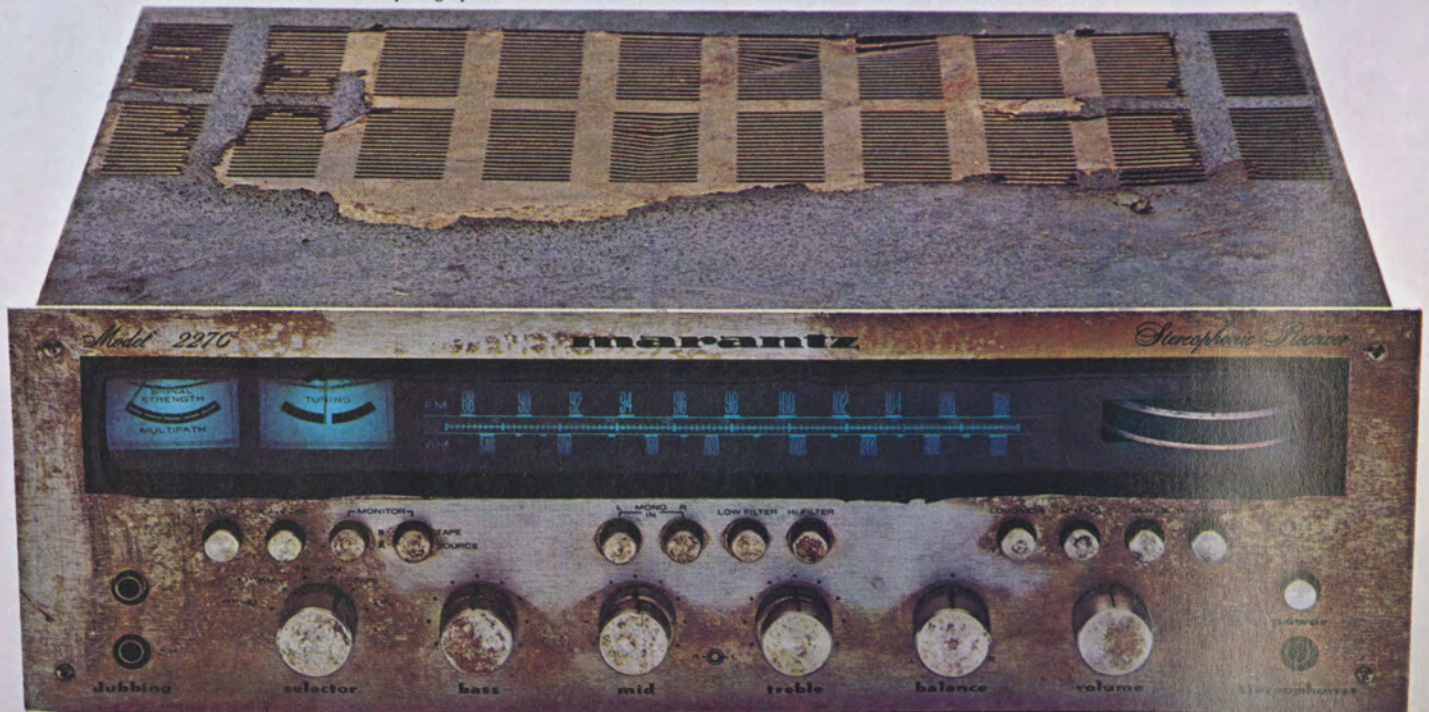
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*Francisco Espina*

Francisco Espina\*  
Newport, Rhode Island

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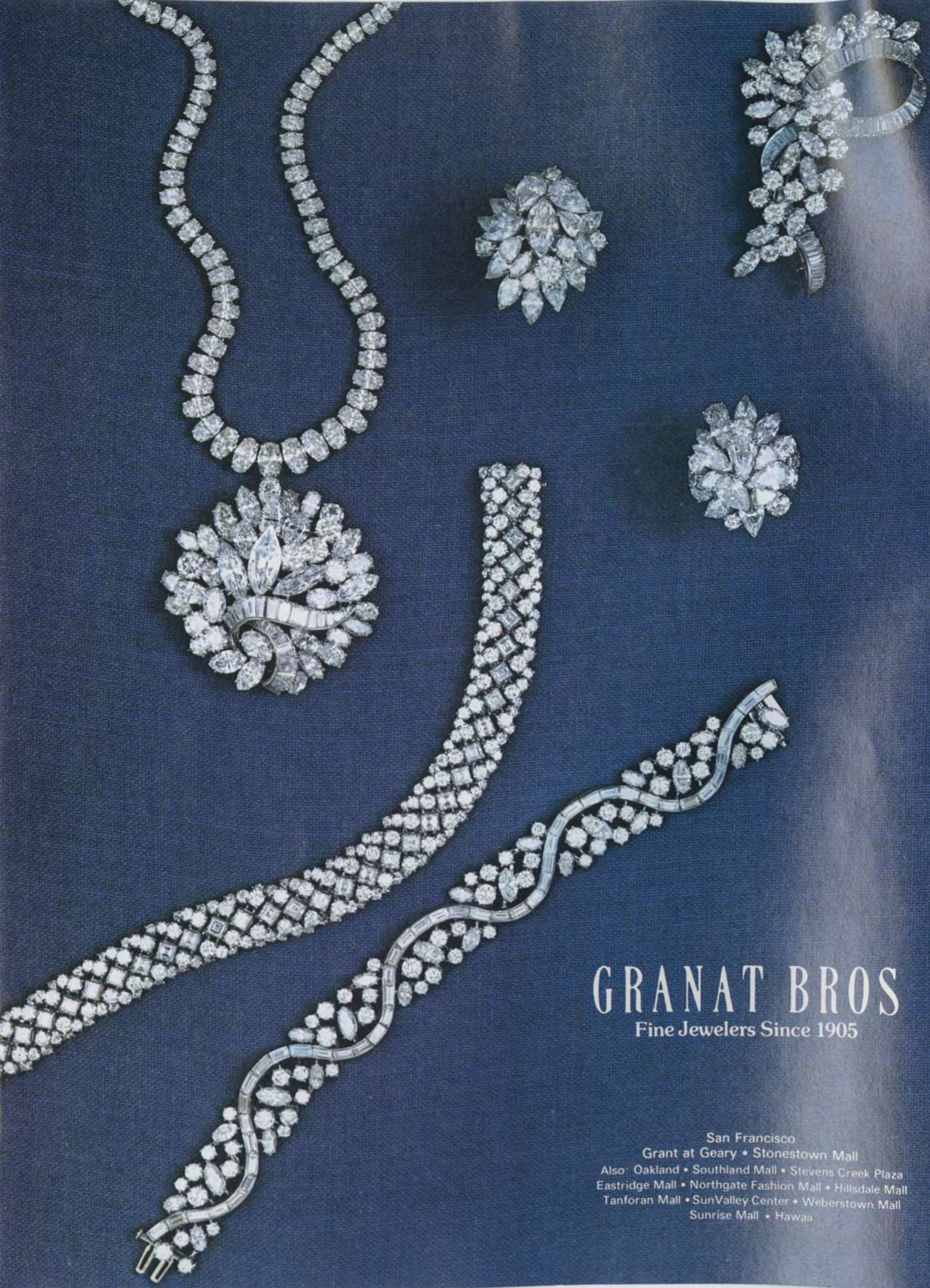
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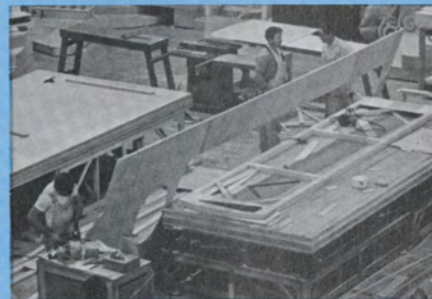
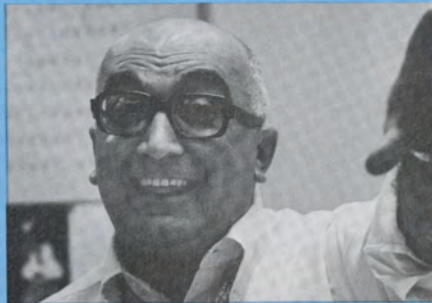
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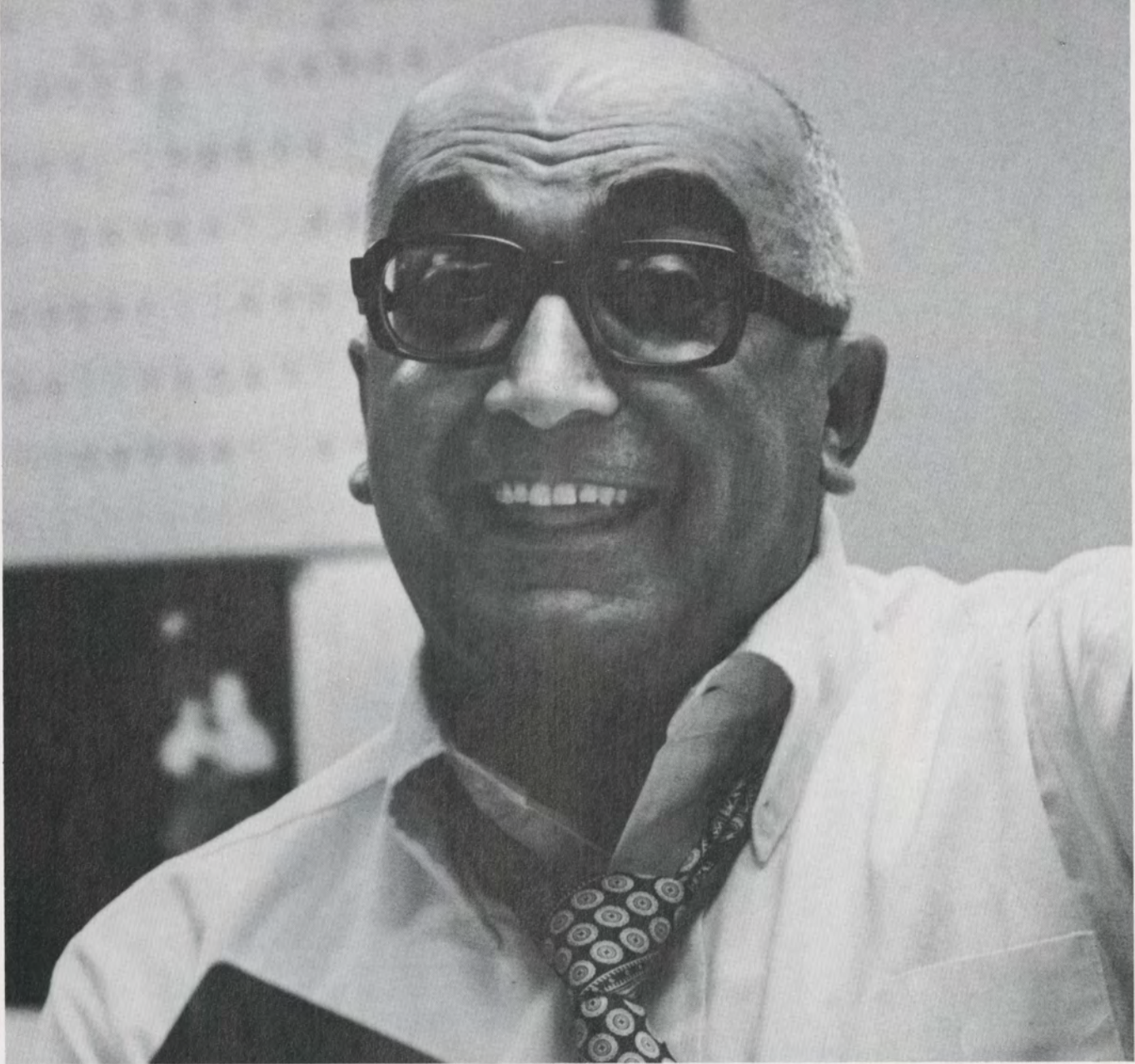




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Director Lotfi Mansouri.

Photo: Caroline Crawford

## LOTFI MANSOURI: Brewing the Potion

*By Armistead Maupin*

Affable Iranian-born director Lotfi Mansouri says his approach to *L'Elisir d'Amore* coincides with the philosophy of movie mogul Sam Goldwyn: "If I want to send a message, I'll call Western Union."



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"It would be a shame to intellectualize an opera that's as human and funny as *L'Elisir d'Amore*," Mansouri insists. "Laughter, after all, is also an elixir of love, because it helps to release the feelings we keep locked up inside of us."

Mansouri, who directed his first *L'Elisir* for San Francisco Opera in 1967, is staging this season's revival of Donizetti's *opera buffa*, as well as new productions of *Werther* and *Andrea Chenier*. Other Mansouri editions of *L'Elisir* have delighted audiences in Zurich (1965), Milan (1971) and Geneva (1974).

"This is an opera about not taking life too seriously," says the 46-year-old Teheran native. It's filled with human emotions and truths, but they are all implied and should never be underlined. There is an additional danger of resorting to burlesque and becoming so busy with extraneous gags that the piece loses its humanity."

"*L'Elisir* and *Don Pasquale* represent the summit of Italian comic opera, the point at which characters were no longer two dimensional, cardboard buffo figures but living, breathing people."

A director's obligation to these characters, Mansouri believes, is to honor their most life-like qualities. "Nemorino, for instance, should never be depicted as the village idiot, because such a person would never win the love of an educated girl like Adina. I see Nemorino as a charming, intelligent and basically strong individual whose only weakness is his timidity. The so-called elixir — nothing more than Bordeaux wine—simply serves as a pretext for releasing his inhibitions, ultimately helping him to achieve the maturity we see in the last duet with Adina."

Adina, on the other hand, is direct, candid and self-assured in her dealings with other people. "She is a very perceptive woman who hates hypocrisy, and, although she believes in poetry, she is realistic at heart."

Even Belcore and Dulcamara are sympathetic characters, Mansouri suggests, despite the egotism of the former and the quackery of the latter. "The pompous sergeant has sufficient sense of humor to accept his defeat gracefully,

and Dulcamara's charlatanism is forgiveable because he brings a great deal of pleasure to the people he defrauds. The sprightly pace of the 142-year-old comedy is intensified in Mansouri's production by the use of open scene changes (sets rotate electrically using a unique system of concealed wheels) and some memorably charming special effects.

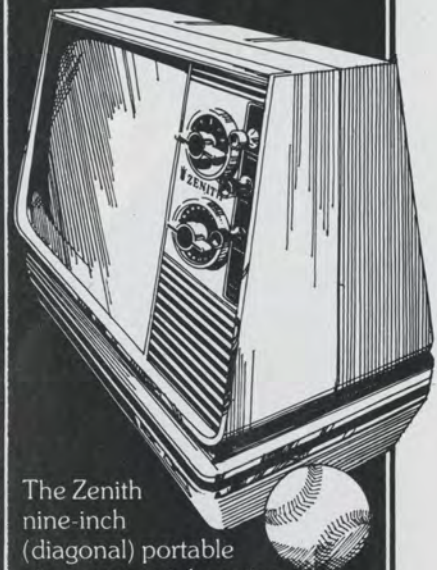
"People always seem to comment on that wonderful mechanical horse which pulls Dulcamara's wagon," Mansouri says, adding that the creature's enduring popularity sometimes prompts him to call *L'Elisir* "an opera about a horse."

"The horse is important because he lends just enough air of make believe to let the audience know that nothing is to be taken very seriously. I also don't like real animals on stage. I used horses here for *Girl of the Golden West* and they never did anything on cue. No, that's not exactly true. They did things, but never on cue."

Mansouri, who has previously directed all of the principals in *L'Elisir* except Jose Carreras, regards reasoning and logic as his most important tools in dealing with performers. The amiable extrovert maintains an informal atmosphere during rehearsals, cajoling his artists with well-placed quips and diplomatic suggestions. "It's terribly important to convince singers, rather than bully them. If it doesn't make sense to them, they will never be able to interpret it convincingly."

