

Il Tabarro

1975

Wednesday, November 12, 1975 8:00 PM

Saturday, November 15, 1975 8:00 PM

Tuesday, November 18, 1975 8:00 PM

Sunday, November 23, 1975 2:00 PM

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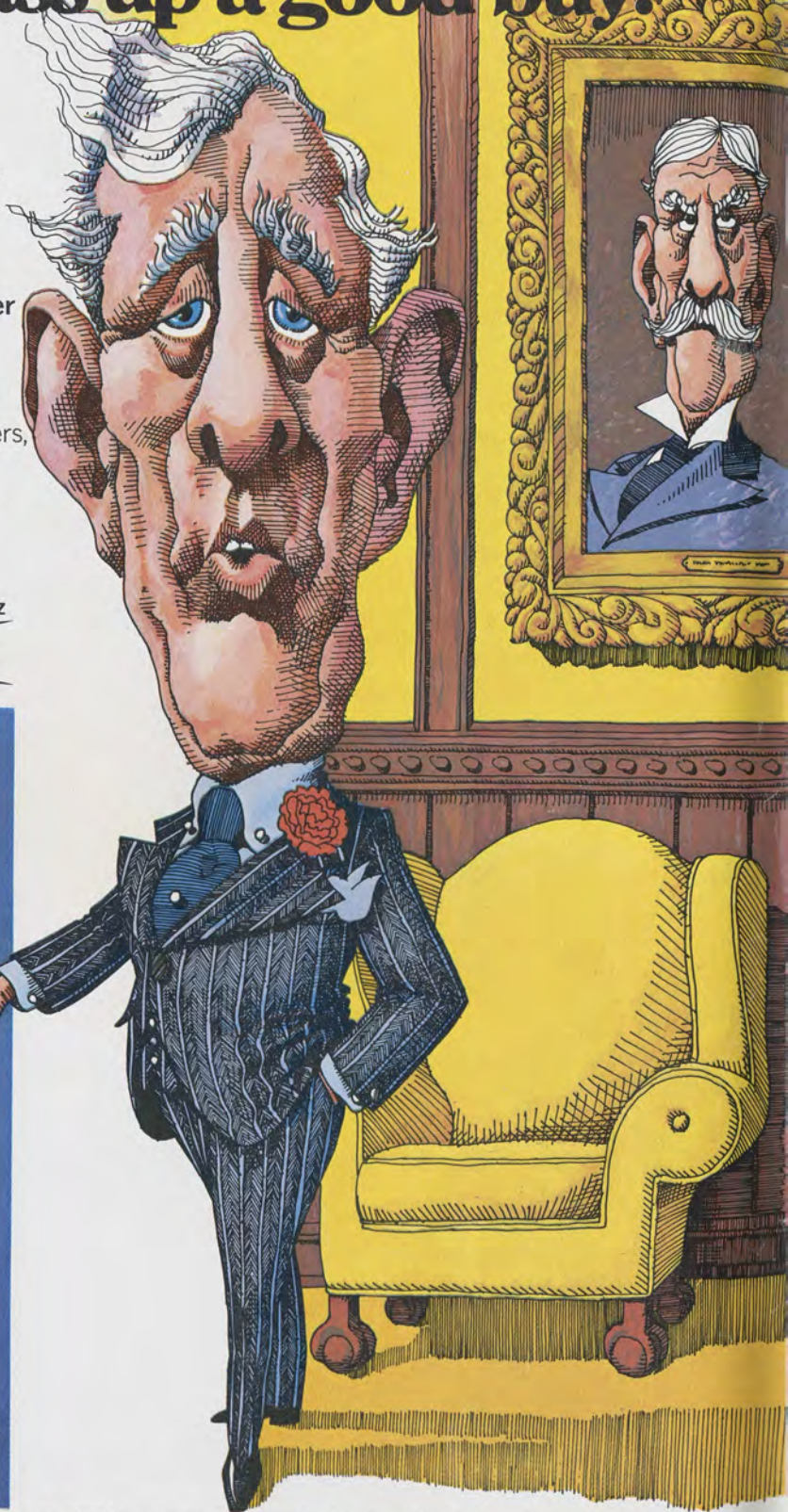
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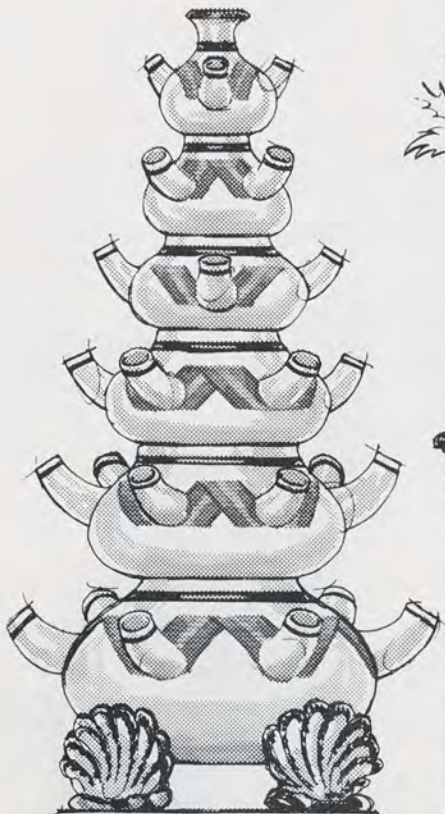
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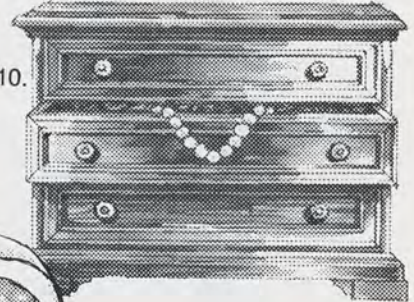
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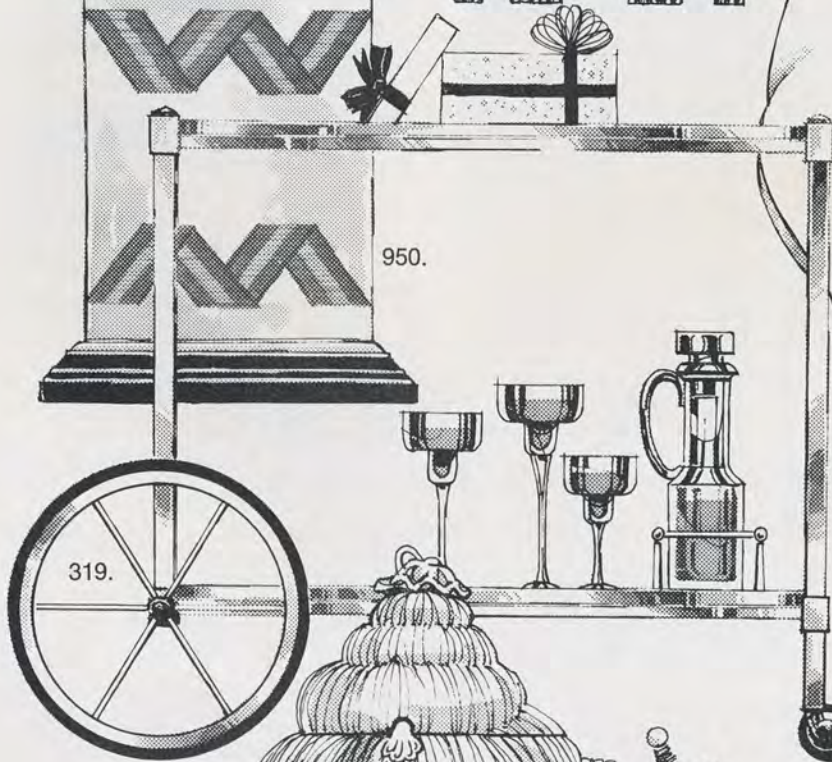
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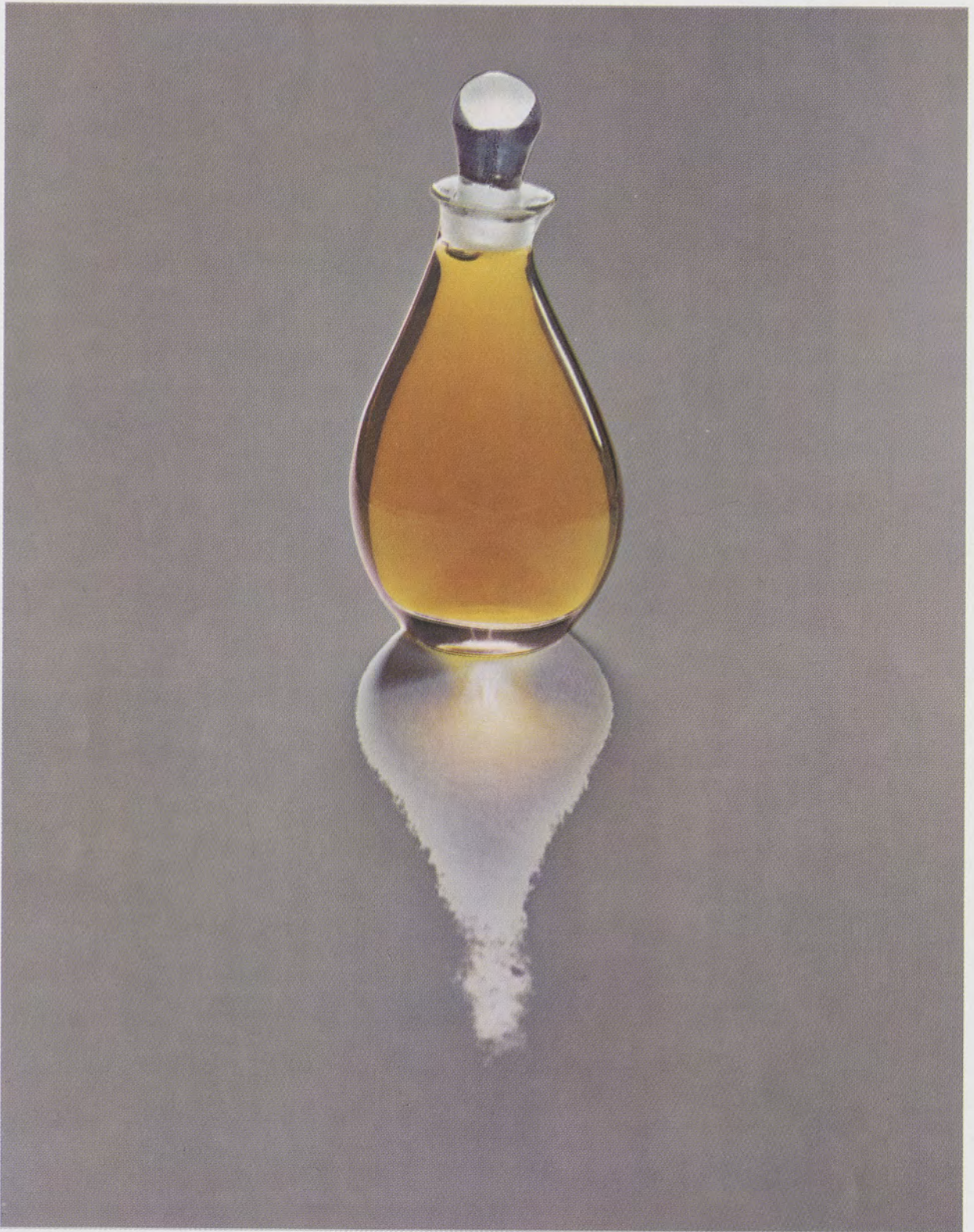


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What would our city be like without San Francisco Opera and the numerous other opera activities it has generated over the years? Culturally deprived, indeed. We take our opera seriously, and enjoy it throughout the year—not only in the War Memorial Opera House, but also in the streets, theaters, parks and plazas of the entire Bay Area. Last year almost 300,000 people attended performances of live opera presented by San Francisco Opera and its affiliate companies. Radio broadcasts of the fall season's repertoire reach millions of people in the Bay Area and in Los Angeles.

This year the San Francisco Opera Association's Annual Fund Drive needs \$750,000 to meet increased production costs and to balance its budget. Cultural organizations as well as business and industry not only have to break even but must provide for present needs while ensuring future growth.

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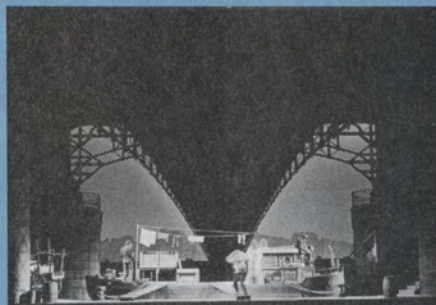
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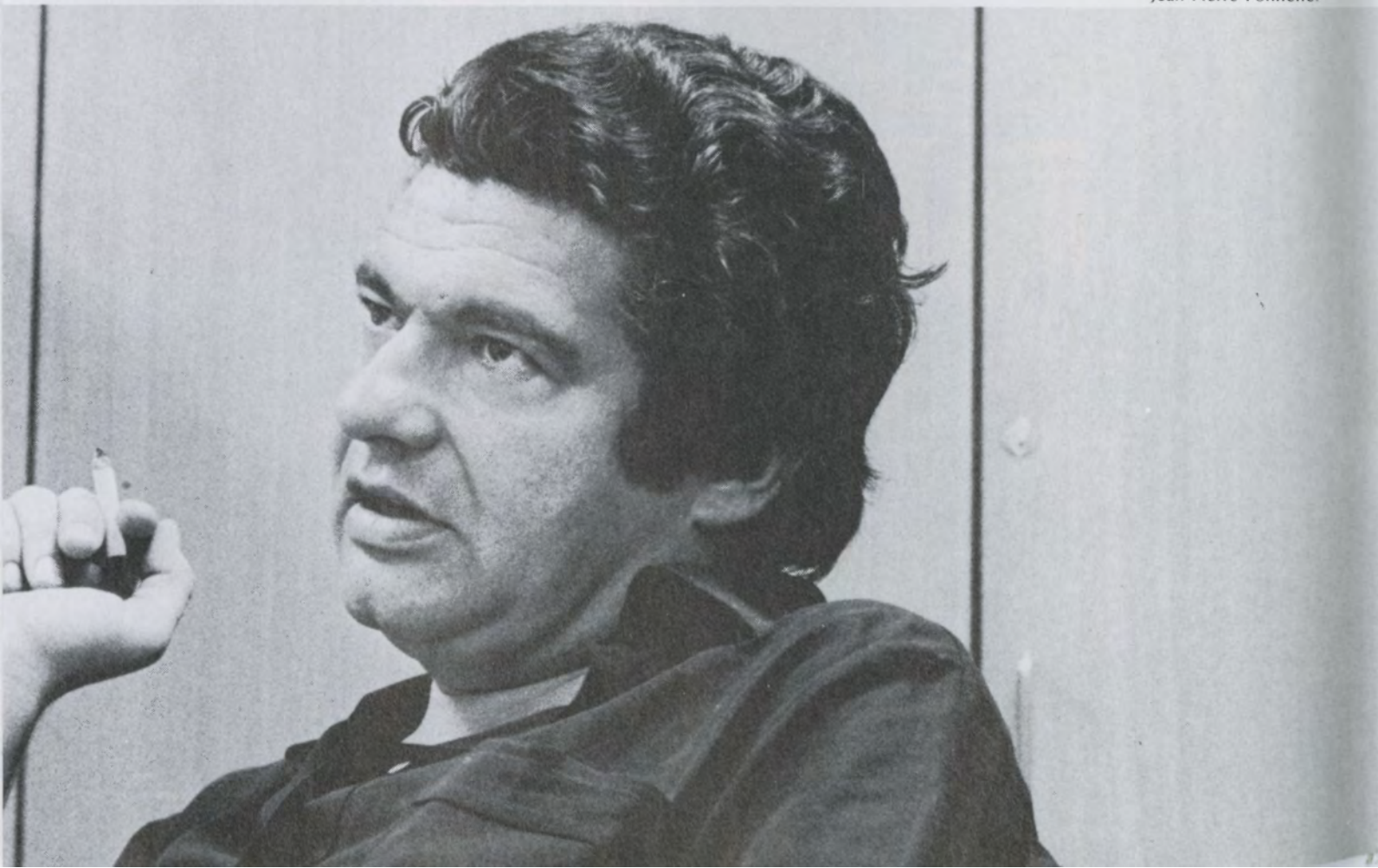
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Cover photo: Carolyn Mason Jones



Patrick Libby (with Robleto Merolla in the background).

Jean Pierre Ponnelle.



PATRICK LIBBY: Examining Escape

by Armistead Maupin

The chic and fanciful barges of London's Little Venice district – a block away from Patrick Libby's Hamilton Terrace home – underscore the irony of the dreary Parisian vessel in *Il Tabarro*:

"A barge is an object of intense romanticism to most people" says director Libby. "It symbolizes limitless freedom and unorthodoxy, a chance to flee the tedium of daily routine. The barge dwellers of *Il Tabarro*, however, are hopelessly trapped, and their

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JEAN PIERRE PONNELLE: Puncturing Pretension

by Armistead Maupin

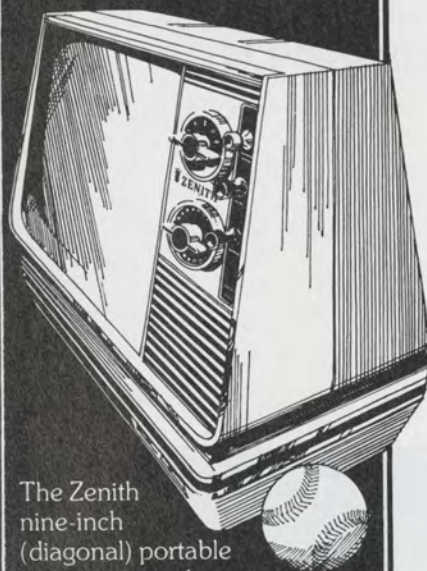
"The greatest circus clowns in the world are Italian," declares Jean Pierre Ponnelle, a Frenchman who may be the greatest designer-director in the world.

