

L'Incoronazione di Poppea

1975

Saturday, September 13, 1975 8:00 PM
Tuesday, September 16, 1975 8:00 PM
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Wednesday, September 24, 1975 8:00 PM
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L'INCORONAZIONE DI POPPEA

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA MAGAZINE 1975



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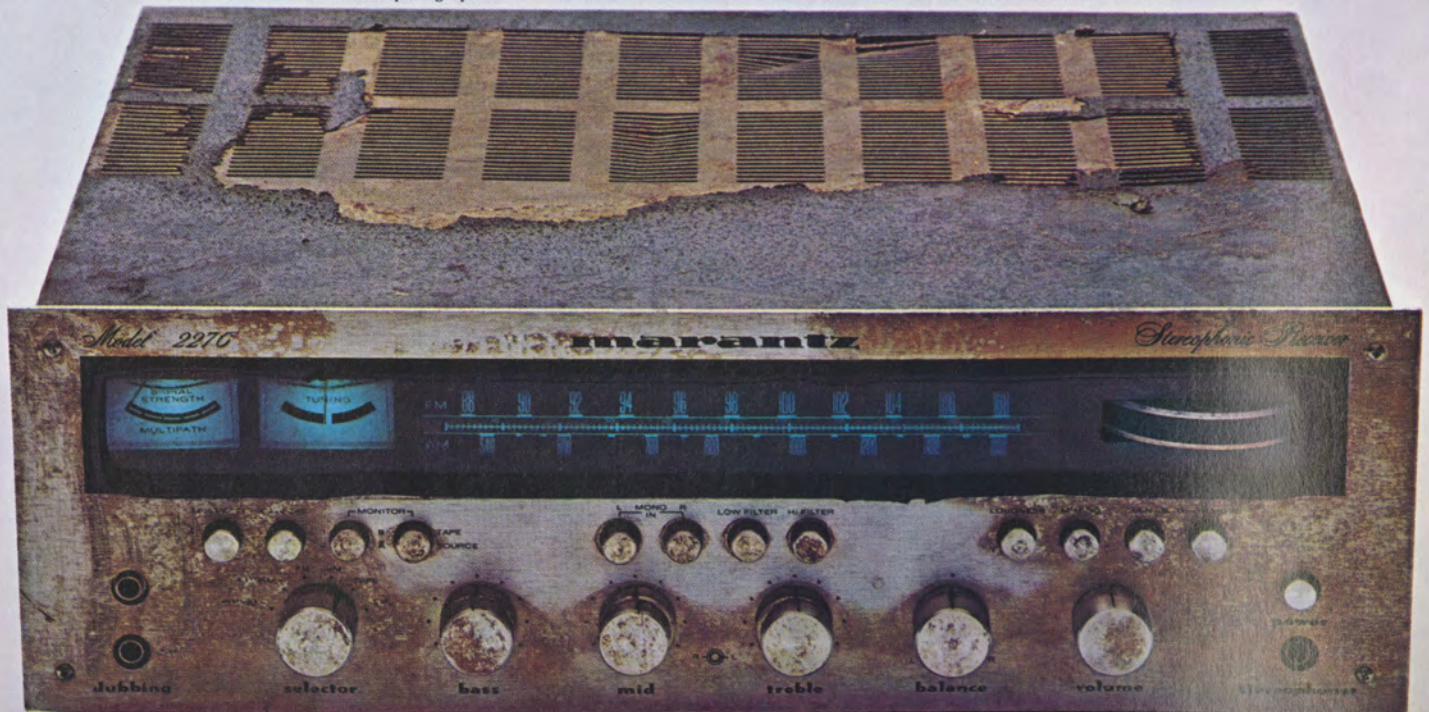
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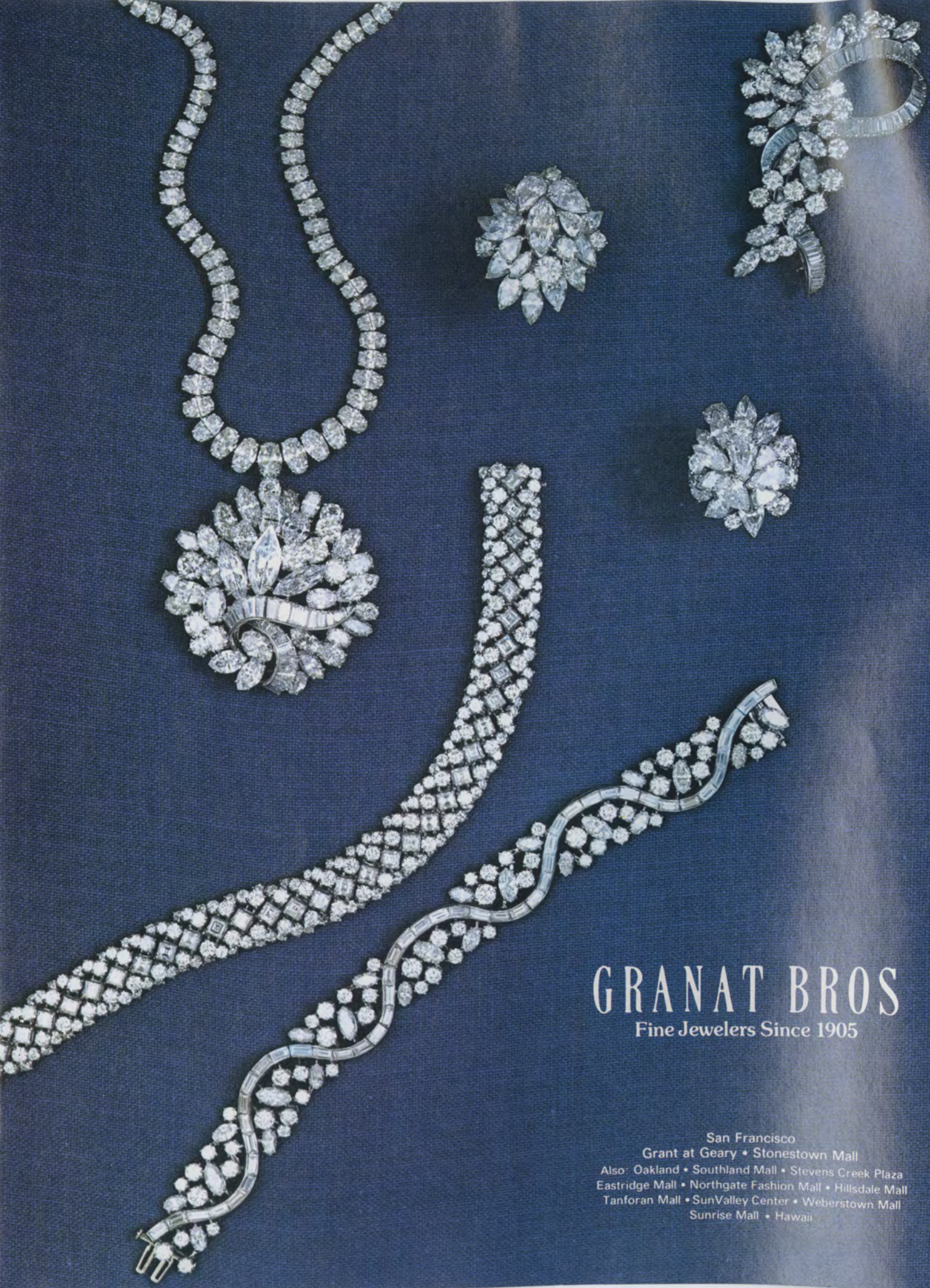
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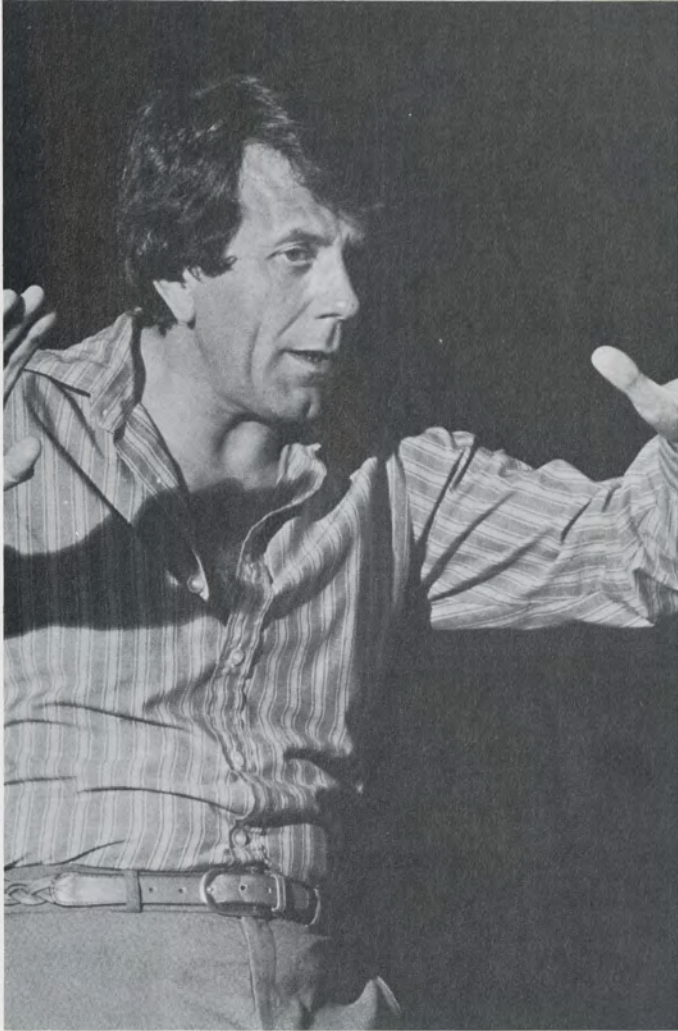
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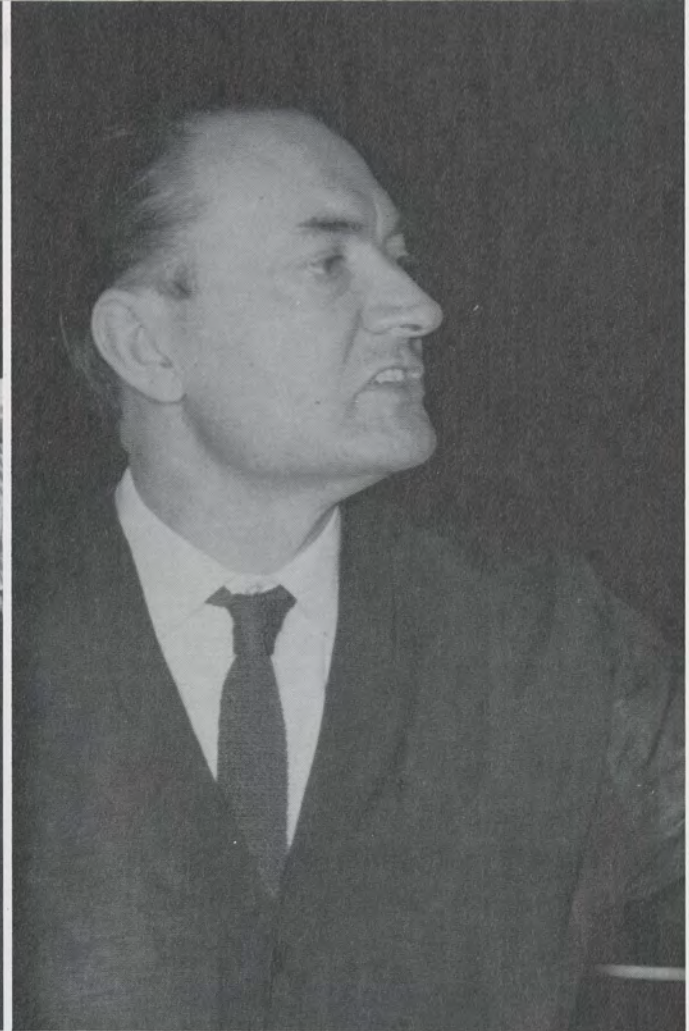
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Director Gunther Rennert

RENNERT AND LEPPARD: Finding the Road to Rome

by Armistead Maupin

"What does a drunk do?" Günther Rennert asks two young singers rehearsing *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* on the stage of Market Street's gingerbreadly old Orpheum Theater.

"A drunk stands in the street and complains, to everyone, to no one." Then, demonstrating, the renowned German director hunches his shoulders, lifts his arms above his head, and shakes his fists in frustrated rage.