The director regards this latest interpretation of *L'Elisir* as an encouraging example of the new wave in opera production. "It's almost a cliché now, but it's quite true that the public expects opera to be more than a concert in costume. Our cast for *L'Elisir* is an excellent sampling of the kind of singer-actors that are changing the face of opera today. Judy Blegen is a director's dream. She soaks up ideas like a sponge, and she could sing a cadenza standing on her head and make it theatrically believable. Carreras combines movie star looks with an incredible voice and acting ability, and Wixell (who appeared in both the original 1967 production and a 1969 revival) is a supremely intelligent man who can appreciate the nuances of

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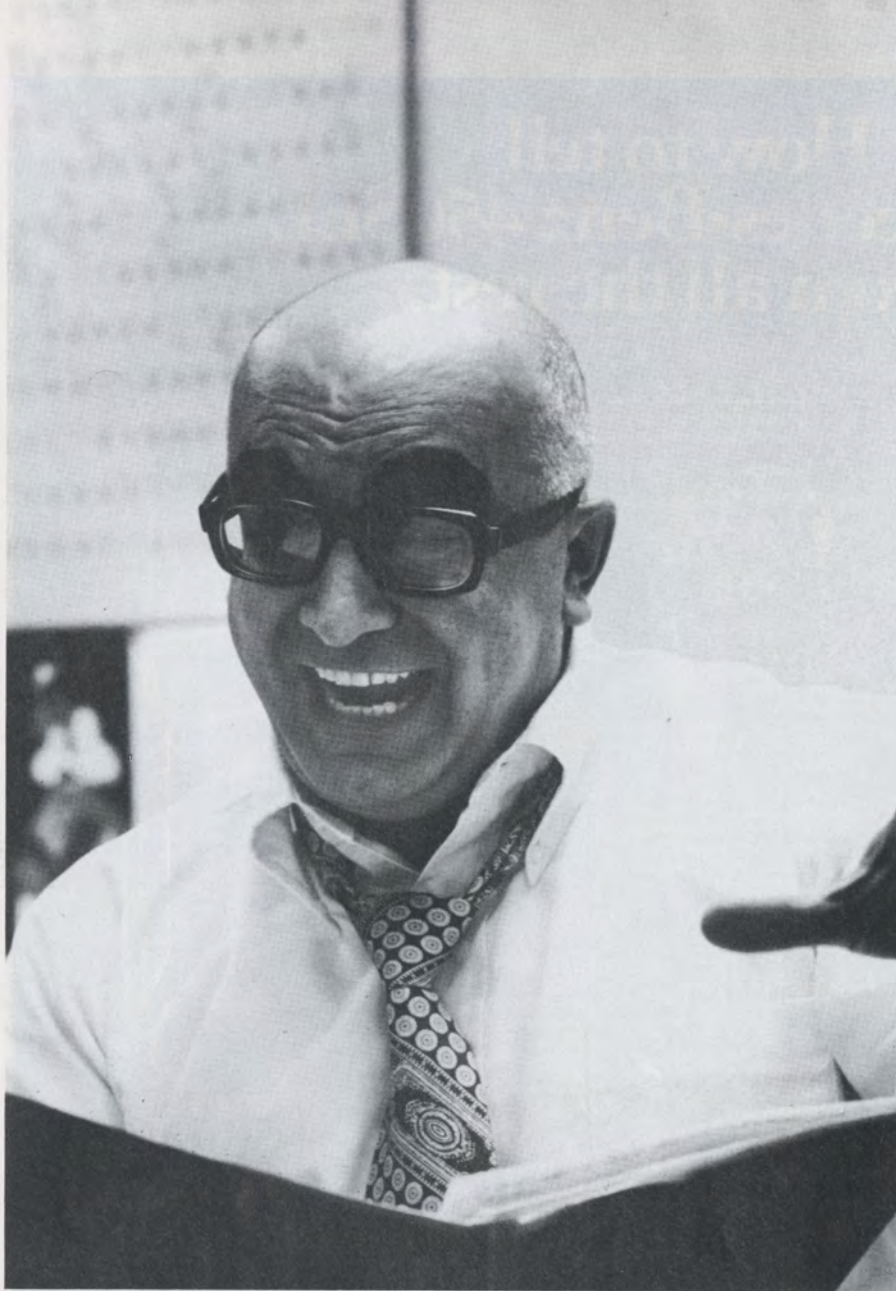


Photo: Caroline Crawford

role. Montarsolo has a remarkable sense of comic timing and the most expressive eyebrows in opera, and Pamela South is quite an accomplished young singing actress."

Mansouri, who came to San Francisco Opera this year after staging a stunning new *Capriccio* for the opening of the Amsterdam season, has scored a number of triumphs here. His biggest San Francisco hits have been *Esclarmonde* and *Die Fledermaus* with Joan Sutherland, *L'Africaine*, and, of course, *L'Elisir d'Amore*.

Fluent in at least five languages, the director is internationally recognized for his work, particularly his efforts at Geneva's Grand Theatre and the opera

house in Zurich. Perhaps the most publicized aspect of Mansouri's career was the dazzling new interpretation of *Carmen* he staged for Iran's 2,500th birthday.

The latest tribute to his talents was a recent invitation to become general director of the Toronto-based Canadian Opera Company next July, upon the retirement of Herman Geiger-Torel.

"Toronto is like San Francisco in many ways," Mansouri says. "The people are open to new ideas and not at all stuffy. I think I'm going to like it there."

*Mr. Maupin is the staff writer for San Francisco Opera.*

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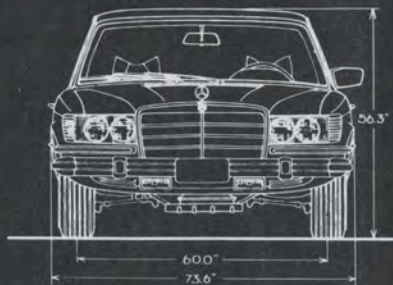
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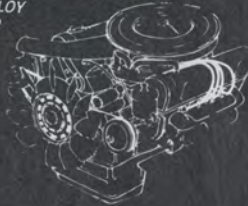
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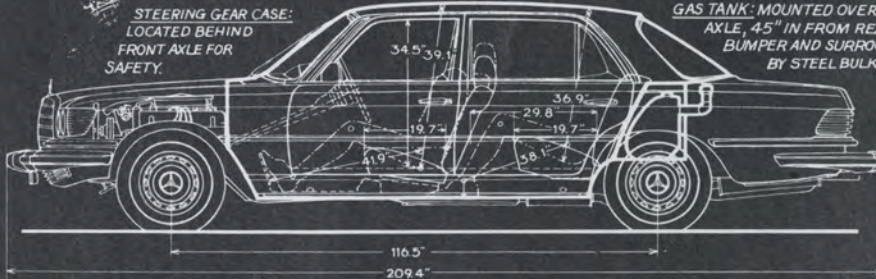
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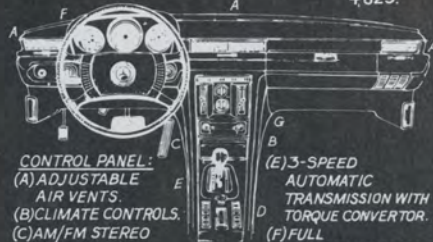
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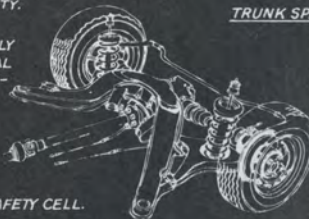


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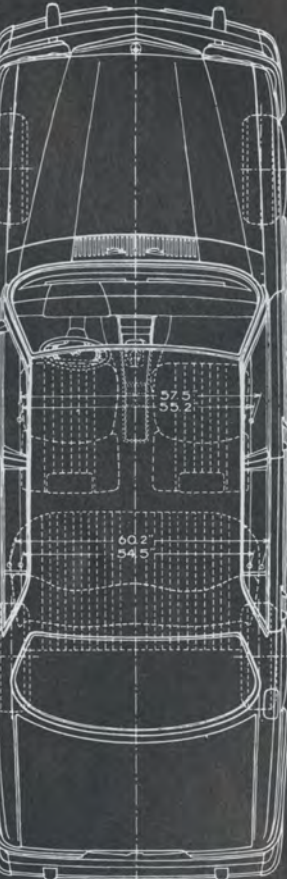
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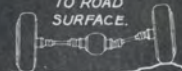


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# College Opera Association

The College Opera Association, a student organization sponsored by the San Francisco Opera Guild to further interest and involvement in the opera, invites you to look into and participate in activities now being planned for 1975-1976.

Among College Opera Association projects this year is a program which affords members a chance to follow the various stages of efforts that go into putting together this season's production of Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore*. Some members will actually participate in the performance of *Andrea Chenier* as supers—a rare opportunity to be involved on the other side of the operatic stage. In addition, the College Opera Association will also be sponsoring meetings with directors, stage technicians, make-up artists and opportunities to get together informally with world famous artists appearing with San Francisco Opera. For the 1976 Season, members will again be able to obtain tickets to certain performances for themselves and their campuses at a substantial discount.

Thus, the College Opera Association is able to add extra dimension to the operatic experience for its members. We hope that you, too, if you are either a student or a faculty member of a Bay Area college, can benefit from our events.

Further information on the College Opera Association can be obtained from:

Michael Cheung, President  
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C/O San Francisco Opera Guild  
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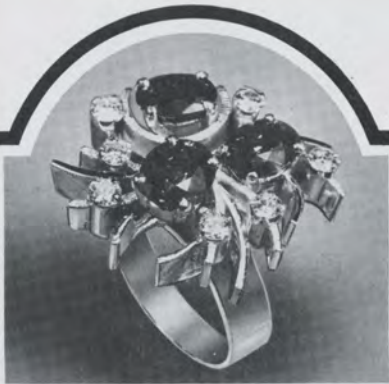
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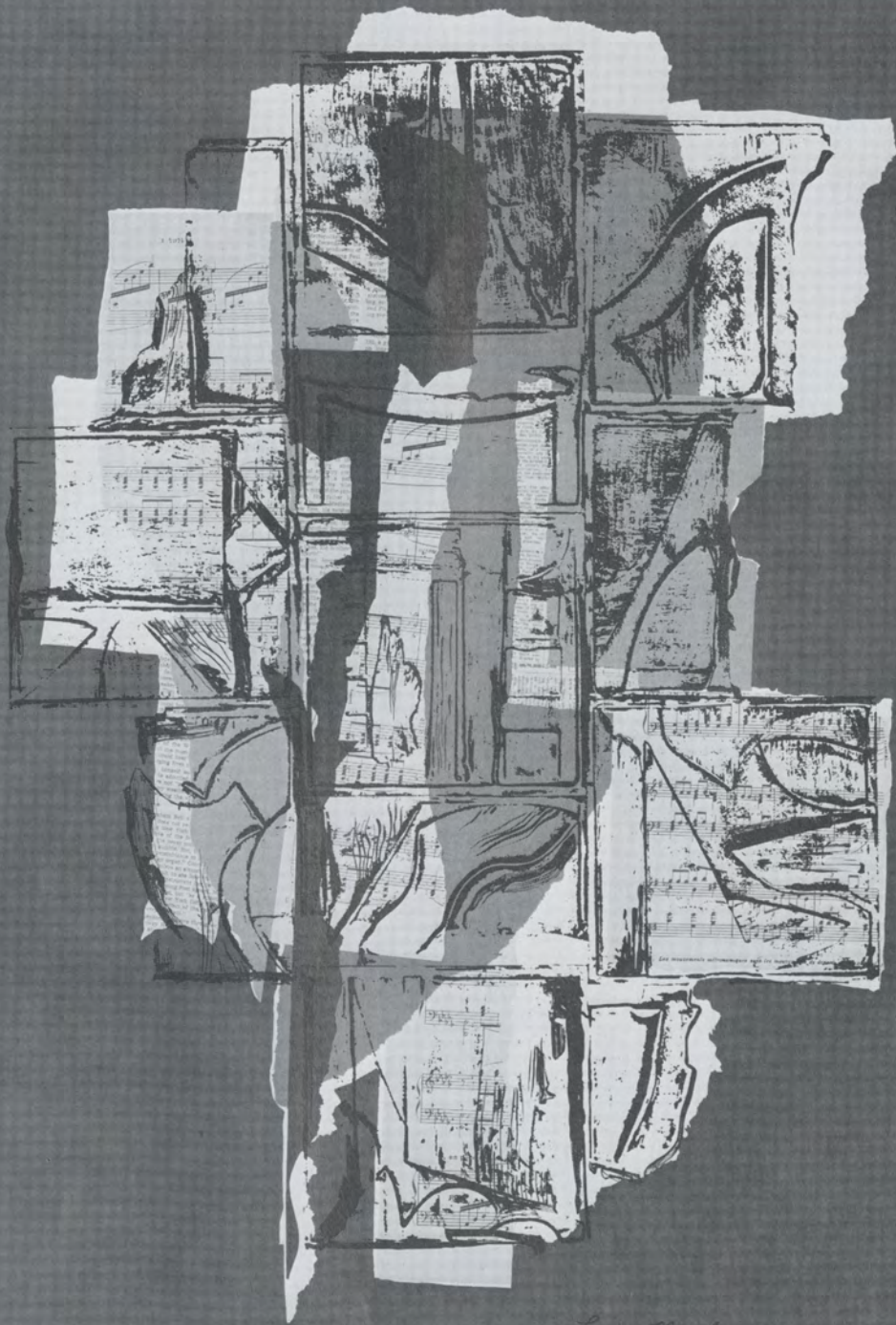
The eye-catching poster that heralds San Francisco Opera's 1975 International Fall Season was designed by renowned artist Louise Nevelson – often dubbed "the grande dame of contemporary sculpture."

"Mrs. Nevelson's poster is a milestone in the history of this company," remarks Kurt Herbert Adler. "This is the first time San Francisco Opera has utilized the work of an artist of such magnitude to commemorate our season."

The 24 x 34 inch poster, printed by the offset process on 80-pound cover stock with a matte finish, is a fanciful, seven-color collage incorporating sheet music and geometric graphics reminiscent of the artist's well-known wood constructions. Produced by Pace Editions in New York City, the poster is being sold at the San Francisco Opera box office, where a limited number of signed (\$75) and unsigned (\$15) copies are still available.

The 75-year-old Mrs. Nevelson, who donated her talents to San Francisco Opera, is a resident of New York City. She was the subject of a major retrospective there at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 1967. Similar exhibitions were held last year at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis and at the San Francisco Museum of Art.





*Louis Nelson*

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA 53RD SEASON SEPT 12-NOV 30 1975



# THE MAKING OF A MAGIC

*By Tom Acord*

Neither performer nor audience will ever completely understand the genius of musical composition. It is nearly impossible to define and isolate the various elements of genius without relying on that beautiful human quality known as "instinct." For example, what exactly is Mozartian charm? What is the passion of Beethoven?

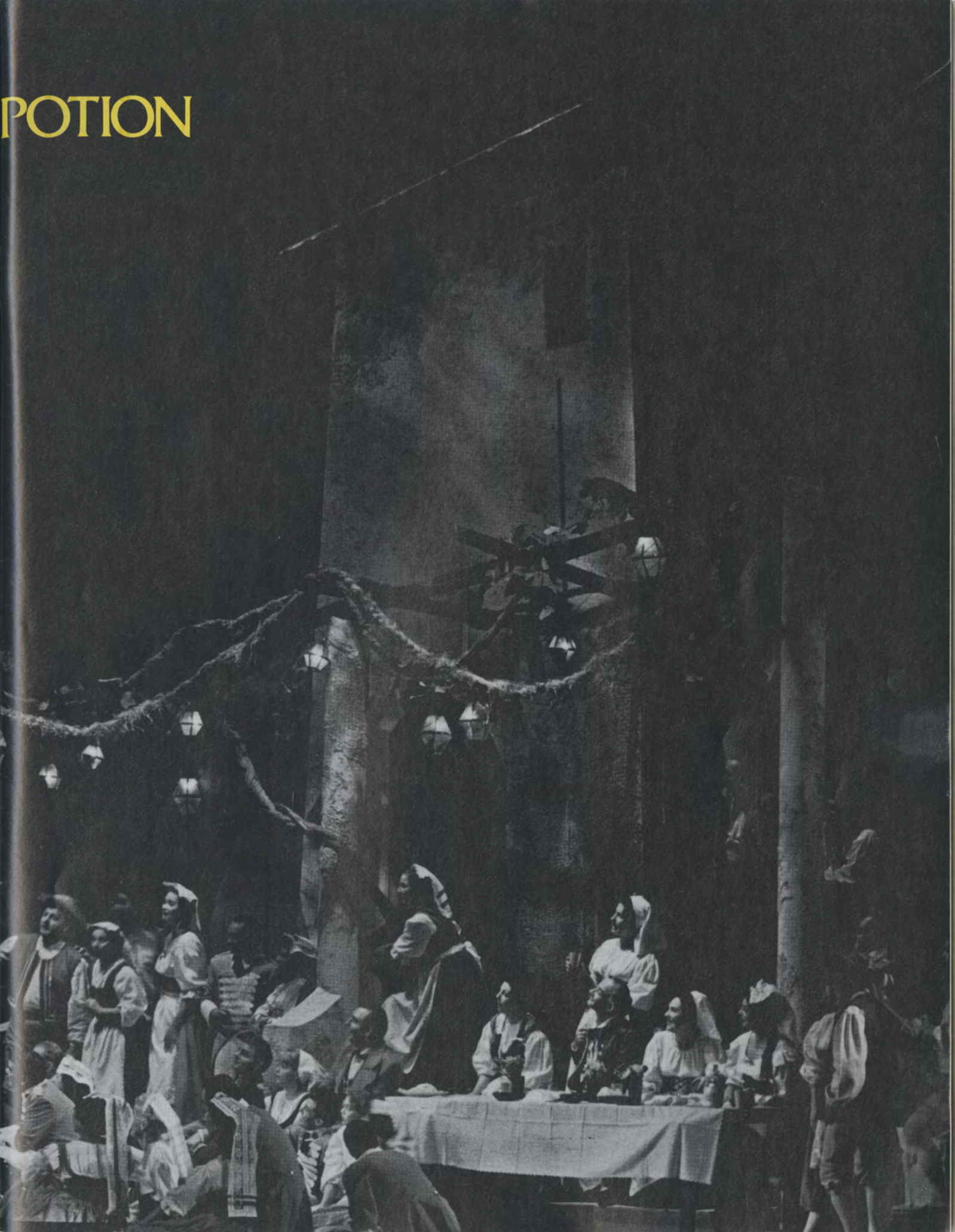
Rather than hypothesize on the merits of Gaetano Donizetti (1797-1848), it is

San Francisco Opera—*L'Elisir d'Amore*.