"Italians have an extraordinary grasp of human failings, and that is the essence of comedy. *Gianni Schicchi* is an opera about people who are reduced to a single human failing: they are very horny about money."

Ponnelle, whose brilliant, hallucinogenic *Holländer* stunned San Francisco

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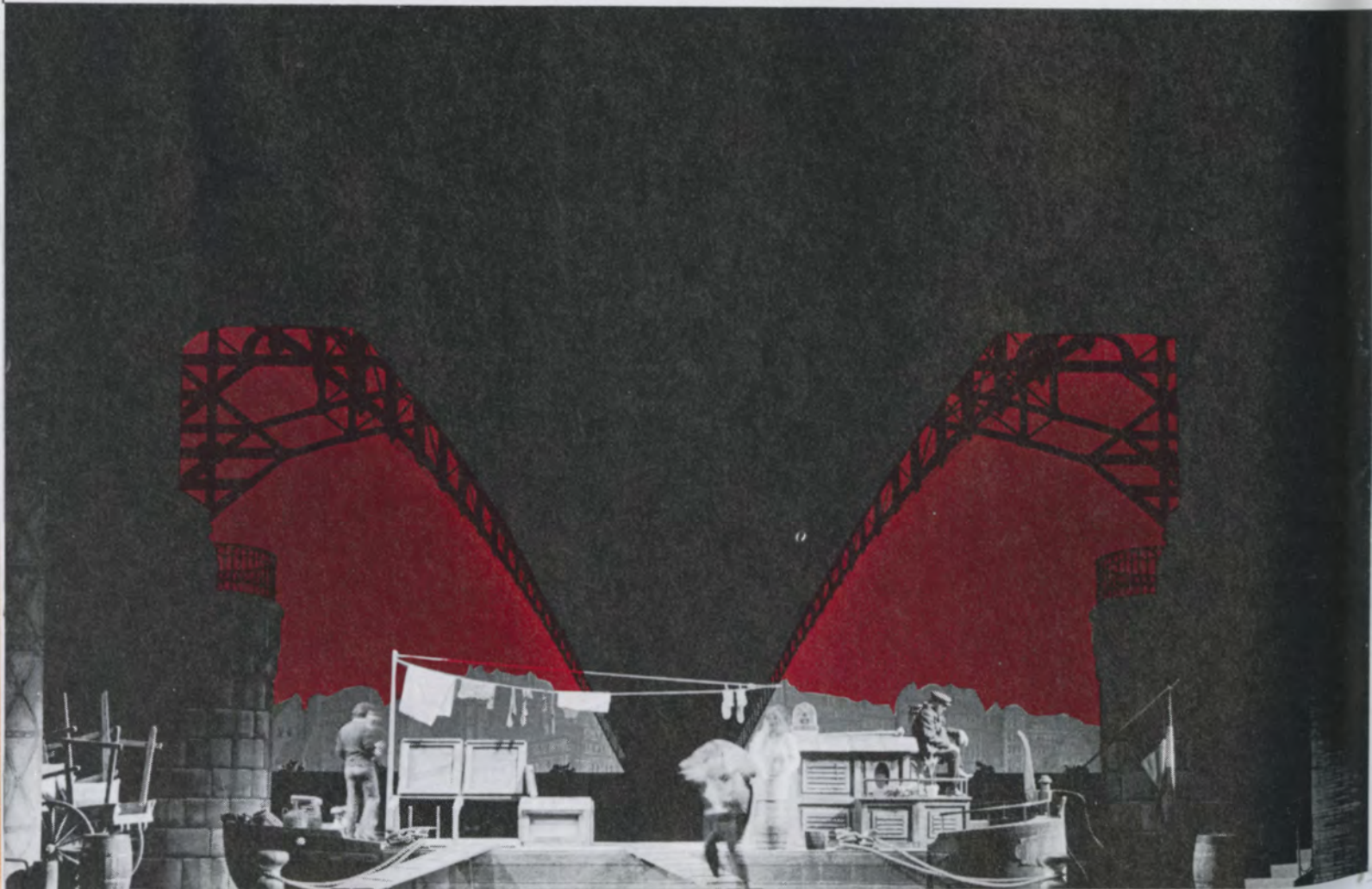
Giacomo Puccini
(1858-1924)

It seems doubtful that when Puccini spoke these words he was truly naming his quarry in order of their importance to his happiness. We do know that he hunted all three of his game in any season and on any preserve. He boasted of never missing a shot at a duck or pheasant, and many husbands, lovers or fathers of women whom Puccini pursued angrily complained that his aim was all too accurate.

As to his search for good libretti, Puccini was indefatigable and spared no effort to satisfy himself that his choice was right,

San Francisco Opera: *Il Tabarro*.

Photo: Ken Howard





Jean Pierre Ponnelle costume sketch for San Francisco Opera's 1975 production of *Gianni Schicchi*.

but even here he was not averse to invading the territorial rights of other composers. Leoncavallo, a recognized composer when Puccini was scarcely known, had written his own *La Bohème*, based on Murger's book *La Vie de la Bohème*, some years before the young upstart Puccini dared to appropriate the same subject. Leoncavallo's followers were incensed, and they contrived by whistles and catcalls very nearly to destroy the premiere of Puccini's version of the story. Leoncavallo did not forgive the young poacher until Puccini earned recognition in his own right. Then Leoncavallo became one of Puccini's staunchest friends and admirers. Meanwhile Puccini's *Bohème* went on to

"I am a mighty hunter of wildfowl, beautiful women, and good libretti."

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phenomenal success while that of Leoncavallo was very nearly forgotten. Not all of Puccini's works were masterpieces, but a much larger percentage of his total output has gained a permanent place in the repertoire than that of any other major composer. His first two operas *Le Villi* (1881) and *Edgar* (1889) are rarely performed today; yet each was performed at La Scala in Milan, no mean honor for a

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Set design for *Il Tabarro* by Paolo Bregni.



Il Tabarro, Paolo Bregni 8/21



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Hunter—continued from p. 14

budding young composer. But it was the next four works which brought Puccini international fame rarely, if ever, surpassed in the history of opera. The success of these was due, in part, to the excellent librettists who worked with Puccini. The name of Luigi Illica was linked with all four operas, beginning with *Manon Lescaut* (1893). Giuseppe Giacosa collaborated with Illica on *La Bohème* (1896), *Tosca*

Gianni Schicchi costume design by Jean Pierre Ponnelle.



(1900) and *Madama Butterfly* (1904), thus completing one of the most successful writing teams in the history of opera.

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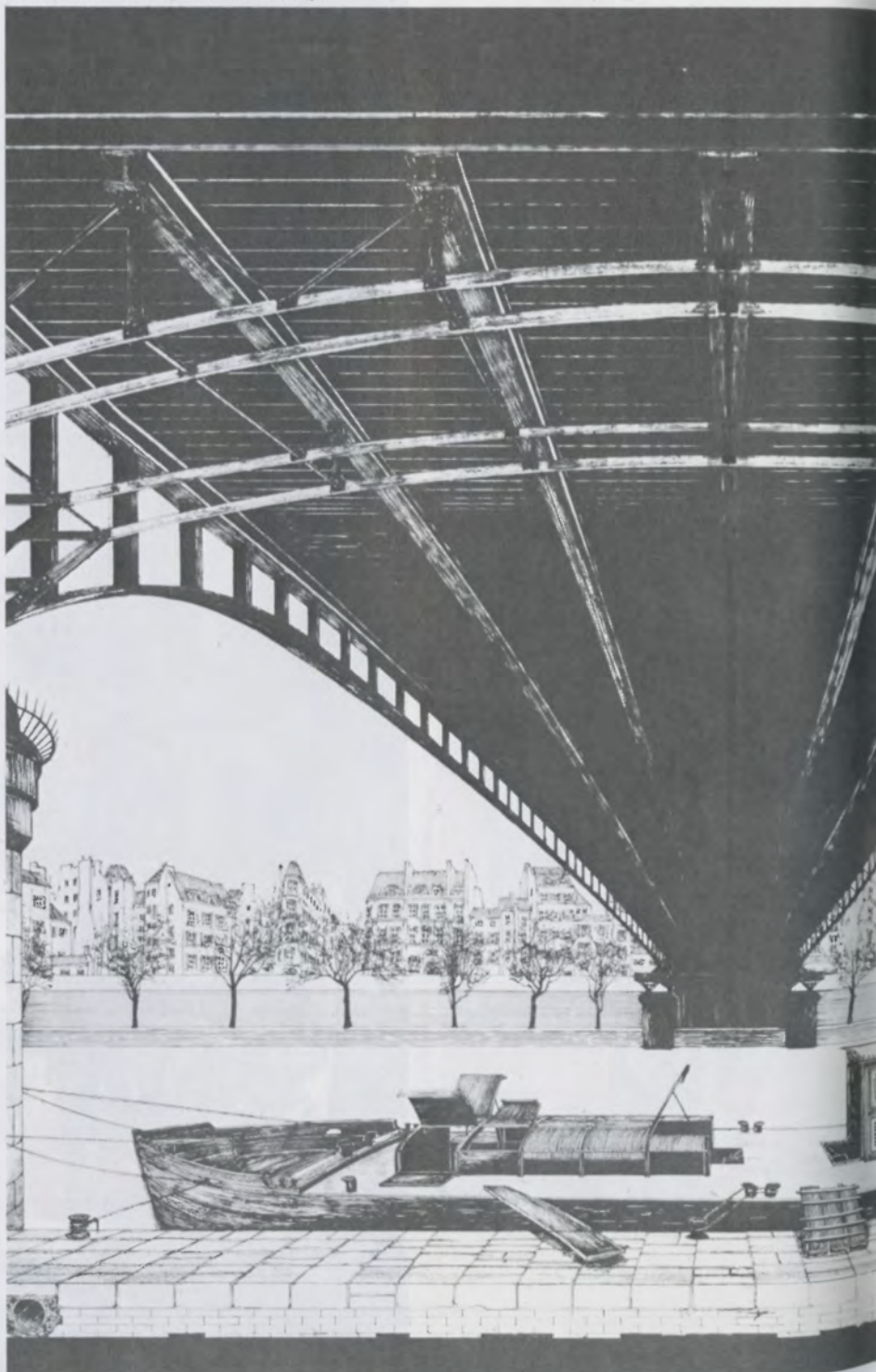
Madama Butterfly (1904), thus completing one of the most successful writing teams in the history of opera.

Perhaps Puccini learned a lesson from his experience with *La Bohème*. True, he had had no repercussions from using the subject of Massenet's *Manon*, but, after the *Bohème* experience, he never again invaded another composer's territory. However, he sometimes

gave other composers' subjects serious consideration.

The six years following *Butterfly* were years of frustration and doubt for Puccini. Seemingly unable to find a suitable libretto for another opera, he seriously considered retiring to his restful country home where, perhaps, he could concentrate upon his hunting of "wildfowl and beautiful women."

Il Tabarro set design by Paolo Bregni.



The constant encouragement of his dear friend and publisher Giulio Ricordi kept his determination alive although Puccini's drive for perfectionism compelled him to reject many times more libretti than he accepted. He had never been one to rush his work. It had always taken him three or four years between operas, but never before had he taken six years. Finally, the dry spell came to an end with the writing and presentation of

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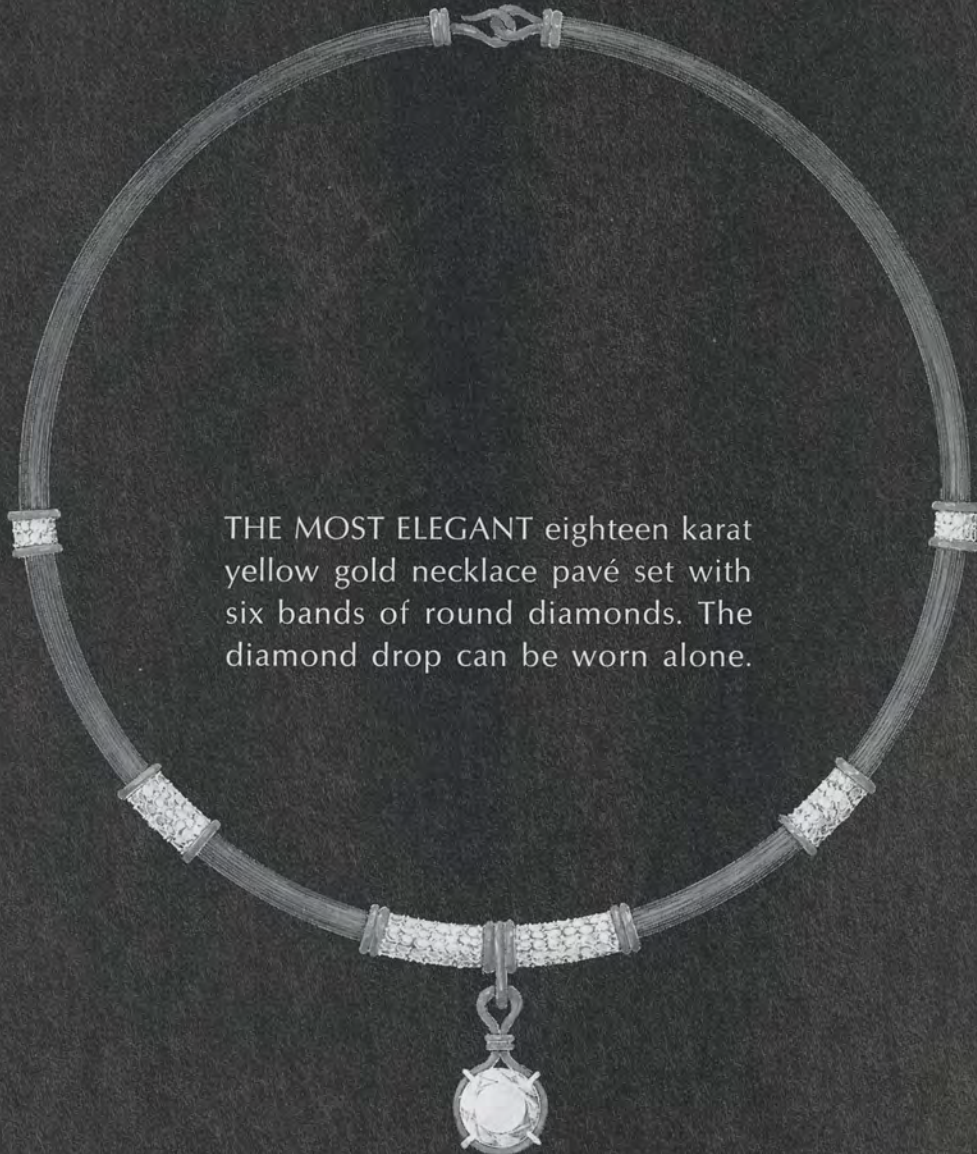
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Hunter—continued from p. 19

La Fanciulla del West which, like *Butterfly*, was based on a play by Belasco from a book by Long. *Fanciulla* was produced with unrestrained fanfare and publicity at the Metropolitan Opera in 1910, but, unfortunately, it fell far short of the spectacular success of its four predecessors. Its cast of gold-rush American pioneers, played by Italians singing in Italian, bore scant resemblance to the "wild west" as it

was popularly pictured by the American public.

Puccini began to look for a different approach. He had never forgotten the unique success of *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci*, written by his two close friends Mascagni and Leoncavallo. The two one-act operas had become almost inseparable twins to make up an evening's performance. Puccini had for

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Gianni Schicchi costume design by Jean Pierre Ponnelle.



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Hunter—continued from p. 21

many years envisioned a group of three one-act operas of widely differing subjects to be performed consecutively in a single evening.

He conceived the idea of selecting three subjects from Dante's *Divina Commedia* bearing the symbolic titles of "Inferno," "Purgatorio," and "Paradiso." But the plan was short-lived. He went to Paris to see a play entitled *La Houppelande* (The Cloak). He was

so impressed with the play that he saw it as the first opera of his *trittico*. It contained all the elements of *verismo*—love, hate, brutality and death. Each of these concerned Puccini, and certainly most of these elements can be seen in some way in Puccini's own personality. He loved heartily; sometimes he hated passionately, and though rarely brutal, he did have an almost morbid preoccupation with

continued on p. 24

Il Tabarro set design by Paolo Bregni.



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Hunter—continued from p. 22

death. To bring forth *Il Tabarro* Puccini was destined to labor long and painfully, for, after his first feverish efforts, he was beset with doubts as to the wisdom of the whole venture. This was largely because of the advice given him some years earlier by his late friend and trusted advisor Giulio Ricordi against just such a venture. Also, he was plagued by the antipathy of Giulio's son and successor Tito Ri-

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Gianni Schicchi costume design by Jean Pierre Ponnelle.