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Rennert's instructional parallel—between San Francisco, A.D. 1975 and Rome, A.D. 64—is typical of his approach to Monteverdi's grandly decadent opera, a 333-year-old work which is timeless in its treatment of human failings.

The director, whose list of international credits stretches back to 1936, first produced *Poppea* in 1962 when he was artistic counselor and chief of production at Glyndebourne Festival Opera. Rennert's creative cohort in the pioneer venture (England's first professional stage interpretation of the Monteverdi opera) was conductor Raymond Leppard, a leading authority on music of the baroque period.

"We met in Berlin to discuss it," Rennert recalls. "I was doing an Eliot play at the time, I believe, and *Poppea* existed only in bits and pieces."

The thorny task confronting the two men was to reassemble the pieces in a fashion that was both historically accurate and artistically feasible. "No one, of course, can say for certain exactly what Monteverdi had in mind," Leppard maintains. "One can only study the sources as thoroughly as possible, join in the creative process, and effect a marriage with the work."

Rennert points out that the biggest pitfall facing him as a director was the fact that *Poppea* encompasses three distinctly disparate elements. "There is the love story between Nerone and Poppea, the political conflict between Nerone and Seneca and the satirical element represented by interchanges between Damigella and Valetto and between Nerone and Lucano. These elements are so different that I realized it would split up the opera if we created different sets for each of them."

Consequently, Ita Maximowna's gilt-toned semi-circular set for the new 1975 San Francisco Opera production provides a unity of place and action

for Monteverdi's richly populated work. "We can vary it for different scenes without confusing the audience," Rennert says. "There is also a suggestion of the Coliseum that I find quite effective."

The director makes no bones about the much-discussed immorality (and amorality) of *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, an honestly cynical work in which vice triumphs over virtue, evil over good and cruelty over compassion. "In that respect," he says, "it is certainly unique in the repertoire. It is important to remember, however, that passion rules in this opera; everything else is subservient to it. Passion is the irresistible force that drives these people to do what they do. All else must bow before the love between Nerone and Poppea. Love is number one."

But does Poppea really love the emperor?

"Oh, yes. She loves him very much. At the same time, she is using him for her own political gains, of course, but in the end tenderness has the last word. The beauty of the music tells us that." Leppard suggests that *Poppea's* theme should not be all that foreign to modern sensibilities. "We live in an era when the power of loving seems to be used as an excuse for almost anything. I imagine that a lot of people can identify with Nerone and Poppea. Let's face it, we aren't always very nice people when we're in love. If you're honest about a relationship, you're going to hurt people. You can't help it."

The conductor points out that the most compelling aspect of the opera is neither its pagentry nor its brutal political intrigue but rather the dramatic tension that exists between Nerone and Poppea. "I've done this opera twice before with other directors," he says, "and Dr. Rennert's interpretation is the only one where the two lovers are kept apart so much on stage. This

(continued on p. 74)

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Comments on "L'Incoronazione di Poppea"

by Günther Rennert

During Monteverdi's time, the operatic singer appeared for the first time as an excited expert of passion in the "concitato style." Drama and music were united as an indivisible unit. Music served the word and scenic event as expressive support. "As to the truth and directness of dramatic expression, even for secondary scenes, Monteverdi has been equalled by a few, but never surpassed." (Albert)

One has to call upon Shakespeare and his contemporaries for help to characterize the greatness of Monteverdi. Busenello's libretto stems from a story from the 14th Book of the Annals of Tacitus. (Mr. Raymond Leppard says quite correctly: "In immorality the fable has yet to find its equal in operatic literature."). In order to legalize his passionate affair with the courtesan Poppea, the Emperor Nero gave the order to his mentor, Seneca, to commit suicide, and then exiled his wife, the Empress Ottavia.

No music could be more stirring or pliable in characterizing these events, indeed through contrasts which capture extreme human behavior, as for example, in the scene in which Seneca, preparing his death, bids farewell to his students. I do not know a more touching/sharing scene in all of operatic literature. Another contrast is the wild comic orgy of Nero and his friend Lucano, who are celebrating Seneca's death. Further contrasting scenes include: Ottavia's painful farewell, "Addio Roma"; the monologue of the defeated nurse Arnalta, who hopes for personal advantages now that her mistress, Poppea, is to become the Empress of Rome; the bubbling Buffo-

duet of Valletto and Damigella as opposed to the dreamy absorption of the closing duet of Nero and Poppea, which is the first love duet in operatic history and only equalled in the second act of *Tristan und Isolde*.

This adaptation was first produced in Glyndebourne, where together with Raymond Leppard a dramaturgical adaptation was established which I, in essence, have retained in later productions. Leppard's orchestration comprehensively reduced the strings to a core since, as is known, the inherited score had no instructions for instrumentation.

The priority of the scenic elements is intimacy based on Roman examples. Working together with Ita Maximowna, a classic arena architectural half circle was developed for the San Francisco production. As a unit the set affords stylistic continuity and speed of scenic changes. Various openings lead to the interior steps, making the playing area accessible from backstage, as well as a second floor area of the semi-circular arena unit. Through these 10 arches one views a horizon which, with furious pomp through varieties of shiny bright golds and purples, indicates the respective locations of the piece. The scenery offers the possibility of a vast "movement psychogram."

One should view the piece in light of its origin in the Renaissance, transferred to present times, i.e., stylization of the great Renaissance motion into various dramatic climates. Scenically, nonspecificity lessens the artificiality of the text and the resultant "numbness," only to solidify the process into a tableau during the final chords.

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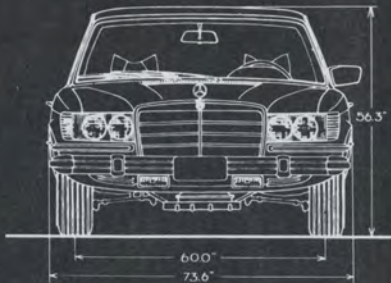
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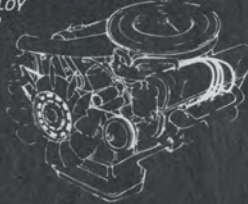
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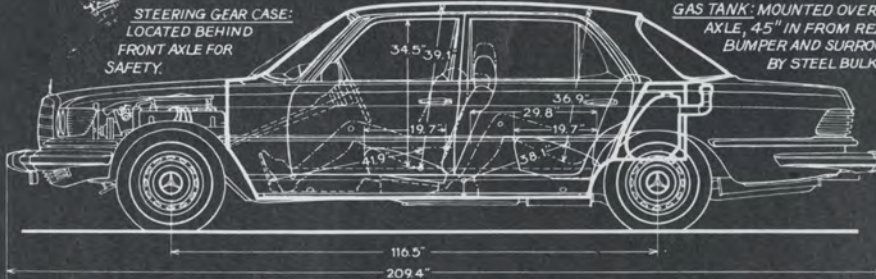


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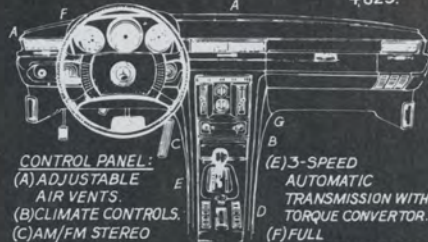
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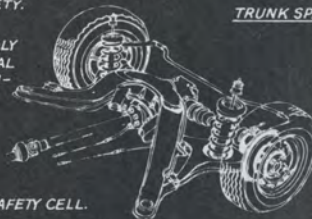


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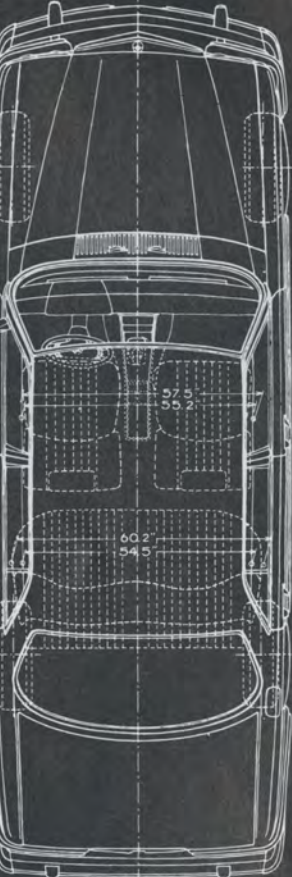
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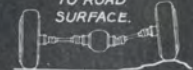


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College Opera Association

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:

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PLANNING A FALL SEASON REPERTOIRE

by Earl Jay Schub

Each year, San Francisco's opera lovers eagerly await the announcement of the coming season's repertoire and leading artists. With it comes the end of the annual guessing game of "who" will be doing "what" and thoughts now turn to the performances themselves—the ultimate proving ground.

While the public pronouncement of repertoire and artists comes only several months before the opening of the season, it actually represents years of intense work on the part of the company's management. "Repertoire and artists," two key elements in the life stream of opera, just don't "happen." They must be meticulously planned and blended in order to produce the magic moments and golden memories which are so dear to the opera-going public.

San Francisco Opera is a major international house and, as such, it has very special responsibilities. *Balance* must dominate the repertoire which means that, over a span of years, every period of opera must be shown. No work can be arbitrarily judged as impossible to produce because to do so would jeopardize San Francisco's world-wide stature as a major opera city. Difficult—yes;

Top: Jess Thomas, Yvonne Minton and Birgit Nilssen in Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* at San Francisco Opera (1974).

Middle: Giorgio Merighi and Leontyne Price in San Francisco Opera's 1974 production of Massenet's *Manon Lescaut*.

Bottom: Soprano Joan Sutherland in last season's stunning production of Massenet's *Esclarmonde*.

photos: Carolyn Mason Jones

POPPEA - AMORAL OR HUMAN?

by Daniel Cariaga



Vivid characterizations, a plot of blatant amorality and music containing both fervid and poignant drama make Claudio Monteverdi's last—and some say greatest—opera, "L'Incoronazione di Poppea" (1642) a work to at once excite the connoisseur and the layman.

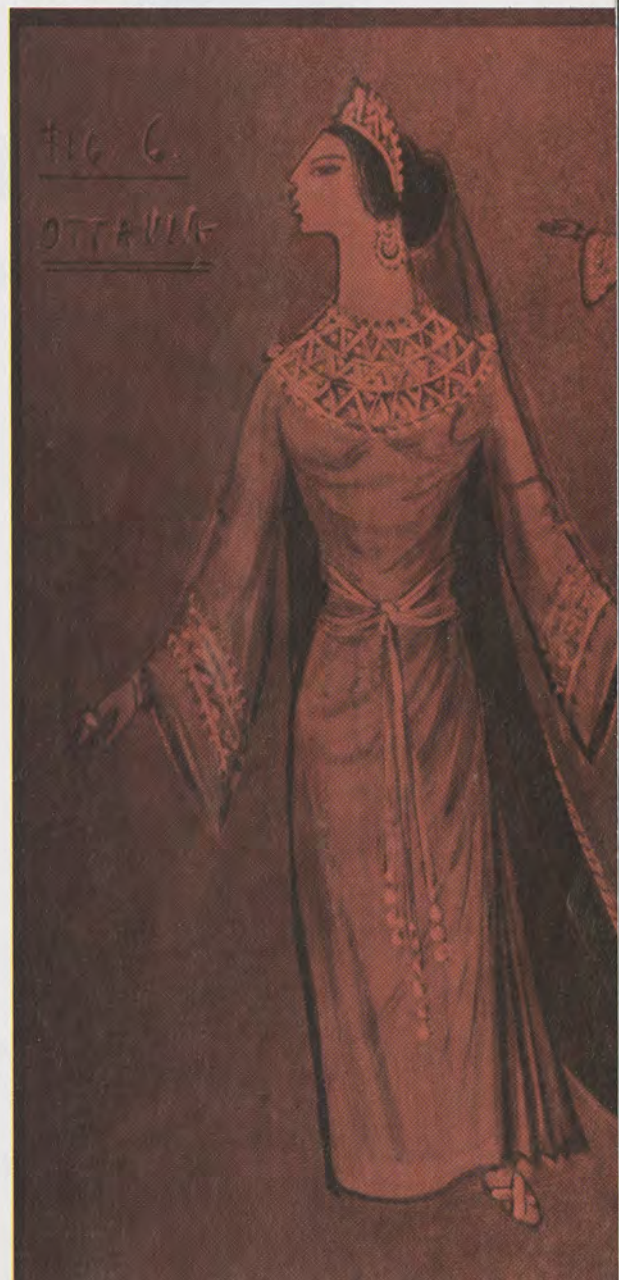
In the current edition of Raymond Leppard, first produced at the Glyndebourne Festival of 1962, revived at Sadler's Wells nine years later, and mounted by New York City Opera in 1973, the shortened score offers arias of haunting beauty, concerted pieces of irresistible charm and great variety for the ear.