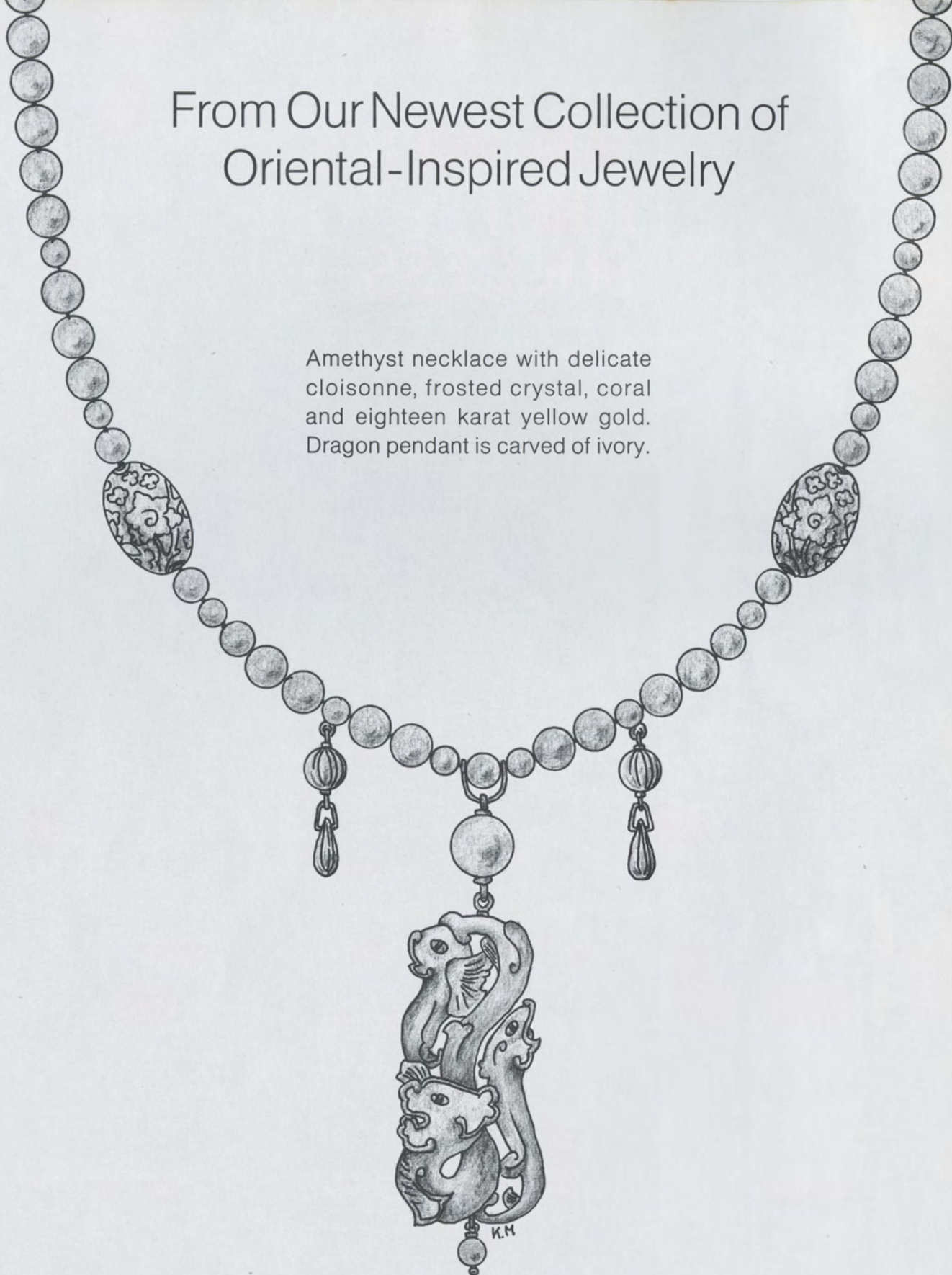
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perhaps just as interesting to examine the situation in which he was to become one of opera's most respected composers. Born to a family of cloth weavers as the sixth child in Bergamo, Italy on November 29, 1797 (the same year as Schubert's birth), he expressed at an early age the desire to follow his brother into the music profession. The older brother, Giuseppe, first plied his trade in Napoleon's army, and then settled in Constantinople, thus having very little influence on young Gaetano. From the beginning Andrea Donizetti, the father, was set against the musical interests of the boy, and pushed him toward that old career standby for composers, a study of law. Under the very close and personal guidance of the transplanted Austrian composer, Johann Simon Mayr (a pro-

lific opera composer in his own right) at the Lezioni Caritatevoli di Musica in Bergamo, Donizetti mastered the compositional techniques of northern-flavored counterpoint, harmony and orchestration. In the nine years of study here, he developed his native Italian lyricism into a technique that produced some forty-six opera-seria and about twenty opera-buffa in the years 1816 to 1843. These include *Anna Bolena* (1830), *L'Elisir d'Amore* (1832), *Lucrezia Borgia* (1833), *Maria Stuarda* (1834), *Lucia di Lammermoor* (1835), *La Fille du Régiment* (1839-1840), *La Favorita* (1840), *Linda di Chamounix* (1841), and *Don Pasquale* (1842-1843). These are only about one-seventh of his entire list, yet they comprise almost as many operas as Bellini composed in his ten operatically active years and about

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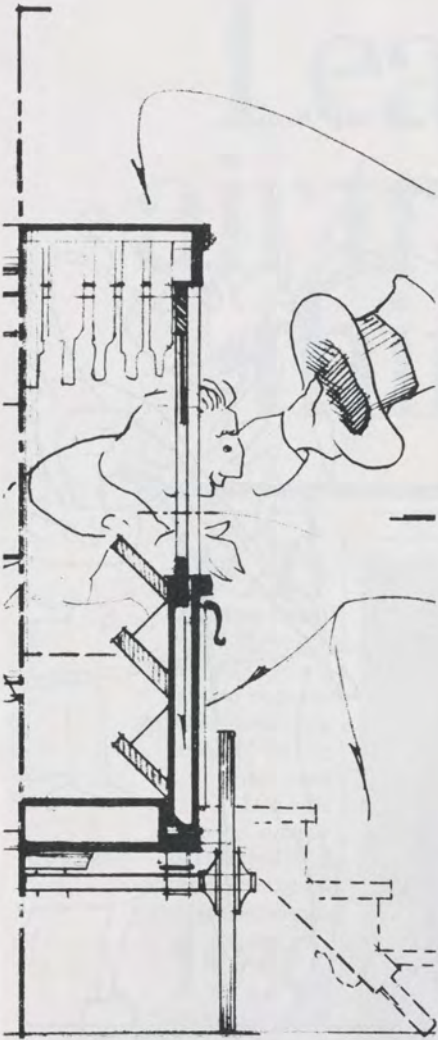
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one-fourth as many as Rossini in his twenty-three years. To further his study, at the age of eighteen and with money from his mentor Mayr's own pocket Donizetti went to study with Rossini's teacher, Padre Stanislao Mattei (1750-1825) at the Liceo Musicale di Bologna.

There are three substantial reasons why Donizetti should not have become the prolific and successful composer he was, yet in each instance, he managed to turn a trial into a success. The first concerns his education. Though talented and desirous of the music world, he had a bad problem. He could not sing, and in a music school which provided the Church with its treble voices (rather than use the previous century's solution of castrati), this was not acceptable. Admitted to the Lezioni Cari-

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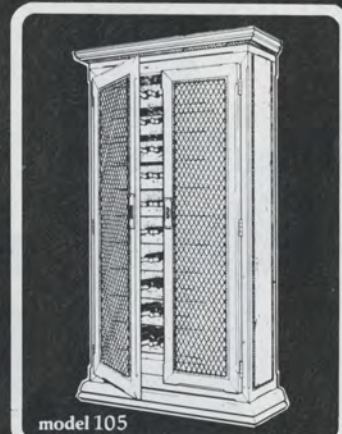
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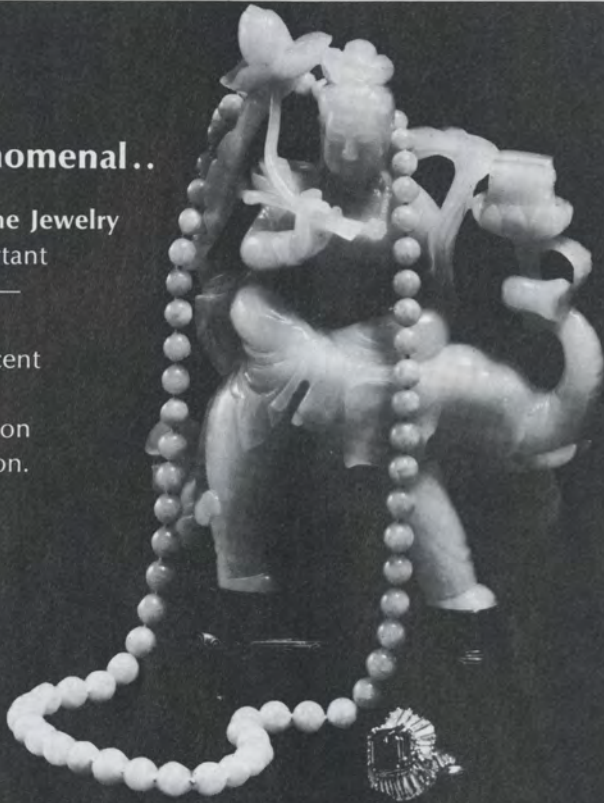
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tatevoli on a three month probation, he was to be dropped from the school on several occasions for his inability to fulfill the required singing achievements. The first report after the probation period, dated Sept. 13, 1806, states, "his voice is defective and throaty". And when he was dismissed one year later, the report said, "it has not been possible to correct his organic defect". On this and succeeding occasions, Maestro Mayr intervened on his behalf, and the young boy was reinstated for his piano and compositional merits. Is it not most likely that the boy who was said to have the voice of a "goat" should be so sensitive to the vocal characterization of a buffo bass role such as Dr. Dulcamara? And in the footsteps of the Rossini's "patter" song, Donizetti was able to provide humor and simultaneously

continued on p. 57



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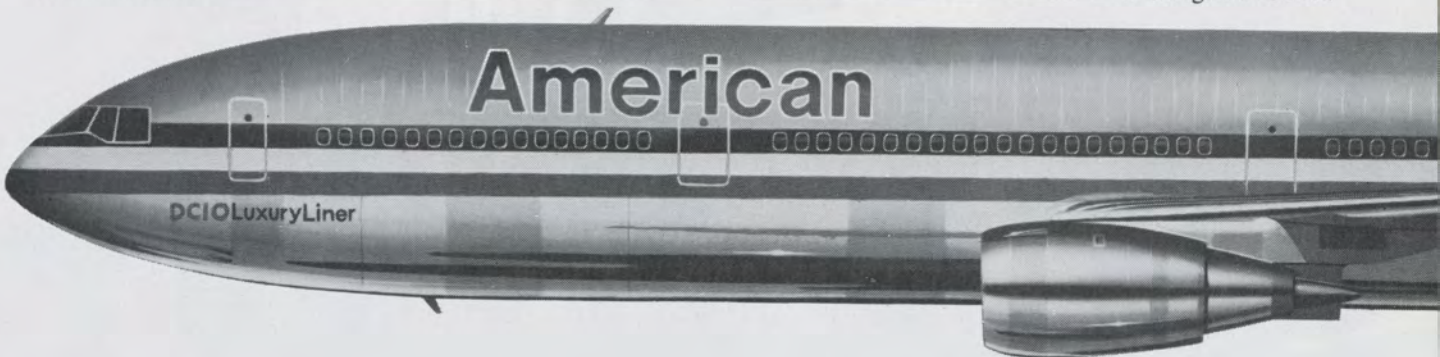
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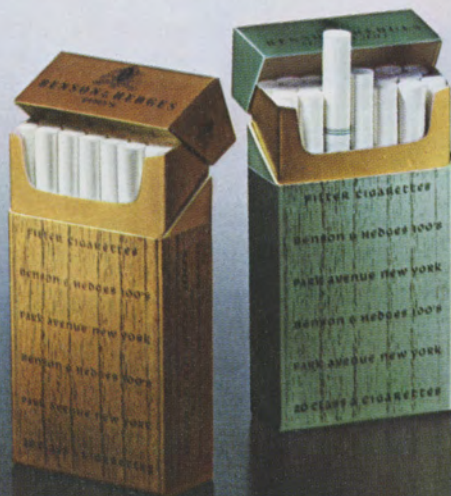
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Again, for the 53rd consecutive year, San Francisco Opera will present a brilliant fall opera season, presenting twelve of the world's finest operas. Our general director, Kurt Herbert Adler, will bring once more to San Francisco an outstanding roster of singers, conductors, directors and designers. Opening with an old favorite, "Il Trovatore," the season includes the San Francisco premiere of Monteverdi's "L'Incoronazione di Poppea." Most of the remainder of the twelve operas have not been performed in San Francisco for many years. And you, our audience, have again responded with a heavy demand for tickets, demonstrating that our community recognizes San Francisco Opera as one of the great opera companies of the world.

In addition to "L'Incoronazione," we will have the pleasure of four new productions. New productions are expensive and we must depend on large donors to make them possible. We are indebted to a group of patrons who wish to remain anonymous for substantial gifts to defray the costs of "L'Incoronazione." "Der Fliegende Holländer" is made possible in part by a generous grant from the Gramma Fisher Foundation and its president, J. William Fisher (who gave us "La Favorita" and "Peter Grimes," jointly with

Lyric Opera of Chicago in 1973). For the fourth year in a row, our treasurer, James D. Robertson, has presented us with a new production, this year "Gianni Schicchi." To all of these people, our special thanks. The costs of "Andrea Chenier" and "Werther" will be shared with Houston Grand Opera and Seattle Opera, respectively.

As has been mentioned in these letters in previous years, opera of the quality for which San Francisco is noted is expensive and, of course, the costs have greatly accelerated in recent years as a result of inflation. Ticket sales cover only a little over 60% of these costs; this percentage incidently is probably the highest in the international opera world—the remainder must be secured from a variety of sources. We are grateful for the significant direct and indirect financial support which we have received from the National Endowment for the Arts, National Opera Institute and the Ford Foundation, to Mayor Joseph L. Alioto, Chief Administrative Officer Thomas J. Mellon, the City and County of San Francisco and the War Memorial Board, which assist our efforts in so many ways. We also appreciate the cooperation of OPERA America, of which we are a member. Opera ACTION continues to perform a myriad of services for San Francisco Opera which not only reduces our costs but spreads the word of opera throughout the community. To its members, we express our appreciation.

As it has for many years past, the San Francisco Opera Guild has financed the student matinees which are applauded enthusiastically by our young people. This year, there will be five such matinees of "L'Elisir d'Amore." The Opera Guild also furnishes important additional financial help to our subsidiary organizations, and undertakes the Opera Ball and the very popular Fol de Rol.

Despite all of the aforementioned support, we must have an annual Operating Fund Drive and this year the drive must raise \$750,000 in order to balance our budget of approximately \$5,000,000; this is approximately \$200,000 more than we needed last year. If you are not presently a contributor to our

annual drive, won't you join the hundreds who presently do support us? Your tax deductible contributions should be sent to San Francisco Opera Association, War Memorial Opera House, San Francisco, 94102. Thank you for thinking of us!

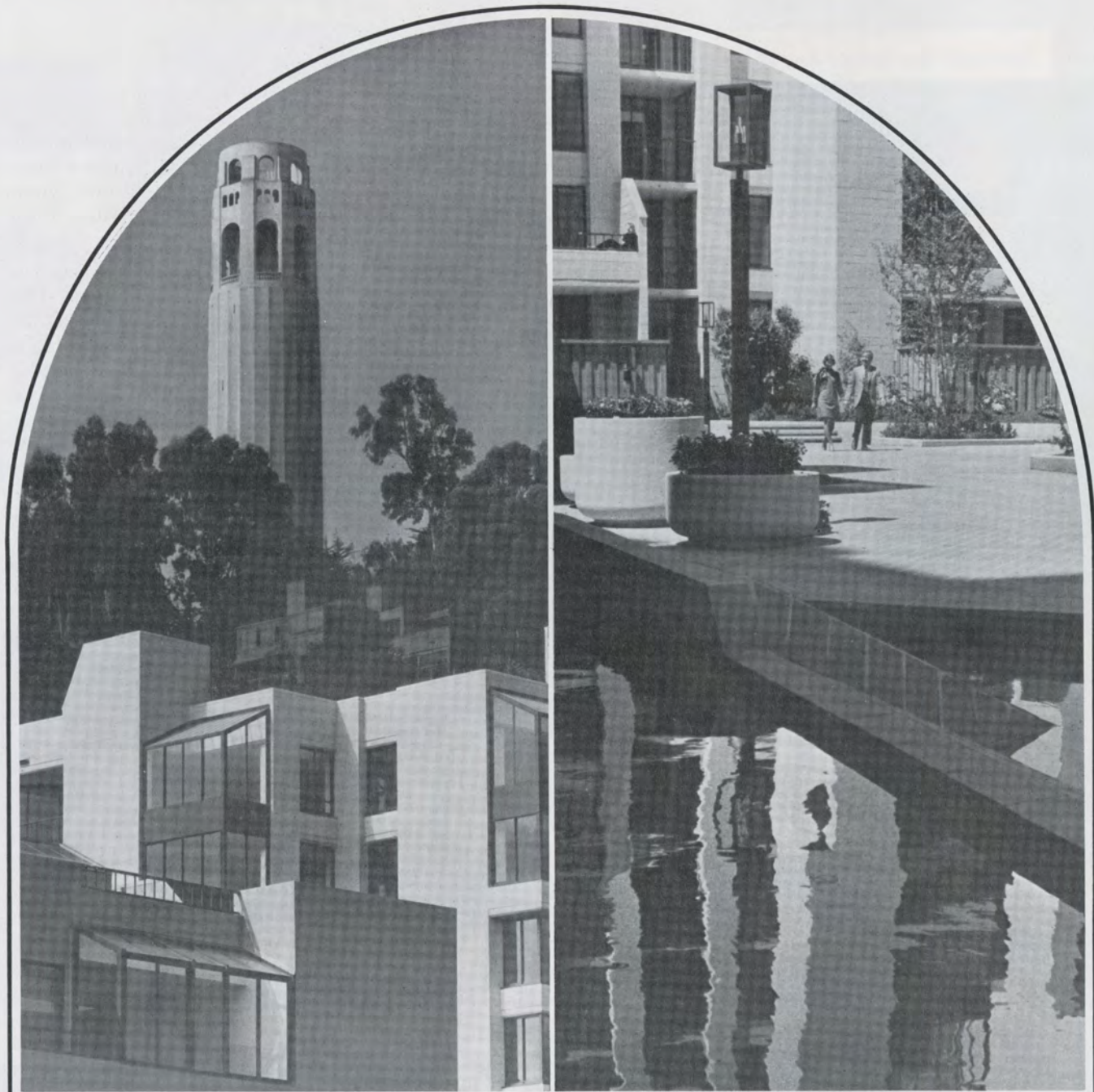
We are continuing the Endowment Fund campaign commenced in 1973 with the announced goal of \$5,000,000. This campaign, under the leadership of Emmett G. Solomon, retired chairman of Crocker National Bank, was launched with a gift of one million dollars from an anonymous donor; our Board of Directors subsequently pledged an amount exceeding \$1,000,000. While income from the Fund will help toward meeting our unavoidable annual deficit, it should again be emphasized that the Endowment Fund will not eliminate the need for the annual fund drive or the need for continuing contributions from other sources.