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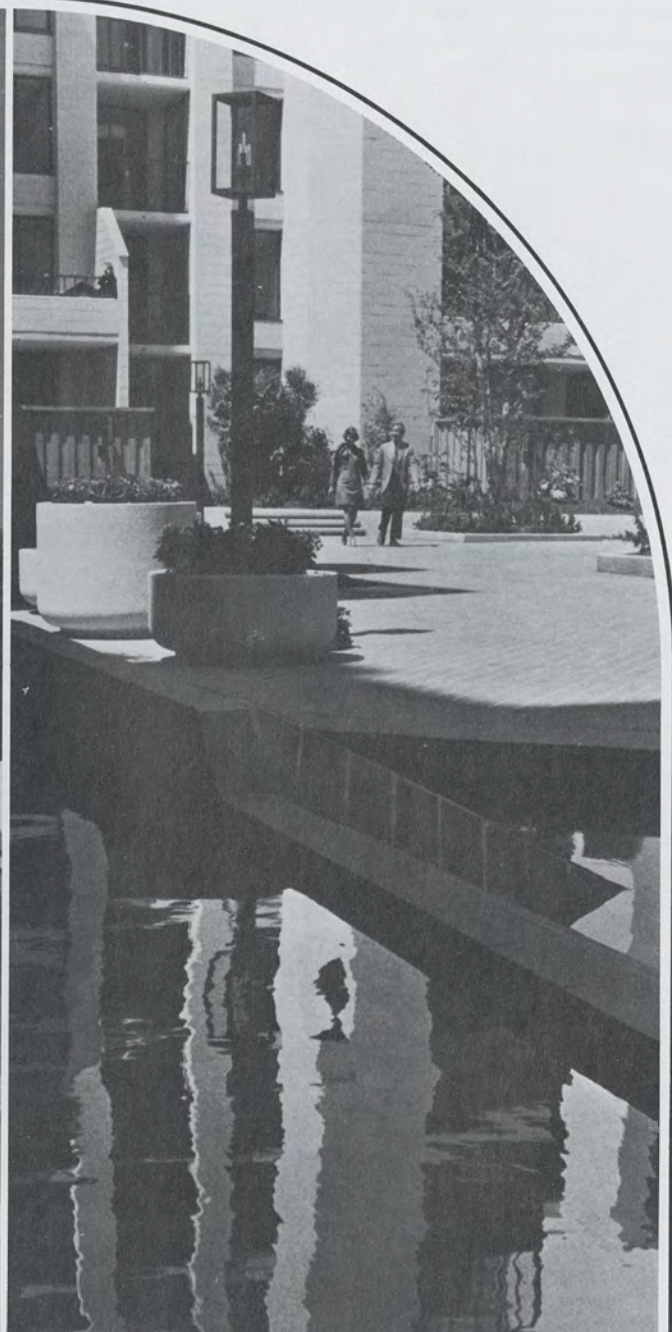
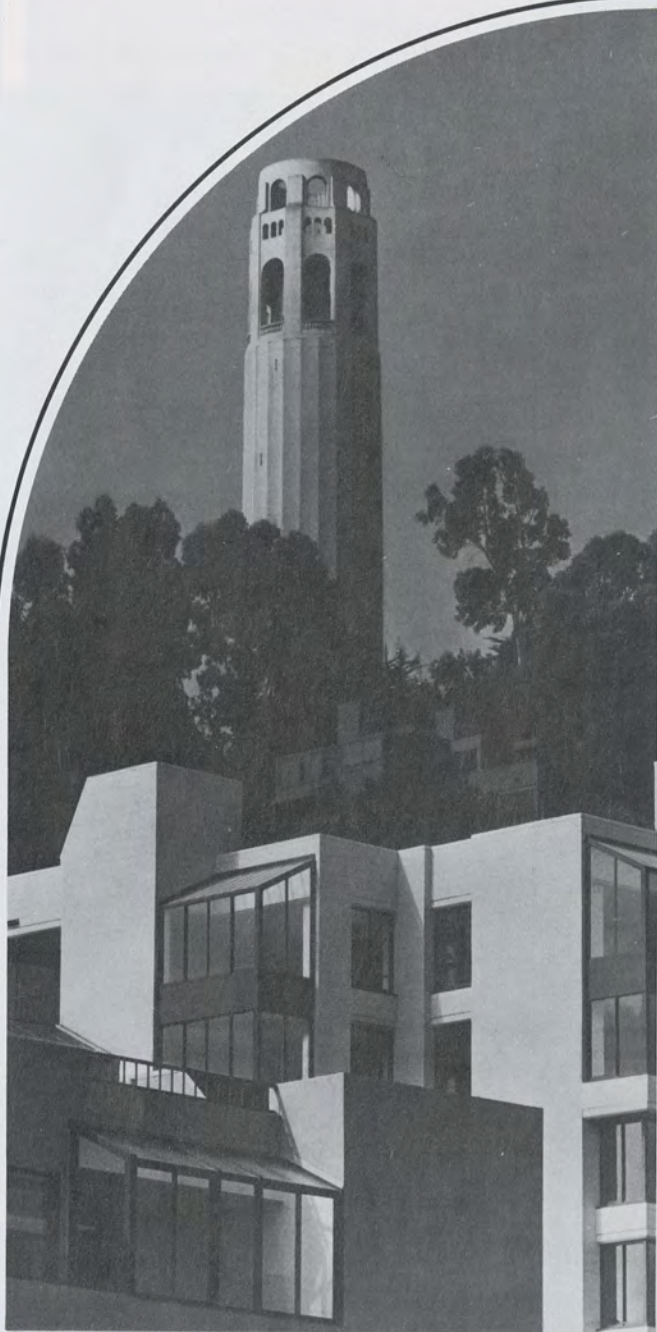
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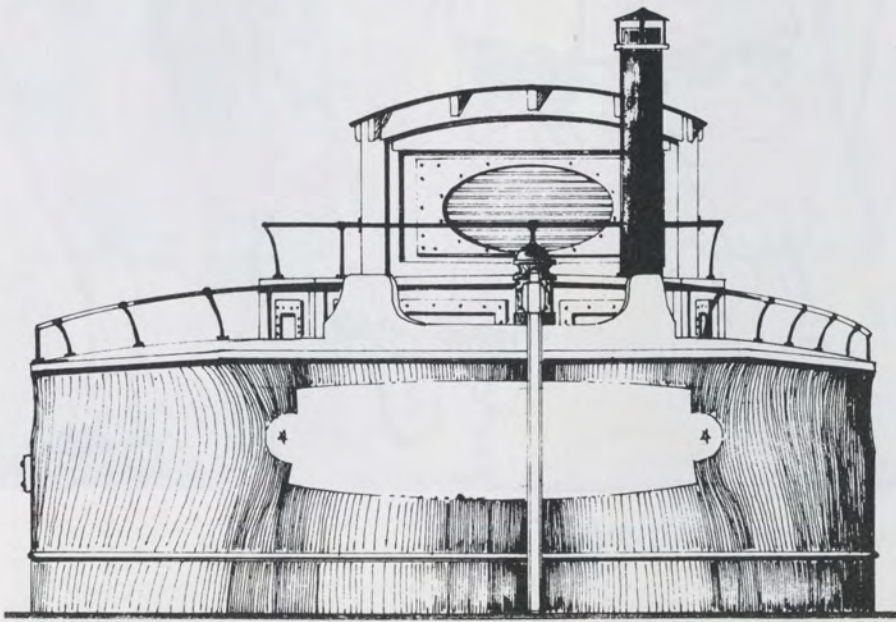
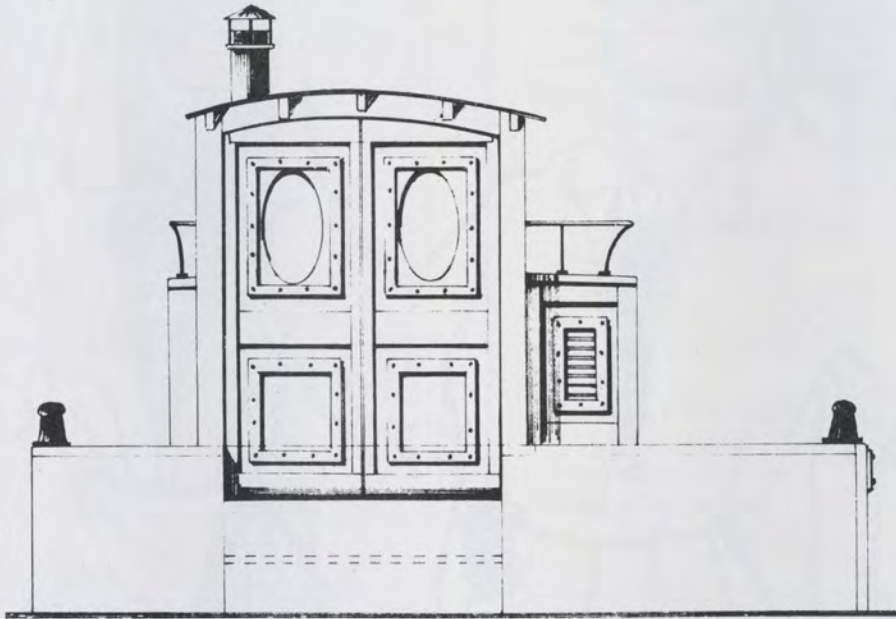
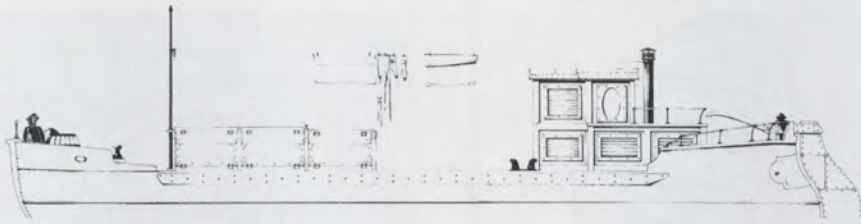
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cordi. Tito, who was motivated by jealousy because of his father's devotion to Puccini, grew antagonistic toward him. However, he was bound by contractual obligations; so he was forced to bear with Puccini's apparent non-productivity. Puccini worked on his *trittico* as the young Ricordi exerted pressure on Puccini to produce another full length opera. Finally, Puccini was obliged to divert his attention

from his *trittico* to compose the full length opera *La Rondine* (The Swallow), which is considered more an operetta than an opera in the Puccini tradition. *La Rondine* lacked the sparkle necessary to succeed as a true musical comedy. Through the entire endeavor—composition and production—Puccini was miserably unhappy. He referred to the opera as "an obscene piece of trash." He cursed

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Il Tabarro set design by Paolo Bregni.



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Hunter—continued from p. 27

the moment he signed the contract and wished that he had not written an opera that "had not come off, and which was bad Lehar!" The failure of *La Rondine* very nearly caused a rift between Puccini and the publishing house of Ricordi, often referred to as the "house that Puccini built."

After a hiatus of two years he returned to work on his tritico, though *Il Tabarro* was still unfinished and he had

not found suitable libretti to complete the project. He had strong hopes that Giuseppe Adami would be able to come forward with the two missing subjects. Adami was a very capable young writer who had come to Puccini's rescue in the earlier stages of *Tabarro* when two other older men had proved inadequate to the task, and he had successfully seen him through *La Rondine*. Unfortunately,

Gianni Schicchi costume design by Jean Pierre Ponnelle.



Adami was unable to find subjects to Puccini's liking, but another playwright Gioacchino Forzano one day paid Puccini a visit and presented to him two one-act libretti with which he was delighted, *Suor Angelica* and *Gianni Schicchi*. In addition to being excellent stories and presenting great contrasts to *Tabarro* and to each other, they fit remarkably well into Puccini's original scheme for the *trittico*, and

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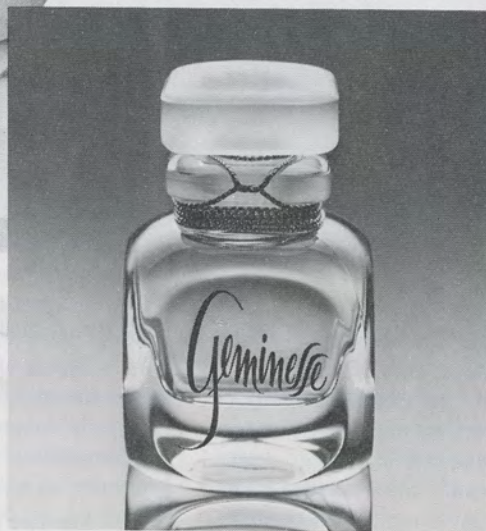
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the last, *Gianni Schicchi*, was actually taken from the works of Dante.

Perhaps one of the most notable things about the writing of these two subjects was the speed with which Puccini worked. It was quite usual for him to spend three or four years on a major work. Never had he written so quickly; never had he thrown himself so wholeheartedly into research. *Sister Angelica*, his special passion, had a theme far removed from anything he had done previously. Set in a nunnery, it had a cast made up entirely of women. It had deeply mystical and spiritual undertones which seemed to reveal a facet of Puccini's personality which had been repressed previously. He was fortunate in having a sister who was the Mother Superior in a nearby mountain convent. Thus, he made frequent visits in order to observe at first hand the customs and attitudes of the nuns. He frequently played for them, and they became deeply interested in this new opera by the great Puccini. His heroine had borne a child out of wedlock and had become a nun in penance for her sinful act. Upon learning of the death of her young child, she mixes a poisonous potion from the herbs in the convent garden, then she takes her own life. Such an action was, of course, strongly objectionable to the church, and, because Puccini had developed such a strong rapport with the nuns, it took a long time for him to gain the courage to tell them of this climax to the story. He was fearful that they would become resentful and withdraw their support from the entire project. Finally, when he did reveal the outcome of the story and play the music for them, he was overcome with emotion as he observed many of the good sisters wiping tears from their eyes and saying, "Surely the Lord has forgiven her sins." He considered it to be among his greatest compositions, and it was certainly his favorite of the three portions of the *trittico*, but it was not destined to receive comparable approval from the public.

continued on p. 78



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made possible by a grant to Lyric Opera by the Gramma Fisher Foundation in commemoration of Lyric's 20th anniversary. For the fifth 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.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Walter M. Baird". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "W" and "B".

WALTER M. BAIRD
President, San Francisco Opera Association

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). Our production of "Simon Boccanegra" comes to us from Lyric Opera of Chicago, where it was originally produced in 1974. The production was

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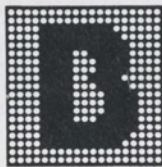
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San Francisco has achieved over the years a much-envied reputation as one of the foremost "opera towns" in the world. Because of the San Francisco Opera family, in excess of 250 presentations of opera are offered in our city annually on six different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



Photo: Ron Scherl

A handwritten signature in cursive script, which reads "J. Herbert Adler".

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<i>Wig and Makeup Department</i>	Richard Stead, Larry Cannon, Paul Alba, Judith Disbrow, Rex Rogers
<i>Rehearsal Department</i>	Susan Dahlin**, Jefferson Garrett*, Judith O'Dell*
<i>Super Department</i>	Thomas E. Curran, III
<i>Scenic Construction</i>	Pierre Cayard
<i>Scenic Artist</i>	Norman Rizzi
<i>Master Carpenter</i>	Michael Kane
<i>Master Electrician</i>	George Pantages
<i>Master of Properties</i>	Ivan J. Van Perre
<i>Broadcast Coordinator</i>	Marilyn Mercur
<i>Official Photographers</i>	Carolyn Mason Jones, Greg Peterson, Ron Scherl
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**American Opera debut

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Zdzislawa Donat**
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Maureen Forrester
Edna Garabedian
Heather Harper*
Barbara Hendricks*
Nina Hinson*
Rita Hunter*

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

CHORUS

Women

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

BALLET

Women

Laura Brown
Regina West Brown
Judanna Lynn
Marilyn Mather

Josella Ligi**
Carol Malone
Marita Napier
Elena Obratsova*
Donna Petersen
Claudette Peterson*
Irem Poventud*
Eva Randova
Regina Resnik
Linda Roark*
Brenda Roberts*

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

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 Cherven
Joseph Ciampi
Ken Criste
Robert Delany
John Del Carlo
Dale Emde
John Glenister
Ross Halper
William Hinshaw
Kenneth Hybloom

Juliana Sakowsky
Katherine Warner
Deirdre Wilson

Renata Scotto
Pamela South*
Joan Sutherland
Kiri Te Kanawa
Anita Terzian**
Tatiana Troyanos*
Shirley Verrett
Galina Vishnevskaya*
Beverly Wolff*

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

*San Francisco opera debut
**American opera debut

Orchestra

1ST VIOLIN

Peter Schaffer *Concertmaster*
William E. Pynchon
Ferdinand M. Claudio
Ervin Mautner
Silvio Claudio
Ezequiel Amador
Mafalda Guaraldi
George Nagata
Everett O'Bannon
Ernest Michaelian
Harry Moulin
Michael Sand

2ND VIOLIN

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

VIOLA

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

CELLO

David Kadarauch *Principal*
Rolf Storseth
Tadeusz Kadzielawa
Sally Kell
Helen Stross
Judiyaba

BASS

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

FLUTE

Walter Subke *Principal*
Lloyd Gowen
Gary Gray

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Lloyd Gowen
Gary Gray

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Raymond Duste
Deborah Henry

ENGLISH HORN

Raymond Duste

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Donald Carroll
David Breeden

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Donald Carroll

BASSOON

Walter Green *Principal*
Jerry Dagg
Robin Elliott

FRENCH HORN

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

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Donald Reinberg *Principal*
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II TROVATORE

Verdi

IN ITALIAN

Sutherland, Obratsova*//Verrett,
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: Rennett

Designer: Maximowna*

Chorus Director: Jones

Saturday Sept 13 8PM

Tuesday Sept 16 8PM

Friday Sept 19 8PM

Wednesday Sept 24 8PM

Sunday Sept 28 2PM

New production sponsored in part

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DER FLIEGENDE HOLLANDER

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

Deutekom//Hunter*, Troyanos,
Felyt/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, Petersen/Wixell, Merighi,
Talvela, Monk, Courtney, Burgess

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: London

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

II TABARRO

Puccini
IN ITALIAN

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

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

New Production made possible by a
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GIANNI SCHICCHI

Puccini
IN ITALIAN

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

Conductor: Shapirra
Stage Director: Ponnelle
Designer: Ponnelle

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

THE MAGIC FLUTE

Mozart
IN ENGLISH

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

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

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

**American Opera debut
*San Francisco Opera debut

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October 31
NORMA
November 7
WERTHER
November 14
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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.