Stagewise, the work gives the director ample opportunities for scenic and histrionic invention, and is basically no more static than, say, "La Bohème" or "Rigoletto." Donald Jay Grout's damning appraisal of operas of this earliest period, "unbearable monotony of effect," is nowhere borne out in "Poppea."

In our century, "L'Incoronazione" has received both neglect and adulation. The first "modern" staging of the opera was given the edition of Vincent D'Indy (in French) at the Theatre des Arts in Paris, in 1913. "Poppea" reached America through academic stagings at Smith College, Massachusetts, in 1926, and at the Juilliard School in New York, in 1933.

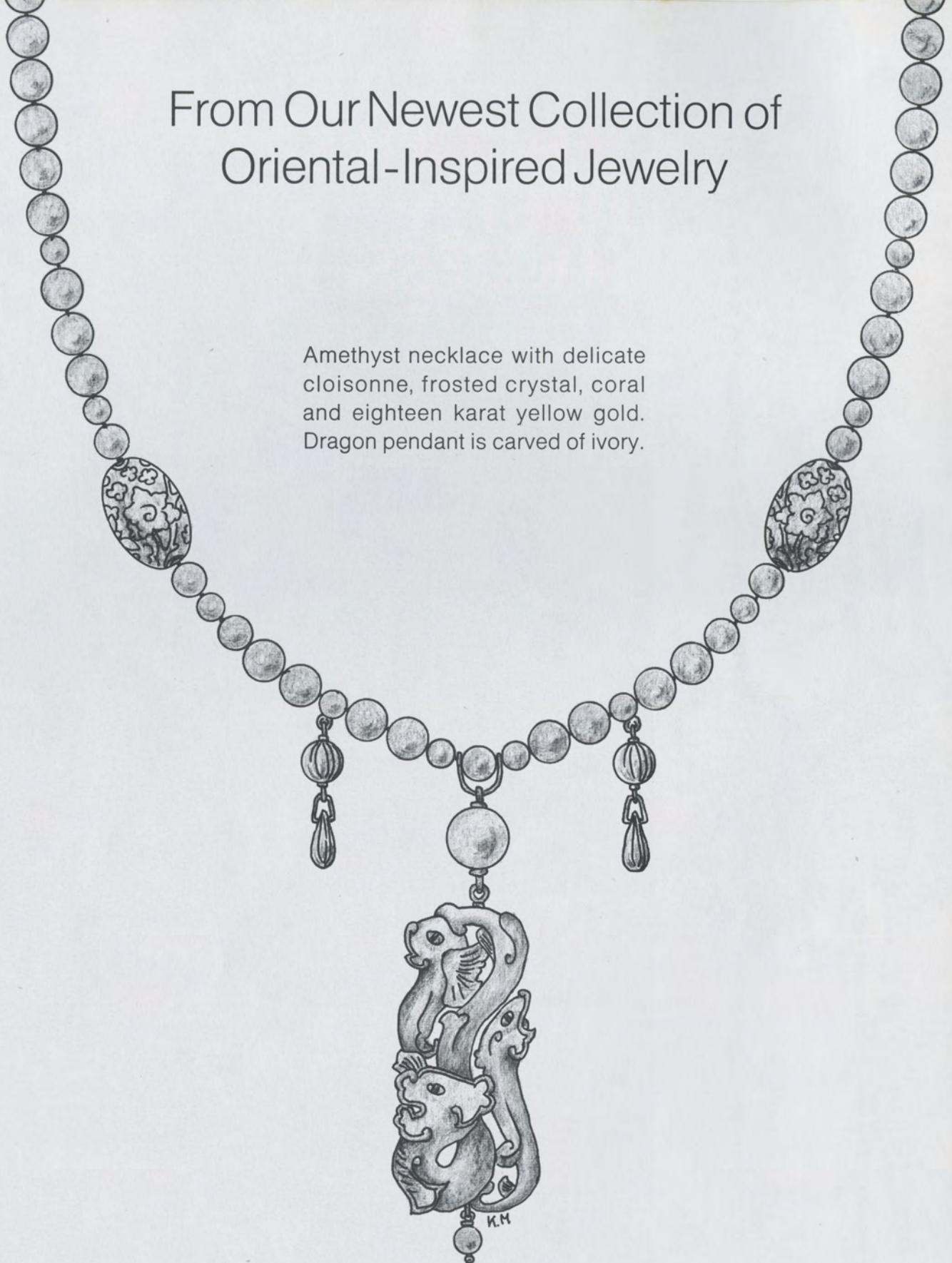
Meanwhile, the work was given in England in similarly modest circumstances at the Oxford University Opera Club, in December, 1927. Two separate scholarly editions, by Giacomo Ben-

Ita Maximowna's costume sketches for Poppea, Nerone, Ottavia and Seneca in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*.



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venuti and Francesco Malipiero, respectively, were introduced in Italy and France in 1937. American Opera Society mounted the work in Arnold Gamsen's two-act version, in New York in 1953; at the repetition, five years later, the roles of Poppea and Nero were sung by Leontyne Price and Robert Rounseville.

(Among contemporary sopranos who have essayed the highly grateful role of Poppea, one must include the names of Grace Bumbry, Jane Rhodes, Carol Neblett and Helen Donath.)

In addition to Leppard's abridged edition, a number of other versions are available. The one by G. F. Ghedini consists of three acts and thirteen

scenes; Giacomo Benvenuti's comprises a prologue and three acts; Ernst Krenek's German edition (1937) used two acts and only seven scenes; Malipiero adhered to the three-act scheme. The edition favored by some critics is that of Alan Curtis, a three-act version containing substantially more music than some of the earlier editions.

The question of edition, always of at least passing interest to musicologists whatever the work, is even more basic where "Poppea" is concerned, for the simple reason that there exists nowhere an "original" complete score to which performers may refer. The only extant remains of an original score reside today in Venice; they consist of a

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single vocal line and a *continuo* part. There is no way to present "L'Incoronazione di Poppea" without resort either to an existing edition or to realizing a new one. Obviously, then, whatever the work means or represents to this generation of listeners, for that we can thank (or blame) the individual editor.

* * *

"Amoral" is the word post-Victorians applied to the plot of Richard Strauss' "Salome"; the same word has been used, in this decade, to describe the action of "Poppea"—which only goes to prove that today, some 333 years after that premiere performance, and in a supposedly "liberated" society, some value judgments die hard.

(continued on p. 22)

Costume design: Ita Maximowna



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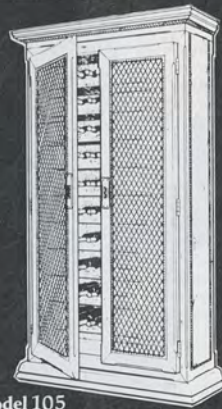
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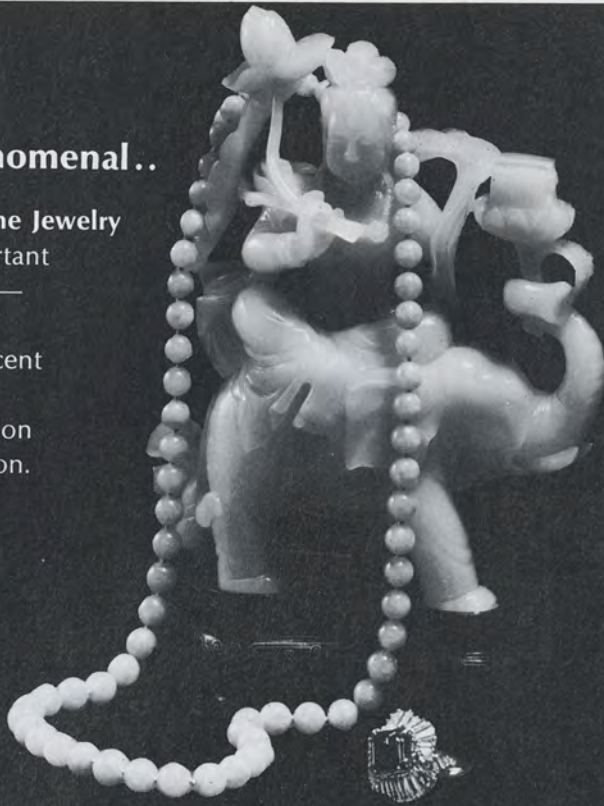
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What makes this plot amoral, obviously, is that Poppea and Nero, who may represent to some observers lust, greed and ambition, succeed in their plan to depose the Empress Octavia, having committed at least one murder along the way. They achieve the crowning of Poppea, and inferentially live happily ever after.

Recounted thus, the action may seem baldly disapprovable in the extreme. But the music of Monteverdi contradicts the facts; it does not deal in black-and-white moral judgments, and certainly not in one-dimensional characterizations. Every one of the personages of the opera—down to Damigella, or the grumbling guardsmen, or the

(continued on p. 57)

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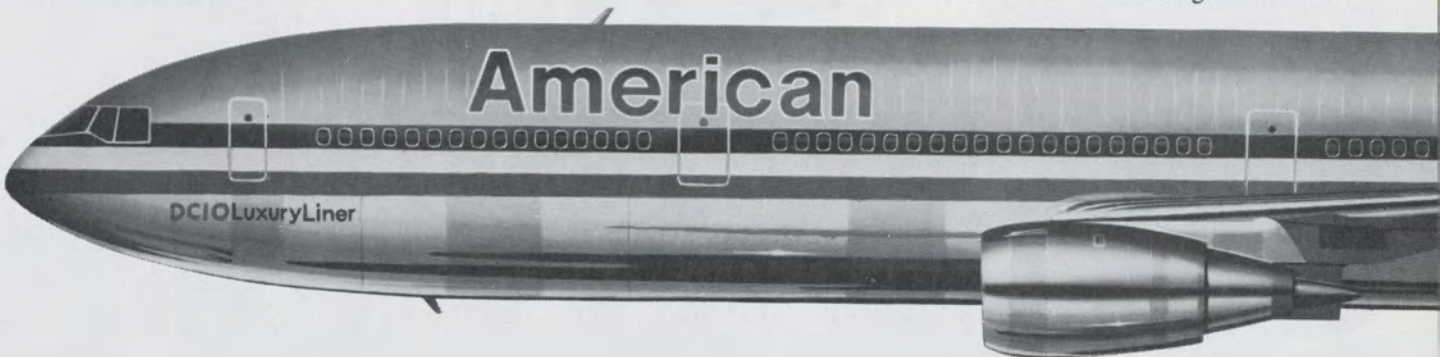
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Again, for the 53rd consecutive year, San Francisco Opera will present a brilliant fall opera season, presenting twelve of the world's finest operas. Our general director, Kurt Herbert Adler, will bring once more to San Francisco an outstanding roster 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