Thanks to Standard Oil Company of California and the L. J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation of Oakland, California, radio listeners will again be privileged to hear a live broadcast of each opera over KKHI AM/FM in San Francisco and, thanks to several organizations who have released their regular program time, also over KFAC AM/FM in Los Angeles.

San Francisco Opera exists solely to provide the public with opera of the highest quality. But when we think of San Francisco Opera, we must remember the various segments of our opera family—the International Fall Season, now with us; Spring Opera Theater; Western Opera Theater; Brown Bag Opera, and the Merola Opera Program. Opera has become a year around activity in San Francisco, bringing its joys to tens of thousands of opera lovers. With the loyal support of the staff and the public, we will still continue to grow.

WALTER M. BAIRD  
President, San Francisco Opera Association





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## The Company

At this time it gives me great pleasure to express warmest thanks and deepest appreciation to the hundreds of my dedicated and talented colleagues who have invested months of strenuous work in the preparation of this year's opera season. In eight buildings, scattered throughout our city, people have been rehearsing, building scenery, making costumes and playing their instruments to finally perform for you in our beautiful but sadly outdated Opera House.

San Francisco has achieved over the years a much-envied reputation as one of the foremost "opera towns" in the world. Because of the San Francisco Opera family, in excess of 250 presentations of opera are offered in our city annually on six different levels. Our attempt is to produce opera for all people, of all ages, from all walks of life. To achieve our aims, however, we need improvements, specifically more working space and modern equipment. Only with these vital elements can we continue the standard of performance which you, our public, are used to, deserve and demand. We urgently need the promised "addition" to the Opera House; and we cannot continue to function for long without the Opera House "Annex" in the projected Arts Center complex. Please do support, in whatever way you can, the construction of that Arts Center. Unite in the name of your Opera to give us the space, the equipment and the means to produce opera for you under better and safer working conditions, which also will result in lesser costs. We are deeply grateful for your help!

In the meantime, rest assured that we are doing all we can to make this 1975 season an event of great enjoyment for you, our opera public, in the great San Francisco Opera tradition.



*Paul Merber Adler*



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<i>Stage Managers</i>	Ralph Clifford, Steven Jordan
<i>Production Assistant</i>	Sharon Thomas
<i>Ballet Director and Choreographer</i>	Daniel Lordon*
<i>Productions designed by</i>	Paolo Bregni, Toni Businger, Robert Darling, Ita Maximowna*, Pier Luigi Pizzi, Jean-Pierre Ponnelle, Steven Rubin*, Wolfram Skalicki, José Varona
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	Assisted by Sara Linnie Slocum
<i>Assistant to the Technical Director</i>	Larry Klein
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<i>Costume Supervision</i>	Jill Percival
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Zdzislawa Donat\*\*  
Janice Felty  
Maureen Forrester  
Edna Garabedian  
Heather Harper\*  
Barbara Hendricks\*  
Nina Hinson\*

Theo Adam  
Giacomo Aragall  
Gary Burgess  
Jose Carreras  
James Courtney  
William Dansby\*  
Federico Davià  
John Davies\*  
Placido Domingo  
John Duykers  
Harry Dworchak  
Ryan Edwards\*  
Joseph Frank  
Edoardo Gimenez\*  
Peter Gougaloff\*\*

Josella Ligi\*\*  
Carol Malone  
Marita Napier  
Elena Obratsova\*  
Donna Petersen  
Irem Poventud\*  
Eva Randova  
Regina Resnik  
Linda Roark\*

Clifford Grant  
William Harness  
Colin Harvey  
Ronald Hedlund\*  
James Hooper  
William Lewis\*  
Juan Lloveras\*\*  
Robert Lloyd\*\*  
Charles Long\*  
Cornell MacNeil  
Raymond Manton  
Giorgio Merighi  
Robleto Merolla\*\*  
Peter Meven\*\*  
Allan Monk

Brenda Roberts\*  
Renata Scotto  
Pamela South\*  
Joan Sutherland  
Kiri Te Kanawa  
Anita Terzian\*\*  
Tatiana Troyanos\*  
Galina Vishnevskaya\*  
Beverly Wolff\*

Paolo Montarsolo  
Luciano Pavarotti  
Louis Quilico  
Marius Rintzler  
Guillermo Sarabia  
Richard Stilwell  
Peter Strummer\*  
Martti Talvela  
Eric Tappy\*\*  
Alan Titus\*  
William Wahman  
Ingvar Wixell

\*San Francisco opera debut  
\*\*American opera debut

# CHORUS

*Women*  
Janice Aaland  
Peggy Ahrens  
Kathy Anderson  
Tommie Sue Anderson  
Candida Arias  
Doris Baltzo  
Roberta Bowman  
Norma Bruzzone  
Louise Corsale  
Beverley Finn  
Jean Groberg  
Judith Hansen  
Lisa Louise Hill  
Cecilia Maclaren  
Tamaki McCracken  
Sharon McKibbin  
Anna Marie Riesgo  
Irene Moreci  
Ramona Mori  
Rose Parker  
Penelope Rains  
Patricia Schuman  
Claudia Siefer

Lola Lazzari Simi  
Linda Smeage  
Claudine Spindt  
Alma Wells  
Weslia Whitfield  
Sally Winnington  
Arlene Woodburn  
Garifalia Zeissig

*Men*  
M. W. B. Adamson  
Winther Andersen  
Robert Bell  
Jan Budzinski  
David Cherveney  
Joseph Ciampi  
Ken Criste  
Robert Delany  
John Del Carlo  
Dale Emde  
John Glenister  
Ross Halper  
William Hinshaw  
Kenneth Hybloom

Gerald Johnson  
Robert Klang  
Conrad Knipfel  
Eugene Lawrence  
Kenneth Maclaren  
Kenneth Malucelli  
R. Clyde McCracken  
Thomas McEachern  
James Meyer  
Thomas Miller  
Eugene Naham  
Kent Nagano  
Charles Pascoe  
Thomas Reed  
Robert Romanovsky  
Lorenz Schultz  
John Segale  
Francis Szymkun  
James Tarantino  
D. Livingston Tigner  
William Tredway  
John Trout  
John K. Walters  
R. Lee Woodriff

# BALLET

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Laura Brown  
Regina West Brown  
Judanna Lynn  
Marilyn Mather

Juliana Sakowsky  
Katherine Warner  
Deirdre Wilson

*Men*  
Ric E. Abel  
Dudley Brooks  
Michael S. Gleason  
John Sullivan  
Edward J. White



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 Mafalda Guaraldi  
 George Nagata  
 Everett O'Bannon  
 Ernest Michaelian  
 Harry Moulin  
 Michael Sand

## 2ND VIOLIN

Felix Khuner *Principal*  
 Herbert Holtman  
 Bruce Freifeld  
 Barbara Riccardi  
 Robert Galbraith  
 Gail Schwarzbart  
 Carol Winters  
 Eva Karasik  
 William Rusconi

## VIOLA

Rolf Persinger *Principal*  
 Detlev Olshausen  
 Lucien Mitchell  
 Asbjorn Finess  
 Kenneth Harrison  
 Jonna Hervig  
 Ellen Smith

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 Rolf Storseth  
 Tadeusz Kadzielawa  
 Sally Kell  
 Helen Stross  
 Judi yaba

## BASS

Michael Burr *Principal*  
 S. Charles Siani  
 Carl H. Modell  
 Donald Prell  
 Philip Karp

## FLUTE

Walter Subke *Principal*  
 Lloyd Gowen  
 Gary Gray

## PICCOLO

Lloyd Gowen  
 Gary Gray

## OBOE

James Matheson *Principal*  
 Raymond Duste  
 Deborah Henry

## ENGLISH HORN

Raymond Duste

## CLARINET

Philip Fath *Principal*  
 Donald Carroll  
 David Breeden

## BASS CLARINET

Donald Carroll

## BASSOON

Walter Green *Principal*  
 Jerry Dagg  
 Robin Elliott

## FRENCH HORN

Arthur D. Krehbiel *Principal*  
 David Sprung *Principal*  
 James Callahan  
 Jeremy Merrill  
 Paul McNutt

## TRUMPET

Donald Reinberg *Principal*  
 Edward Haug  
 Chris Bogios

## TROMBONE

Ned Meredith *Principal*  
 Carla Rosenblum  
 John Bischof

## TUBA

Floyd Cooley

## TIMPANI

Elayne Jones

## PERCUSSION

Lloyd Davis  
 Peggy C. Lucchesi

## HARP

Anne Adams  
 Marcella De Cray

## PERSONNEL MANAGER

Mitchell I. Ross

## LIBRARIAN

Laure Campbell

# BOYS CHORUS

## William Ballard

*Music Director*  
 Donald E. Osborne  
*Assistant Music Director*  
 Joellen Piskitl  
*Accompanist*

## Gregory Applegarth

Eric Brudos  
 Keith Cerny  
 Peter Chamberlin  
 Laramie Crocker  
 Peter Curran  
 Douglas Doppelt  
 James Dreer

## George Fernandez

Brian Gordon  
 Eric Green  
 Zachary Griffin  
 Matthew Hethcoat  
 Eric Jewell  
 Ethan Kaplan  
 Martin Kovach  
 Robert Kruzner  
 Martin LaPlaca  
 Mark Louden  
 Richard Morrison  
 Christopher Nomura  
 Scott Palmer

## Mark Paxson

Jerome Pembrook  
 Todd Perry  
 Damir Priskich  
 Marco Remedios  
 Peter Reilly  
 Richard Robin  
 Timothy Salaver  
 Jeffrey Silver  
 John Smalley  
 Dan Tadmor  
 Clement Ulrichs  
 Jonathan Yuen

## OFFSTAGE CHORUS FOR DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER

### Douglas Allen

Ted Bakkila  
 Peter Becker  
 William Bopp  
 Ric Cascio

### Ken Clark

Ronald Crandall  
 Wayne Davison  
 Peter Gaffney  
 Michael Haller

### Tom Hart

Adrian Horn  
 Raymond Martinez  
 Deane Merrill  
 Carl Noelke  
 Robert Steiner



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# 1975 Season Repertoire

## II TROVATORE

Verdi  
IN ITALIAN

Sutherland, Obratsova\*, Roark\*/  
Pavarotti, Wixell, Grant, Burgess,  
Duykers, Davies\*

Conductor: Bonyngé  
Stage Director: Libby\*  
Designer: Skalicki  
Chorus Director: Jones

Friday Sept 12 8PM  
Wednesday Sept 17 8PM  
Sunday Sept 21 2PM  
Saturday Sept 27 8PM  
Tuesday Sept 30 8PM  
Friday Oct 3 8PM

Scotto, Randova, Petersen/Lloveras\*\*,  
Quilico, Dworchak, Burgess, Duykers,  
Davies

Conductor: Adler  
Stage Director: Libby  
Designer: Skalicki  
Chorus Director: Jones  
Saturday Nov 22 1:30PM  
Wednesday Nov 26 8PM  
Saturday Nov 29 8PM

New Production  
San Francisco Opera Premiere  
L'INCORONAZIONE DI POPPEA  
Monteverdi  
IN ITALIAN

Troyanos\*, Wolff\*, Forrester, Malone,  
Hendricks\*, Roark/Tappy\*\*, Stilwell,  
Meven\*\*, Wahman, Burgess, Duykers,  
Frank, Long\*, Davies

Conductor: Leppard\*  
Stage Director: Rennert  
Designer: Maximowna\*  
Chorus Director: Jones  
Saturday Sept 13 8PM  
Tuesday Sept 16 8PM  
Friday Sept 19 8PM  
Wednesday Sept 24 8PM  
Sunday Sept 28 2PM

New production sponsored in part  
by a generous gift from the  
Gramma Fisher Foundation,  
Marshalltown, Iowa

DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER  
Wagner  
IN GERMAN

Napier, Petersen/Adam, Lewis\*,  
Rintzler

Conductor: Schermerhorn\*  
Stage Director: Ponnelle  
Designer: Ponnelle  
Chorus Director: Jones  
Saturday Sept 20 8PM  
Tuesday Sept 23 8PM  
Friday Sept 26 8PM  
Wednesday Oct 1 8PM  
Sunday Oct 5 2PM

L'ELISIR D'AMORE  
Donizetti  
IN ITALIAN

Blegen, South\*/Carreras, Wixell,  
Montarsolo

Conductor: Cillario  
Stage Director: Mansouri  
Designer: Darling  
Chorus Director: Jones  
Choreographer: Lordon\*

Saturday Oct 4 8PM  
Tuesday Oct 7 8PM  
Friday Oct 10 8PM  
Sunday Oct 12 2PM  
Friday Oct 17 8PM

NORMA  
Bellini  
IN ITALIAN

Caballé\*, Troyanos, Felty/Merolla\*\*,  
Grant, Burgess

Conductor: Cillario  
Stage Director: Capobianco  
Designer: Varona  
Chorus Director: Jones

Saturday Oct 11 8PM  
Tuesday Oct 14 8PM  
Sunday Oct 19 2PM  
Wednesday Oct 22 8PM  
Saturday Oct 25 1:30PM  
Friday Oct 31 8PM

PIQUE DAME  
Tchaikovsky  
IN RUSSIAN

Vishnevskaya\*, Resnik, Terzian\*\*,  
Petersen, South/Gougaloff\*\*, Monk,  
Edwards\*, Dansby\*, Burgess, Duykers,  
Frank, Courtney

Conductor: Rostropovich\*\*  
Stage Director: Hadjimishev\*\*  
Designer: Skalicki  
Chorus Director: Jones  
Choreographer: Lordon  
Wednesday Oct 15 8PM  
Saturday Oct 18 8PM  
Tuesday Oct 21 8PM  
Friday Oct 24 8PM  
Sunday Oct 26 2PM  
Saturday Nov 1 1:30PM

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October 3, 1975

Your Signature

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New Production in cooperation  
with Seattle Opera

**WERTHER**

*Massenet*  
IN FRENCH

Harper\*, Malone/Aragall, Hedlund\*,  
Manton, Long, Dansby

Conductor: Shapirra\*  
Stage Director: Mansouri  
Designer: Rubin\*

Saturday Oct 25 8PM  
Tuesday Oct 28 8PM  
Sunday Nov 2 2PM  
Friday Nov 7 8PM  
Saturday Nov 15 1:30PM

Production from Lyric Opera of  
Chicago, donated by the Gramma  
Fisher Foundation of  
Marshalltown, Iowa

**SIMON BOCCANEGRA**

*Verdi*  
IN ITALIAN

Te Kanawa, Felty/Wixell, Merighi,  
Talvela, Monk, Courtney, Duykers

Conductor: Peloso\*\*  
Stage Director: Frisell\*  
Designer: Pizzi  
Chorus Director: Jones

Wednesday Oct 29 8PM  
Saturday Nov 1 8PM  
Tuesday Nov 4 8PM  
Sunday Nov 9 2PM  
Friday Nov 14 8PM

New Production in cooperation  
with Houston Grand Opera

**ANDREA CHENIER**

*Giordano*  
IN ITALIAN

Ligi\*\*, Terzian, Garabedian, Hinson\*/  
Domingo, MacNeil, Davià, Dworchak,  
Long, Frank, Davies, Hooper,  
Courtney, Wahman, Dansby

Conductor: Buckley\*  
Stage Director: Mansouri  
Designer: Skalicki  
Chorus Director: Jones  
Choreographer: Lordon

Wednesday Nov 5 8PM  
Saturday Nov 8 8PM  
Tuesday Nov 11 8PM  
Sunday Nov 16 2PM  
Friday Nov 21 8PM

**II TABARRO**

*Puccini*  
IN ITALIAN

Roberts\*, Barbieri, South/Merolla,  
Sarabia, Manton, Davià, Frank,  
Wahman

Conductor: Shapirra  
Stage Director: Libby  
Designer: Bregni  
Chorus Director: Jones

and

New Production made possible by a  
generous gift from  
James D. Robertson

**GIANNI SCHICCHI**

*Puccini*  
IN ITALIAN

Poventud\*, Barbieri, South,  
Felty/Gramm\*, Gimenez\*, Davià,  
Duykers, Hooper, Strummer, Davies,  
Courtney, Dansby, Harvey

Conductor: Shapirra  
Stage Director: Ponnelle  
Designer: Ponnelle

Wednesday Nov 12 8PM  
Saturday Nov 15 8PM  
Tuesday Nov 18 8PM  
Sunday Nov 23 2PM  
Friday Nov 28 8PM

**THE MAGIC FLUTE**

*Mozart*  
IN ENGLISH

Te Kanawa, Donat\*\*, Roark, Felty,  
Garabedian, South/Harness, Titus\*,  
Monk, Lloyd\*\*, Frank, Burgess,  
Dworchak, Wahman, Courtney

Conductor: Adler  
Stage Director: O'Brien\*  
Designer: Businger  
Chorus Director: Jones

Wednesday Nov 19 8PM  
Saturday Nov 22 8PM  
Tuesday Nov 25 8PM  
Thursday Nov 27 8PM  
Sunday Nov 30 2PM

\*\*American Opera debut  
\*San Francisco Opera debut

---

Hot buffet service in lower level one  
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Refreshments in the box tier on mez-  
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Live Broadcasts — 7:50 P.M.