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

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Curtain 8:00 P.M.

San Jose—Leave 5:45
Los Gatos—Leave 6:05
Peninsula—Leave 6:30

SUNDAY DEPARTURE TIME/
Curtain 2:00 P.M.

San Jose only—Leave 11:45 A.M.

NAPA COMMUNITY COLLEGE LECTURE SERIES

For the third year Napa Community College is offering a 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.

November 6
ANDREA CHENIER

November 13
IL TABARRO/GIANNI SCHICCHI

November 20
THE MAGIC FLUTE

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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.

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November 10
IL TABARRO/GIANNI SCHICCHI

November 17
THE MAGIC FLUTE

JUNIOR LEAGUE OPERA PREVIEWS

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

November 11
IL TABARRO/GIANNI SCHICCHI

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1975 - 1976 Season
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Repertoire

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The Marriage of Figaro
new production
Trouble in Tahiti

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

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KFAC/AM 1330/FM 92.3 Los Angeles

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 SCHICCHI*

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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IL TABARRO

(IN ITALIAN)

Opera in one act by GIACOMO PUCCINI

Libretto by GIUSEPPE ADAMI

Based on DIDIER GOLD'S "La Houppelande"

(by arrangement with Belwin Mills Publishing Corp., sole U.S. agent for Ricordi & Co., Milan, publisher and copyright owner)

Conductor
ELYAKUM SHAPIRRA

Stage Director
PATRICK LIBBY

Designer
PAOLO BREGNI

Chorus Director
ROBERT JONES

Musical Preparation
PHILIP EISENBERG

Lighting Designer
ROBERT BRAND

Scenic Artist
KENNETH MacCLELLAND

Costumers
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TIME AND PLACE:

CAST

(in order of appearance)

<i>Giorgetta</i>	BRENDA ROBERTS*
<i>Michele</i>	GUILLERMO SARABIA
<i>Luigi</i>	ROBLETO MEROLLA
<i>Il Tinca</i>	RAYMOND MANTON
<i>Il Talpa</i>	FEDERICO DAVIÀ
<i>Song Vendor</i>	JOSEPH FRANK
<i>Two Lovers</i>	PAMELA SOUTH WILLIAM WAHMAN
<i>La Frugola</i>	FEDORA BARBIERI

*An organ grinder, a harp player,
longshoremen, midinettes*

*San Francisco Opera debut

BEGINNING OF THE CENTURY;
BANKS OF THE SEINE

*First performance: Metropolitan Opera, New York,
December 14, 1918*

First San Francisco Opera performance: September 29, 1923

WEDNESDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 12, 1975 AT 8:00
SATURDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 15, 1975 AT 8:00
TUESDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 18, 1975 AT 8:00
SUNDAY AFTERNOON, NOVEMBER 23, 1975 AT 2:00
FRIDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 28, 1975 AT 8:00 (Broadcast)

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*

Il Tabarro will last approximately one hour

SYNOPSIS / IL TABARRO

A bend of the river Seine, where Michele's barge is lying at anchor. It is sunset, and as the curtain rises Michele, the skipper, is seen sitting on the dock, admiring the beauty of the hour. Soon Giorgetta emerges from the cabin and asks her husband whether he is not weary of gazing at the bright sunset. She then suggests that, since the stevedores have worked so hard all day, they might be refreshed with a glass of wine. Michele readily agrees. He looks at his wife searchingly, but, when he attempts to kiss her, she turns away. Glowering darkly, he goes down into the hold.

One by one the stevedores come up on deck. They complain bitterly about the heat and the work they have been doing, but the instant Giorgetta appears with the wine jug, their mood improves. An organ-grinder passes along the wharf, adding the sound of his music to the occasion. Tinca, one of the stevedores, and Giorgetta begin a light-hearted dance, but, although he makes a vigorous effort, the man cannot keep step with the sprightly girl. Before long, Luigi, another longshoreman, shoves Tinca aside, takes Giorgetta in his arms, and, from the way the two dance together, it is obvious that they are lovers.

When Michele emerges from the hold, the merriment ceases, and Giorgetta quickly frees herself from Luigi's embrace. The longshoremen go back to their work, leaving Michele and Giorgetta alone on the deck. He is morose and sullen, and Giorgetta fears that he may suspect that she has a lover.

Frugola, a dirty, ragged woman, the wife of Talpa, comes up the gangplank with a large bundle of rubbish that she has scavenged from the alleys of Paris. Michele leaves the two women alone, and Frugola proceeds to show Giorgetta the prizes of her sordid collection—a comb, old feathers, a silk scarf, a battered bracelet. Soon they are joined by Luigi, Talpa, and the other stevedores. Luigi is in a morose mood, and complains bitterly about his lot in life. His despondency affects Giorgetta, and she expresses a longing to return to the gay city where she had spent her childhood. Luigi had grown up in the same district of Paris as had Giorgetta, and the two passionately sing of their desire to return to the kind of life they had both known there.

Talpa is impatient for his dinner, and he and Frugola take their leave. The two lovers are now alone, and Luigi rushes to Giorgetta and takes her in his arms. She, how-

ever, fearful that Michele may come out on deck at any moment, pushes him away. She warns Luigi that if her husband found out about their clandestine meetings, he might kill them both. Luigi dejectedly replies that he would prefer death to constant separation.

The two quickly draw apart as Michele appears. "What, you still here?" he inquires of Luigi. The stevedore replies that he had lingered behind only to ask Michele if he might leave the ship at Rouen. Michele warns him that it would be foolish to leave, for he could find no work at Rouen. Then he returns to his cabin. Giorgetta begs Luigi to change his mind and not to leave the ship. He tells her that he cannot bear any longer sharing her with another man. They embrace passionately, and agree to meet in an hour. She will light a match as a signal.

Michele now comes out to join his wife on deck. She is obviously on edge, and he asks solicitously what ails her. Then, drawing close to her, and with anguish in his voice, he begs to know why she cannot love him. He attempts to draw her into his arms and to evoke in her the memory of their once happy days together. But Giorgetta puts him off and freezes.

Michele stands rigidly still and gazes moodily into the river. He takes his pipe from his pocket and lights it. As the match flares, Luigi, who has been waiting anxiously for Giorgetta's signal, mistakenly takes the light to be the predetermined signal and appears on the barge. Recognizing him, Michele catches him by the throat and savagely demands to know why Luigi has returned—to seek his mistress? Luigi tries to get at his knife, but Michele overpowers him, and violently demands that he confess that he loves Giorgetta. As he tightens his hold on the stevedore's throat, Luigi confesses. Michele chokes him to death.

Giorgetta appears. Hastily Michele throws his cloak over the dead man's body. Giorgetta has heard the sounds of the struggle, but, seeing her husband seated at the tiller alone, she is reassured. Then, attempting to dispel his evident distrust of her, she sits close to him and begs him to forgive her for having refused his caresses. She coquettishly asks whether he does not want to hold her close to him. Savagely he replies that he does—he wants her close under his cloak. He rises, and Luigi's body falls at Giorgetta's feet. She draws back in horror. Michele rushes at her and violently thrusts her upon her lover.

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GIANNI SCHICCHI

(IN ITALIAN)

Opera in one act by GIACOMO PUCCINI

Libretto by GIOVACCHINO FORZANO

(by arrangement with Belwin Mills Publishing Corp., sole U.S. agent
for G. Ricordi & Co., Milan, publisher and copyright owner)

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ELYAKUM SHAPIRRA

Production Designed and Directed by
JEAN PIERRE PONNELLE

Musical Preparation
PHILIP EISENBERG

Lighting Designer
ROBERT BRAND

Costumers
RAY DIFFEN STAGE CLOTHES

CAST

(in order of appearance)

<i>Zita</i>	FEDORA BARBIERI
<i>Rinuccio</i>	EDOARDO GIMENEZ*
<i>Gherardo</i>	JOHN DUYKERS
<i>Nella</i>	PAMELA SOUTH
<i>Gherardino</i>	ROBERT KRUZNER (Nov. 12, 18, 28) DOUGLAS DOPPELT (Nov. 15, 23)
<i>Betto</i>	PETER STRUMMER
<i>Simone</i>	FEDERICO DAVIÀ
<i>Marco</i>	JAMES HOOPER
<i>La Ciesca</i>	JANICE FELTY
<i>Gianni Schicchi</i>	DONALD GRAMM*
<i>Lauretta</i>	IREM POVENTUD*
<i>Spinelloccio</i>	WILLIAM DANSBY
<i>Amantio di Nicolao</i>	JOHN TROUT*
<i>Pinellino</i>	JAMES COURTNEY
<i>Guccio</i>	COLIN HARVEY

*San Francisco Opera debut

TIME AND PLACE: 1299; THE BEDCHAMBER OF
BUOSO DONATI IN FLORENCE, ITALY

*First performance: Metropolitan Opera, New York,
December 14, 1918*

First San Francisco Opera performance: September 29, 1923

WEDNESDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 12, 1975
SATURDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 15, 1975
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Gianni Schicchi will last approximately one hour

SYNOPSIS / GIANNI SCHICCHI

The bedroom of Buoso Donati's home in Florence. The rich Donati is ill and his relatives are anxiously awaiting his demise. Upon his death, their exaggerated grief changes to anger when they hear the rumor that Donati has left everything to the church. Impatiently, they begin to search the room for Donati's will. The young Rinuccio finds it but will not allow the others to read it until he has their permission to marry Lauretta, the daughter of Gianni Schicchi. They assure him that he may wed anyone he chooses, and anxiously unroll the will. All are doomed to bitter disappointment, for they discover the rumor is true and Donati has indeed left his entire fortune to a monastery. Rinuccio finally manages to quiet the agitated group with the suggestion that there is one man in Florence who will be able to help them—the talented Gianni Schicchi. He is certainly the only man clever enough to suggest some kind of trick for nullifying the will. At first the relatives scorn his suggestion, saying Schicchi is from the country, and they think that the young man is merely trying to further his romance with Schicchi's daughter. But Rinuccio vigorously defends the Tuscan and, in the aria "Firenze è come un albero fiorito," he declares that a man of Schicchi's talents is a credit to the wonderful city of Florence.

Now Schicchi himself arrives, accompanied by his daughter. The problem is put before him and he is also told that Rinuccio now cannot marry the daughter of a nobody. He then refuses to have any part in the plan and expresses his contempt for the rapacious relatives. Rinuccio implores him to help and Lauretta adds her entreaties ("O mio babbino caro"). Schicchi finally agrees and before long comes up with an idea: since no one knows as yet that Donati is dead, he himself will imper-

sonate the old man and dictate a new will ("Si corre dal notaio"). They are interrupted in their plan by the arrival of the doctor. Hiding from view, Schicchi impersonates Donati's voice, saying he is better but resting and to return later. Having successfully fooled the doctor, Schicchi is then dressed in Donati's night clothes and climbs into his bed, warning the relatives as he does so that if anyone should find out about the deception, they will all suffer severe punishment. The penalty for conniving at the falsification of a will is extremely harsh, he tells them. "Your hand is cut off, and, even worse, you are banished from beautiful Florence" ("Prima un avvertimento!").

A notary is summoned and while awaiting his arrival, the relatives arrange the distribution of Donati's property, each privately promising to pay Schicchi if he will give them the best—the house, the mule and the saw mills. Now the notary, accompanied by two witnesses, arrives. Schicchi proceeds to dictate the will. He makes a few trifling bequests to the relatives—but when it comes to the best of the property, he leaves all of it to himself! The relatives are furious but, remembering the penalty that will be inflicted on them if they should betray Schicchi, they can do nothing. As soon as the notary leaves, the relatives attack Schicchi, attempting to take as much as possible as Schicchi drives them from the house, which is now his. Rinuccio and Lauretta, however, remain. Lauretta is now the daughter of a rich man, and the two lovers can get married. As they sing happily of their love ("Laurettamia"), Schicchi turns to the audience and tells them that for his trickery the great Dante has consigned him to Hell. But if they, the audience, have enjoyed themselves, would they kindly, by their applause, return the verdict of Not guilty?

“Il Tabarro”

by GEORGE R. MAREK

Puccini began this opera before the other two, the libretto being furnished him by Giuseppe Adami, who had previously supplied the text of *La Rondine* and was to be one of the co-authors of *Turandot*. All Adami had to do was to simplify, adapt, and translate from the French another one-act play, Didier Gold's *La Houppelande*. *The Cloak* is what is known in Paris as a *piece noire*. It is gloomy, deals with the lives of lowly people in a realistic and grimey manner, and is obviously influenced by Zola. It is not, and neither is the opera, a bravura shocker of the Grand Guignol type, though *Il Tabarro* has been so classified.

The situation is familiar enough, the old, old triangle, with each character standing uncertainly at one of the three points, and each wishing to be where he is not. The husband, Michele, broods over the loss of the love of his wife. Giorgetta, a woman half Michele's age, wants nothing but to get away from him to give herself completely to her lover, Luigi, a stevedore, who is younger than she and whose attraction to her is purely a sexual one. He suffers by the deceit imposed on him and longs to free himself of the oppressive infatuation. There is not much to interest us in this triangle drawn with heavy lines, in this tension the outcome of which is easily foreseeable. Yet *Il Tabarro* is a fascinating work, too little appreciated, and of course it derives its power from the music. In one sense it is un-Puccinian music, because the composer gives us here, for the first and last time, what I might call "landscape music." Puccini spends much time in conjuring up a background, in evoking the scene in which the tragedy is to be enacted: the Seine, the dank air permeating minds and hearts, the slow flow of the river, the barge lying inert while life passes by, dusk, night, the weary monotony of physical labor,

day after day, from which there is no surcease.

The opera seems to fall into two parts. Almost one half of it is devoted to this mood painting of locale and atmosphere. The orchestra plays a leading part, though incidental snatches of melody are sung by the bargeman and by La Frugola, the ragpicker. We hear her hurried little song as well as a tune played on a hurdy-gurdy, an effect reminiscent of Stravinsky's *Petrouchka*. But it is not Stravinsky who is the godfather of *Il Tabarro*, it is Debussy. It is certain that Puccini, at the time he was composing the opera, was studying the music of Debussy and was deeply impressed by it. The sound of *La Cathédrale engloutie* is discernible.

At the moment, however, when the workers take their departure and the domestic drama begins, the style of the music changes and we hear the work of the composer of *Tosca*, a man of the theater who knew how to twist our nerves taut. There is not a bar wasted. The coming of the tragedy proceeds at a precisely measured pace which becomes faster and grimmer as we approach the denouement. Michele's monologue, leading up to the murder, is marvelous music drama. At the last Puccini hammers home the revelation of Michele's deed in one brief but overwhelming blow. Thinking back on the opera we realize that it contains no "villains," only confused, passionate, and pitiable human beings. Thus *Il Tabarro* stands high above the average products of the *verismo* school. A passion is torn to tatters, but unlike the proceedings in the lesser works of a Mascagni, a Leoncavallo, or a Ponchielli, Puccini does not dip those tatters into dyes of a tawdry hue.

Mr. Marek is the author of many books, including biographies of Puccini, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Strauss and Toscanini.

“Gianni Schicchi”

by GEORGE R. MAREK

Gianni Schicchi is first cousin to Mosca of Jonson's *Volpone*, second cousin to Till Eulenspiegel, a distant relative of Baron Münchhausen, and no stranger to Harlequin of the Italian comedy. He is the rake who thumbs his nose at respectable people, the scapegrace who cuts a snippet off the law, the reprobate who throws dust into the eyes of authority. He is what we would all like to be sometime, somehow: that is suggested by the fact that somebody like him pops up in the literature of all nations and at diverse periods. In as unlikely a place as Scotland, one finds an old ballad, “The Abbot of Dri-mock,” whose “hero” performs a fraud exactly like the one Gianni invents on the spur of the moment.

Gianni Schicchi actually lived; Dante knew his story—though to the poet his hanky-panky was no laughing matter—and made him immortal by consigning him to the eighteenth circle of the *Inferno*, the region which is peopled by the “tricksters of words, persons, and coins.” Legend has it that in using the yarn the great poet was prompted by small revenge: Dante's wife was a Donati, the family on which Gianni exercises his deceit. Dante did not like the Donatis, any more than he liked the peasant class from which Schicchi springs. The poet belonged to the Guelph family and was proud of the Florentine blue blood which coursed through his veins.

Puccini was of course familiar with the *Divine Comedy* and aware of what the poet had intended. He wanted no heavy cerebation to weigh down what he hoped would turn out a little work of pure fun; yet there remain in the opera a few intimations of social schism, such as the old aristocrats acting as if they smelled a bad smell when Schicchi's name is mentioned, while young Rinuccio opposes the conservatives and sings the hymn in praise of Florence and its “new race.”