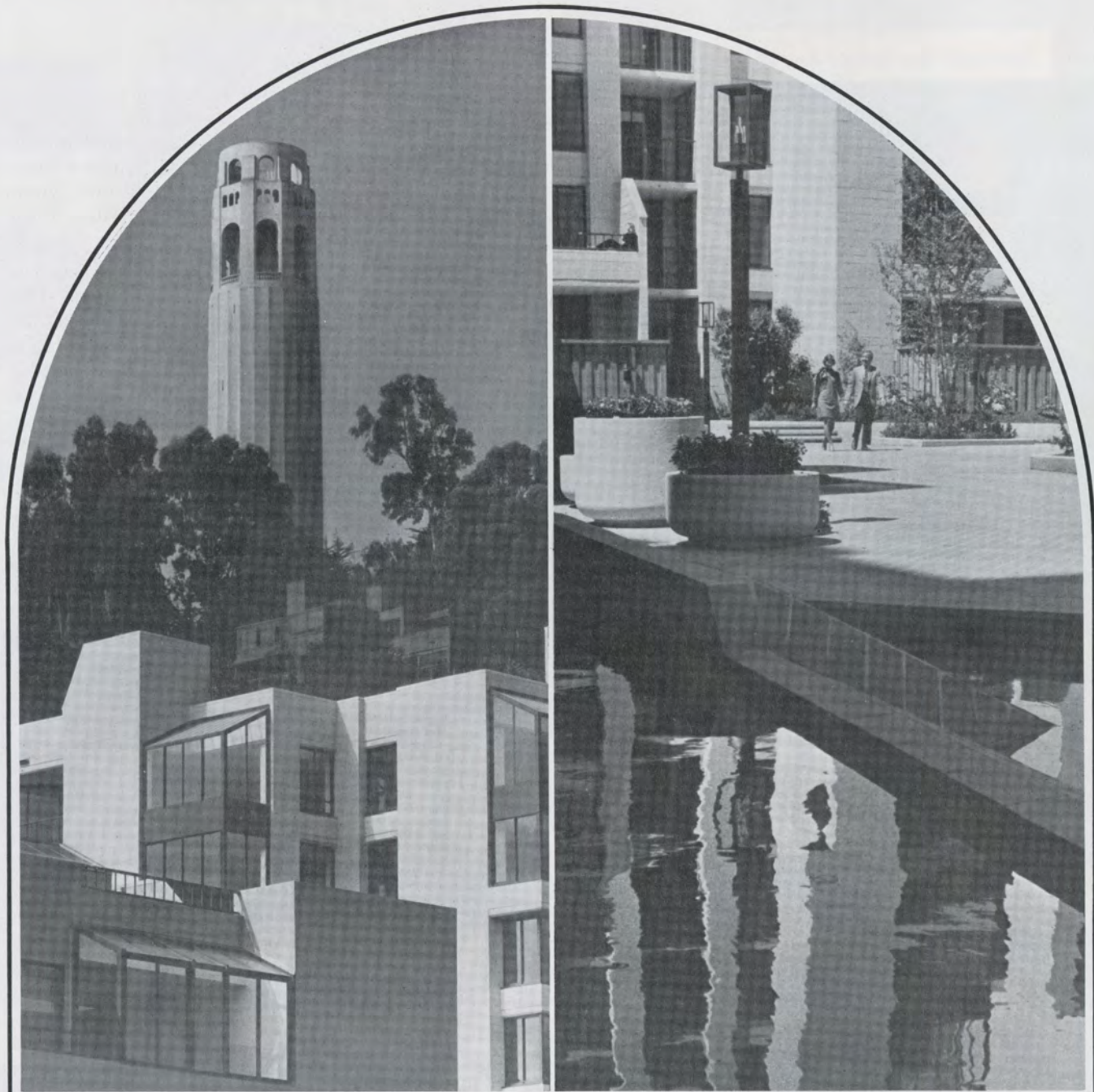
annual drive, won't you join the hundreds who presently do support us? Your tax deductible contributions should be sent to San Francisco Opera Association, War Memorial Opera House, San Francisco, 94102. Thank you for thinking of us!

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.

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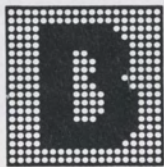
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San Francisco has achieved over the years a much-envied reputation as one of the foremost "opera towns" in the world. Because of the San Francisco Opera family, in excess of 250 presentations of opera are offered in our city annually on six different 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.



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**American opera debut

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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
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 James Dreer

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

Mark Paxson
 Jerome Pembrook
 Todd Perry
 Damir Priskich
 Marco Remedios
 Peter Reilly
 Richard Robin
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 Jeffrey Silver
 John Smalley
 Dan Tadmor
 Clement Ulrichs
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1975 Season Repertoire

II TROVATORE

Verdi
IN ITALIAN

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

Conductor: Bonyng
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

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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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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

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GIANNI SCHICCHI

Puccini
IN ITALIAN

Poventud*, Barbieri, South,
Felty/Gamm*, 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

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*San Francisco Opera debut

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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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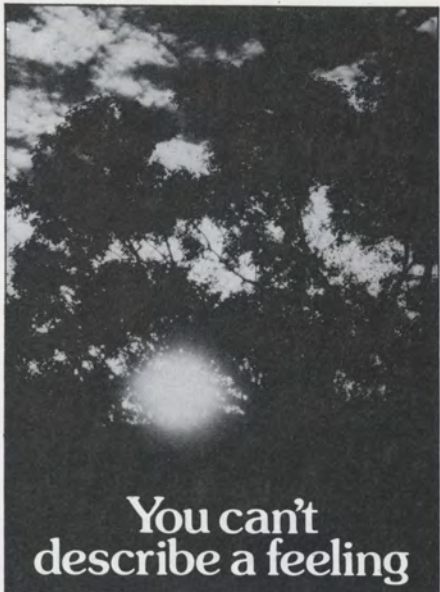


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San Francisco Opera ACTION was created in 1967 to increase awareness of San Francisco Opera and to stimulate interest in opera in general. Opera ACTION works in close cooperation with the Company's staff, enabling it to greatly extend its reach and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

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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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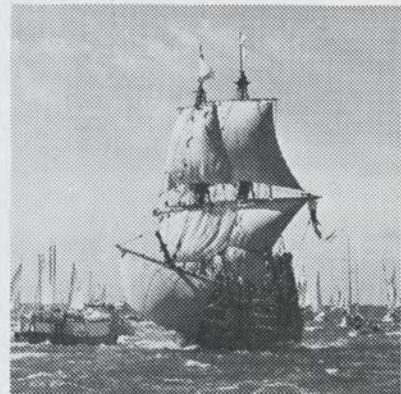
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New Production—San Francisco Opera Premiere

L'INCORONAZIONE DI POPPEA

(IN ITALIAN)

Opera in two acts by CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI

Realized by RAYMOND LEPPARD

(Used by arrangement with G. Schirmer, Inc., New York, U.S. agent for Faber Music Ltd., London)



CAST

(in order of appearance)

<i>Conductor</i> RAYMOND LEPPARD*	<i>Ottone</i>	RICHARD STILWELL
<i>Production</i> GÜNTHER RENNERT	<i>Soldier</i>	GARY BURGESS
<i>Designer</i> ITA MAXIMOWNA*	<i>Soldier</i>	WILLIAM WAHMAN
<i>Chorus Director</i> ROBERT JONES	<i>Poppea</i>	TATIANA TROYANOS*
<i>Musical Preparation</i> RANDALL BARE	<i>Nerone</i>	ERIC TAPPY**
<i>Lighting Designer</i> ROBERT BRAND	<i>Arnalta</i>	MAUREEN FORRESTER
<i>Costumes by</i> RAY DIFFEN STAGE CLOTHES	<i>Ottavia</i>	BEVERLY WOLFF*
<i>Sound Design</i> PETER V. C. QUAINANCE CHARLES F. SWISHER	<i>Drusilla</i>	CAROL MALONE
<i>Baroque Organ Courtesy of</i> CITY COLLEGE, SAN FRANCISCO John West, Builder	<i>Seneca</i>	PETER MEVEN**
<i>Regal Organ from</i> RUDOLPH F. ZAHL	<i>Valletto</i>	JOSEPH FRANK
<i>Harpichords from</i> N. LYNN BERCOVITZ, BJARNE DAHL	<i>Pallade</i>	LINDA ROARK
	<i>Liberto</i>	CHARLES LONG*
	<i>Damigella</i>	BARBARA HENDRICKS*
	<i>Lucano</i>	JOHN DUYKERS
	<i>Amor</i>	BARBARA HENDRICKS*
	<i>Littore</i>	JOHN DAVIES
	<i>Friends of Seneca</i>	
	<i>Ladies-in-Waiting to the Empress Ottavia</i>	
	<i>Officers and Senators of Rome</i>	

**American Opera debut

*San Francisco Opera debut

TIME AND PLACE:

ACT I—Scene 1	Before Poppea's house
Scene 2	In Poppea's house
Scene 3	Ottavia's chamber in Nerone's palace
Scene 4	In Poppea's house
Scene 5	Before Poppea's house
Scene 6	A garden
Scene 7	Seneca's court
INTERMISSION	

ROME, 64 A.D.

ACT II—Scene 1	Nerone's palace
Scene 2	Ottavia's chamber in Nerone's palace
Scene 3	Street
Scene 4	Poppea's bedroom
Scene 5	Street
Scene 6	Ottavia's chamber in Nerone's palace
Scene 7	Street
Scene 8	Nerone's palace—The coronation

First performance: autumn, 1642, Venice

First San Francisco Opera performance: September 13, 1975

SATURDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 13, 1975 AT 8:00

TUESDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 16, 1975 AT 8:00

FRIDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 19, 1975 AT 8:00 (Broadcast)

WEDNESDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 24, 1975 AT 8:00

SUNDAY AFTERNOON, SEPTEMBER 28, 1975 AT 2:00

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 and one-half hours

SYNOPSIS L'INCORONAZIONE DI POPPEA

ACT I *The scene is set in Rome, A.D. 64.*

It is just before dawn. Outside Poppea's house, two of Nero's guards lie asleep at their post. Ottone, returning from the wars, apostrophises the house of his beloved Poppea. Suddenly he sees the soldiers, and realises that his place has been taken by an invincible rival; Poppea is in the arms of his Emperor. The guards wake up and, as soldiers will, they grumble about their job, the corruptness of Rome, the infatuation of Nero with Poppea which keeps them up all night, and the sad plight of the Empress. Nero and Poppea come out from the house. He, having taken his pleasure, is anxious to go; she, whose ambition stops only at the throne itself, uses all her art to delay the separation until she receives not only a promise to return but an assurance that Ottavia, the Empress, will be repudiated in her favour.

Arnalta, Poppea's old nurse, warns her that she is playing a dangerous game which might easily cause the Empress to have her murdered. Poppea laughs at her, saying that Love is on her side and she cannot fail.

The Emperor's palace. In a noble lament, Ottavia sings of her humiliation, anger and misery. Drusilla, her companion, tries in vain to comfort her. Seneca, philosopher, elder statesman and upholder of all the ancient virtues, is shown in by Valetto, the Empress's page. Knowing of Ottavia's plight, he gently urges her to exercise the restraint and dignity of her position. Valetto, enraged by the calm manner of the old philosopher, threatens him in youthful ardour, if he will not help his beloved Empress.

Seneca, alone, receives a vision of the Goddess of Wisdom, who warns him that he will die if he interferes in this matter. The philosopher, feeling that he has lost his benevolent influence over the Emperor, welcomes the thought of death.

As though to strengthen the warning, Nero comes to reveal his intention of deposing Ottavia in favour of Poppea. The philosopher's calm remonstrations only serve to incite him to hysterical anger.

Nero returns to Poppea, who uses her subtle charms to keep him to his purpose and insinuate the idea into his mind that Seneca, the greatest obstacle to her ambition, must die.

Ottone approaches Poppea when Nero has gone, only to be scornfully dismissed. Alone, he thinks of his sorry state, until Drusilla, who is in love with him, appears and chides him for his useless faithfulness. Partly from despair and partly in gratitude for Drusilla's sympathy, he tells her that he will forget Poppea and love only

her, a promise he knows he cannot keep.

The old Seneca considers the virtues of solitude, even the solitude of death. His thoughts are interrupted by the arrival of Liberto bearing the command of Nero that Seneca must die. With great dignity, the old man sends back a last message of submission to his Emperor's will.

There follows an intermezzo between Valetto and Damigella, a pretty serving maid. The young man complains of a certain pain in his heart which he has never had before—will she help to cure him? She, knowing very well what is the matter, promises to make it better. Seneca, surrounded by his disciples, prepares for death.

ACT II

In the palace, Nero, elated by the news of Seneca's death, drinks himself insensate with his friend Lucano.

The Empress, unable to bear the indignity of the situation any longer, commands Ottone to kill Poppea, suggesting that he should gain access to Poppea's house by dressing as a woman. Ottone, torn between his old love and his new resolution, agrees, and then involves the infatuated Drusilla, telling her of the conspiracy and borrowing her cloak.

Poppea, attended by her faithful Arnalta, is also jubilant at the news of Seneca's suicide, but, worn out with the anxiety of waiting, she falls asleep as Arnalta sings a lullaby. Ottone enters, disguised in Drusilla's cloak. But Poppea was right to put her faith in Amor, for the little God stops Ottone's hand and Arnalta raises the alarm.

Drusilla, happy in Ottone's love, is suddenly arrested for the attempted murder. Nero appears, and Ottone, who claims all responsibility. Finally, the conspiracy comes out; Ottone and Drusilla are sent together into exile, and Nero announces Ottavia's banishment. Nero and Poppea are reunited; nothing now can stand in their way.

Ottavia sings a lament as she leaves Rome for the last time, and Arnalta comically recalls her past indignities as a servant and anticipates with relish her future grandeur as the Empress's lady.

There follows the Coronation of Poppea, with the Tribunes and Consuls of Rome paying homage to their new Empress.

Nero and Poppea, their separate ambitions fulfilled, end the opera singing of their love for one another.