September 19  
L'INCORONAZIONE DI POPPEA

September 26  
DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄENDER

October 3  
IL TROVATORE

October 10  
L'ELISIR D'AMORE

October 24  
PIQUE DAME

October 31  
NORMA

November 7  
WERTHER

November 14  
SIMON BOCCANEGRA

November 21  
ANDREA CHENIER

November 25  
THE MAGIC FLUTE

November 28  
IL TABARRO/GIANNI SCHICCHI

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# Special Events

## OPERA ACTION PREVIEWS

### EAST BAY

The East Bay Opera ACTION preview will be held at 8 PM. Admission is \$2 (\$1 for senior citizens and students.) For information, please call (415) 653-7839 or 865-2556.

October 15  
WERTHER  
Dr. Jan Popper  
Lake Merritt boathouse  
Bellevue Avenue, Oakland

### MARIN

All Marin Opera ACTION Previews will be held at Del Mar School, 105 Avenida Mira Flores, Tiburon (Take Tiburon turn-off 2.5 miles from Highway 101, turn left on Avenida Mira Flores). Coffee will be served at 8 PM; the lecture will begin at 8:30 PM. Series registration is \$7; single tickets are \$1.50 (\$1 for students). For information, please call (415) 435-0191.

A special Champagne Gala, arranged by Ramona Rockway Shaneyfelt, will be held September 25 at 8 PM at the Sausalito Women's Club, 120 Central Avenue. A donation of \$3.50 is requested. For reservations, please call 332-3922.

September 11  
L'INCORONAZIONE DI POPPEA  
Dr. Dale Harris

September 18  
DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER  
Dr. Jan Popper

October 9  
PIQUE DAME  
Dr. Jan Popper

October 16  
ANDREA CHENIER  
Ramona Rockway Shaneyfelt

October 23  
WERTHER  
Dr. Dale Harris

## SOUTH PENINSULA

All South Peninsula Opera ACTION Previews will be held at the Palo Alto Community Cultural Center, 1313 Newell Road, at 7:30 PM. Series registration is \$10; single tickets are \$2.50 (\$1.25 for students). For information, please call (415) 326-0856, 321-9875, or 326-0588.

September 14  
L'INCORONAZIONE DI POPPEA  
Dr. Dale Harris

September 21  
DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER  
Dr. Jan Popper

October 5  
ANDREA CHENIER AND L'ELISIR D'AMORE  
Lotfi Mansouri

October 12  
PIQUE DAME  
Dr. Jan Popper

October 19  
WERTHER  
Dr. Dale Harris

Weekend subscribers of FALL OPERA, do you need transportation? If so, San Francisco Opera ACTION will assist you; please call: San Jose (408) 354-4268; Marin County (415) 435-0191; Napa/Sonoma/Vallejo (707) 226-5002; South Peninsula (415) 326-0856, 321-9875 or 323-6305

The following schedule will be in effect for the South Peninsula:

SUNDAY SERIES buses leave promptly at 12:30 p.m. from in front of Blum's at the Stanford Shopping Center.

Series	Round-trip Single	Round-trip Full Series
M	\$3.75	\$41.25
N	3.75	22.50
O	3.75	18.75

SATURDAY SERIES buses leave promptly at 6:30 p.m. from in front of Blum's at the Stanford Shopping Center.

Series	Round-trip Single	Round-trip Full Series
J	\$3.75	\$41.25
K	3.75	22.50
L	3.75	22.50

## SAN JOSE OPERA GUILD PREVIEWS

The San Jose Opera Guild previews are presented in cooperation with De Anza College as part of their Seminar Lecture Series 90. All previews will be held at De Anza College, 21250 Stevens Creek Boulevard, Cupertino, California. There is a \$2.00 registration fee which permits entrance to one or all of the previews. For further information, please call (408) 257-5550, Ext. 368.

September 12  
L'INCORONAZIONE DI POPPEA  
Dr. Dale Harris  
10 a.m.-12 noon, Building A-11



September 17  
*DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER*  
Dr. Arthur Regan  
10 a.m.-12 noon, Council Chambers

October 17  
*PIQUE DAME*  
Dr. Dale Harris  
8-10 p.m., Building A-11

October 20  
*SIMON BOCCANEGRA*  
Dr. Dale Harris  
10 a.m.-12 noon, Council Chambers

October 23  
*WERTHER*  
Dr. Jan Popper  
8:15-10:15 p.m., Building A-91

November 6  
*ANDREA CHENIER*  
Dr. John Rockwell  
8:15-10:15 p.m., Building A-91

#### JUNIOR LEAGUE OPERA PREVIEWS

All Junior League opera previews will begin at 11 AM. For information, please call (415) 567-8600.

September 18  
*DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER*  
Dr. Jan Popper  
Mark Hopkins Hotel

October 10  
*WERTHER* and/or *ANDREA CHENIER*  
Lotfi Mansouri  
Mark Hopkins Hotel

October 22  
*PIQUE DAME*  
Dr. Dale Harris  
First Unitarian Church

November 11  
*IL TABARRO/GIANNI SCHICCHI*  
Stephanie von Buchau  
Curran Theatre

#### NAPA COMMUNITY COLLEGE LECTURE SERIES

For the third year Napa Community College is offering a ten-week course called ADVENTURES IN OPERA. The course, which introduces the Sunday Series at San Francisco Opera, will be held in the Library of Ridgeview Junior High School, 2447 Old Sonoma Road, Napa, California, on Thursday nights from 7-9 p.m. Registration for the entire series is \$5.00. Ernest A. Fly will again teach the course, using his collection of complete opera recordings, Metropolitan Opera filmstrips, guest speakers and vocal artists. For further information, please call Mr. Fly at (707) 224-6162.

September 18  
*L'INCORONAZIONE DI POPPEA*

September 25  
*DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER*

October 2  
*L'ELISIR D'AMORE*

October 9  
*NORMA*

October 16  
*PIQUE DAME*

October 23  
*WERTHER*

October 30  
*SIMON BOCCANEGRA*

November 6  
*ANDREA CHENIER*

November 13  
*IL TABARRO/GIANNI SCHICCHI*

November 20  
*THE MAGIC FLUTE*

#### UC-BERKELEY EXTENSION LECTURE SERIES

DR. JAN POPPER LECTURES will be given at 7:30 PM in Cole Hall in the Medical Sciences Building on the University of California—San Francisco campus. Series registration is \$35; single tickets are \$4, on a space available basis, payable at the door. For information, please call (415) 642-4111 or 861-6833.

September 15  
*L'INCORONAZIONE DI POPPEA*  
and *IL TROVATORE*

September 22  
*DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER*

September 29  
*L'ELISIR D'AMORE*

October 6  
*NORMA*

October 13  
*PIQUE DAME*

October 20  
*WERTHER*

October 27  
*SIMON BOCCANEGRA*

November 3  
*ANDREA CHENIER*

November 10  
*IL TABARRO/GIANNI SCHICCHI*

November 17  
*THE MAGIC FLUTE*

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South Peninsula	Mrs. Melvin Britton

San Francisco Opera ACTION was created in 1967 to increase awareness of San Francisco Opera and to stimulate interest in opera in general. Opera ACTION works in close cooperation with the Company's staff, enabling it to greatly extend its reach and activity.

Those interested in actively working on behalf of the San Francisco Opera should call:

In San Francisco	673-2263
In Marin	435-0191
In the East Bay	653-7839
In the North Peninsula	343-1948
In the South Peninsula	326-0856

## Western Opera Theater

1975 - 1976 Season  
December 11, 1975 - May 16, 1976

### Repertoire

The Barber of Seville

The Marriage of Figaro  
*new production*

Trouble in Tahiti

and a new production  
of a one - act work  
to be announced.



# Broadcasts

KKHI/AM 1550/FM 95.7 San Francisco  
KFAC/AM 1330/FM 92.3 Los Angeles

Friday, September 19	L'INCORONAZIONE DI POPPEA
Friday, September 26	DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER
Friday, October 3	IL TROVATORE
Friday, October 10	L'ELISIR D'AMORE
Friday, October 24	PIQUE DAME
Friday, October 31	NORMA
Friday, November 7	WERTHER
Friday, November 14	SIMON BOCCANEGRA
Friday, November 21	ANDREA CHENIER
Tuesday, November 25	THE MAGIC FLUTE
Friday, November 28	IL TABARRO/GIANNI SGHICCHI

All broadcasts will begin at 7:50 p.m.

## KQED FM 88.5

*SUNDAY MORNING AT THE OPERA*— Recorded operas with John Roszak, host. Gene Parrish interviews artists of the 1975 San Francisco Opera season during intermission. 11 a.m. every Sunday.

*ARTS REPORTING SERVICE* — Charles Christopher Mark, publisher of *Arts Reporting Service Newsletter*, speaks from Washington, D.C. on the state of the arts in the United States and elsewhere. 9:00-9:05 a.m. Monday through Friday.

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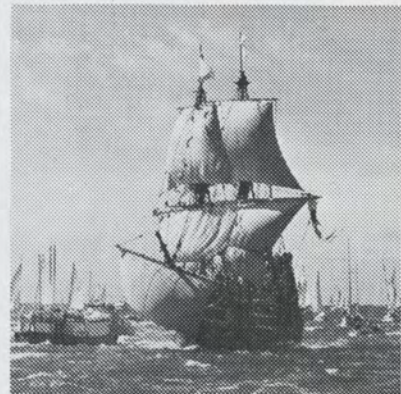
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# L'ELISIR D'AMORE

(IN ITALIAN)

Opera in two acts by GAETANO DONIZETTI  
Text by FELICE ROMANI

Conductor  
CARLO FELICE CILLARIO

Production  
LOTFI MANSOURI

Designer  
ROBERT DARLING

Chorus Director  
ROBERT JONES

Choreographer  
DANIEL LORDON\*

Musical Preparation  
RANDALL BARE\*

Lighting Designer  
ROBERT BRAND

Costumes Designed by  
ROBERT DARLING

Costumes Executed by  
GOLDSTEIN & CO.

Puppeteer  
HENRY KERSH

## CAST

(in order of appearance)

Giannetta PAMELA SOUTH\*

Nemorino JOSE CARRERAS

Adina JUDITH BLEGEN

Sergeant Belcore INGVAR WIXELL

Dr. Dulcamara PAOLO MONTARSOLO

Farmers, soldiers, villagers

Corps de ballet

\*San Francisco Opera debut

### TIME AND PLACE:

DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY IN THE  
BASQUE COUNTRY

#### ACT I—Scene 1

Scene 2

Scene 3

Scene 4

Scene 5

#### INTERMISSION

#### ACT II—Scene 1

Scene 2

Scene 3

Adina's Farm

A Small Garden

The Village Square

The Inn of Pernice

The Village Square

Adina's Farm

A Village Street

Adina's Farm

First performance: Teatro della Canobbiana, Milan, May 12, 1832

First San Francisco Opera performance: September 14, 1929

SATURDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 4, 1975 AT 8:00

TUESDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 7, 1975 AT 8:00

FRIDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 10, 1975 AT 8:00 (Broadcast)

SUNDAY AFTERNOON, OCTOBER 12, 1975 AT 2:00

FRIDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 17, 1975 AT 8:00

L'Elisir d'Amore is also performed at five student matinees,  
sponsored by the San Francisco Opera Guild

Please do not interrupt the music with applause

Latecomers will not be seated during the performance  
after the lights have dimmed in order not to disturb  
patrons who have arrived on time

The use of cameras and any kind of recording  
equipment is strictly forbidden

The performance will last approximately two hours  
and thirty minutes



# SYNOPSIS / L'ELISIR D'AMORE

## ACT I

Entrance to Adina's farm. Giannetta and a group of peasants are resting from harvesting under the shade of a group of trees. Nemorino watches Adina timidly from a distance, sad that he is too poor to offer her anything but his love and thus is too shy to approach her. Adina reads the story of Tristan and Isolde and how Tristan won his love with a magic potion. A squad of soldiers appears led by the swaggering Sergeant Belcore. He flirts with the girls and then declares his passion for Adina, asking her to marry him. She is flattered by his handsome bearing and the declaration of his love, but refuses the offer. The peasants return to work, and Nemorino finds the courage to declare his love for Adina. She laughs at him, telling him she is too capricious to settle down. The scene shifts to the square of the neighboring village. Dr. Dulcamara arrives with a supply of patent medicine for sale. Nemorino asks him if he knows of the magic elixir with which Tristan won Isolde. Dulcamara replies that it was he who invented the potion. Taking an empty bottle, the quack fills it with Bordeaux wine and sells it to Nemorino as a love potion. The effect of the alcohol is immediate. Certain that he will win Adina's love, Nemorino begins to treat her indifferently. To get even, Adina begins to flirt with Belcore and finally

agrees to marry him. When orders arrive calling for Belcore to report to duty at once, it is decided that Adina and Belcore will wed that very evening.

## ACT II

Inside Adina's farm. Distracted that Nemorino has not attended the party preceding her marriage, Adina puts off signing the marriage contract. All depart leaving Dulcamara alone. Soon, Nemorino enters and asks the doctor's help. He says Nemorino must double the amount of the potion and gives him another bottle of wine. In order to gain the money to pay for the elixir, Nemorino joins Belcore's regiment and receives an enlistment bonus. The scene shifts back to the village square. Nemorino reels in, tipsy from the new bottle of wine. The girls of the village, having just learned that a rich uncle of Nemorino's has died and made him wealthy, crowd about him. Unaware of his new wealth, Nemorino thinks that at last Dulcamara's potion is working. Adina sees Nemorino and the girls and becomes jealous. She is now determined to win him for herself. Nemorino returns, sad at the thought of leaving his village and Adina for the army. Adina joins him and tells him that she has bought back his enlistment papers so that they can be married. All join in praising Dulcamara and his magic elixir.

## STUDENT MATINEES

### L'ELISIR D'AMORE

(in Italian) Donizetti

Conductor  
RANDALL BARE\*

Stage Director  
MATTHEW FARRUGGIO

Designer  
ROBERT DARLING

Choreographer  
DANIEL LORDON

#### CAST

(in order of appearance)

Giannetta	PAMELA SOUTH
Nemorino	WILLIAM HARNESS
Adina	CAROL MALONE
Sergeant Belcore	CHARLES LONG
Dr. Dulcamara	PETER STRUMMER*

*Farmers, soldiers, villagers*

*Corps de ballet*

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1975 AT 1:30  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1975 AT 1:30  
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1975 AT 1:30  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1975 AT 1:30  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1975 AT 1:30

\*San Francisco Opera debut



# “A Vintage Year”

by IVAN DAVIS

Most musicians I have known have two ruling passions (other than music, one hopes)—a love for good food and wine, and a zest for games of any sort. Of the latter, in the wishful thinking or “Desert Island” variety, one of the most popular is selecting a period in musical history that one would most like to recapture. My unvarying choice is the three-year period centering around 1831. My curiosity as an instrumentalist would be more than satisfied with the hearing of Chopin, Liszt and Paganini in concert, and my passion for bel-canto opera would be brought to fever pitch witnessing the premieres of Bellini’s *I Capuletti ed I Montecchi*, *La Sonnambula* and *Norma*, and Donizetti’s *Anna Bolena* and *L’Elisir d’Amore*. One would also receive the lagniappe of hearing in person the legendary sopranos Giuditta Pasta and Giulia Grisi. If granted a few months in Paris at the end of 1829 as well, I could also hear the first performance of Rossini’s last opera *Guillaume Tell* at the Opéra.

Hector Berlioz in his *Memoirs* gives us an intriguing, if unsettling account of operatic life during this fascinating period. “On arriving in Milan,” Berlioz wrote, out of a sense of duty I made myself go to hear the latest opera. Donizetti’s *L’Elisir d’Amore* was being given at the Canobbiana. I found the theater full of people talking in normal voices, with their backs to the stage. The singers, undeterred, gesticulated and yelled their lungs out in the strictest spirit of rivalry. At least I presumed they did, from their wide-open mouths; but the noise of the audience was such that no sound penetrated except the bass drum. People were gambling, eating supper in their boxes, etcetera, etcetera. Consequently, perceiving it was useless to expect to hear anything of the score, which was then new to me, I left. It appears the Italians do sometimes listen. I have been assured by several people that it is so. . . . (However) music for the Italians is a sensual pleasure and nothing more. For this noble expression of the mind they have hardly more respect than for the art of cooking. They want a score that, like a plate of macaroni, can be assimilated immediately without their having to think about it or even pay any attention to it.”

Actually, Berlioz came very close to

the truth; the Italians have a particularly apt expression for fast work—“cooked, served and eaten.” With this in mind, Gaetano Donizetti definitely would have been Italy’s answer to Colonel Sander’s or MacDonald’s. In fact, it would have been possible to hear the premieres of eleven other Donizetti operas during this three-year period.

Only thirty-four at the time *L’Elisir* was written, Donizetti had already composed forty operas (and nearly as many to come). In his case, as well as Rossini’s, quality bore no relationship to the length of the gestation period. *L’Elisir* was written in two weeks. (Informed of this fact, Rossini is reputed to have retorted, “Well, he’s always been a lazy fellow; I wrote *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* in thirteen days!”) Even more incredibly, Donizetti composed the fourth act of *La Favorita*, one of his finest dramatic creations, one evening at a friend’s house, after dinner, in a matter of hours. Of course, all of these operas were written by formula — operatic yard goods, one might say. Arias, duets, trios, even overtures were interchangeable, but when the muses were present, the results were masterpieces — *L’Elisir* and *Don Pasquale* on the one hand, *Anna Bolena* and *Lucia di Lammermoor* on the other.