Whatever be the social implications which Dante had in mind and Puccini let stand—and which in point of fact pass unremarked in the course of a performance—the story is simple enough, the opera closely following the tale Dante tells. Virgil, Dante's guide, explains that in order to win a prize mare called “The Queen of the Stable,” Gianni Schicchi impersonated the dead Buoso Donati and “made a will in legal form, and forged it in his name.”

Dante, profoundly exploring man's capacity for good and evil, offered no lighthearted apology for Schicchi. On the contrary, he describes him as grimly as possible: he is a “hellhound” rushing aimlessly to and fro and tearing at whatever he sees.

To Puccini, or rather to his new playwright, Gioacchino Forzano, with whom the composer formed an alliance during the years of World War I, Schicchi was a proper figure for comedy. Forzano proposed the idea and Puccini was at once fire and flame for it. The composer had been through a bad period, during which the jealousy of his wife had caused an innocent servant girl to commit suicide and he had cringed under the ensuing scandal. Not even the success of *The Girl of the Golden West* at the Metropolitan had cheered him sufficiently to free him from what he called his Tuscan melancholy. He was prone to these attacks of depression, when he thought himself “old” and “dried-out” and when he rejected libretto after libretto in uncertainty. But now he felt an immediate lift of spirits and such conviction of being right as he had not experienced in years. He was enthusiastic not only about the comic one-act opera but about

the whole plan of the *Trittico*, *Il Tabarro*, *Suor Angelica*, and *Gianni Schicchi*, a three-branched entertainment which offered him the possibility of composing music of varied hues and of contrasting moods. And he had for so long wished to create “Something light” that he now urged Forzano to drop everything and get on with *Schicchi*. He felt “the need to jest.” The evidence suggests that while he kept insisting as long as he lived that the *Trittico* ought to be performed as a unit, he felt a special love for *Schicchi*. It was to remain his only essay in comic opera, undertaken when he was nearly sixty.

The shaping of the libretto, which usually caused Puccini much aggravation—he fussed over every word—was easily enough accomplished this time. Forzano knew his business, and Puccini, possessing a libretto in which he believed with his heart and soul, was able to compose the music joyously and quickly—again an exception to his usual practice.

Small as it is, and unambitious in delving into psychological depths, *Gianni Schicchi* is an altogether delightful work and has been so appreciated ever since it was first performed. It is tightly constructed, and swift in movement. The music perfectly expresses the action and limns the characters superbly. It is witty music—that opening lament of the hypocritical relatives is a master-stroke of irony—it is melodious music, as sunny as the sun of Florence. Nothing in it is superfluous or undramatic, not even Lauretta's aria, “*Oh mio babbino caro*,” for she is trying to persuade her father to help out, and it is not Puccini's fault that the aria has been done to death by aspiring sopranos, who sing it as frequently as candidates for a part in a musical comedy give forth “I could have Danced all Night.”

The Tryptich was performed for the first time at the Metropolitan on December 14, 1918. (It is amusing to note that several Italian biographies blithely ignore this date and state that the work was first given in Rome.) De Luca was Gianni Schicchi, and, as I mentioned, the opera was an immediate success. Henry Krehbiel, writing in the *New York Tribune*, reported:

An invigorating breeze blew through the theater when the curtain rose on *Gianni Schicchi*. . . . This comedy is so uproariously funny, the music so full of life, humor, and ingenious devices, that though there is less singing than in the preceding pieces, it was received with uproarious delight. . . .

The news was not an unmitigated joy to the composer. He worried more over the fact that two-thirds of the trio had not pleased than that one had. And he therefore determined that the Rome premiere would have to be especially fine. He chose the cast and supervised the rehearsals himself. The tenor parts in *Gianni Schicchi* and *Il Tabarro* were sung by one Eduardo di Giovanni, who evinced, according to the *Corriere d'Italia*, “uncommon acting and vocal ability” and sang the hymn to Florence “in a magic manner.” The tenor is better known to us as Edward Johnson, and he remembered, when I spoke to him, Puccini's extraordinary nervousness on that evening. But what had happened in New York happened in Rome: it was that imposter in the bed whom the audience took to their hearts.

Mr. Marek is the author of many books, including biographies of Puccini, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Strauss and Toscanini.

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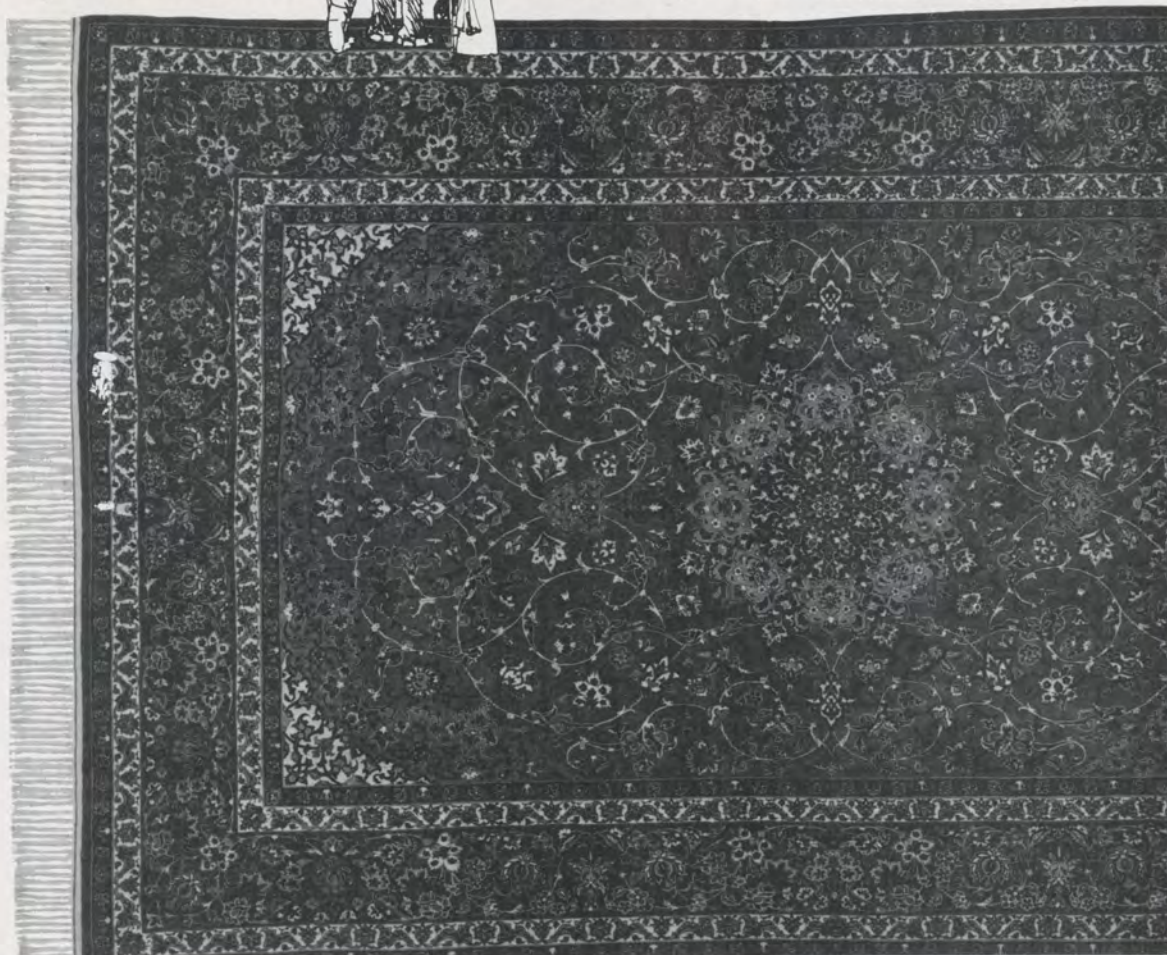


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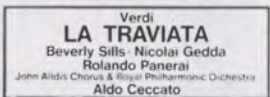


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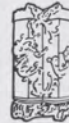


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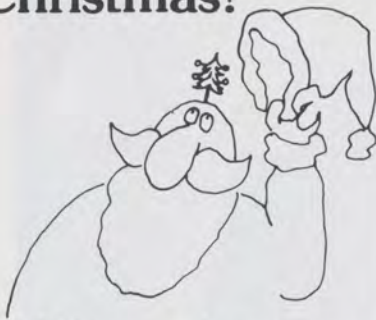
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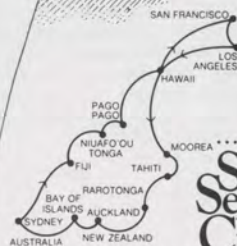
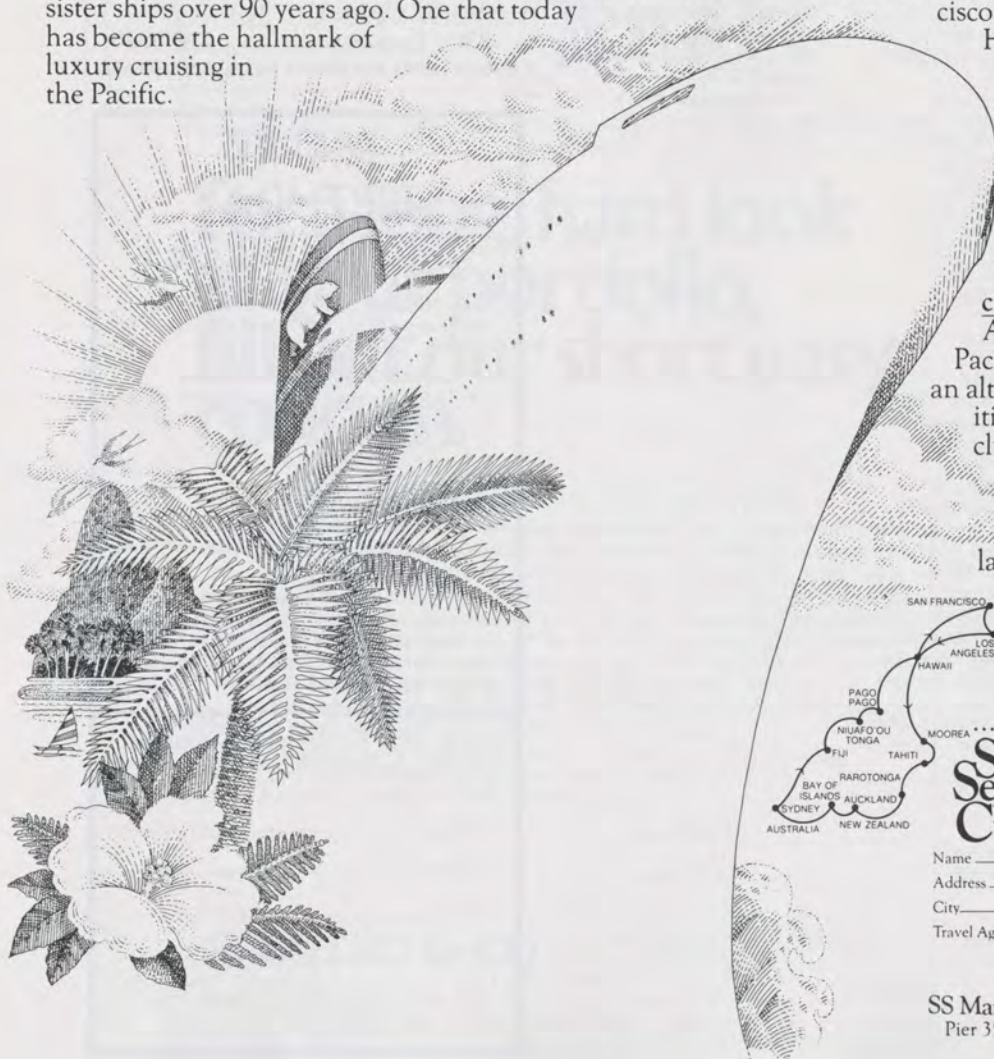
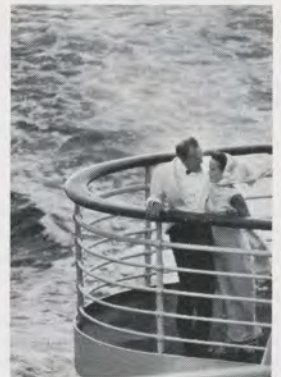
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At all Opera performances, an attendant will be stationed at the taxi entrance of the Opera House, and persons wishing a taxi after the performance are requested to so advise the attendant upon their arrival. Shortly after the start of the performance,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

Opera Museum

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

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

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

A special feature in the Opera Museum is a display of dolls created by Mr. Mark Farmer. Mr. Farmer independently designed these miniature representations of key female protagonists in operas included in the San Francisco Opera 1975 repertoire and has generously loaned them to the Museum.

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



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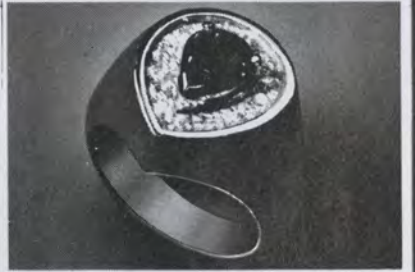


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FEDORA BARBIERI

Fedora Barbieri, the internationally acclaimed mezzo soprano, was last heard in this house 23 years ago when she made her San Francisco Opera debut singing Azucena in *Il Trovatore*, Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, and Amneris in *Aida*. Born in Trieste, Miss Barbieri made her first public appearance in the Saint Justus Cathedral while she was still studying at the Conservatory. In June, 1940 she won a scholarship to the Florence Lyrical Training School, and only four months later, when she was not yet 20, achieved her first operatic triumph as Azucena at the Florence Municipal Theatre. In subsequent years she performed at Covent Garden (*La Cenerentola*, 1941) La Scala (Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, 1941, and *Telemachus*, 1943) and on a now classic recording of *Un Ballo in Maschera* with Gigli, Caniglia and Bechi (1943). Following the war, Miss Barbieri achieved her greatest successes around the world: Buenos Aires (Amneris, 1947), Covent Garden (Quickly, 1950), Metropolitan Opera (Eboli, 1950), Naples (Amneris, 1955), and the Verona Arena (1955). Today, 35 years after her early debut, Miss Barbieri remains unflagging in the pursuit of her career. Last season she was cheered in the opera houses of Monte Carlo, Rome, Barcelona and Turin, and she recorded another complete opera for EMI in London. During 1975 the mezzo will be heard at the Metropolitan Opera, on the Met's tour, and at the Caracas (Venezuela) International Festival. At San Francisco Opera she portrays Frugola in *Il Tabarro* and La Vecchia in *Gianni Schicchi*.



JANICE FELTY

Janice Felty, a recipient of San Francisco Opera's Kurt Herbert Adler Award, made her debut here last season, performing as a Flower Maiden in *Parsifal*, the Slave in *Salome* and as Kate Pinkerton in the November subscription performances of *Madama Butterfly*. During Western Opera Theater's 1975 season, she was heard as Nicklausse in *The Tales of Hoffmann*, Rosina in *The Barber of Seville* and Vivian in *What Price Confidence*. A participant in the 1974 Merola Opera Program, the young mezzo also sang Rosina that year for Merola's annual performance at the Sigmund Stern Grove Midsummer Music Festival. She was the winner of the James H. Schwabacher Memorial Award at the 1974 San Francisco Opera Auditions Grand Finals. The previous year she sang Isolier in Rossini's *Le Comte Ory* in the Merola Opera Program's production at the Paul Masson Mountain Winery in Saratoga. Miss Felty is also remembered for her portrayals of Hansel in Western Opera Theater's production of *Hansel and Gretel* in 1973 and Nerillo in Spring Opera Theater's *L'Ormino* (1974). She is a 1974 Metropolitan Opera Regional Auditions winner as well as a recipient of the 1973 San Francisco Opera Auditions' Florence Bruce Award. During the 1975 San Francisco Opera season she portrays Clotilde in *Norma*, Kätchen in *Werther*, La Ciesca in *Gianni Schicchi* and the Second Lady in *The Magic Flute*.



IREM POVENTUD

Irem Poventud, a highly regarded soprano from Puerto Rico, appears for the first time at San Francisco Opera singing the role of Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi*. A cum laude bachelor of arts graduate in Puerto Rico, she had her basic music education there and later pursued vocal training in New York and Barcelona. The artist has given numerous solo concert performances throughout North and South America and Europe, receiving critical raves for her appearances in Miami, Mexico, Spain, Caracas, Puerto Rico and at New York's Lincoln Center. Her extensive operatic experience in her native country has included performances as Micaëla in *Carmen* (with Mignon Dunn in the title role), in addition to Elvira in *Don Giovanni* and The High Priestess in *Aida* (with Gabriella Tucci, Placido Domingo and Grace Bumbry). In the realm of operetta and zarzuela, Miss Poventud has been heard in New York, Puerto Rico, Miami and the Dominican Republic, performing the title roles in *Luisa Fernanda*, *Marina* and *Cecilia Valdes*. The soprano has recorded an album of folklore music for the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture. Named one of the 10 most popular Puerto Rican Women in 1973, Miss Poventud has received awards from the Lions Club of Puerto Rico, the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture and the Foundation of Operetta and Zarzuela.