Raymond Leppard



"L'Incoronazione di Poppea"

by RAYMOND LEPPARD

It is a tendency of our age to look further and further back into music's past in search of forgotten values. Contemporary composition may play some part in encouraging this tendency but in the main I think it comes about as a result of a search for durable values in a world not much given to permanence.

Certain factors affect the process of revaluation, not the least of which is the availability of the music itself. In the case of Monteverdi this has been the most obvious cause for delay. Apart from a very few madrigals and an occasional limited publication, there was no complete edition available until, under Malipiero's supervision, such works, or portions of works as have survived were published between 1926 and 1942. But even after its publication there were many obstacles to be surmounted before much of the music could be performed. Apart from the early five-part madrigals and some church music in the older 16th Century style, the texts are so incomplete that their performance requires the sort of reconstruction and improvisation brought about by the imaginative application of what is at present a somewhat specialised knowledge which not all of our practising musicians have the time to acquire. And some of those who have the time have not the imagination. The pedant failing to realise that Monteverdi was a practising musician for whom music must serve expressive ends or fail, is as much a factor in the delay of revaluation as the well-meaning man who attempts reconstruction without sufficient knowledge.

For the most part, we do at least have as much as Monteverdi ever put down on paper, but in the case of *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* even that has been denied to us. Very little in the way of full scores or orchestral parts survived the theatre fires and demolitions in 17th Century Venice, and *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* was no exception. All that we have is a manuscript written in several hands, a sort of rehearsal or continuo copy not unlike a very simple piano-conductor found in some orchestral arrangements, consisting of a single bass-line, very occasional sketches in parts for *ritornelli*, and a vocal line. Fortunately it has the stamp of authenticity about it since remarks, directions and cuts appear throughout in the composer's hand. This manuscript is preserved in Venice and, except for a later copy to be found in Naples, it is the only music we have of the opera, the rest has to be reconstructed.

Claudio Monteverdi was born in 1567 at Cremona, the city of violin makers. He was the son of a musician and there seems to have been little question but that he would follow the same profession as his father. His first post was at the court of Mantua in 1590. There he must have become aware of the experiments in musical theatre being carried out in Florence by the followers of the amateur Count Bardi.

It may seem curious that Monteverdi's first opera *L'Orfeo*, was written as late as 1607, but the reasons are not hard to find. He occupied, to begin with, a very junior position at the Mantuan Court and would scarcely have been chosen to compose an opera in preference to his senior colleagues. Moreover, it is unlikely that he was very impressed with the new music he heard from Florence. The *Camerata*, as Count Bardi's group came to be called, attracted a good deal of at-

ention but it was more for the novelty of their ideas than for the persuasiveness of their music. Their theories led them to exclude any music which might be thought to rival the words in expressive power, and the result, although interesting as an experiment and attractive as a novelty, tended to a dullness and a monotony which defeated its purpose and would have been unlikely to appeal to someone whose main concern was expressiveness in terms of music. But the principal reason seems to have been that Monteverdi was approaching the form of opera in his own way; working out his own revolution through the madrigal. By 1607 he had published five volumes comprising over one hundred madrigals which show an increasing tendency to change the old polyphonic style into one of choral declamation, treating the five voices as if they were one without losing the potential for expressive counterpoint wherever it would serve the text best. Thus, *L'Orfeo* showed the translation of ideas into the forms of opera which had been arrived at in the madrigal by a process of gradual musical change rather than an abrupt theoretical revolution. The result was a style much less restricted than that of the *Camerata* and infinitely nearer the spirit of effective declamation which they tried so hard to achieve. It must be counted the more valuable because of the short period in which it was practised. In Monteverdi's hands it became more and more expressive as the years passed and at no other time has vocal writing achieved this particular and wonderful fluidity of purpose, slipping from recitative to arioso and even aria without the strict division which later stultified so much 17th and 18th Century opera. Its culmination is to be found in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*.

L'Orfeo was a great success, so much so that it was even printed and then re-printed, a very rare distinction at that time. It was the first of a long succession of full-length operas all of which have been lost save for the last two, *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* and *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*. In 1613 Monteverdi was appointed *Maestro di capella* of St. Mark's, Venice, the most highly coveted musical post in all Italy where, in spite of his church commitments, he continued to accept commissions for operas in Mantua and the private theatres of Venice. But the event which perhaps influenced his last operas more than anything else was the opening of the first public opera-house not only in Venice but in the world, San Cassiano, in 1637. So popular did opera become that before the mid-century was reached five more houses opened. Their fundamental design was very similar and their size was about that of present-day Glyndebourne. In their lay-out, however, they were very different. Each auditorium consisted principally of boxes arranged in tiers (in SS. Giovanni and Paolo for which *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* was written, there were five tiers of twenty-nine boxes). Each box has a small withdrawing-room where conversation could be made and refreshment taken in private. This arrangement contributed not a little to the early success of opera for the boxes were rented annually and much coveted by all the distinguished Venetian families and foreign Embassies. The opera house became a centre of Venetian social and political life.

Apart from providing regular employment for singers, the running of a season's performances imposed certain

restrictions on the form of opera among the most important of which was the standardisation of the orchestra. If we look at the score of *L'Orfeo* we see a list of instruments which reads like the catalogue of a sale at Sotheby's. It is not evidence of Monteverdi's original or bizarre taste in orchestration, but of his practicality, for it represents all the instruments available in Mantua at the time of performance. The originality comes in the use he made of them. The practice of scoring for whatever instruments were available persisted for as long as opera was essentially a festival occasion; but now that a repertoire of several operas was played for a season there had to be a consistency. It is important to realise that all of these early 17th century scores were based on the continuo instruments: harpsichord, harp, lute and organ. The aim of the setting of words in musical drama was to achieve a malleable line which would give the singer complete freedom for expressive intensity. And even now, with the vastly improved conducting and instrumental techniques it would be impossible to accompany such a line by an orchestra without forcing the singer into rhythmic patterns totally obfuscating the original expressive intention of the music. Herein lies the essential difference between the *prima e seconda prattica*, terms devised by Monteverdi himself to distinguish between the two styles of his own music.

The first was the traditional church style in which music was the master of the words, metrical music where an orchestra of instruments could very well be employed throughout; and the second in which the expression of the dramatic import of the words was the first concern, where the main burden of the accompaniment was borne by the continuo instruments joined only in moments of heightened passion where the music moved into a more regular metre. At first the only instruments added to the continuo were strings. Of course wind players existed in Venice but there was a strong tendency at this time to departmentalise music—and not without good reason. The brass and certain blending wood wind instruments belonged properly to the church where their sound would be softened by the great spaces and yet be entirely suited to the dignity of the locale. Wind players' duties lay there and out of doors for ceremonial and festive occasions, their tone being considered too strident for an enclosed space such as an opera house. The first use of wind instruments in opera seems to have been entirely for representational purposes; trumpets and drums for a battle or horns for a hunting scene where they probably played on the stage as members of the cast. Taking this as license, trumpets will appear in the coronation scene of *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* but for the rest it is scored for continuo and strings. If the continuo consisted only of one harpsichord, this might prove monotonous but we know from various letters that Monteverdi took for granted a large number of continuo instruments, even in the later operas, so as

to give a wide tonal variety for characterisation and dramatic effect. The present reconstruction will use a characteristic group of two harpsichords, a reed and a flue organ, lute, chitarrone, guitar and harp.

L'Incoronazione di Poppea was Monteverdi's last work, written in 1642, when he was seventy-five, an achievement paralleled only by another Italian over two centuries later. Compared with *L'Orfeo*, it shows a narrowing of focus. The earlier opera reflects the splendours of the Mantuan Court; splendours in which personality is overshadowed by elaborate surroundings. Now, in the much simpler setting of the Venetian opera house, the focus turns from situation to the characters themselves, probing the innermost aspects of human drama in a quite unprecedented manner. It is this aspect which has been particularly seized on in planning this production, musically, visually and dramatically. The opera's libretto is by Francesco Busenello, a Venetian lawyer, at one time ambassador to the Court of Mantua, whom Monteverdi met through his pupil Cavalli. A comparison between the full libretto and the libretto actually set to music is a separate study, but it reveals a care for dramatic effect and balance we do not ordinarily associate with the period. Perhaps the most striking single change occurs at the very end. Busenello concluded with the great Coronation scene, but Monteverdi, after a *sinfonia* for the exit of the Tribunes and Consuls, added an ecstatic love-duet for Nero and his new Empress, left together on a darkening stage. If this was his very last piece of composition, it is a noble ending to a great creative life.

The plot is perhaps the least moral in all opera; wrong triumphs in the name of love, and we are not expected to mind. Nor indeed is this the real point of the piece for, while retelling the story of Poppea's rise to the power of the throne, it is concerned with the interaction and development of the characters themselves in a realism and intensity totally surprising to the general preconception of early opera. Every character has a sharply defined personality: Poppea, the beautiful courtesan, shrewd, ambitious, an expert in love but showing only real affection for Arnalta, her old nurse who, like her counterpart in *Romeo and Juliet* chides, but is blind to her charge's faults; Nero, hysterical and wilful, besotted alike with his own power and Poppea's body; Ottavia his Empress, a great and noble soul driven to ignominious crime and banishment by the force of her despair; Seneca, a former-day Gurnemanz, wise, courageous but doomed to self-destruction before his Emperor's will; Ottone, whose hopeless adoration for Poppea brings him to ruin his life and that of Drusilla, companion of the Empress, who, in her turn, loves him. All these work out their destiny in music which exploits every variety of form known at the time with uncanny appropriateness.

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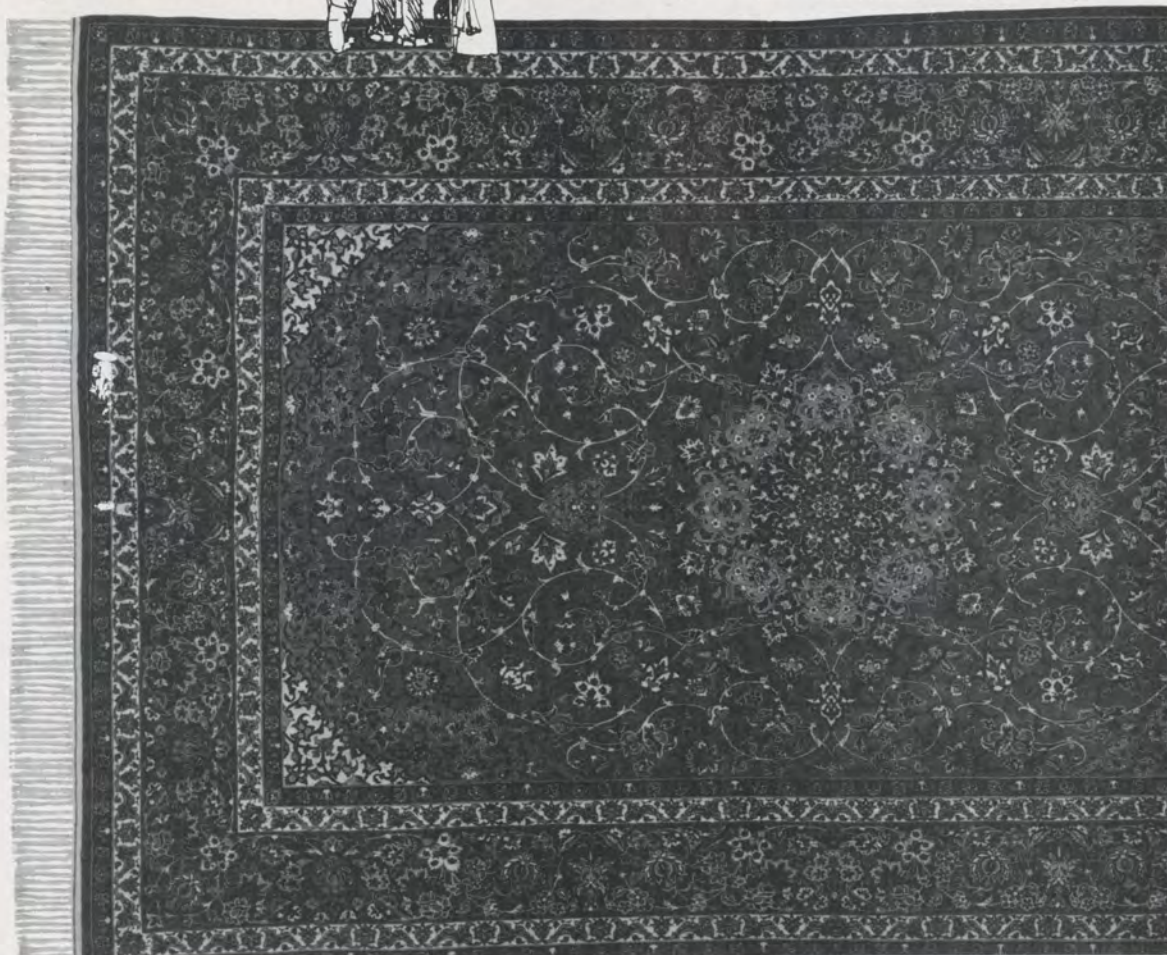