Comic opera, in some form, has been with us since the late Renaissance, though the first opera was conceived not as a musical form but as a recreation of classic Greek tragedy. Luckily, however, Italians being Italians, comedy was lurking in the wings. Then as now, the basic premise in comedy is deception, from Cavalli through Mozart to Rossini and Donizetti. Jove transforms himself into Diana in *La Calisto*; the Countess and Susanna exchange identities in *Le Nozze di Figaro*; Guglielmo and Ferrando pretend to be amorous Albanians in *Così fan tutte*; Count Almaviva assumes the role of the poor student Lindoro in *Il Barbiere*; and Norina plays the double-faced Sofronia in *Don Pasquale*. These impersonations are all designed to create hilarious situations, but in some instances a note of cruelty invades the action.

This is not the case in *L’Elisir*, the gentlest of all comic operas. True, there is deception, but of the usual variety. Doctor Dulcamara’s “love”



potion falls in the realm of harmless quackery — no malice aforethought, only pecuniary gains in view. Even Adina's taunting of the hapless Nemorino is tinged with tenderness.

Like the majority of Donizetti's operas, *L'Elisir* is dependent on a quartet of principal singers. In the "Tudor" trilogy — *Anna Bolena*, *Maria Stuarda* and *Roberto Devereux* — the quartet consists of two women and two men, whereas in *L'Elisir*, *Lucia* and *Favorita* he wrote for one woman and three men. In all cases, the strength of the music lies in the strength of all four singers. We were most fortunate in the beginning of the bel-canto revival to have extraordinary casts such as Maria Callas, Giulietta Simionato, Gianni Raimondi and Nicola Rossi-Lemeni bringing *Anna Bolena* back to life at La Scala in the 1950's. However, a decade later revivals tended to concentrate on the fame and/or merits of certain prima donnas. What should be an ensemble of virtuoso singing-actors then becomes a solo vehicle resulting in musical and dramatic imbalance. Donizetti, as well as we, are the losers. Luckily in this San Francisco production of *L'Elisir*, we have a cast of peers. With such a quartet, the audience will receive the full impact of the beautifully characterized arias and ensembles which tumble from this impeccably wrought score.

In Nemorino's opening aria, "Quanto è bella," we feel immediately the sincerity of his feelings for Adina, while in the opera's most famous moment, "Una furtiva lagrima," the emotions have become more intense and more touching. Many tenors have wrongly portrayed Nemorino as a bumpkin bordering on the village idiot, instead of the naive, unsophisticated innocent that Donizetti's music depicts. The plaintive melody of "Una furtiva lagrima," is first given to the bassoon, usually the buffoon of the orchestra, but here an elegiac voice.

In Adina's ensuing "Prendi, per me sei libero," the warmth of her love

makes a strong contrast to the flirtatious, slightly vixenish "Per guarir di tal pazzia" in the first-act duet when she implores Nemorino to find "a new sweetheart everyday."

Dr. Dulcamara, opera's greatest con man, assails the senses with the most delightful patter song imaginable, "Udite, udite, o rustici," with plays on words and rhymes that are irresistible. Donizetti may owe a great deal to Rossini's Dr. Bartolo, Don Magnifico, Mustafà and Selim, but Gilbert and Sullivan are equally in the debt of our medicine-man huckster. How typical (and cruel) it was of Donizetti to give the final member of the quartet, Belcore, the only unsympathetic character in the opera, one of the most demanding of entrance arias, "Come Paride vezzoso." Difficult it is, but it perfectly expresses his swagger and bragadoccio.

In the opera's opening scene Adina reads aloud the story of Tristan and Isolde and their love potion. Later, Dulcamara informs us that his "miraculous" elixir is in reality a wine from Bordeaux. Now Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* is indeed a heady brew, and, excepting their respective perfection, about as opposite as possible from Donizetti's *L'Elisir*. Wagner's masterpiece, eight years in creation, is like a rich and noble wine, a Chambertin, perhaps, or, if from Bordeaux, a Chateau Latour of illustrious vintage. *L'Elisir d'Amore*, on the other hand, with only a fortnight in the bottle, would have to be a beaujolais—light, fresh and as almost as sparkling as champagne. Indeed, as Nemorino and Adina sing, it is an elixir "di si perfetta, di si rara qualità."

*Ivan Davis, internationally-known concert pianist, is professor of piano at the University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida. A long-time opera fan and record collector, he has frequently been an intermission guest on the broadcast of the Metropolitan Opera. His latest records for the London label include music of Gottschalk and Gershwin.*



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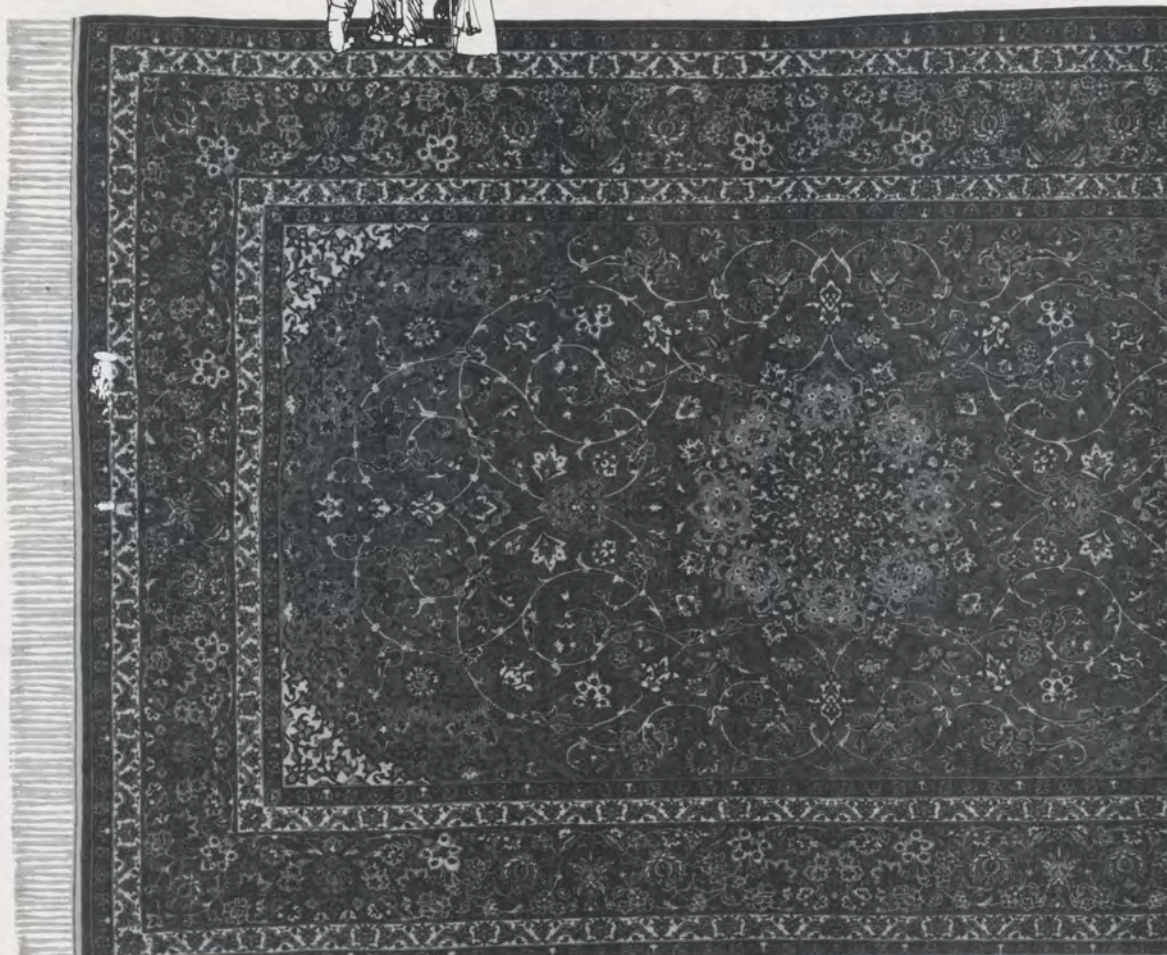


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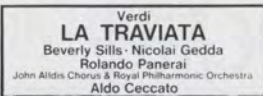


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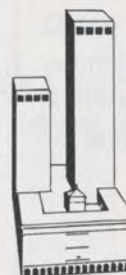
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To mark the completion of the Colonnade restoration project, the Palace of Fine Arts will present a free program of films and an auction of Palace artifacts

on Sunday, October 5

Noon: Free film program in honor of the centenary of the death of Hans Christian Andersen. Feature film "Hans Christian Andersen" starring Danny Kaye plus several short subjects.

4 PM: Auction of monumental "Weeping Woman," four "Dancing Maidens," and assorted fragments from decorative sculptures of the famous Maybeck-designed structure. Guest celebrity auctioneer.

For free tickets (limit of 4 per request) send stamped self-addressed envelope to The Manager, Palace of Fine Arts Theatre, 3301 Lyon Street, San Francisco, CA 94123. Send for tickets by September 22. After that date, seats will be on a first-come basis on day of performance.

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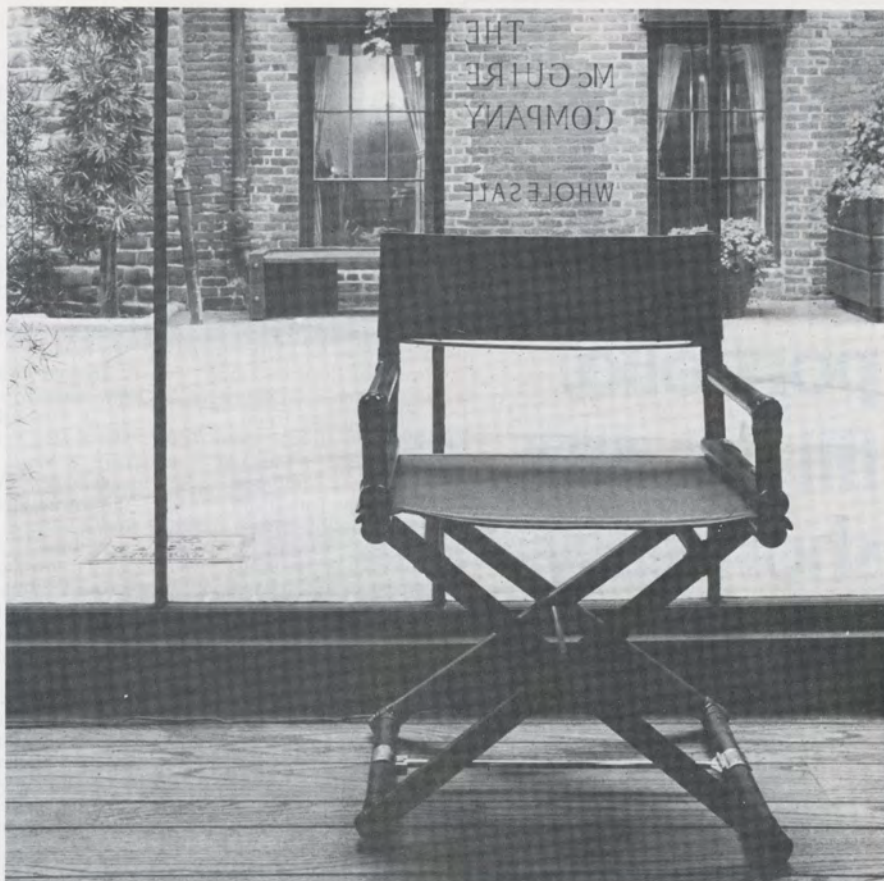
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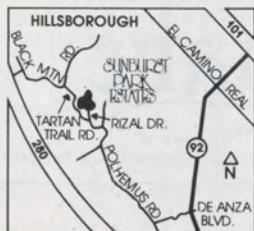
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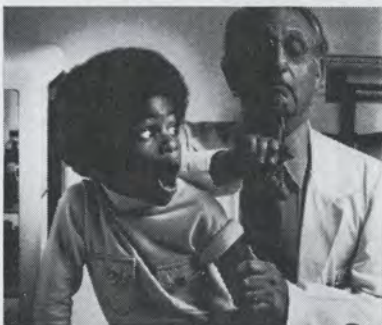
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Many Opera goers who live in the northern section of San Francisco are regular patrons of the Municipal Railway's special "Opera Bus".

This bus is added to Muni's north-bound 47 Line following all evening performances of the Opera, Symphony, Ballet and other major events. The service is also provided for all Saturday and Sunday matinees.

Look for this bus, marked "47 Special", after each performance in the north-bound bus zone at Van Ness Avenue and Grove Street — across Van Ness from the Opera House.

Its route is as follows:

North on Van Ness to Chestnut, then left to Divisadero where it turns left to Union. It continues on Union over Russian Hill to Columbus, then left to Powell—then right to the end of the line at North Point.

The 1975 San Francisco Opera season is supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington, D.C., a Federal Agency.

## Taxi Service

At all Opera performances, an attendant will be stationed at the taxi entrance of the Opera House, and persons wishing a taxi after the performance are requested to so advise the attendant upon their arrival. Shortly after the start of the performance, the attendant will telephone the dispatcher and inform him of the total number of taxis requested. Although the Opera Association cannot guarantee that a taxi will be available for each patron requesting one, we believe this procedure will help to improve post-performance taxi service for our patrons.

**FIRE NOTICE:** There are sufficient exits in this building to accommodate the entire audience. The exit indicated by the lighted "Exit" sign nearest your seat is the shortest route to the street. In case of fire please do not run—walk through that exit.

Please note that no cameras or tape recorders are permitted in the Opera House.

## Ticket Information

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA BOX OFFICE LOBBY, WAR MEMORIAL OPERA HOUSE: Van Ness at Grove, (415) 431-1210. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday. 10 a.m. through first intermission on all performance days.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** The box office in the outer lobby of the Opera House will remain open through the first intermission of every performance. Tickets for remaining performances in the season may be purchased at this time.

## Unused Tickets

Patrons who are unable to attend a performance may make a worthwhile contribution to the San Francisco Opera Association by returning their tickets to the Box Office or telephoning (415) 431-1210. Their value will be tax deductible for the subscriber. If tickets are re-sold, the proceeds will be used to benefit the San Francisco Opera.

## Opera Museum

The exhibit in the Opera Museum has a new look this year: instead of presenting memorabilia from past seasons and past productions, the display consists of the work done privately by the many talented and fine artists who comprise the Opera Scenic Shop.

Twenty artists have worked to assemble what they consider their finest achievements in painting, ceramics, sculpture, architectural models and scenic designs.

The exhibit will be changed periodically so that San Francisco Opera audiences will have the widest possible exposure to the work of this most able group. In addition to supplying the materials for the exhibit, the scenic artists have also mounted the entire show.

As in past seasons, the Opera Museum is open, free of charge, during all performances in the south foyer, box level

For lost and found information inquire at check room No. 3 or call (415) 621-6600, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

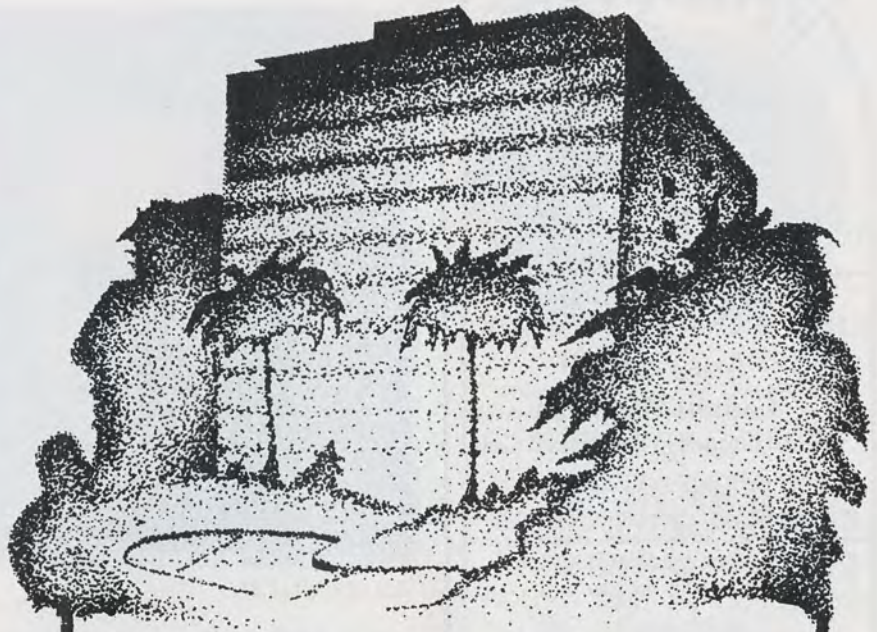


evoke sentimental and even tragic undertones on occasion.

The second reason was the death of his parents, three infant children, and his young wife, Virginia. All happened within the space of just a few years and made such an impression on the sensitive composer that he was bed-ridden for several weeks when he heard the plague had taken his wife. In listening to any of the dramatic works such as *Anna Bolena*, *Lucrezia Borgia*, *Maria Stuarda*, or *Lucia di Lammermoor* (those favorites of Verdi), one is most aware of the intensity of his personal experience. The "Giudici, Anna?" aria from *Anna Bolena* is expressive of pure pain and horror as it takes the normally high tessitura soprano role into the mid and low registers with tremendous, tearing acrobatics in the style of the early nineteenth century "bel canto" vocal writing.