BRENDA ROBERTS

Brenda Roberts, a young American soprano who has achieved considerable success on the German operatic stage, makes her bow at San Francisco Opera as Giorgetta in *Il Tabarro*. Having performed in the opera companies of Saarbrücken, Bielefeld and Nürnberg, Miss Roberts began a resident engagement this season with the Hamburg State Opera, where she is slated to perform the roles of Senta, Elektra, Salome, all Brünnhildes and Lady Macbeth, among others. In recent years she has made guest appearances in Bern and Essen as Turandot, in Saarbrücken and Hagen as Lulu, in Bonn, Hagen, and Bielefeld as Desdemona, and in Bielefeld and Essen as Ariadne. Born in Lowell, Indiana, Miss Roberts received two degrees from Northwestern University, where she attended master classes with Lotte Lehmann and Gerald Moore and appeared as Musetta in a production of *La Bohème*. After studying under Boris Goldovsky in his Oglebay Institute Opera Workshop, she trained for a year in Vienna at the Academy of Music. Miss Roberts recently sang scenes in *Wozzeck*, as Marie, for a Paris radio station and performed in the world premiere of Hindemith's *Lieder für Sopran und Grosses Orchester* broadcast on Frankfurt radio. At the 1974 Bayreuth Festival she portrayed Brünnhilde in *Siegfried*.

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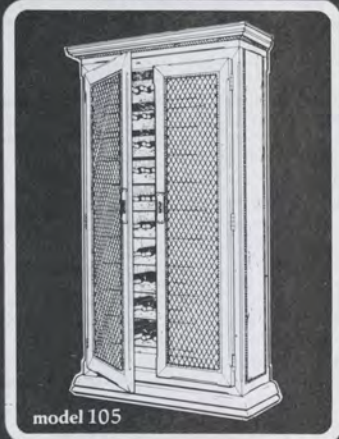
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PAMELA SOUTH

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



JAMES COURTNEY

James Courtney made his debut at San Francisco Opera last season with roles in *The Daughter of the Regiment*, *Otello*, and *Manon Lescaut*. A 1974 member of the Merola Opera Program, the young bass appeared in the Program's productions of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at Sigmund Stern Grove and *The Magic Flute* at Paul Masson Mountain Winery. Courtney is a graduate of San Jose State College and holds a master of music degree from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, where he is currently studying for a doctoral degree. This summer he was a member of the Wolf Trap Company in Vienna, Virginia, appearing in *Albert Herring* (Superintendent Budd), *The Tender Land* (Grandpa Moss), and *The Crucible* (Reverend Hale). Also during 1975 he was heard as Colline in Tucson Opera's production of *La Bohème* and as a soloist in the City Center Joffrey Ballet's production of *Pulcinella* with the San Francisco Symphony. The previous year he appeared as Sarastro in *The Magic Flute* and Don Magnifico in *La Cenerentola* with the Opera Theater of Syracuse. A 1974 finalist in the San Francisco Opera Auditions, Courtney is a 1975 recipient of the Metropolitan Opera's San Francisco Regional Study Award. In San Francisco Opera's 1975 season he portrays Narumoff in *Pique Dame*, Pietro in *Simon Boccanegra*, Fouquier-Tinville in *Andrea Chenier*, Pinellino in *Gianni Schicchi* and the Second Priest in *The Magic Flute*.



WILLIAM DANSBY

William Dansby, a 1975 member of Western Opera Theater, was heard in that company's productions of *The Barber of Seville* (Basilio) and *The Tales of Hoffmann* (Dr. Miracle). A native of Texas, Dansby performed last fall with the Eastern Opera Theater where he sang in *La Bohème* as well as in the New York premiere of *Postcard from Morocco*. The baritone also played the role of Banquo in the New York Lyric Opera's 1974 production of Verdi's *Macbeth*. In November he sang the title role of *Boris Godunov* in student performances with the Michigan Opera Theater of Detroit. A graduate of Southwestern University, Dansby received a masters degree in voice from North Texas State University. His subsequent experience included summer and winter stock at the Houston Music Theater and a year-long tour with a choral group called *The Mid-America Chorale*. After moving to New York in 1968, Dansby performed with a number of opera companies in the area, including the Bel Canto Opera, Young Artists Opera, Long Island Opera and Princeton Opera Association. Since then he has interpreted major roles with both Minnesota Opera and Santa Fe Opera. This season he makes his San Francisco Opera debut appearing as Sourin in *Pique Dame*, and follows with the bailiff in *Werther*, Il Maestro di Casa in *Andrea Chenier* and Spinelloccio in *Gianni Schicchi*.



FEDERICO DAVIÀ

Federico Davià, who appeared at San Francisco Opera in 1966 and 1967, returns to the house to interpret Mathieu in *Andrea Chenier*, Talpa in *Il Tabarro*, and Simone in *Gianni Schicchi*. His previous roles here were The Bonze in *Madama Butterfly*, Antonio in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Sparafucile in *Rigoletto*, Pistola in *Falstaff*, Zuniga in *Carmen*, The Police Commissioner in *Der Rosenkavalier*, Geronte in *Manon Lescaut*, Benoit in *La Bohème* and Tommaso in *Un Ballo in Maschera*. Born in Genoa, the distinguished bass made his operatic debut in Milan in 1959, singing the role of Colline in *La Bohème*. Two years later he made his first appearance on the stage of La Scala; subsequently his career has taken him to the major opera houses of Europe and to the Wexford and Glyndebourne festivals. Davià's formidable repertoire, in French, German, Spanish and English, encompasses such classics as *La Cenerentola*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Don Pasquale*, *Turandot*, *Così fan tutte*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Otello*, *Faust*, *The Tales of Hoffmann*, *Aida*, and *Rigoletto* as well as the modern operas—*Wozzeck*, *Murder in the Cathedral* and Musco's *Il Gattopardo*. The artist sang in the world premieres of Chailly's *Wassiliev*, Turchi's *Il Buon Soldato Swaik*, and Negri's *Giovanni Sebastiano*. Among his numerous recordings are *La Rita* for RCA, *L'Ormino* for Argo and *Orfeo e Euridice* for Telefunken.



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JOHN DUYKERS

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*.



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* (*Curlew 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 sings 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*.



EDOARDO GIMENEZ

Edoardo Gimenez is a young Spanish tenor whose artistry has brought him guest engagements at Europe's most distinguished opera houses. Among the companies which have sought his talents are La Scala in Milan, La Fenice in Venice, San Carlo in Naples, Rome Opera, Paris Opera, Lyon Opera, Teatro del Liceo in Barcelona, Staats Opera in Budapest, Terez Galdos in Las Palmas and London's Royal Festival Hall. A native of Mataro, Spain, Gimenez studied singing in Milan, then made his operatic debut in 1967 with *L'Elisir d'Amore* at the Teatro Municipale in Reggio Emilia, Italy. (Prior to his debut, the young artist had already received Reggio Emilia's international singing prize, the Achille Peri Award.) Among the numerous works in his repertoire are *La Cenerentola*, *L'Italiana in Algeri*, *Don Pasquale*, *Rita*, *Lucrezia Borgia*, *La Sonnambula*, *Il Mercato di Malmantile*, *La Ninā pazza per amore*, *La Traviata*, *Così fan tutte*, *Manon*, *Mignon*, *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*, *Zoroastre*, and many others. The tenor's American appearances have included concerts at Carnegie Hall and Washington's Kennedy Center, as well as performances at Seattle Opera, where last season Gimenez was heard as Count Almaviva in *The Barber of Seville*. Following his engagement in Seattle, he sang Almaviva again in Lyon, France. Gimenez makes his debut at San Francisco Opera this season interpreting Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi*.



DONALD GRAMM

Donald Gramm, one of the nation's foremost bass baritones, appears for the first time at San Francisco Opera in the title role of *Gianni Schicchi*. The artist's busy schedule in 1975 has included his debut in the title role of *Falstaff* with the Opera Company of Boston, performances as Dr. Schoen in a multi-media production of *Lulu* at Houston Grand Opera, another appearance in Boston in *Benvenuto Cellini*, and the role of Varlaam in the Metropolitan Opera's production of *Boris Godunov*. During the summer of 1975 Gramm made his debut as Nick Shadow in Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* with the Glyndebourne Opera; he repeated the role for his London debut with the company at Royal Albert Hall. Among the recent highlights of the singer's career have been the American premiere of Verdi's original French version of *Don Carlo* in Boston and a Haydn-Stravinsky evening with Pierre Boulez and the New York Philharmonic. Born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Gramm made his Metropolitan Opera debut in 1964; since that time he has developed a repertoire of more than four dozen roles. His summer festival appearances have taken him to Tanglewood, Wolf Trap, Caramoor, the Hollywood Bowl, Stratford and Bethlehem, and such European centers as Spoleto and Aix-en-Provence.

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COLIN HARVEY

Colin Harvey has been with San Francisco Opera for 36 years. A native of Lancashire, England, baritone Harvey was auditioned for and accepted into the Opera chorus in 1937 by Gaetano Merola, founder and first general director of San Francisco Opera. In 1939 he appeared as Yamadori in *Madama Butterfly* with Jarmila Novotna and Michael Bartlett, who made their San Francisco Opera debuts that year. A stint on Broadway followed, where he sang in *The Student Prince* and *Blossom Time*. In 1945 Harvey appeared with the New York Opera in *The Merry Widow* with Marta Eggerth and Jan Kiepura. The Cleveland performances of that production were conducted by Kurt Herbert Adler, who met Harvey and invited him to return to San Francisco. During the past 30 seasons, he has sung each year in the Opera chorus and has had many solo roles; among those best-remembered are the Notary in *Der Rosenkavalier* and the Customhouse Guard in *La Bohème*. In addition, he has been for three decades a much-loved member of the Opera staff, serving as chorus librarian. Last season Harvey received the Kurt Herbert Adler Award and the San Francisco Opera Association Medal, the highest award the company can make to an artist. This year the baritone will be heard as Guccio in *Gianni Schicchi*.



JAMES HOOPER

James Hooper made his debut at San Francisco Opera last season singing the role of Sharpless in the student matinee performances of *Madama Butterfly*. A veteran of three seasons with Western Opera Theater (San Francisco Opera's touring and educational subsidiary), Hooper appeared with the company this year as Germont in *La Traviata*, Sam in *Trouble in Tahiti* and Hoffmann's rivals in *The Tales of Hoffmann*. He was also heard as Massetto in a special series of performances of *Don Giovanni* for Street Opera and the Sigmund Stern Grove Midsummer Music Festival. A graduate of Trenton State College in New Jersey, Hooper has sung with the Amato Opera Showcase, the Opera Society of Northern New Jersey and the Opera Theater of New Jersey. At the Opera Theater in 1970 he performed the role of Peter in *Hansel and Gretel* with Frederica von Stade and the role of Morales in *Carmen* with Mignon Dunn. In 1972 he appeared in the world premiere of Selig's *Chorcorus* and the American premiere of Weill's *Der Jasager* during the Tanglewood Music Theater Project. A 1974 recipient of a Sullivan Foundation Musical Award, the baritone will be heard this season at San Francisco Opera as Johann in *Werther*, Dumas in *Andrea Chenier* and Marco in *Gianni Schicchi*.



PATRICK LIBBY

Patrick Libby makes his San Francisco Opera debut with *Il Trovatore* and *Il Tabarro* after triumphing this year with his stagings of *Wozzeck* for Covent Garden and the Metropolitan Opera. Other 1975 engagements included *Don Pasquale* for the Northern Ireland Opera Trust and *L'Ormino* in Bagnano, Italy. Later this fall he will direct *Così fan tutte* for the Metropolitan Opera. At 22, Libby was the youngest person ever appointed staff producer at the Sadler's Wells Opera Company, where he worked on productions of Monteverdi's *Orfeo* (with conductor Raymond Leppard), *The Barber of Seville*, *The Magic Flute* and *L'Heure Espagnole*, among other operas. He was subsequently invited to join the Glyndebourne Festival Opera as an associate producer. There he collaborated with Peter Hall on *La Calisto* and *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* as well as two musicals and a play for the Royal Shakespeare Company. Other productions for Glyndebourne included *Pelléas et Mélisande* (assistant director), *The Rising of the Moon* (assistant director), and *Don Giovanni*, which he directed for the Glyndebourne Touring Opera. In 1973 Libby staged a highly successful production of *L'Ajo nell'Imbarazzo* at Ireland's Wexford Festival. In other realms of the performing arts, he has worked as an assistant designer on the film, *Becket*, and formed a modern dance company (Collages) for which he designed sets and costumes.



RAYMOND MANTON

Raymond Manton, now in his 21st season with San Francisco Opera, appears in this year's productions of *Werther* (Schmidt) and *Il Tabarro* (Tinca). Manton's impressive list of credits at this house includes, among other roles, the Simpleton in *Boris Godunov* (1956, 1961, and 1973), Don Curzio in *The Marriage of Figaro* (1958, 1961, 1964, 1966, and 1972), Remendado in *Carmen* (1960, 1962, 1964, 1966, and 1970), Pang in *Turandot* (1961, 1964, 1968, and 1969), Andreas in *Wozzeck* (1962), Bardolph in *Falstaff* (1962, 1963, and 1966), the Hunchback in *Die Frau Ohne Schatten* (1959, 1960, and 1964), Prince Yamadori in *Madama Butterfly* (1971) and Loby in *The Visit of the Old Lady* (1972). Last season the tenor was heard at San Francisco Opera as the Lamplighter in *Manon Lescaut*, the Third Jew in *Salome* and as the Shepherd in *Tristan und Isolde*. Manton scored a great success with Spring Opera Theater in its 1975 season as Guglielmo Antolstoinolonoff, the off-key Russo-Italian tenor in Donizetti's opera spoof, *Viva La Mamma*. He also portrayed Baron Puck in Spring Opera Theater's 1973 and 1974 productions of *The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein*. In addition, Manton, a resident of San Francisco, has appeared with opera companies in Houston, Seattle, San Diego, Los Angeles, Portland and Boston, and has been a frequent soloist with the San Francisco Symphony and other major West Coast orchestras.

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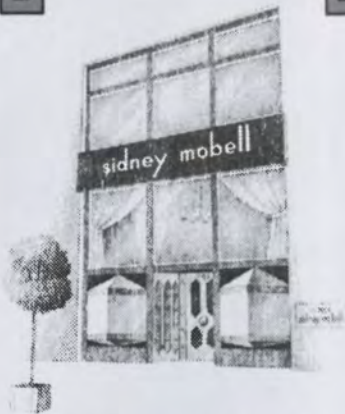
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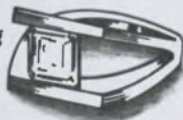
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ROBLETO MEROLLA

Robleto Merolla, an Italian tenor whose work is highly regarded throughout Europe, makes his American opera debut at San Francisco Opera singing Pollione in *Norma* and Luigi in *Il Tabarro*. Born in Naples, Merolla studied voice at the Rossini Conservatory of Music in Pesaro where his tutor was Maestro Arturo Melochi; later he received training from Maria Grassi Leraio in Milan. The tenor made his operatic debut in Spoleto performing in *Simon Boccanegra*, and he won first prize there at the Experimental Theater's International Singing Competition. In 1970, 1971 and 1973, he opened the opera season in Brescia, appearing respectively in *Macbeth*, *Norma* and *Il Tabarro*. Merolla has sung extensively on R.A.I. television in Italy, portraying roles in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Pizzetti's *Ifigenia* and *Iolanda*. Recent European engagements include *Norma* (with Montserrat Caballé) in Lisbon, *Ernani* at London's Royal Festival Hall, *Jenufa* at La Scala, *Tosca* in Naples, *La Vestale* in Palermo, Beethoven's *Fidelio* in Parma and Modena, *Pique Dame* in Florence, and *Simon Boccanegra* in Barcelona. Among other works in his wide-ranging repertoire are Rota's *La Vita di Maria*, *Carmen*, *Andrea Chénier*, *Nabucco*, *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Aida*. Merolla received the Noce d'Oro award in Italy as the best young tenor of 1973, and the same year was presented Parma's Verdi d'Oro for his performances there.



JEAN PIERRE PONNELLE

Jean Pierre Ponnelle, perhaps the most sought-after designer-director in opera today, attended the Sorbonne in Paris, and at 18, designed costumes and scenery for *Das Wundertheater*, Hans Henze's first opera. Since then, he has produced opera and comedy in virtually all the major theaters of the world, including the opera houses of Salzburg, Vienna, Milan, Paris, London, Munich and New York. Ponnelle made his American debut at San Francisco Opera in 1969 with *La Cenerentola*; his other credits here include *Tosca* (1972), *Così fan tutte* (1973), *Rigoletto* (1973), a revival of *La Cenerentola* (1974) and *Otello* (1974). This season he has designed and directed both *Der Fliegende Holländer* and *Gianni Schicchi*; during the period between these two productions he staged a highly-acclaimed interpretation of *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. In recent years Ponnelle has received international attention for his films of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (1973), *Madama Butterfly* (1974), and this year's *Carmina Burana*, for which he received the coveted Prix d'Italia last month. Following his engagement with San Francisco Opera, he will return to Europe to design and direct a film version of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, with Herbert von Karajan conducting. Ponnelle will stage the *Ring* cycle in Stuttgart during the 1977-78 season.