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on Sunday, October 5

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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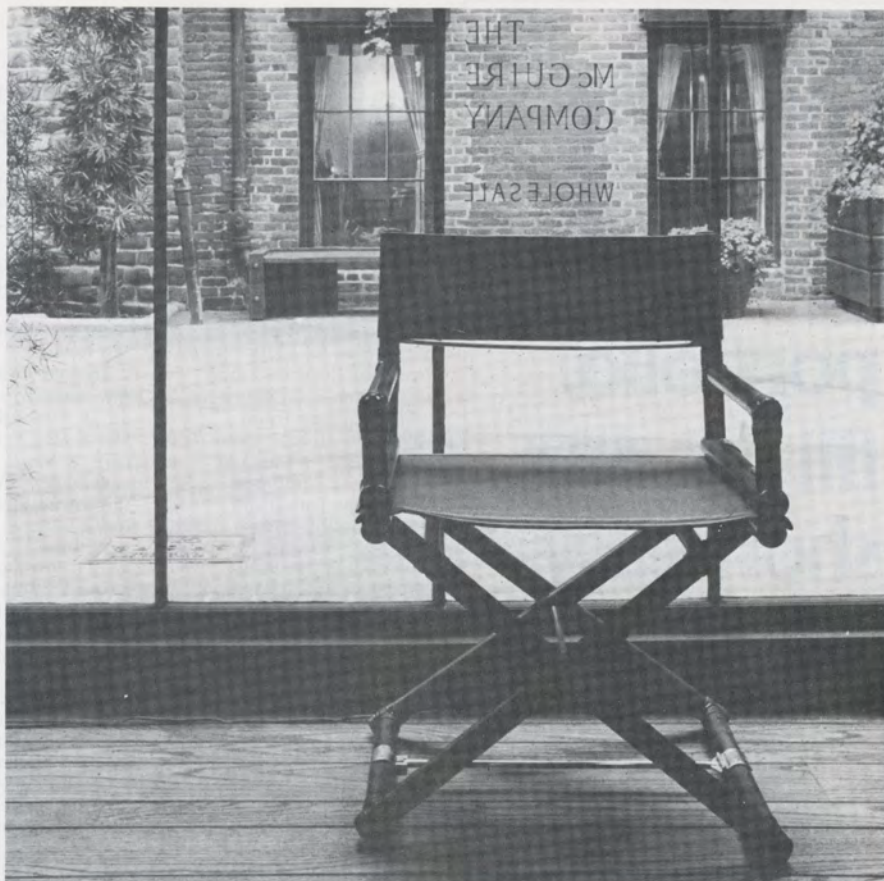
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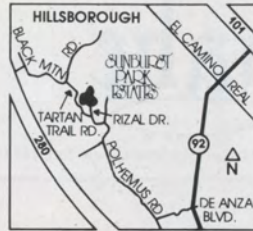
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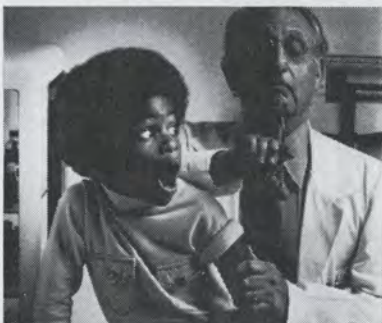
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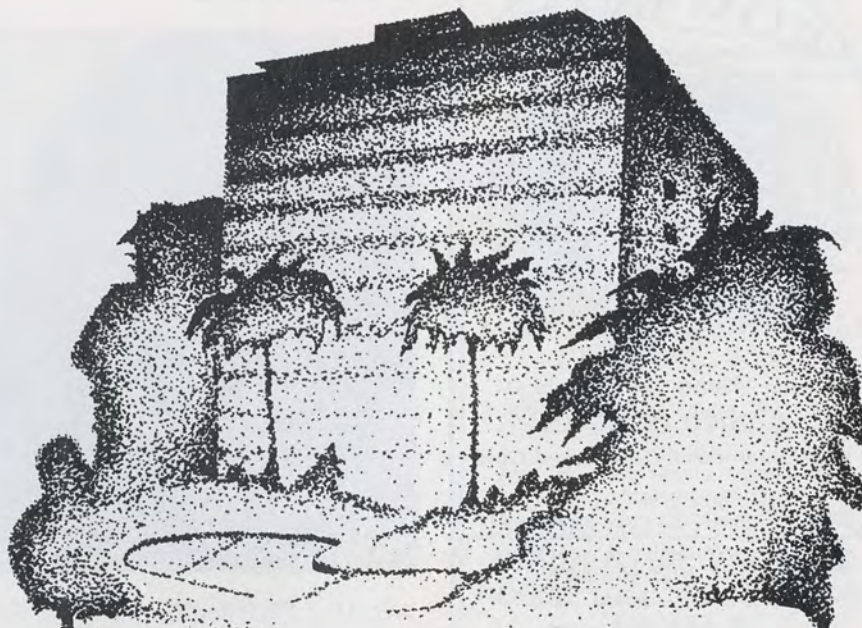
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Poppea: Amoral or Human?—
continued

freedman who reluctantly tells Seneca of Nero's decree of death—is drawn, through the music, complete and faceted. Surely there can be no final adverse judgment on the ecstatic couple who sing "Pur ti miro," a moment of almost transfigured sensuality, at the end of the opera. In any case, by that point in the drama, the listener has come to sympathize so thoroughly with Nero, Poppea, and all the characters of the work that questions of morality and culpability have been ameliorated by the human dimensions involved.

Daniel Cariaga is a prize-winning music and dance critic at the Los Angeles Times.

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Profiles



TATIANA TROYANOS

Tatiana Troyanos, Hamburg Opera's dynamic mezzo soprano, makes her bow at San Francisco Opera this season in the title role of *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* and follows with Adalgisa in *Norma*. Miss Troyanos is especially well known for her portrayals of Carmen (Covent Garden, Hamburg, Munich, Geneva and Palermo), Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier* (Covent Garden, Salzburg, Hamburg, Berlin and Palermo) and the Composer in *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Aix-en-Provence, Venice, Zurich, Munich, Covent Garden and the Edinburgh Festival). Among her widely-praised United States engagements have been Jocasta in *Oedipus Rex* with New York City Opera, *Ariodante* for the opening of the Kennedy Center, Charlotte in *Werther* as her Lyric Opera of Chicago debut, and Orsini in *Lucrezia Borgia* with Dallas Civic Opera. This past June the mezzo received critical raves for her portrayal of Romeo, opposite Beverly Sills as Juliet, in Bellini's *I Capuletti ed i Montecchi* with the Opera Company of Boston. Miss Troyanos has previously sung the title role in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* for the Rennert production in Stuttgart. A favorite soloist with many orchestras, she has performed with the Boston Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the New York Philharmonic and the Cleveland Orchestra, among others. Future engagements include her Metropolitan Opera debut in March as Octavian and the Composer, and performances of the *Verdi Requiem* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in August, 1976.



BEVERLY WOLFF

Beverly Wolff, who makes her San Francisco Opera debut as Ottavia in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, performed the *Verdi Requiem* during Holy Week at the Vatican this year before a crowd of 7,000. In May, 1975 the mezzo sang in Schoenberg's *Gurre-Lieder* at the Cincinnati Festival under the baton of James Levine, and the previous fall she appeared in Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* with the Rome Philharmonic. An accomplished orchestral wind player turned vocalist, Miss Wolff studied at the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia and subsequently won the Youth Auditions of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Since then, she has sung many times not only with that orchestra but also with the New York Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony in its home city and at Tanglewood, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Cincinnati Symphony, the Minnesota Orchestra, and the Hollywood Bowl. Recent milestones in her career include her Spoleto Festival debut in the seldom-heard *Il Giuramento* and premiere performances of Donizetti's *Roberto Devereux* (which she had previously recorded for Westminster) and Gian Carlo Menotti's *The Most Important Man* at New York City Opera. Among her future engagements are performances of *Tristan und Isolde* in Turin and *Carmen* in Cincinnati.



MAUREEN FORRESTER

Maureen Forrester, who last appeared with San Francisco Opera in 1967 as La Cieca in *La Gioconda*, made her Metropolitan Opera debut last season, singing Erda in *Das Rheingold* and *Siegfried*. In the summer of 1974 she undertook the role of Madame Flora in Menotti's *The Medium* for the first time anywhere, at the Stratford (Ontario) Festival. Subsequent engagements included a production of *Falstaff* for Quebec Opera, where she made her debut as Dame Quickly, and performances at the Aspen, Saratoga, Ambler, and Nova Scotia Festivals. The Canadian contralto was also a soloist with such orchestras as the Boston, Cincinnati, Toronto, Montreal, Hamilton and Hartford Symphonies, and in May, 1975 she was heard in debut performances as Brängane in *Tristan and Isolde* with the Quebec Opera, under the direction of Zubin Mehta. In 1973 Miss Forrester opened the first season of the revitalized American Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall, performing Berlioz's *Nuits d'Été* under the baton of Japan's Kazuyoshi Akiyama. She was also a guest artist that season with the orchestras of Cleveland, Montreal, Seattle, San Francisco, St. Louis, Buffalo, Hartford and many other American and Canadian cities. Miss Forrester's televised portrayal of the Witch in CBC's production of *Hansel and Gretel* has been aired all over the world. This season with San Francisco Opera she sings Arnalta in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*.



CAROL MALONE

Carol Malone, who made her American opera debut last season singing Zerlina in San Francisco Opera's new production of *Don Giovanni*, returns to the house to interpret Drusilla in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and Sofie in *Werther*. During the 1974-75 season she was heard in the Bavarian State Opera's new production of *Die Fledermaus*. After studying music at the University of Indiana, Miss Malone left the United States in 1964 when she was awarded a scholarship for music study at the Hochschule für Musik in Hamburg. She was awarded another grant the following year for further studies in Cologne, and, since then, has been extremely active on the European opera scene; she is a permanent member of the Berlin Deutsche Oper. In 1974 she participated in the world premiere of Nabokov's *Love's Labours Lost* at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, a performance she repeated later that year at the Berlin Festival. She was heard in *Hansel and Gretel* and *The Magic Flute* in Berlin in 1973, and the previous year she portrayed Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro* at Lyon Opera and Aix-en-Provence. She sang Blonde in *The Abduction from the Seraglio* in 1971 at the Edinburgh Festival and the Munich Opera, and appeared in a television production of *The Magic Flute* as Papagena with Hamburg Opera.

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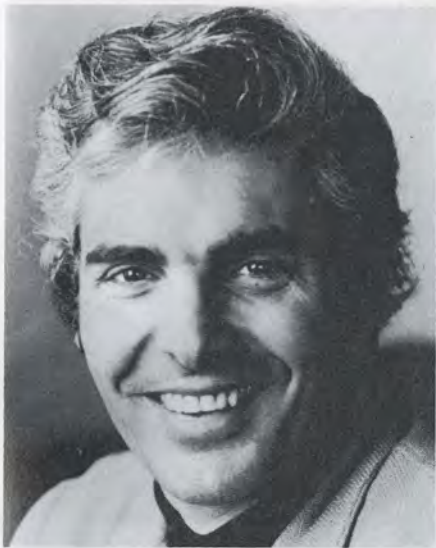
BARBARA HENDRICKS

Barbara Hendricks, a young soprano from Arkansas, makes her San Francisco Opera debut singing the roles of Amor and Damigella in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*. She drew critical raves in San Francisco in 1974 when she made her bow before Spring Opera Theater audiences as Erisbe in Cavalli's *L'Ormino*. Since then her appearances have included the title role in Cavalli's *La Calisto* at Glyndebourne, a debut recital in Stockholm and her St. Paul Opera debut. The 1974-75 season also marked Miss Hendricks' first coast-to-coast recital tour, highlighted by an appearance with the Chicago Symphony, conducted by Sir Georg Solti. In the summer of 1975 she interpreted the title role in *The Cunning Little Vixen* with Santa Fe Opera. After receiving a degree in chemistry and mathematics from the University of Nebraska, Miss Hendricks attended the Juilliard School of Music and performed with the Metropolitan Opera Studio and the American Opera Center. A former student of both Jennie Tourel and Maria Callas, she has been the recipient of many awards, including a special prize from the International Competition of Geneva in 1971, the 1972 Lucrezia Bori Award, the first prize and the Mozart prize at the International Competition of Paris in 1972, and second prize at the Naumburg Competition (1972). Miss Hendricks recently recorded *Porgy and Bess* for Decca with the Cleveland Symphony under Lorin Maazel.