The last reason is the entire working relationship with the people and their offices. The choice of libretto or even librettist was not that of the composer. A tyrannical opera house manager would often dictate each to the composer, impose a performance date often in less than a month's time, often take no care to protect the composer's work, and possibly even conspire against him for personal profit. Pirated performances from piano scores would be sold to the highest bidder. The Rome premiere of *Anna Bolena* was a fiasco (which reflected poorly on the composer) due to the quality of the corrupt version presented. Frequently, the librettist might be employed in the local house as stage manager or perhaps assistant conductor, and was more or less a literary jack-of-all-trades. Indeed, there might be no meaningful communication between composer and librettist. This was not all bad, for the various censors in the politically independent city states of Italy had imposed such a degree of text control that there was a standardization of libretto writing. Composers were not free to write music for all that interested them, whether it be integral to the plot or not. Since the eighteenth century, it was not allowed to permit such subjects as regicide, treason, suicide or adultery on the stage. Have you wondered why in Mozart's *Così fan*

*continued on p. 63*



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## Profiles



JUDITH BLEGEN

Judith Blegen, the much-acclaimed Metropolitan Opera soprano, returns for her third season with San Francisco Opera to sing Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore*. Miss Blegen made her debut here during the 1972-73 season as Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and returned the following year as Adele in *Die Fledermaus*. The young artist triumphed in the role of Adina (opposite Luciano Pavarotti) during the Met's 1973-74 season, adding to a list of successes there which included Marzelline in *Fidelio*, Mélisande in *Pelléas et Mélisande*, and Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier*. Last season at the Met she reached new operatic milestones singing Juliette opposite Plácido Domingo in *Roméo et Juliette* as well as Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi*. During the summer of 1975 she appeared at Covent Garden in *Così fan tutte* and at the Salzburg Festival in *The Abduction from the Seraglio*. The Montana-born singer has performed extensively with the nation's leading orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Cleveland Orchestra. Among her many recordings are Haydn's *Harmoniemesse* with the New York Philharmonic under Leonard Bernstein, *La Bohème* conducted by Sir Georg Solti, Menotti's *The Medium* and *The Old Maid and the Thief*, and Orff's *Catulli Carmina* with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Eugene Ormandy.



PAMELA SOUTH

Pamela South, a 1975 member of Western Opera Theater, appeared in that company's productions of *The Tales of Hoffmann* (Antonia and Giulietta), *La Traviata* (Flora) and the special Street Opera and Sigmund Stern Grove performances of *Don Giovanni* (Zerlina). In the summer of 1974 she sang the role of Pamina in the Merola Opera Program's production of *The Magic Flute* at the Paul Masson Mountain Winery. A native of Idaho and a graduate of the University of Montana, the young soprano toured Europe in 1969 with the *Jubilees*, a USO singing group. In 1973 she was a winner of the Seattle Opera Auditions and the San Francisco and Metropolitan Opera Regional Auditions. Miss South made her debut with Seattle Opera singing the role of Countess Ceperano in the 1973 production of *Rigoletto*. In the fall of that year she joined the original company of *What Is This Thing Called Opera?*, a touring group sponsored by the Cultural Enrichment Program of Seattle. Miss South makes her debut with San Francisco Opera this season singing the roles of Giannetta in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Mascha in *Pique Dame*, the first Lover in *Il Tabarro*, Nella in *Gianni Schicchi* and Papagena in *The Magic Flute*. The soprano is a recipient of a Martha Baird Rockefeller Grant.





JOSE CARRERAS

Jose Carreras, the electrifying Catalan tenor who sang Rodolfo here in *La Bohème* (1973) and Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* last season, returns to the house as Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*. During the 1974-75 season Carreras made his debut at the Metropolitan Opera in *Tosca* and also sang engagements in Dallas (*Lucrezia Borgia*), Trieste (*Adriana Lecouvreur*), Milwaukee (*Lucia di Lammermoor*) and Covent Garden (*Madama Butterfly*). In addition, he interpreted Rodolfo in the Metropolitan Opera's April production of *La Bohème*. The tenor made his operatic debut as Ismaele in *Nabucco* with the company of his hometown, Barcelona, and was immediately recognized as a major talent by his celebrated compatriot, soprano Montserrat Caballé; today the two artists are frequently paired as singing partners. Carreras appeared in many of the major European opera houses before making his American debut with New York City Opera as Pinkerton in 1972. During his initial U.S. season, he made his Los Angeles bow at the Hollywood Bowl in a concert version of *Rigoletto* under James Levine. The tenor's meteoric career in this country has also included appearances at Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, Los Angeles City Opera, the Miami Philharmonic, Philadelphia Lyric Opera, and New York's Alice Tully Hall. He is slated to sing Nemorino at Covent Garden during the 1975-76 season.



INGVAR WIXELL

Ingvar Wixell, now in his sixth season with San Francisco Opera, is a permanent member of the Deutsche Oper Berlin and the Royal Swedish Opera of Stockholm. He has also sung as a guest artist with the Munich Opera, the Hamburg State Opera, London's Covent Garden, Milan's La Scala, the Vienna State Opera and with the opera companies of Marseilles, Tokyo and Copenhagen. During the Metropolitan Opera's 1974-75 season the baritone portrayed Scarpia in *Tosca* for the first time at that house; he will repeat the role in April, 1976 for the Greater Miami International Opera. Wixell frequently performs at various European festivals, notably at Salzburg and Bayreuth, where his roles have included the Count in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Wolfram in *Tannhäuser*, and the Herald in *Lohengrin*. In 1973 he portrayed Tonio in *I Pagliacci* for the Hamburg State Opera, and the title roles in the Metropolitan Opera's productions of Verdi's *Rigoletto* (his Metropolitan Opera debut) and *Simon Boccanegra*. He frequently performs in productions under the baton of Colin Davis, for whom he interpreted *Rigoletto* at Covent Garden in 1974. This season at San Francisco Opera he sings the roles of Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore*, the title role in *Simon Boccanegra*, and Sergeant Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore*. Previous roles in this house have included Valentin in *Faust*, Marcello in *La Bohème*, Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Ping in *Turandot*, and Scarpia in *Tosca*.

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PAOLO MONTARSOLO

Paolo Montarsolo, now in his third season with San Francisco Opera, abandoned his university career to study singing at La Scala's famous "Centro di Perfezionamento." He subsequently became a member of the "Cadetti della Scala" which toured the major cities of Italy and Europe. Noted for his polished portrayals of the basso buffo roles of Rossini, Montarsolo performed with San Francisco Opera in 1969 and 1974 as Don Magnifico in *La Cenerentola*, a part which also brought him critical acclaim at La Scala in 1973. His busy schedule during the 1974-75 season has included performances of *La Donna del Lago* in Bologna, *L'Elisir d'Amore* in Naples and *Così fan tutte* in Turin (which he also produced), as well as his Metropolitan Opera debut in the title role of *Don Pasquale*. Last spring he sang Mustafa in La Scala's production of *L'Italiana in Algeri*, and during the summer he appeared in *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Salzburg Festival. Also last season he performed in the first production in 50 years of the Weber-Mahler *Die drei Pintos* at Turin's Teatro Regio. In addition to Salzburg, the bass has sung at the festivals of Glyndebourne, Wiesbaden, Wexford and Spoleto. He also appears frequently at Dallas Civic Opera and Chicago Lyric Opera. This season at San Francisco Opera he portrays Dr. Dulcamara in *L'Elisir d'Amore*.



CARLO FELICE CILLARIO

Carlo Felice Cillario is on the podium this season at San Francisco Opera for two productions: *L'Elisir d'Amore* and *Norma*. In previous years here he has conducted *Tosca* and *Nabucco* (1970), *Il Trovatore* (1971) and *La Favorita* (1973). Cillario began his musical career as a violinist, winning the coveted Paganini Prize and devoting several years to intensive concert activity. In 1942 he began to concentrate on conducting under the guidance of Nicola Cerniatsky and George Enesco. Cillario is active on the podium at such leading opera houses as La Scala, Covent Garden, Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires, Verona Arena, La Fenice in Venice, Paris Opera, Hamburg Staatsoper, and Stockholm Royal Opera, among others. He has also conducted for five seasons at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, and during the 1972-73 season he was in seven productions at the Metropolitan Opera. In 1975 he was on the podium for *Aida* at the Sydney Opera House and for *Don Giovanni* at the Einge Festival in Israel. Cillario conducted *L'Elisir d'Amore* during three seasons at the Glyndebourne Festival and recently recorded *Norma* for RCA. Following his engagement here the Maestro will conduct Menotti's *The Consul* in Marseilles, a concert with Leontyne Price in Paris, and Janacek's *The Cunning Little Vixen* and Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio* for Australian Opera.





LOTFI MANSOURI

Lotfi Mansouri, who directed *Esclarmonde* and *The Daughter of the Regiment* here last season, returns to San Francisco Opera for *L'Elisir d'Amore*, *Werther*, and *Andrea Chenier*. The internationally-known Iranian director is also remembered here for his productions of *L'Africaine* (1972) and *Die Fledermaus* (1973). As chief resident stage director at the Grand Theatre, Geneva, he has mounted productions of *Samson et Dalila*, *Idomeneo*, *L'Elisir d'Amore* and *Der Zigeunerbaron*, among many others. Mansouri moved from Iran to this country to study psychology, but after receiving his BA from UCLA turned to opera as a career. He directed a special production of *Carmen* in the new opera house in Teheran on the occasion of the celebration of the 2,500 anniversary of the founding of Iran. Active in broadcasting, he has produced *School for Wives* for Swiss-German television in Zurich and *Manon* for French television with Wolfram Skalicki. Last season the director made his debut with Dallas Opera, staging *I Puritani*, and produced *Ariadne auf Naxos* for the Netherlands Opera in Amsterdam. He is slated to direct a new production of *The Merry Widow* for Vancouver Opera in April, 1976.



ROBERT DARLING

Robert Darling, the designer of *L'Elisir d'Amore*, made his debut here with that opera in 1967. Following that season at San Francisco Opera he created sets and costumes for *Salome* (based on the sketches of the late Wieland Wagner), as well as for the company's production of *Fra Diavolo*. In 1972 he was designer here for the American premiere production of *The Visit of The Old Lady*. Darling's association with Spring Opera Theater has produced set and costume conceptions for *Titus*, *La Rondine*, *The Consul*, *Rigoletto*, and *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*. During the 1971 season he created two productions of Verdi's *Don Carlo*, one for Santa Fe Opera and the other for the Chicago Lyric Opera. Last year at San Francisco Opera Darling designed and revised the production of *Parsifal* as well as the company revival of *Salome*. As a designer-director, he handled three different treatments of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* during the 1974-75 season: for the Hidden Valley Music Seminars in Carmel, for Western Opera Theater at the Sigmund Stern Grove Midsummer Music Festival, and for a Street Opera edition of the WOT production. A native of San Francisco, Darling graduated from San Francisco State and received a master's degree from Yale University. He has worked on several Broadway shows as well as for numerous repertory theaters across the country.

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DANIEL LORDON

Daniel Lordon, a 29-year-old dancer who choreographed the widely-praised comic ballet sequence in Spring Theater's 1975 production *Viva La Mamma*, makes his choreographic debut with San Francisco Opera this season. As ballet director and resident choreographer for the company he is staging the dance segments of five productions: *L'Elisir d'Amore*, *Pique Dame*, *Werther*, *Andrea Chenier* and *The Magic Flute*. A member of the San Francisco Opera Ballet for the past five years, Lordon performed the mime role of the Dance Master in the company's 1974 production of *The Daughter of the Regiment*. He also danced solo roles in San Francisco Opera's *L'Africaine* (1972) and *La Favorita* (1973) and appeared in Spring Opera Theater's 1973 production of *The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein*. He provided choreography assistance and also danced in the 1974 production of the Offenbach opera. In addition, Lordon has performed with San Francisco Ballet, Ballet Celeste, San Francisco Dance Theatre, Dance Spectrum, Oakland Ballet and Santa Fe Opera Ballet.

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*tutte* the marriage is performed by a notary? Well, any demonstration of the Church was considered inappropriate, ergo, no priests, crucifixes or religious activities. This was quite the opposite of the French, who in their rescue operas, such as the works of Auber and Meyerbeer, used the prayer to a great advantage, and paved the way for the famous last act of Verdi's *Otello* when restrictions had loosened later in the century.

Unlike the opera houses of today, which either have a virtual stable of talent or casts from international stars, the Italian opera houses were content to maintain only a half dozen or less singers in major fachs with comprimario roles distributed among the more prepossessing members of the chorus. Thus a composer wrote for the

singers of the particular house (known as *puntature*). The result is that many operas were simply not suited for the intended house due to the lack of quality singers in the essential roles. This along with the problems of proficient orchestra, adequate staging and technical demands, placed a large burden on the composer who was required to "sit at the cembalo" for the first three performances in order to insure responsibility. Worse yet, popular acceptance of a new work was necessarily based on the success of his guidance in these first three performances. Where today's opera houses are grand architectural memorials combining perfect acoustics with luxurious appointments for two to four thousand people sitting comfortably and listening intently, the Italian opera house was one

*continued on p. 68*

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# THE ART OF MAKING A SCENE

by Armistead Maupin

With enough rope to scale Mount Everest, it may well be the world's largest macrame creation.

Twenty-eight thousand feet of rugged hemp have been knotted, spliced, frayed, woven, stitched and glued by San Francisco Opera scenic shop craftsmen to create the ghostly ship riggings of Jean Pierre Ponnelle's new production of *Der Fliegende Holländer*.

"There was actually a good deal of nautical art involved in the project," says shop foreman Pierre Cayard, "but the real miracle is that the entire construction is moored to a single pressure point supporting more than 10,000 pounds of pressure."

The knotty masterpiece, fashioned by three people over a month's time, was perhaps the most challenging aspect of the 1975 season for the select handful of artisans who comprise the scenic shop. *Holländer*, in fact, contains a number of technical elements especially worthy of note.

"The ship itself is quite literal," chief scenic artist Norman Rizzi points out. "The detailing is so thorough it could almost be a movie set. By contrast, the ropes and the riggings with their skeleton puppets are very impressionistic creations. A third element — those crashing waves — employs a stage device that is centuries old."

The waves, which differ only slightly from a theatrical effect invented by DaVinci and used by Inigo Jones in the

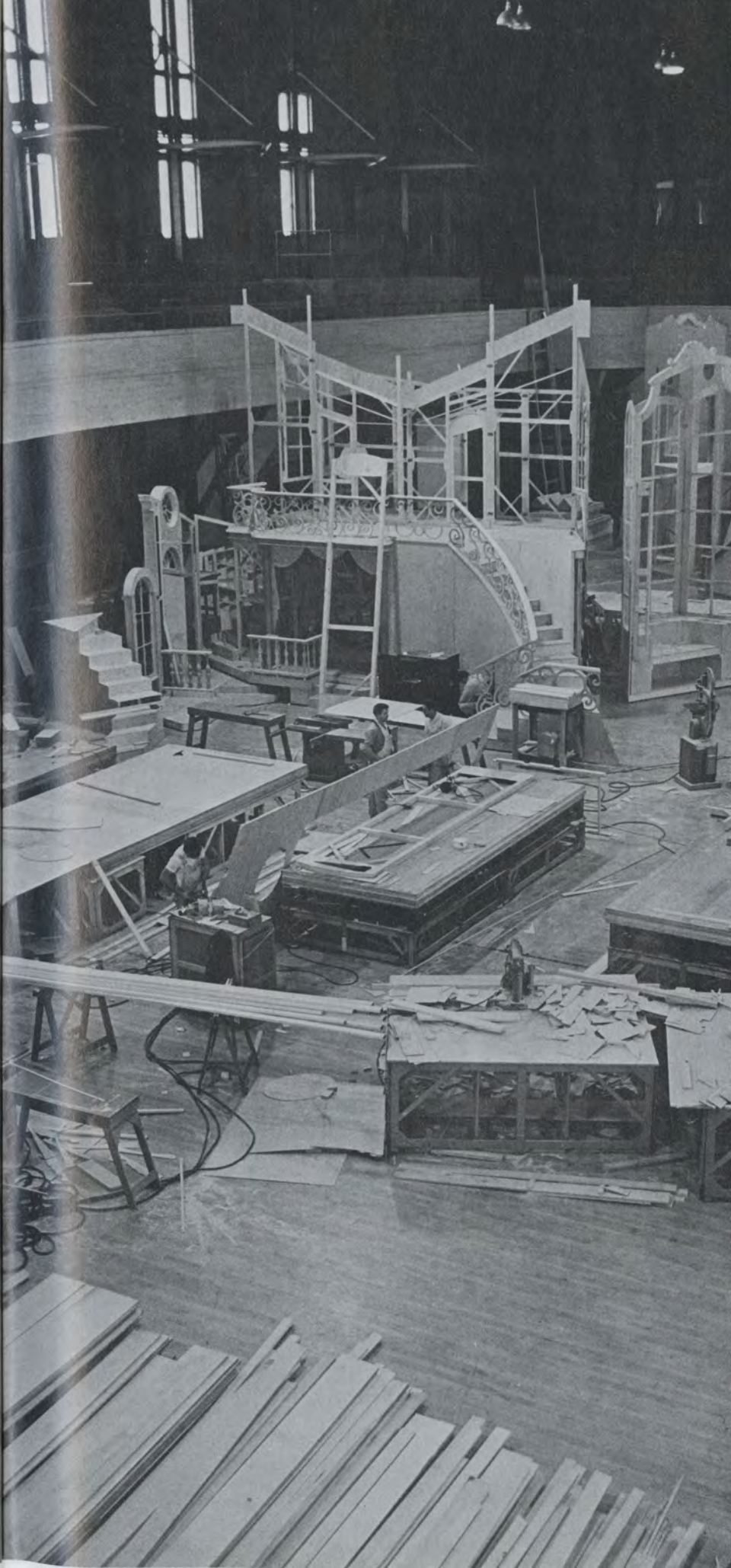
17th Century, are constructed of chicken wire and gauze on six separate rotating metal axes. Crouched like galley slaves within the innards of the Dutchman's ship are six stagehands who crank the axes first counterclockwise, then clockwise, to create the random motion of the sea.

At least a dozen other stagehands are required during the tempestuous opening scene of *Holländer* to produce effects so realistic that some impressionable audience members may reach for their Dramamine. (There are two rope shakers, one snow tosser, six men on the light board operating lights and a fan for the sails, and two others feeding dry ice "fog" from upstage over the deck.)