GUILLERMO SARABIA

Guillermo Sarabia, a permanent member of the Deutsche Oper am Rhein, was last heard at San Francisco Opera as Germont opposite Beverly Sills in *La Traviata* (1973). The baritone's premieres in Düsseldorf have included *Tosca*, *Don Giovanni*, *Wozzeck*, *The Flying Dutchman*, *Lohengrin*, *Macbeth*, *Andrea Chenier* and *Otello*. This season with the German company Sarabia sang his first Falstaff as well as Rigoletto in new productions by Jean Pierre Ponnelle. The artist was born a United States citizen in Mazatlan, Mexico and as a youth studied at the Opera Studio with Herbert Graf and the Konservatorium in Zürich. He also had voice training with Dusolina Giannini and master classes with Karl Ebert in Switzerland, returning to North America to complete a season of acting study with the Pasadena Playhouse. In 1965 Sarabia made his professional debut in the title role of Busoni's *Dr. Faustus* at Detmold, and since then has become a perennial favorite at the opera houses of Munich, Stuttgart, Cologne, Dortmund, Kiel, Berlin and Vienna, among others. His Metropolitan Opera debut was in 1973, when he sang Amonasro in *Aida*; earlier that year he appeared in a concert version of *The Flying Dutchman* with the Houston Symphony. The baritone's 1975 engagements include *Rigoletto* in Vienna, *Otello* in Berlin, and a summer tour of Japan as Escamillo in *Carmen*. This season at San Francisco Opera he portrays Michele in *Il Taboro*.



ELYAKUM SHAPIRRA

Elyakum Shapirra won a competition in his native Israel, conducting the Israel Philharmonic while he was still in his teens. Leonard Bernstein, one of the judges in that event, later became Shapirra's teacher with Koussevitsky in Tanglewood and subsequently appointed him assistant conductor of the New York Philharmonic. Shapirra achieved his first success there and was soon conducting the orchestra both in New York and on tour in Canada and Japan. From 1962 to 1968 he was on the podium for over a hundred concerts each season with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and he also appeared with the orchestras of New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and Pittsburgh. During this time, through the encouragement of Rosa Ponselle of Baltimore Opera, he had his first opportunity to conduct an opera orchestra. In 1968 he was appointed musical director and chief conductor of Sweden's Malmö Symphony Orchestra. He subsequently toured Australia and Israel and emerged as an outstanding operatic conductor, with performances in Stockholm and Hamburg. Shapirra has also made appearances with the London Philharmonic, the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, the London Symphony and the Stockholm Symphony. Last season the conductor was on the podium in Frankfurt (*La Juive* and *Faust*) and Sydney (*Tosca*), in addition to conducting symphony concerts in Tokyo and Israel. Following his San Francisco Opera debut in *Werther*, Shapirra will go to Frankfurt for *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *I Pagliacci* and *Lohengrin*.

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PETER STRUMMER

Peter Strummer, a 26-year-old bass baritone, makes his debut at San Francisco Opera this season singing Dulcamara in student matinee performances of *L'Elisir d'Amore* and Betto in *Gianni Schicchi*. The artist's first major operatic appearance was in *The Marriage of Figaro* in 1972 with the Atlanta Symphony under James Levine. The following year he was heard as Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* with the Opera Theater of Rochester. As a principal bass baritone with the Minnesota Opera since 1973, Strummer has interpreted the roles of Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, Papageno in *The Magic Flute*, Inspector Budd in *Albert Herring* and the Neighboring King in the world premiere of *Transformations*. During the 1974-75 season he made debuts in New York, as the Sacristan in the American Opera Center's production of *Tosca*, and at Santa Fe Opera in *The Cunning Little Vixen*. Among Strummer's orchestral credits are appearances with the Minnesota Symphony and the St. Paul and Cleveland Chamber Orchestras. His solo concert recitals have included song cycles by Brahms, Schumann, Schubert and Mahler, as well as contemporary works. Following his performances in San Francisco, the bass baritone will repeat his Guglielmo with the Minnesota Opera and will sing a leading role in the world premiere of Dominick Argento's *The Voyage of Edgar Allan Poe*.



JOHN TROUT

John Trout, a 27-year-old member of the San Francisco Opera Chorus, makes his professional opera debut this season as Amantio di Nicolao in *Gianni Schicchi*. The young baritone is a native of the San Joaquin Valley and a graduate of Fresno State where he appeared in student productions of Mozart's *Così fan tutte* (Don Alfonso), Donizetti's *Il campanello di notte* (Enrico) and Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld* (John Styx). He is presently studying for a masters degree in music (voice) at San Francisco State University and was heard there last spring as Marcello in *La Bohème*. In May, 1975 he portrayed the title role in *Gianni Schicchi* at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Trout has frequently performed as a soloist in churches throughout the Bay Area, and last year was chosen as a regional finalist in the San Francisco Opera Auditions. He has sung in the San Francisco Opera Chorus for the past four years.

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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 the roles of the First Soldier in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, L'Abate in *Andrea Chénier*, a Lover in *Il Tabarro* and the First Priest in *The Magic Flute*.

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The final opera, *Gianni Schicchi* was taken from an anecdote in Canto XXX of Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Though the libretto bears a striking resemblance to Jonson's *Volpone*, no connection exists. It is based on the tale of a real person, a man of somewhat questionable character, who was endowed with extraordinary shrewdness and cunning. He has often been compared to the legendary Tyl Eulenspiegel immortalized in the tone-poem of Richard Strauss. As the original story goes, Gianni, prompted by the relatives of the deceased Buoso Donati, re-wrote the old man's will leaving everything of any value to Gianni. The idea of using the money as a dowry for his daughter's marriage was added by Puccini and his librettist Forzani. Schicchi pleads directly with the audience at the close of the opera for a verdict of "not guilty."

The three operas do, in a unique way, reveal much of Puccini the man. All through his life he almost morbidly concentrated upon death, and each of the three operas was concerned with death. In all of his operas he presented death dramatically, graphically, and tragically. At the same time he invariably associated death with love, be it spiritual, sensual, or romantic, and the *trittico* was no exception. Each of the three deals with one of these qualities of love.

It has been said that Puccini fell in love with each of his heroines, much as he fell in love with almost every beautiful woman whom he encountered. He was famous for his extramarital affairs which, for a man not held in great public esteem, could have been ruinous to his career. Even his long-suffering wife Elvira had been enticed from her husband's house and had lived with Puccini seven years before he married her. A fiercely jealous woman, Elvira was well aware in the years both before and after their marriage of his many infidelities, but, with a couple of notable exceptions, she forebore from leaving Puccini and remained loyal to her always penitent husband. It seems obvious that, in spite of circumstances, each bore an affection for the other which was able to survive Puccini's amorous dalliances.

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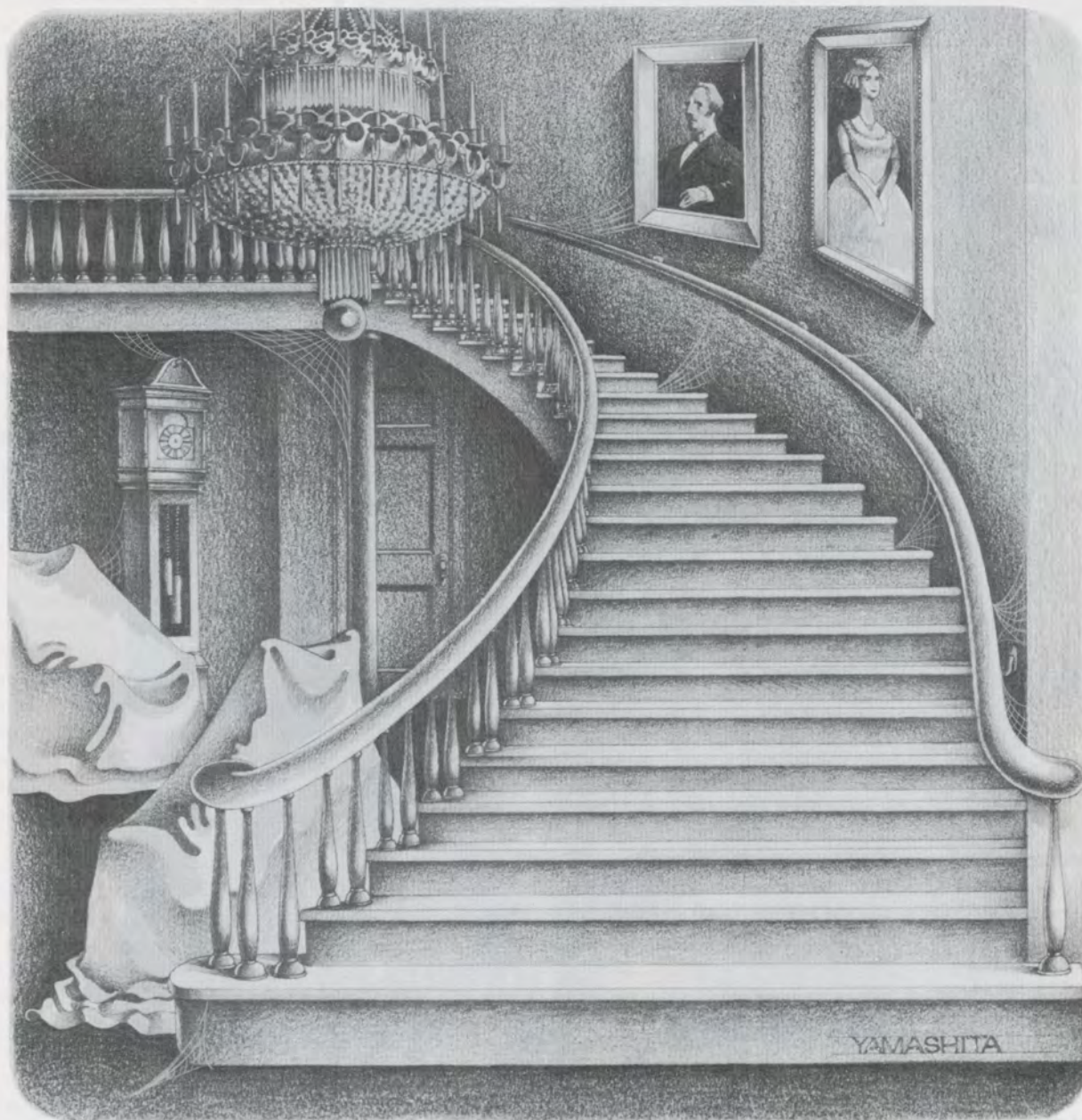
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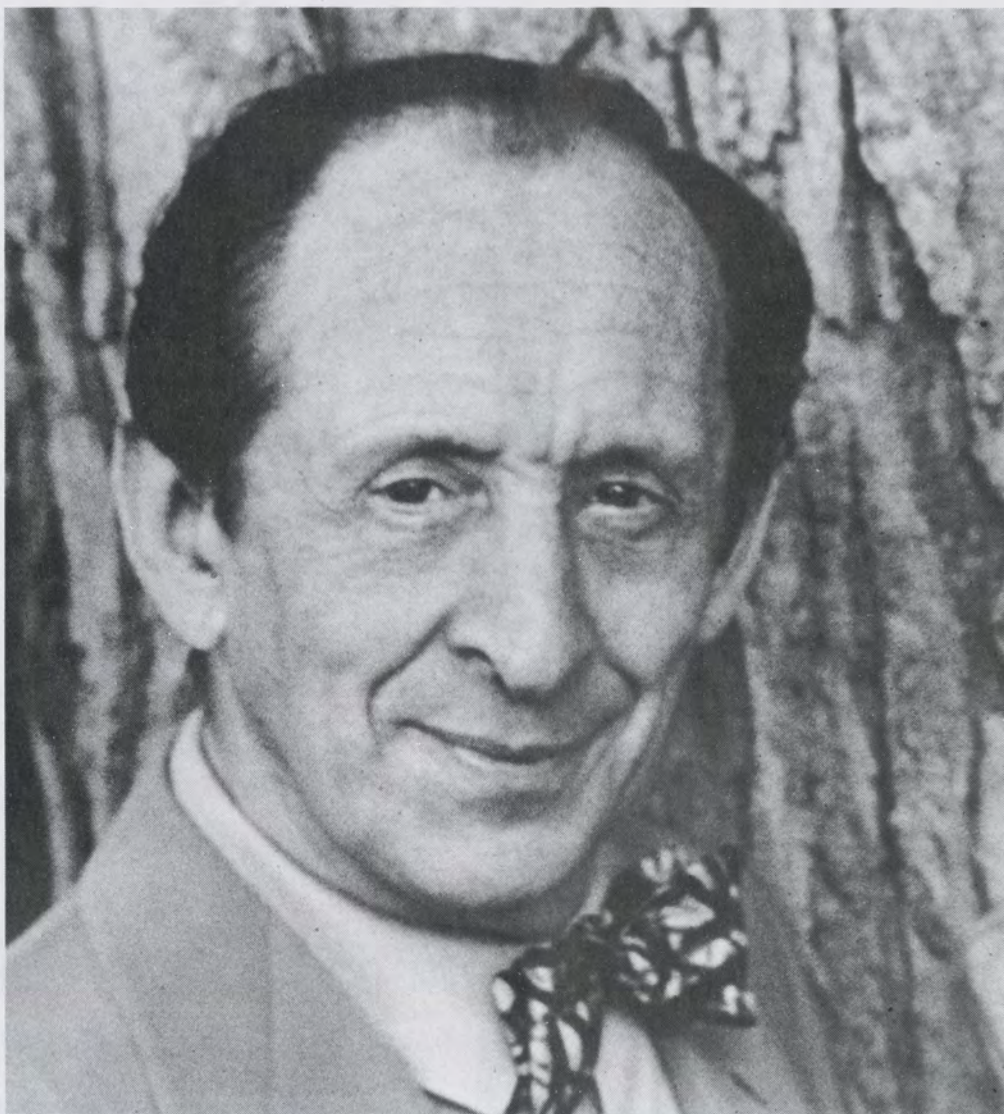
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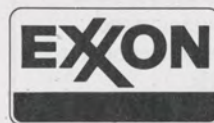
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It is not strange then that love was as much infused in his plots as in his life; yet, to him, his real and fictional loves were experiences which he regarded as beautiful. In his operas, even the women of most doubtful character are, in time, elevated to places of almost goddess-like purity.

In the *trittico* we see human emotions and the experiences of love and death treated in widely divergent ways. *Il Tabarro* is presented with stark realism; love and death are painted in broad strokes. As Leoncavallo says in his prologue to *Pagliacci*: "Now you will love just as real people love, you will see hate, sorrow, suffering, howls of hatred and derisive laughter."

Suor Angelica presents love and death on a mystical and spiritual plane; yet Angelica's final actions are motivated by typically human emotions. On the other hand, *Gianni Schicchi* deals with love in a light romantic manner, and death is an almost incidental, even humorous, occurrence. It is the only Puccini opera which is entirely humorous, revealing a side of Puccini, seldom apparent, except in the lighter moments of *La Bohème*, in which he relied upon his experiences as a young student-musician in Milan where he was well-known as a prankster and practical joker. His lifelong preoccupations with loving, playing, and drinking many times diverted him from more serious application of his magnificent talent. Yet, in his work, he was a perfectionist, seeking, even after performance of his works, to rewrite, cut, elaborate, and to pick out every minute fault, making every effort to try to achieve perfection.

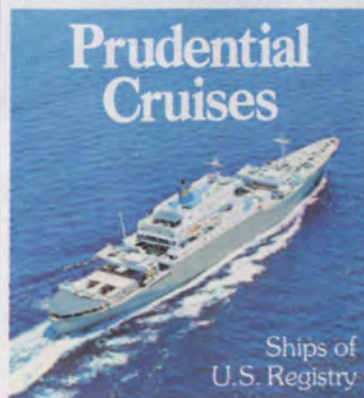
Thus, though Puccini never bagged the perfect game, loved the ultimate woman, or found the libretto that would completely satisfy his multifaceted nature, his efforts, his striving toward perfection, have made him and his works a lode-star for all those who love great music. ■

Edwin C. Dunning is a Professor of Music at San Jose State University where he is in his eighteenth year as Founder-Director of the University Opera Workshop. He served for the past six years as Chairman of the Vocal Area.



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audiences earlier this season, journeys to the other end of the operatic spectrum for *Gianni Schicchi*. "This opera offers people a chance to laugh," he stresses, "though the laughter is often very bitter, very cruel. *Gianni Schicchi* has one of the best libretti in the repertoire, and its satire is exceptionally sharp-edged."

The director points out that the Puccini comedy contains noticeable traces of Roman farce as well as the Italian *commedia dell'arte* of the 16th century. "It's also very interesting to remember that Gianni Schicchi was a character from history. He was even mentioned in Dante's *Inferno*."

The title character, as depicted by Puccini, represents the 13th century influx of rough-hewn country people into the tottering aristocratic bastions of Florence. "There were a lot of clever people—*la gente nuova*—who were of the merchant class, but who were extremely gifted and intelligent. The Medicis were among them, in fact. This was the start of the great free towns, and the genius of Florence was the genius of these people."

This upheaval of the social milieu provides ample grist for the composer's satirical mill. "Here we have a family," says Ponnelle, "which regards itself as the best family in the world, whose members try to kill each other off at every turn. Their specialty is hypocrisy."

In creating sets and costumes for *Gianni Schicchi*, Ponnelle has relied heavily on research into Renaissance styles. "I have respected completely—

continued on p. 87



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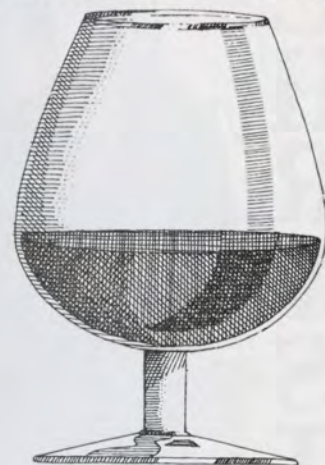
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Libby—continued from p. 11

only concern, their only obsession, is escape."