LINDA ROARK

Linda Roark, a 25-year-old soprano, was a 1975 member of Western Opera Theater, San Francisco Opera's touring and educational subsidiary. During that company's tour of seven Western states she sang the roles of Giulietta and Antonia in *The Tales of Hoffmann* and Flora in *La Traviata*. In 1974 Miss Roark appeared as a soloist in Bach's *Magnificat* at Wolf Trap in Vienna, Virginia. The previous year she was chosen to sing excerpts from *La Traviata* and *Der Rosenkavalier* at Wolf Trap's closing summer performance. A graduate of Tulsa University, with a master's degree from Southern Methodist University, Miss Roark performed with Tulsa Opera in 1972, singing the role of Frasquita in *Carmen*, and with Tulsa University Opera Theater. In 1971 she appeared at the university in productions of *Hansel and Gretel*, *Amelia Goes to the Ball*, *Così fan tutte*, and *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. This season she makes her debut with San Francisco Opera, portraying Inez in *Il Trovatore*, Pallade in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* and The First Lady in *The Magic Flute*.



ERIC TAPPY

Eric Tappy makes his American opera debut portraying Nerone in the San Francisco Opera premiere of *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*. The Swiss tenor, who was born in Lausanne and educated at the Geneva Conservatory, is heard regularly in London (Covent Garden), Lyon, Strasbourg, Geneva, Amsterdam, Brussels, Cologne and Munich. In 1964 Tappy sang in Rameau's *Zoroastre* at the Opéra-Comique in Paris on the occasion of the bicentenary of the composer's death. A specialist in the works of Monteverdi and Cavalli, he received Amsterdam's Edison Prize in 1968 for his recordings of Monteverdi's *Orfeo*. The tenor has performed at a number of European music festivals, including those of Warsaw, Munich, Lucerne, Flanders, Hanover, Perugia, Wurzburg, Aix-en-Provence and Herrenhausen. He has also performed in the world premieres of works by such contemporary composers as Frank Martin, Darius Milhaud, Louis Kelterborn and Konstanty Regamey. Earlier this year Tappy appeared as Titus in *La Clemenza di Tito* at Covent Garden, a role he had sung there the year before in his debut with the Royal Opera. He also interpreted Titus with great success in the summer of 1974 in both Munich and Cologne and at the Aix-en-Provence Festival. Among his other roles last season was Pelléas in *Pelléas et Mélisande* with the Paris Opera, a part he will interpret again in April, 1976 for the Geneva Opera.



RICHARD STILWELL

Richard Stilwell made his bow at San Francisco Opera in 1973 interpreting the role of Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*. A winner of the Fisher Foundation Award of the Metropolitan Opera Auditions, the baritone auditioned for New York City Opera after completing his military service and made his debut with that company as Pelleas in *Pelléas et Mélisande* in 1970. Last season he returned to New York City Opera to portray Pelléas again, and he repeated the role at his Covent Garden debut in November, under the direction of Colin Davis. Other appearances last season included a production of *La Bohème* for Houston Grand Opera and the title role of *Eugene Onegin* for the Glyndebourne Festival Opera. After singing Ottone here in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* Stilwell will make his Metropolitan Opera debut in *Così fan tutte* and will also appear in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. In February, 1976 he is slated to sing in Monteverdi's *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* with New York City Opera, and in April he will portray the male lead in Pasatieri's *Inez di Castro* for Baltimore Opera. In past seasons the baritone has appeared with Milan's La Scala, Venice's Teatro la Fenice, the Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Geneva Opera, and Houston Grand Opera. He has performed frequently with the Caramoor, Glyndebourne and Tanglewood festivals.

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PETER MEVEN

Peter Meven, a West German bass who makes his American opera debut as Seneca in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* with San Francisco Opera, triumphed in that role in the 1972 Renert production of the work in Stuttgart. After finishing secondary schooling he studied sculpture in Vienna and Cologne, then worked as a scenic artist at the Cologne Theater, where his operatic talents were discovered while he was singing on the job. Meven received his musical training at the Musikhochschule in Cologne and studied voice under Robert Blasius. His operatic debut was as Hagen in *Götterdämmerung* in 1957, followed by appearances in Mainz, Wiesbaden and Oldenburg. Since 1964 he has been a regular performer at the Deutsche Oper am Rhein, Düsseldorf, singing all the major bass roles with special success in the parts of Boris, Kaspar, Gurnemanz, Sarastro, Hagen and Moses. Meven has been a guest artist in most of the international opera houses, and he has received worldwide recognition for his concert appearances in Europe and South America.



WILLIAM WAHMAN

William Wahman completed his third season with Western Opera Theater this year, performing in *The Barber of Seville* (Almaviva), *What Price Confidence* (Richard) and a special Street Opera and Sigmund Stern Grove Midsummer Music Festival production of *Don Giovanni* (Don Ottavio). The tenor made his San Francisco Opera debut last season as the First Knight in *Parsifal*. Wahman sang the role of the Narrator in Berlioz's *L'Enfance du Christ* in 1973 with the Chicago Symphony and has made many other appearances with that orchestra, most recently in December, 1974, when he performed in *Salome* in Carnegie Hall under Sir Georg Solti. His 1975 oratorio schedule has included his debut at the Carmel Bach Festival, two Bach concerts with the San Francisco Symphony, and performances of the *St. John Passion* in Chicago. Wahman is slated to appear in the premiere performance of Alan Stout's *Passion* with the Chicago Symphony in 1976 as well as in *Così fan tutte* with Minnesota Opera. He is a recipient of a Martha Baird Rockefeller Grant. This season at San Francisco Opera he appears in *Andrea Chenier*, a Lover and a voice in *Il Tabarro* and the First Priest in *The Magic Flute*.

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GARY BURGESS

Gary Burgess, appearing this season with San Francisco Opera in *Il Trovatore*, *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, *Norma*, *Pique Dame*, and *The Magic Flute*, received his musical training at Indiana University, the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, the Juilliard School of Music, and the Academy of St. Cecilia in Rome. He has sung with many America opera companies, including the Metropolitan Opera Studio, the Metropolitan Opera at the Forum, Kentucky Opera Association, Philadelphia Lyric Opera, Wilmington Opera Association, Harford Opera (Baltimore) and Central City (Colorado) Opera. In 1973 Burgess opened the National Council for the Arts in Aspen, portraying Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi*. He also opened the Grand Teton National Music Festival that year, singing Britten's *Les Illuminations* with the Festival Orchestra. During the 1973-1974 season Burgess made his European debut with the Greek National Opera in Athens as Bacchus in *Ariadne auf Naxos*; he returned there last spring to sing Tom Rakewell in *The Rake's Progress*. Other engagements this year have included Strauss' *Daphne* in New York with the Little Orchestra Society and *The Tales of Hoffmann* in Philadelphia. The young tenor was heard at San Francisco Opera in *Boris Godunov*, *Elektra*, *Peter Grimes*, *La Traviata*, *Don Carlo* and *La Bohème* in the 1973 season, and in *Otello*, *Esclarmonde*, *Salome* and *Par-sifal* in 1974.



JOHN DUYSKERS

John Duykers, who was a soloist in the ensemble of Spring Opera Theater's 1975 West Coast premiere of Britten's *Death in Venice*, made his debut with San Francisco Opera in 1972, singing Normanno in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Ill's Son in *The Visit of the Old Lady*. A 1968 graduate of the Merola Opera Program, he has appeared in over 75 opera productions in the past ten years. Duykers has performed on opera stages in Santa Fe, Seattle, Vancouver, Edmonton, Geneva, Frankfurt and New York. In addition, he has sung with the Oakland Symphony, the University of California Orchestra, the Carmel Bach Festival, Western Opera Theater, the Inverness Festival, the New Music Ensemble (San Francisco Conservatory), the Modesto Symphony Orchestra, and the Mills College Performing Group. Touring extensively as a recitalist, the tenor has performed with the Banff Opera Festival (Alberta, Canada) and in Alaska for the world premiere of *Toyon of Alaska* in 1967. The new Port Costa Players, a Bay Area performing arts company, was founded by Duykers, and he has directed and performed in operas there. This season with San Francisco Opera he appears as The Messenger in *Il Trovatore*, Lucano in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, Tchaplitsky in *Pique Dame*, the Captain of the Guard in *Simon Boccanegra* and Gherardo in *Gianni Schicchi*.

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JOSEPH FRANK

Joseph Frank is familiar to San Francisco Opera audiences for his performances last season in *Salome*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Manon Lescaut*, *Luisa Miller* and *The Daughter of the Regiment*. After appearing in South Africa as Almaviva in *The Barber of Seville*, the young tenor returned to San Francisco where he received critical praise for his portrayal of Pedrillo in Spring Opera Theater's 1975 production of Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio*. Frank has been a featured soloist with the Central City (Colorado) Opera Company and a member of the opera department of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, where he performed in *Madama Butterfly*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *The Rake's Progress* and *La Traviata*, among other works. In 1973 he made his New York debut in *Three Church Parables* (*Curlow River*, *The Burning Fiery Furnace*, and *The Prodigal Son*) by Benjamin Britten, under the direction of Nathaniel Merrill for the Concert Artists Guild. Frank has performed with the Marlboro (Vermont) Music Festival for the past two summers. This season with San Francisco Opera he will sing the roles of Valletto in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, the Master of Ceremonies in *Pique Dame*, *Incredibile* in *Andrea Chenier*, the Song Vendor in *Il Tabarro* and Monostatos in *The Magic Flute*.



CHARLES LONG

Charles Long, who makes his San Francisco Opera debut this season as Liberto in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, is the 1974 recipient of the Bruce Yarnell Memorial Award. The young baritone was a member of the 1975 Western Opera Theater company, singing the roles of Figaro in *The Barber of Seville*, Germont in *La Traviata*, Dapertutto in *The Tales of Hoffmann*, and Don Giovanni in a special production for Street Opera and the Sigmund Stern Grove Midsummer Music Festival. A native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Long received his early musical training in the Opera Department of Carnegie Mellon University with Rudolf Fellner. In 1972 he made a tour of Southeast Asia with the Opera Theater of New York, appearing as Marcello in *La Bohème*, Germont in *La Traviata* and Amonasro in *Aida*. Returning to the U.S., he sang the role of Escamillo in the Artist's Internationale (Providence, R.I.) production of *Carmen* with Mignon Dunn. He appeared with the New York Lyric Opera Company in the fall of 1974, filling the title roles of *Rigoletto* and *Macbeth*. Earlier that year he was seen as Count Di Luna in *Il Trovatore* at Queens Opera Company in New York. This season with San Francisco Opera he appears as Liberto in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Johann in *Werther* and Pietro Fleville in *Andrea Chenier*.



JOHN DAVIES

John Davies, a young veteran of Western Opera Theater, appeared with that company this year as Bartolo in *The Barber of Seville*, Crespel in *The Tales of Hoffmann*, and as Leporello in *Don Giovanni* (a special WOT production for Street Opera and the Sigmund Stern Grove Midsummer Festival). A native of Boston, the bass-baritone went on tour last winter with Sarah Caldwell's Opera New England, singing the Bonze in *Madama Butterfly* and the Crapshooter in Lukas Foss' *The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*. In October, 1974 he performed the title role in the coronation scene of *Boris Godunov* with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra at the Worcester Music Festival. A graduate of the Boston University School of Fine and Applied Arts, Davies appeared last year in the New Opera Company's production of *The Marriage of Figaro* and the Opera Company of Boston's production of *War and Peace*. He has also performed in youth concerts with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and as a recitalist for the Welsh Music Hour on BBC-Wales (1973). This season he makes his San Francisco Opera debut as the Old Gypsy in *Il Trovatore*, Litore in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, Schmidt in *Andrea Chenier*, and Amantio di Nicolao in *Gianni Schicchi*.