"Creating the set for *Holländer* was a rewarding experience for all of us," says foreman Cayard, "because of the single-set design and the detailed drawings provided by Mr. Ponnelle. Unlike some productions, this one allowed each artist and carpenter to visualize exactly where his efforts were fitting in."

Cayard, a Frenchman whose family has handcrafted custom furniture for four generations, joined San Francisco Opera in 1957 as a scenic construction mechanic. Among the projects which have taxed his imagination through the years was the 1967 production of *L'Elisir d'Amore*, being revived this season with Judith Blegen and Jose Carreras in the lead roles.





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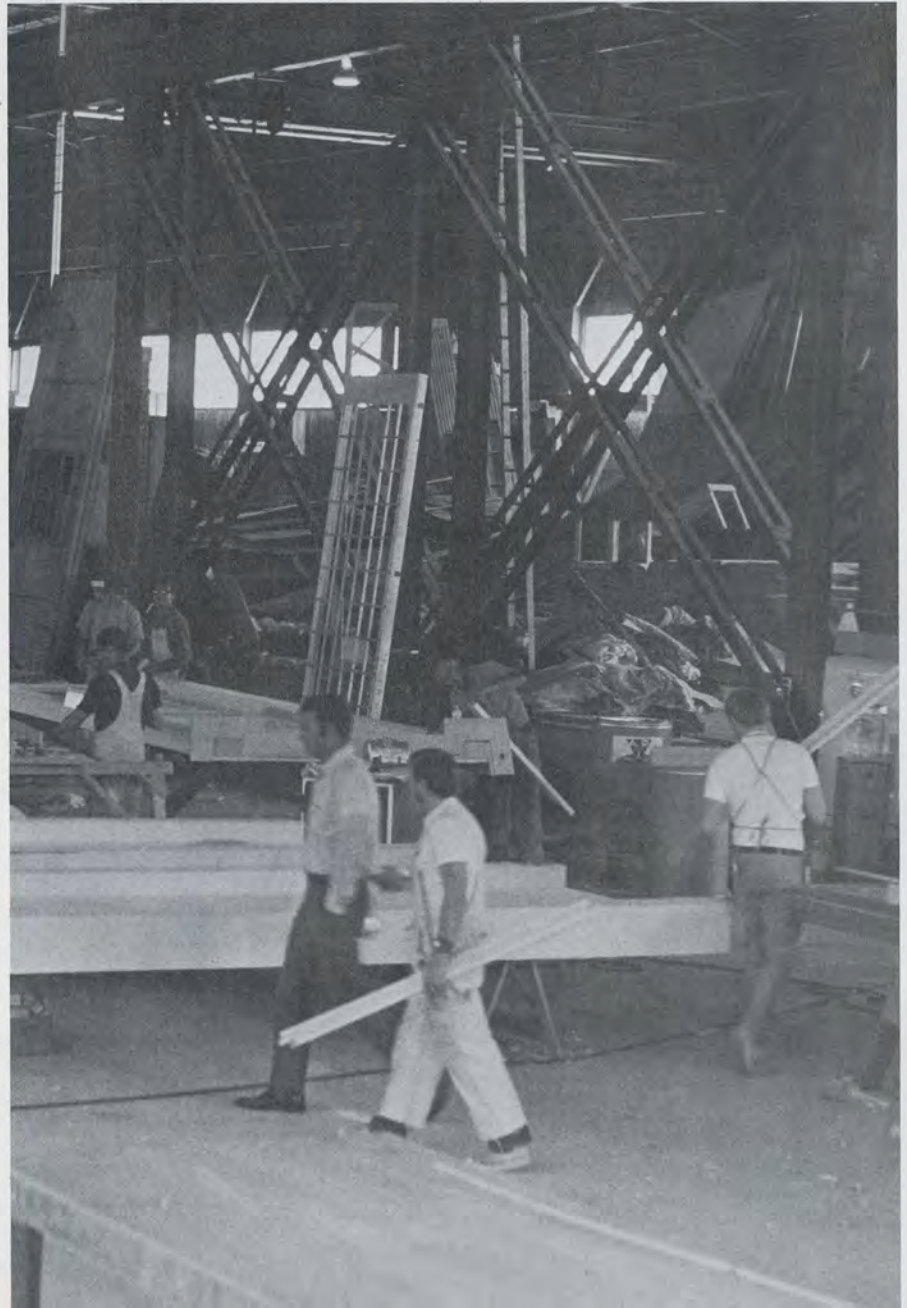
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"The set of *L'Elisir* is unique at San Francisco Opera," the foreman says, "because it moves under its own power without the use of a visible turntable. In those days, our budget was much smaller than it is now, so we had to make do with a lot of improvising." The set, consequently, was mounted on a number of small wheels, only one of which was motorized ("like a motorscooter," Cayard grins) and a hole was drilled in the stage to handle the electric cord.

"This technique has proven to be quite workable," Cayard remarks. "The simplest solutions often turn out to be the best." The revolving set concept,

which *L'Elisir* director Lotfi Mansouri developed for his Zurich debut in the Donizetti work (1965), was employed with great success at La Scala in 1971 where Mansouri utilized stagehands dressed as peasants to shift the scenery.

The mammoth (600 feet by 120 feet) scene shop, located at 800 Indiana Street, serves not only as a space for set construction and painting but also as a warehouse for storage. Tons of sugar pine lumber (ideal for sets because of its strength and light weight) and thousands of yards of "enamel duck" canvas are regularly supplied to the shop.





The 16 to 18 people employed by the shop function not only as carpenters and painters but also as foam cutters, welders, fibreglassers, and furniture makers. "Of all our new productions this season—*L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, *Werther*, *Andrea Chenier*, *Gianni Schicchi* and *Der Fliegende Holländer*—*Poppea* was the most exciting in terms of creating furniture," Rizzi comments. "Some of those chairs we built for Nero's palace were so realistic that Nero might not be able to tell the difference."

*Mr. Maupin is the staff writer for San Francisco Opera.*



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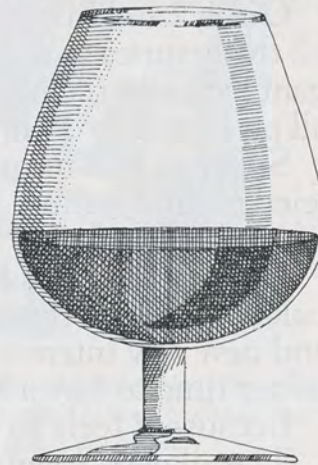
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*Der Fliegende Holländer*, San Francisco Opera, 1954; production designed by Harry Horner. Photo: Strohmeyer Photographers

so it binds together the musical worlds of the piece. The empty fifths with which her verse begins are a scarcely camouflaged version of the Dutchman's bleak motive (as heard, for example, at the beginning of the overture). The unsettled, chromatically sliding harmonies of the restless sea (and of the phantom chorus) are at the center of each verse of her ballad. At the close of each verse, she softens the harsh emptiness of the Dutchman's open fifth by filling it in with the steps of the diatonic scale and supporting it with rich tonal harmony, thus presenting her contrasting world of fulfillment through redemption in human love. These few musical symbols form the essential world of the opera, extending over almost every part of a very simple plot.

After drafting Senta's ballad, Wagner turned to the phantom chorus and the sailors' chorus of the third act, pieces

(continued on p. 71)





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The source for the libretto was the original work of Eugene Scribe's *Le Philtre* set to the opera of the same name by Auber just eleven months earlier. If this can be used as an indication of how fast news of opera production traveled, then we should take note of major works that preceded *L'Elisir d'Amore*. The preceding two years witnessed the premiers of Bellini's *Norma* and *La Sonnambula* (both of libretti by Romani), Meyerbeer's *Robert-le-Diable* and Rossini's *Guillaume Tell*. The Wagner precursor, Carl Maria von Weber, wrote *Oberon* in 1826.

In the "prima", Adina was played by the German soprano Clara Sabina Hein-fetter. Giovanni Battista Genero, who is said to have stuttered badly when he spoke (though not while singing), was

*continued on p. 74*

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- Fri., Sept. 19 L'Incoronazione di Poppea
- Fri., Sept. 26 Der Fliegende Hollaender
- Fri., Oct. 3 Il Trovatore
- Fri., Oct. 10 L'Elisir d'Amore
- Fri., Oct. 24 Pique Dame
- Fri., Oct. 31 Norma
- Fri., Nov. 7 Werther
- Fri., Nov. 14 Simon Boccanegra
- Fri., Nov. 21 Andrea Chenier
- Tue., Nov. 25 The Magic Flute
- Fri., Nov. 28 Il Tabarro/Gianni Schicchi

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SUNDAY

MONDAY

## September

14

15

21 2 PM (M,O)

22

IL TROVATORE

28 2 PM (M,N)  
 L'INCORONAZIONE DI POPPEA

29

## October

5 2 PM (M,N)

6

DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER

12 2 PM (M,O)

13

L'ELISIR D'AMORE

19 2 PM (M,O)

20

NORMA

26 2 PM (M,N)

27

PIQUE DAME

## November

2 2 PM (M,N)

3

WERTHER

9 2 PM (M,N)

10

SIMON BOCCANEGRA

16 2 PM (M,O)

17

ANDREA CHENIER

23 2 PM (M,O)

24

IL TABARRO/  
 GIANNI SCHICCHI

30 2 PM (M,N)

THE MAGIC FLUTE



TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			12 8 PM (A) Opening Night IL TROVATORE	13 8 PM (J,K) L'INCORONAZIONE DI POPPEA
16 8 PM (A,B) L'INCORONAZIONE DI POPPEA	17 8 PM (D,E) IL TROVATORE	18	19 8 PM (G,H) L'INCORONAZIONE DI POPPEA	20 8 PM (J,L) DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER
23 8 PM (A,C) DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER	24 8 PM (D,F) L'INCORONAZIONE DI POPPEA	25	26 8 PM (G,I) DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER	27 8 PM (J,K) IL TROVATORE
30 8 PM (B) IL TROVATORE				
	1 8 PM (D,E) DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER	2	3 8 PM (G,H) IL TROVATORE	4 8 PM (J,L) L'ELISIR D'AMORE
7 8 PM (A,B) L'ELISIR D'AMORE	8	9	10 8 PM (D,E) L'ELISIR D'AMORE	11 8 PM (J,K) NORMA
14 8 PM (A,C) NORMA	15 8 PM (D,E) PIQUE DAME	16	17 8 PM (G,I) L'ELISIR D'AMORE	18 8 PM (J,L) PIQUE DAME
21 8 PM (A,B) PIQUE DAME	22 8 PM (D,F) NORMA	23	24 8 PM (G,I) PIQUE DAME	25 1:30 PM (X) NORMA 8 PM (J,K) WERTHER
28 8 PM (A,C) WERTHER	29 8 PM (D,F) SIMON BOCCANEGRA	30	31 8 PM (G,H) NORMA	
				1 1:30 PM (X) PIQUE DAME 8 PM (J,K) SIMON BOCCANEGRA
4 8 PM (A,C) SIMON BOCCANEGRA	5 8 PM (D,F) ANDREA CHENIER	6	7 8 PM (G,H) WERTHER	8 8 PM (J,L) ANDREA CHENIER
11 8 PM (A,B) ANDREA CHENIER	12 8 PM (D,E) IL TABARRO/ GIANNI SCHICCHI	13	14 8 PM (G,I) SIMON BOCCANEGRA	15 1:30 PM (X) WERTHER 8 PM (J,L) IL TABARRO/ GIANNI SCHICCHI
18 8 PM (A,B) IL TABARRO/ GIANNI SCHICCHI	19 8 PM (D,F) THE MAGIC FLUTE	20 8:30 PM FOL DE ROL	21 8 PM (G,I) ANDREA CHENIER	22 1:30 PM (X) IL TROVATORE 8 PM (J,K) THE MAGIC FLUTE
25 8 PM (A,C) THE MAGIC FLUTE	26 8 PM (F) IL TROVATORE	27 8 PM THE MAGIC FLUTE*	28 8 PM (G,H) IL TABARRO/ GIANNI SCHICCHI	29 8 PM (L) IL TROVATORE

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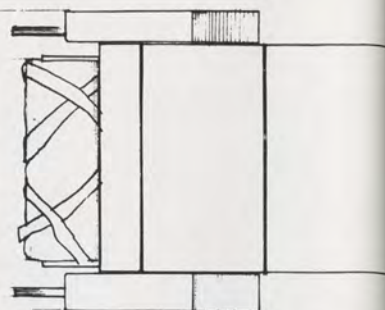
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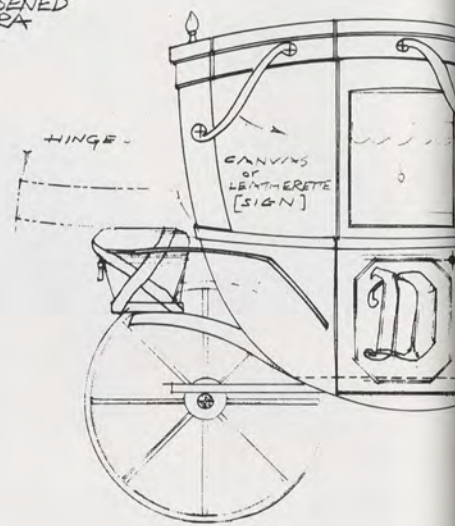
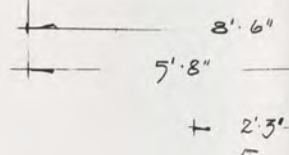
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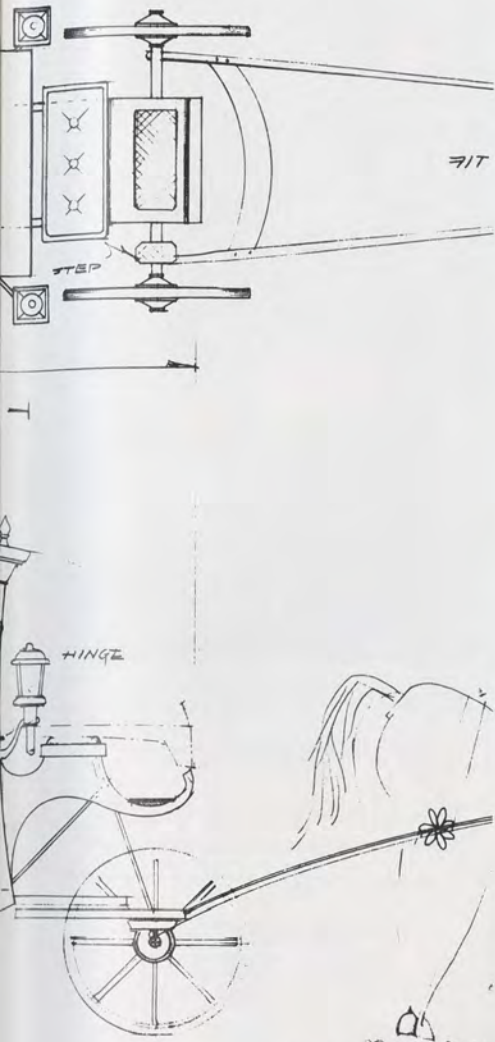
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the Nemorino. The Frenchman Henry-Bernard Dabadie was Belcore, and Giuseppe Frezzolini was Dulcamara. Donizetti was not approving of Frezzolini and claimed he had the "voice of a goat".

Romani faithfully adhered to the Scribe text with the most noticeable exceptions being the addition of the Nemorino-Adina duet in the first act and the exquisite serenade, "Una furtiva lagrima", in the second act. In a letter to his father, Donizetti speaks of writing the famous aria in one hour while suffering from a tremendous headache. And though normally reticent about his personal life, his understanding of women might be revealed in his dedicating the opera to the ladies of Milano, who he felt all possessed such a potion of love.





Design: Robert Darling

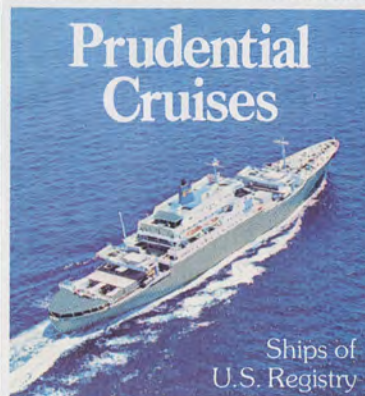
Perhaps the charm and inherent success of *L'Elisir d'Amore* lies not so much in the beauty of the music, or the simple and delightfully treated plot, or even the commedia dell'arte aspect of characters, but in great part to the anti-hero character of Nemorino. He is not the strong, deliverer-from-evil of the French mode. Nor is he the poised, stately Don Ottavio type. He is only the naive, sincere Nemorino, who is entranced by the flirtatious Adina, intimidated by the soldier Belcore (ah!, the authority of a uniform), and confounded by the charlatan Dulcamara and then reveals the depth of love in his sensitivity to that one tender tear (*Una furtiva lagrime*) and wins the adulation of Adina and audience alike.

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years, the opera was first performed in English at the Park Theater in New York, June 18, 1844. San Francisco witnessed its first production eleven years later in 1855. The Metropolitan Opera premiered *L'Elisir d'Amore* on January 23, 1904, with Caruso, Sembrich, Scotti, and Rossi in the major roles. It is most ironic that Caruso should do this, for it was this very role, one of his favorites, in which the great career would be interrupted. On the evening of December 11, 1920, at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Caruso began to succumb to the pleurisy which would soon take his life. He was able to finish the first act. During the intermission, when the audience was told of his problem and his desire to finish, they shouted for him to stop and cancel the performance. Eight months later, Caruso died in his beloved Napoli.

*Tom Acord, a tenor who has performed with Portland, Houston, São Paulo and Spring Opera Theater Companies, is currently on the faculty of California State University at Hayward where he directs the Opera Workshop and teaches voice.*



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