The 33-year-old Englishman, who staged San Francisco Opera's current revival of the Puccini *verismo* masterpiece, believes *Il Tabarro's* enduring appeal lies in its theme of thwarted aspirations. "We're all made for better things, aren't we?" Libby grins wryly. "The housewife isn't meant to wash dishes; the businessman wonders over his vodka why he's getting a peptic ulcer, when he could be living on a fishing trawler."

"From the moment that the curtain rises on *Il Tabarro* we are conscious of the deadly monotony of the characters' lives. Those stevedores hauling cement in the opening scene are slaves to the repetition of their existence. Repetition, repetition, repetition—that theme, even musically, is at the core of *Il Tabarro*."

All of the characters in the opera share the need for escape, Libby says, though some of them realize stoically that another life is impossible. "Michele's escape is perhaps the most realistic, because it centers on his love for Giorgetta. He recognizes their relationship as his only refuge from the tedium of his day-to-day existence. The solace their marriage permits him is so valuable to Michele that he will do anything, even kill, to preserve it."

"Giorgetta's escape, on the other hand, is in the sexual attraction which Luigi holds for her. Because he is young and passionately rebelling against the poverty of their lives, Luigi appears to be a way out for Giorgetta. And his own vocalized frustrations are the young man's personal form of release."

Il Tabarro's secondary characters are equally obsessed with escape, the director adds. "Tinca, for instance, drowns reality with alcohol, and Frugola and Talpa long for a house in the country, though they inwardly accept the futility of their dream. The two young lovers, by contrast, are still blindly idealistic about their futures. Escape, to them, is a certainty."

Libby's only other directorial venture with Puccini was a revival of *La Bo-*

hème a number of years ago for Sadlers Wells Opera (now English National Opera). "Unlike the Parisians of *Bohème*," he points out, "the characters of *Il Tabarro* are doomed from the beginning. This is Puccini's rawest tableau of human emotions."

Based on Didier Gold's brutally realistic play, *La Houppelande*, *Il Tabarro* represented a radical departure from the conventional operatic fare of its era. "It was as if one of our contemporary composers had chosen to make an opera out of, say, a Harold Pinter play," Libby comments.

He adds that Paolo Bregni's somber and claustrophobic set for the opera—entrapping the little barge under the oppressive ironwork of a Seine River bridge—heightens the sense of futility and imprisonment that permeates *Il Tabarro*.

"The music serves the drama marvelously," Libby points out, "expressing the private hopes and dreams of all those pathetic lives. It also corresponds perfectly with the suffocating mood of the story, the stifling heat, the demoralizing repetition."

Libby, who staged San Francisco Opera's 1975 season opener, *Il Trovatore*, recently returned to the city from New York, where he directed the Metropolitan Opera's production of *Così fan tutte*. Last season at the Met—and at Covent Garden—the young director's *Wozzeck* received unanimous critical praise.

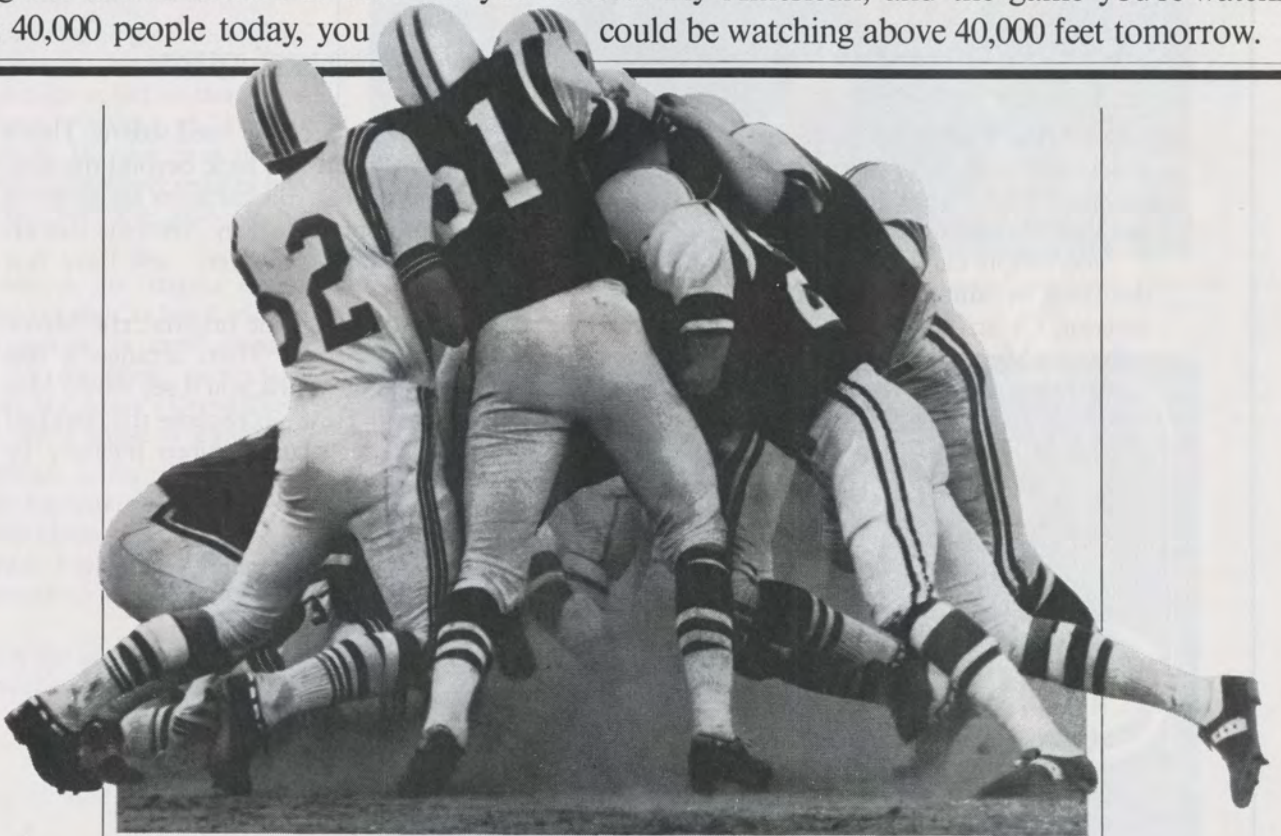
Libby attributes much of his approach to his craft to experience he garnered at the Glyndebourne Festival when he collaborated on several productions with Peter Hall (*La Calisto*, *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*, two musicals and a play for the Royal Shakespeare Company). "Hall helped me to come to the conclusion that the real function of a director is to be objective, to question constantly, to be as naive as possible—like a child. The questions are simple enough: Do I understand it? Why is that character behaving like that? Does it make any sense?" ■

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

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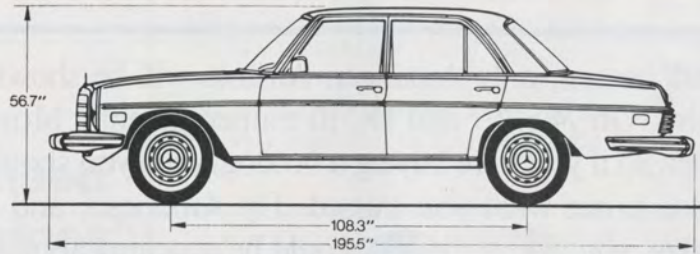
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with some wrong perspectives — the architectural peculiarities of early 13th century Tuscany." (The designer's attention to historical detail affords the audience an intriguing insight into the sociological quirks of the era, e.g. Donati's over-the-bed pulley-operated money bag, a commonplace Tuscan security device.)

Even Gianni Schicchi's comically bulbous nose is typically Tuscan, Ponnelle says, "and one of the tenor's arias describes it as looking like a tower."

Ponnelle, whose lively and unorthodox visions have delighted audiences here in 1969 (*La Cenerentola*), 1972, 1973 (*Così fan tutte* and *Rigoletto*) and 1974 (*Otello* and a revival of *La Cenerentola*), recently returned to San Francisco from Chicago where he staged *Le Nozze di Figaro*.

Last month the director won the Prix d'Italia—perhaps the most coveted of all international television awards—for his filmed production of *Carmina Burana*. He has also received worldwide attention for his films of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (1973) and *Madama Butterfly* (1974).

Following his engagement with San Francisco Opera, Ponnelle will return to Europe to design and direct a film version of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, with Herbert von Karajan conducting. He will stage the *Ring* cycle in Stuttgart during the 1977-78 season. ■

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

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29

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6

7 8 PM (A,B)
 L'ELISIR D'AMORE

13

14 8 PM (A,C)
 NORMA

20

21 8 PM (A,B)
 PIQUE DAME

27

28 8 PM (A,C)
 WERTHER

November

3

4 8 PM (A,C)
 SIMON BOCCANEGRA

10

11 8 PM (A,B)
 ANDREA CHENIER

17

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8	9	10 8 PM (D,E) L'ELISIR D'AMORE	11 8 PM (J,K) NORMA	12 2 PM (M,O) L'ELISIR D'AMORE
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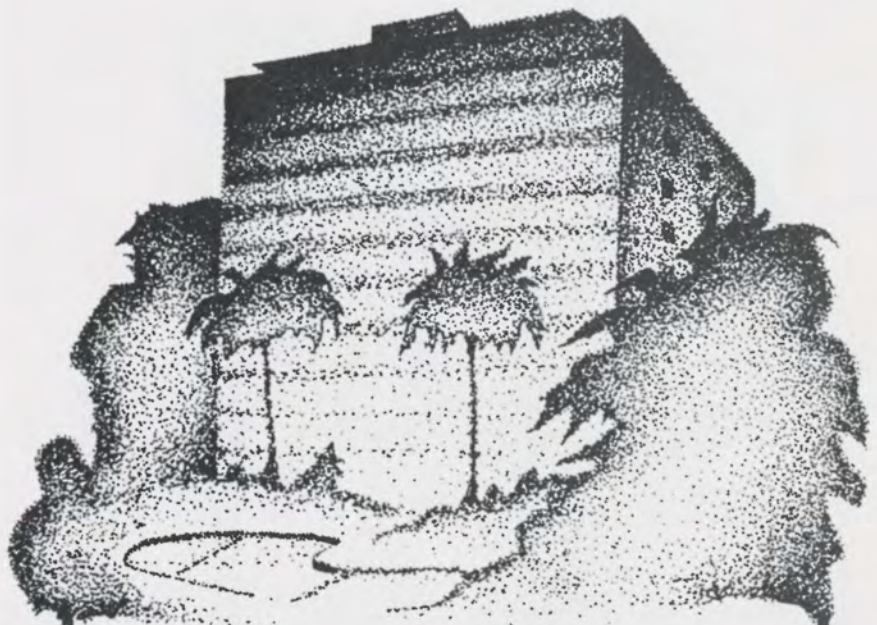


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music and geometric graphics reminiscent of the artist's well-known wood constructions. Produced by Pace Editions in New York City, the poster is being sold at the San Francisco Opera box office, where a limited number of signed (\$75) and unsigned (\$15) copies are still available.

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



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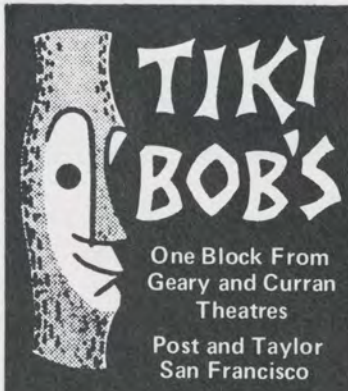
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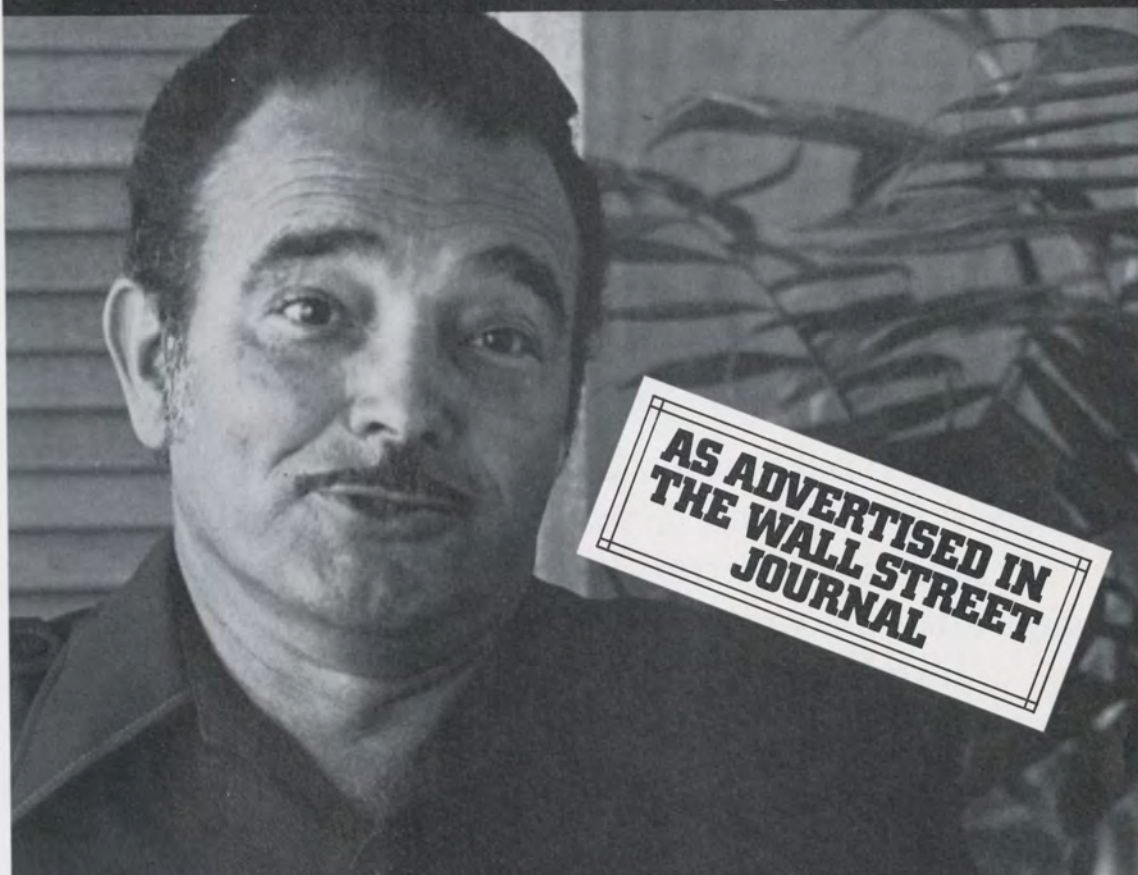
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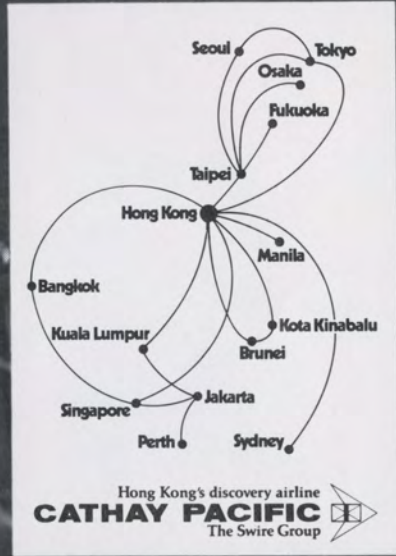


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In Memoriam

Walter Herbert, general director of the San Diego Opera, passed away last Sunday.

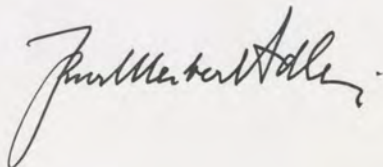
I first met Walter in the mid-1930's when we were both at the Volksoper in Vienna; he was then musical director and I was working under him. When Maestro Merola brought me to San Francisco in 1943, I learned that Walter was about to leave the city to become general director of the New Orleans Opera Company. Walter Herbert's activities in San Francisco had been many—he had conducted the San Francisco Opera Orchestra, the San Francisco Symphony, had appeared at the Midsummer Music Festival at Stern Grove, and had led the local WPA symphony orchestra. His many-faceted career took him to Houston and ultimately to San Diego. In addition, he was a conductor for Opera/South, a black company in Jackson, Mississippi, which he had helped to organize in 1971. He was also a respected member of OPERA America, the professional association of American opera managers.

Although he had not lived here for many years, Walter retained strong ties with San Francisco. He visited our city frequently and members of his family are still residents of the Bay Area. One of Walter Herbert's closest associates for many years was a San Franciscan, Charles Rosekrans.

Walter Herbert had been a student of Arnold Schoenberg and remained dedicated to contemporary music. A particular distinction was his conducting of his mentor's work, *Lulu*, in Zurich in the early 1930's. He had a very astute mind which served him well in establishing a reputation as a superior bridge player, which followed him from Vienna to San Francisco to San Diego.

He was a quiet but strong-minded man. Perhaps a small incident which occurred long ago best expresses his personality: at a social gathering in Vienna I witnessed a dialogue between Walter and Julius Korngold, then the dean of music critics. Korngold asked Walter, "Mr. Herbert, when are you going to step out of your passive objectivity?" Walter, with no hesitation, replied, "I feel very good in it."

I shall always remember Walter—the good colleague and man.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be "Julius Korngold". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Tuesday, September 16, 1975