RAYMOND LEPPARD

Raymond Leppard, has long been acknowledged as an authority on music of the baroque period, especially that of 17th century Venetian composers. The San Francisco Opera premiere of Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* marks his conducting debut at this house. Leppard has appeared regularly with all the major British symphony orchestras in a wide-ranging repertoire, and has continued his close association with the English Chamber Orchestra with which he toured to Europe, Central and South America and Japan for "Expo 70" and to Hong Kong in February of 1975. As a scholar and conductor he has published and performed his own realizations of operas by Monteverdi and Cavalli, and he was one of the first to bring this music to the notice of the general public. He made his American concert debut in 1969 with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra at Avery Fisher Hall and his operatic debut in 1974 conducting performances of his edition of Cavalli's *L'Egisto* at Santa Fe Opera. He also conducted three concerts at the Hollywood Bowl that year. In 1973 Leppard was appointed principal conductor of the BBC Northern Symphony Orchestra and he has established a series of Master Concerts with them. Before coming to San Francisco Opera for *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* Leppard led the Los Angeles Philharmonic in several concert performances at the Hollywood Bowl.

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GÜNTHER RENNERT

Günther Rennert made his debut at San Francisco Opera in 1963 directing a new production of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. One of the leading stage directors in the world, Rennert began staging productions as early as 1936 in Frankfurt. After holding directorial positions in Wuppertal and Mainz, he worked in Berlin from 1942 to 1945, and from 1946 to 1956 he was general director of the Hamburg State Opera. During this period and the succeeding decade Rennert directed operas and plays all over the world: at the Vienna State Opera, the Salzburg Festival, Covent Garden, the Edinburgh Festival, La Scala, Teatro San Carlo in Naples, the Metropolitan Opera, Vancouver, Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires, Stockholm, Amsterdam and numerous other places. From 1959 to 1967 he was artistic counsellor and chief of production at Glyndebourne Festival Opera; he became general director of the Bavarian State Opera in Munich in 1967, the position he fills today. Rennert, who holds a chair for opera direction at the State University of Music in Munich, is also noted for his revisions of the works of Handel, Gluck, Rossini, Prokofiev and Puccini. Among Rennert's recent triumphs are his 1972 production of *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* in Stuttgart and his 1975 production of *Die Frau ohne Schatten* in Salzburg.



ITA MAXIMOWNA

Ita Maximowna, a world-renowned designer whose talents are frequently paired with those of director Gunther Rennert, makes her San Francisco Opera debut creating sets and costumes for *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*. Born in Germany and educated in Paris and Berlin, she had over 150 design credits to her name by 1960; some of the most notable examples were *Carmen* with Herbert von Karajan (1955), *La Cenerentola* with Rennert at La Scala (1959) and *Prince von Hamburg* with Hans Hartleb (1960). During the 70's she received critical acclaim for her designs for *Die Lustige Witwe* at Vienna's Theater an der Wien (1970), *Un Ballo in Maschera* with Rennert at the Metropolitan Opera (1970), *Capriccio* at the Munich Festival (1971), *Albert Herring* with Hartleb at Munich's Cuvillies Theatre (1972), *Così fan tutte* at the Salzburg Festival (1973 and 1975), and *Death in Venice* in Munich (1975).

impossible—never! The San Francisco Opera welcomes this challenge; singers respond to it; the discriminating San Francisco audience demands it.

Ultimately, final decisions on repertoire are the responsibility of one person. At San Francisco Opera, that person is Kurt Herbert Adler, the company's General Director. He must decide what productions will be given and who will sing, direct and design them. To do this, he maintains a delicate balance between the artistic and the financial. What the company would like to do must be weighed against such factors as availability of artists, budget limitations and anticipated public response.

Planning is required for an organization to be both creative and efficient and, indeed, Maestro Adler has developed a plan for repertoire selection.

To begin with, each season consists of 11 productions (12 in the case of a double-bill such as this year's *Il Tabarro/Gianni Schicchi*). The principle factor behind this decision is the length of the fall season. Because San Francisco Opera shares the War Memorial Opera House with the San Francisco Symphony and the San Francisco Ballet, its performing season is restricted to 11½ weeks. As a result, the number of different productions is constrained by additional expenses which would place a financial burden on the company and its sources of support. The construction of a new symphony hall, as envisioned by the planners of an expanded Performing Arts Center, would enable the San Francisco Opera to have a longer season and thereby make opera available to more people, increase its revenue from ticket sales and, conceivably, expand the number of productions.

In planning the specific operas for a given season, one of Maestro Adler's policies is that at least one-half should come from the standard repertoire—


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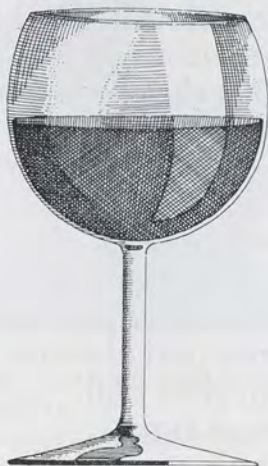
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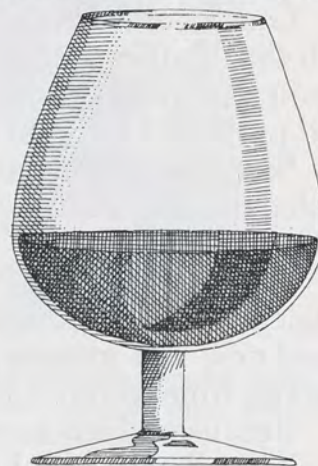
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Der fliegende Holländer, San Francisco Opera, 1954; production designed by Harry Horner. Photo: Strohmeyer Photographers

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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vative in order to maintain a reputation for greatness. The San Francisco Opera scrupulously guards its eminent position by scheduling what might best be described as 2 "rarities" each season. These works come from various sources. One might be a re-discovered work by a well-known composer (last year's *Esclarmonde* by Massenet); another could be an opera by a contemporary composer (the 1973 production of Britten's *Peter Grimes*). Or, he might select an opera given in a language not usually presented in the United States (this season's Russian-language production of Tchaikovsky's *Pique Dame*). In the light of today's expanding musical tastes and knowledge, Maestro Adler felt that it was decidedly appropriate to mount Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, a rarely performed Baroque opera, with the splendor and understanding which would enable a whole new audience to experience the style and heart of this period. An adherence to a policy of innovation through the presentation of rarely-performed works cannot be under-estimated; without it, ultimately, repertoire would take on a sameness season after season and we, the audience, would be the poorer for it.

Usually, one French opera is given and great care is exercised in order to avoid the over-exposure of *Carmen* and *Faust*, the two best-known products of this school. Rather, Maestro Adler constantly explores the possibility of infusing the dramatic and lyric strengths of such composers as Meyerbeer, Massenet, Debussy and Berlioz. This season's French opera, for example, is a new production of Massenet's *Werther*. It is the General Director's policy to give at least one production in English. The opera is usually a work originally written in another language such as this year's *The Magic Flute* and last season's *The Daughter of the Regiment*. "Opera in English" is a subject in itself and deserves a fuller treatment than is given or intended here. The point taken is that Maestro Adler believes

(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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In addition to inviting you to listen to this year's opera broadcasts, we at Standard would also like to take this opportunity to invite you to visit our new Chevron Gallery at 555 Market Street weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

On exhibit until September 29 is "Word and Image," a collection of posters. From October 6 to November 17 will be a retrospective of Imogen Cunningham photographs, and from December 1 to January 9 will be a display of puppets from throughout the world.



Standard Oil Company of California

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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Planning a Fall Season—continued

that an English language production should be given each season *but* the translation must be relevant and meaningful to today's audiences.

Along with repertoire projection must come the selection of the leading singers. Certain operas absolutely require the presence of an artist who bears the needed vocal prowess or charisma. Ensemble operas often call for distinguished artists in every leading role. The services of these "super-stars" often must be contracted for 2 to 5 years in advance.

Finally, there are the physical aspects of the productions. Which ones are to be totally new? Which will be re-staged? How are they to be financed? All of the pieces in this massive jigsaw puzzle must fit and fit perfectly so that artists and repertoire can at last come together and make for a season to be remembered and treasured.

Mr. Schub is enrolled in the Management in the Arts Program at the Graduate School of Management, University of California, Los Angeles, where he will receive his M.B.A. degree in June. He is currently a Management Intern with San Francisco Opera.

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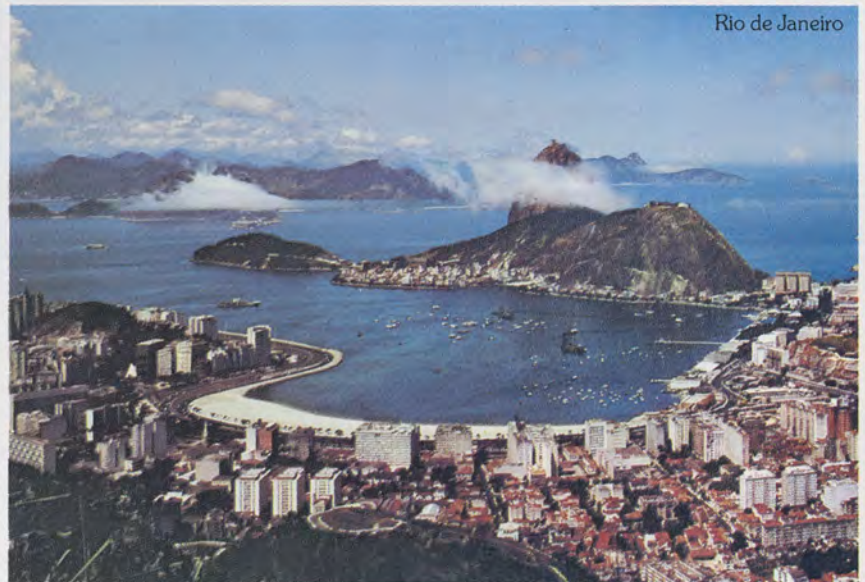
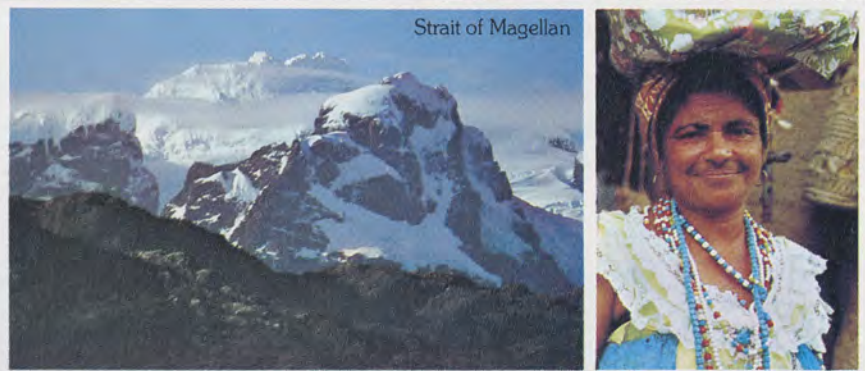
Rennert and Leppard—continued

separation has the effect of heightening the tension tremendously. Poppea is always wanting more of Nerone; she must keep getting him back for one more assurance of his love, one more concession. Other productions, on the other hand, have traditionally thrust the two central figures together on stage. In my opinion, that defeats the issue at hand."

Leppard and Rennert agree that *Poppea* should never be treated simply as a Baroque show. "If you get all wrapped up in the pomp and ceremony," the conductor says, "it kills the characters, who are remarkably human and three-dimensional. Ottone, for instance, exploits Drusilla terribly after he's been rejected by Poppea. He tells Drusilla he loves her but doesn't mean a word of it. She's simply handy. Arnalta is another character who's incredibly delineated."

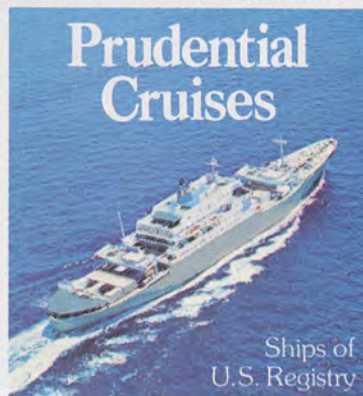
While Leppard shuns any claim to reproducing exactly the *Poppea* of Monteverdi's day, he maintains that the San Francisco Opera version comes closest to duplicating the original sound. "In this realization we've attempted to match the instrumentation of the Venetian orchestra, particularly its use of the continuo," he says. (The continuo for the production employs two harpsichords, a harp, a lute, a guitar, a flue organ, a reed organ, two violoncellos, and two double basses.)

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



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